

## Chapter 6: Projecting Clauses as Theme in Workplace Texts

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Based on the discussion of Theme as outlined in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses specifically on one particular type of extended Theme, namely projection. There is very little explicit writer evaluation in Theme position in the texts. Modal Adjuncts, which Halliday (1994) classifies as interpersonal Theme, only occurred in 4.7% of all texts (see Table 5.3). However, it is evident when reading the texts that the writer viewpoint is present and a certain ‘angle’ on the topic is construed.

The findings show that 32.9% of all Themes in  $\alpha$  clauses were extended Themes (see Table 5.8). The extended Themes found in the present study were either realised by a Circumstantial Adjunct, a hypotactic enhancing clause or a projecting clause in thematic position. This study suggests that one way in which writer viewpoint is construed is through the choice of extended Themes. Projection (41.5% of all instances of extended Theme) and Circumstantial Adjuncts (34.2%) were almost equal in frequency and enhancing clauses (24.3%) were only a little less frequent. Although there was little difference in the frequency, projection seems to function far more interpersonally than Circumstantial Adjuncts as part of the extended Theme, and is potentially therefore an interesting concept to explore further.

Projection, where the writer represents through a mental, verbal or factual clause something that someone else has “said or thought at a different time from the present”, is viewed by many as realising an interpersonal function (Thompson, 1996:206). This chapter argues that projection should be viewed as interpersonal, that it inherently reflects the writer’s viewpoint, and that the writer can manipulate the choice of projecting clauses to realise viewpoint either in a subjective or more objective manner. In what follows, these considerations constitute the basis for the exploration of certain general research questions relating projecting clauses found in thematic position, viz.:

- 1) Are there any particular patterns in the memos, letters and reports of projecting clauses found in thematic position?
- 2) What is the particular function of projecting clauses found in thematic position?
- 3) To what extent are projecting clauses found in thematic position in the memos, letters and reports?

It is suggested that the writer, through the use of projecting clause in thematic position, is able to use viewpoint as the starting point for what will follow. Projection will affect the way in which the reader interprets the following and perhaps even the preceding clause and to some extent beyond the clause. A writer's viewpoint can be made explicit through the choice of a projecting clause, e.g. *I believe entirely [that] Mr Woo has ordered his air ticket in good faith* (Letter 21, clause complex 6). The writer in this example is stating what he thinks and uses the Modal Adjunct *entirely* to emphasise his viewpoint. This projecting clause is used in an interpersonal manner to establish the sincerity of what the writer has to say about *Mr Woo*. As discussed below, projection is not always as explicit; at times it appears more objective, e.g. *it was understood that* and *it was contemplated that*. Here, the projection of ideas *understanding* and *contemplating* are presented in a more objective manner, with no human participant taking on the modal responsibility for the thought process. Thus, an investigation into projection was undertaken not only because it was the most frequent of the extended Themes, but also because of its inherently interpersonal nature. The argument proposed in this study is that projection in letters, memos and reports, which may appear to be factual texts, is always interpersonal, and that through the choice of projection the writer can invest a significant amount of interpersonal meaning in the choice of Theme.

The chapter focuses on projecting clauses and the way in which the writer constructs their identity when using projecting clauses to make meaning. In Section 6.1, the meaning of the term 'projection' is established. Relevant research in this particular area is reviewed in Section 6.2. The approach adopted towards projection in the present study is outlined in Section 6.3. During the analysis three categories for projecting clauses as Theme were developed; these categories and the related findings are presented in Section 6.4. The pattern and function of projecting clauses within the corpus are discussed in Section 6.5. The discussion that projecting clauses in thematic position are important and relevant in construing writer viewpoint and identity within a text is summarised in Section 6.6.

## 6.1 What is projection?

The following section introduces the terms and parameters adopted when investigating projection in the memos, letters and reports. Projection involves a specific relationship

between clauses. Therefore, before discussing projection the different types of relationships found in a clause complex are introduced.

### 6.1.1 The logico-semantic relationship of projection

When analysing clauses within the clause complex, Halliday (1994:216) distinguishes between dependency (taxis) and logico-semantic relations. Clause relations of dependency are presented in Chapter Three, Section 3.5.3. Logico-semantic relationships are briefly discussed in this section. According to Halliday, in projecting clauses the  $\alpha$  clause expresses the ideational component of either locution, mental or factual projection; and the  $\beta$  clause carries the ideational realisation of the projection. In a clause where the relationship between the projecting and projected clause is hypotactic, the projected clause is dependent on the projecting clause, and the projected clause cannot be realised without the projecting clause. This relationship is investigated further throughout this chapter.

The present study supports Halliday's position that the projected clause, in a projecting/projected clause relationship, realises the ideational component of the clause complex and that the meanings construed by projecting clauses need to be investigated further. The analysis of projecting clauses in the present study follows Halliday's view of a hypotactic relationship, in that there is an independent clause, in this case the projecting clause, and a dependent clause, in this case the projected clause, and that the projected clause cannot stand alone but is dependent on the projecting clause for meaning to be made. As shown in Example 6.1 the main ideational element of the clause complex is realised in the projected clause *that additional staff would be required in view of the scale*. In the present study it is suggested that the projecting clause, in the case of Example 6.1 *he envisages*, should be considered as construing interpersonal meaning. The extent and range of interpersonal meanings realised through the choice of a projecting clause in initial position is analysed in detail throughout this chapter.

**Example 6.1**

He envisages that	additional staff	would be required in view of the scale of the feasibility study and the subsequent implementation of the proposal.
$\alpha$	$\beta$	
interpersonal Theme	Subject/ Theme	Rheme

Report 10, clause complex 29

Projected clauses can occur in both paratactic and hypotactic clauses. In certain projected clauses they are independent and there is a paratactic relationship; for example, direct quote marks are used to signify what has been said: *He thought to himself “additional staff would be required”*. In this example, the two clauses are of equal status, the quoting of what is said and the reporting of who said it are related through parataxis; neither is dependent on the other. Other examples include:

**Example 6.2**

John thought to himself	‘I’ll run away’.
1	2

(Halliday, 1994:220)

**Example 6.3**

I met our Franchisor’s Shipment and Invoicing Department staff last week	and the following is the information they require from us.
1	2

Memo 17, clause 1 &amp; clause complex 2

As shown in Examples 6.2 and 6.3, in a paratactic clause the primary clause is the *initiating clause* (1) and the following clauses are *continuing clauses* (2). The clauses are not dependent on each other as they are of equal status and the relationship between them is one of parataxis. In both examples, clauses 1 and 2 are ‘free’ elements which can stand alone. As pointed out in Section 3.3, all paratactic clauses have been analysed as having their own Theme within the clause complex. There are no examples of paratactic projecting clause complexes in the present corpus. However, projecting clauses, on the other hand, occur frequently.

The logico-semantic relationship of projection is where “the secondary clause is projected through the primary clause, which instates it as (a) a locution or (b) an idea” (Halliday, 1994:219). (In this quote the term *instates* is a little odd; perhaps Halliday really means it

*instantiates*). Projection thus occurs when one clause projects another clause either through quoting or reporting what is said or thought. There is also a third type of projection which is realised through processes other than locution or ideas, and which has no named projector, namely projection as ‘fact’ (Halliday, 1994:264). This type of projection will be dealt with under the heading of thematised comment, in Section 6.4.5.

### 6.1.2 Modality within projecting clauses

Clauses such as *I believe* could be classified as projection where the writer is reporting something in relation to their thoughts. Alternatively, *I believe* could also be classified as an interpersonal metaphor (Halliday, 1994). Halliday states that the realisation *I think* can be interpreted as either projection (the speaker is really thinking something) or modality (the speaker is inferring some form of probability), with the interpretation depending on the context (Halliday, 1994:354). In spoken language, for example, an interpersonal metaphor will be recognised by tone and prosodic intonation. However, this is more difficult to recognise in written texts, where the analyst must refer to the surrounding context. Ascertaining whether the writer is inferring probability is thus more difficult. For the purposes of the present study, realisations such as *I think* are, if appropriate, being viewed as projecting clauses and not as interpersonal metaphors. The term projecting clause, from this point on, will be used to refer to an independent projecting clause in thematic position within a clause complex where it is followed by a hypotactic projected dependent clause. The analysis of projecting clauses presented in this chapter classifies projection under three main categories. These categories were introduced in Section 4.4.6 and the findings are discussed below in Section 6.4, but first the relevant literature in the area is reviewed.

## 6.2 A review of the literature related to projection

Halliday’s position related to projecting clauses and the linguistic elements incorporated within projection has been summarised above. However, Thompson (1994), in an unpublished paper, challenges this account. Thompson states that the categories for reported language “were far from adequate” and that Halliday’s concepts of projection “were to some extent unclear” (1994:1). In support of Thompson’s (1994) argument, there have been a number of

other studies which have also argued for an extension or a revision of Halliday's categorisation of projection (Davies, 1994, 1997; McGregor, 1994; Thompson, 1996).

Empirical research based on authentic data and the notion of projection seems to be rather limited. McGregor (1994) calls for the need for more research into reported speech. Drawing from Volišinov, McGregor talks of the "extraordinary methodological interest" and "enormous general linguistic and theoretical significance of reported speech" (1994:64), where

quotation is more than just a retelling or reporting of another person's words or meaning, as most linguists would seem to believe. It is a way of saying: a particular way of saying which distances the speaker in the SS [uttered sentences] from the framed utterance.

(McGregor, 1994:87)

Thus, for McGregor, reporting "another person's words or meanings" is a 'pivotal' phenomenon in language and is a feature worthy of detailed analysis.

Following McGregor, therefore, within the business world, a study of projection at a clause complex level and the relationship between clauses is seen to have considerable potential in shedding light on the way in which writers construct viewpoint within an organisational setting. Workplace texts within bureaucratic organisations "seem primarily concerned with the formal or objective nature of their tasks" (Iedema, 2000). However, as pointed out by Tadros (1985:63), workplace texts try to "persuade, cajole, convince and win the reader to his side". Iedema (1995, 1997, 2000) asserts that organisational communication "rarely fails to realise both "subjective" and highly personal status differences as well as emphasise staff's [sic] tasks and responsibilities" (Iedema, 2000:49). Workplace texts in the form of memos are making meaning in relation to giving a directive in a social environment and, as such, depend highly on interpersonal relations. Projection is one means whereby the writer can encode status and viewpoint. The writer can inform the reader of correct procedure and also incorporate views about that procedure. As pointed out above, Iedema states that institutional communication evolves around "correct procedure and control" (Iedema, 2000:49). Through the choice of *I believe*, *the company believes* and *it is believed*, the writer can choose to demonstrate a level of control and in the projected clause the related procedure can be inscribed.

In the area of rhetorical studies, a great deal of research has been carried out on reported speech in both spoken and written discourse. Research in this area appears to focus on literary texts, narratives and occasions where instances of projection, ‘reported speech’, are instantiated. Baynham (1996), Buttny (1997), Maybin (1997) and Myers (2000) have all studied reported speech in relation to the transformation of direct into indirect speech within a classroom setting. Others have studied the same phenomenon and have associated reported speech with storytelling in the following contexts: interviews (Schiffrin, 1996; Rabotas and Berkenkotter, 1998); interactive storytelling (Johnstone, 1993; Shuman, 1993); and the way in which the individual situates themselves (Hamilton, 1998). Myers (2000) analyses reported speech within focus group meetings. In these meetings, the aim is to elicit opinions and understand the way in which reported speech is used to tell stories. None of the studies listed here is directly involved with workplace English. The definition of reported speech within all these studies includes a far wider range of linguistic realisations than simply projection. These linguistic realisations are not based on grammatical categories, but rather “hypothetical representations” (Myers, 2000:574). The analysis tends to focus on chunks of text within the narrative genre, does not follow an SFL approach and appears to be pragmatically driven. One commonality of the above studies and the present one is the view that reported speech (including projection) is seen to be “usually not noticed, just because they [reported speech instances] are so ubiquitous”, and further that they are seen to be key “‘framing’ elements within the discourse” (Myers, 2000).

McGregor, in his 1994 paper, proposes a “new account” of reported speech. He adds, “there is a hiatus between structural and functional/semantic theories of quotation” (McGregor, 1994:71). He believes that neither the structuralists nor those using the SFL model, the functionalists, have grasped the essence of reported speech. His view of what he terms “reported clauses”, which Halliday would refer to as projection, is compatible with work carried out previously by Clark and Gerrig (1990). McGregor, who supports his argument with examples taken from Gooniyandi (a Western Australian Aboriginal language), argues that projection is a device used to distance the speaker, and the reporting clause is a way of framing the reported clause. However, his view about the status of projecting and projected clauses within a clause complex is different from Halliday’s. He argues that reported clauses are “capable of independent occurrence” (McGregor, 1994:76). He asserts that the relationship

between the two clauses, i.e. the projecting and projected clause, is not one of parataxis, or hypotaxis, but one of a “whole-whole relationship” (1994:76). He uses the analogy of a picture in a frame to demonstrate that both have distinct and different characteristics, but at the same time are part of a whole. The frame sets the picture in a particular setting, providing a context that can be interpreted differently from that of, for example, a mural. This description of indirect speech, he states, “delineates the reported clause from the surrounding clauses, and indicates that it is to be viewed or evaluated in a different way” (McGregor, 1994:77). Thus, according to McGregor, the projecting clause establishes and frames the way in which the interlocutor would interpret the projected clause.

Following the argument put forward by McGregor and others, it would appear that the nature of projection is still under debate and the dispute is yet to be fully resolved (McGregor, 1994; 1997). It is not within the scope of the present discussion to explicate such a dispute. Rather, it is worth noting that the present study follows Halliday’s (1994) initial suggestions that reported clauses are not independent and that a definite hypotactic relationship exists. In the present study, it is argued that the writer through the choice of a projecting Theme, followed by a hypotactic projected clause, influences or ‘frames’ the manner in which the projected clause should be interpreted. If the projecting and projected clauses were paratactic in nature, in the present analysis each paratactic clause would be analysed for its own Theme structure. Therefore, the present study does partially agree with McGregor that the projecting clause establishes a frame for interpreting the message, but that this frame is related hypotactically within the clause complex. Halliday’s initial theory of projection will be extended to incorporate suggestions raised by Davies (1988, 1994, 1997) and Thompson (1994, 1996). On the basis of these suggestions, the present research argues that the whole of the projecting clause and the Subject of the projected clause should be considered the Theme of the clause complex.

Studies discussing projection agree, to a greater or lesser extent, that projection encodes interpersonal meaning (Davies, 1988, 1997; McGregor, 1994; Thompson, 1994, 1996; Iedema, 1995, 1997, 2000). Davies, for example, states that the anticipatory *it* and the projecting clause “are treated as interpersonal ‘projections’ of the writer’s message or viewpoint” (1997:56). Thompson (1996) extends Halliday’s view of projection by introducing the term ‘thematized comment’, and that is the term adopted in this study. The term itself, thematized *comment*,



implicitly incorporates some form of interpersonal element. Thematised comment is the term adopted for the purpose of this study and it will be discussed in detail below. In addition, Thompson states that it is “revealing” to examine projection with reference to interpersonal meaning (1996:211).

McGregor (1994), like Davies (1988, 1997), views projecting clauses as framing clauses and as highly interpersonal. McGregor (1994) also states that projection falls into the interpersonal metafunction. Thus, for Davies, Thompson and McGregor, there is an undeniable link between projection and the interpersonal metafunction. Following this view of projection as creating interpersonal meaning, this study aims to show the way in which the writer influences the interpersonal meaning of the message through choice of projection as part of the extended Theme.

### 6.3 Projection in the present study

Davies (1988, 1994) and Thompson (1996), although approaching projection in different ways, both propose an extension to Halliday’s categorisation of projecting clauses. As introduced in Section 3.2.3, Davies (1988, 1994, 1997) suggests that there are a number of different ‘Contextual Frames’ which will help the analyst understand the writer’s moves within a text. She outlines four main Contextual Frames: location, logical relations/progression, goal and process, and evaluation. She argues that by including the ‘Contextual Frame’ and Subject of the main clause within the boundaries of Theme, the analyst is able to identify continuity of the ‘central participant’ – the Subject – as well as understand how the writer is framing the text and signalling changes in the text. Davies (1997) is motivated by the pedagogic potential of understanding these Contextual Frames within different genres. Thus, by extending the boundaries of Theme to include everything up to and including the Subject of the main clause, she believes this allows Theme to be studied “as a means of differentiating amongst Interactive and Topical Units of *Texts* as constituents of *Genres* and as means of signalling the progression of a text.” (Davies, 1997:53, italics in orig.). Davies investigates the variety of Contextual Frames in 14 different textual units.

Projecting clauses are just a part of one of the Contextual Frames outlined by Davies. She does not fully discuss projection as a separate entity, preferring to see it more as part of a

wider category of interactive units within the boundary of Theme. Thompson also departs from Halliday in that Thompson believes that all of the projecting clause should be labelled Theme. For example, Thompson argues that *it is interesting* in the clause complex “*it is interesting that you should say that*”, should be considered Theme (Thompson, 1996:129). He believes that this structure “allows speakers to thematise their own comment on the value or validity of what they are about to say” (Thompson, 1996:128). As noted above, he introduces the term thematised comment to describe this form of projection.

### 6.3.1 Projection as a representation of the gist

Thompson (1994), in a paper given at the 21<sup>st</sup> ISFC in Ghent 1994, discussed theoretical considerations in the classification of projecting clauses. However, his argument in this paper was tentative. Later, Thompson (1996) argued that the meaning represented in projection is an area worthy of more detailed investigation, as projection is implicit in nature since it has a

double layer of representation: on the one hand, the language is signalled as, in some sense, not our own; but on the other hand it clearly differs from the original utterance (even if we quote verbatim) in that it is now incorporated into our present message rather than coming straight from the original source.

(Thompson, 1996:206)

Thus projecting and projected clauses involve some form of interpretation on behalf of the author, or as Thompson puts it, projecting and projected clauses have an “uncertain status” (Thompson, 1996:139). It can be argued that the ideas or locution realised in the text may not be completely true to the ideas or words originally expressed, i.e. that “the speaker is reporting the gist of what was said and the wording may be quite different from the original” (Halliday, 1994:254). Thus, projection is complex and not necessarily an accurate representation of what was originally expressed, as it allows the speaker or writer to represent their ideas, or in fact another’s locution or ideas, perhaps in a different light.

Projection in the present study is found in all three text types where the writer uses projection to express a personal viewpoint, to introduce or report the company’s direction, or to report action or discussions which have taken place. For example, in the following clause complex projection is used to summarise what was discussed previously: *The Director of Housing said that after the relocation, the HAHQ Special Facilities would be allocated a net*

*area of 7,000 square metres* (Report 7, clause complex 14). The Director of Housing may not have used these words, and the discussion could have been contentious. However, in Report 7, the Director of Housing's words have been removed from the point when they were expressed in a meeting or a discussion and represented in a less negotiable form in a written report.

### 6.3.2 Projecting a fact

Halliday, in his description of projecting clauses, states that projection may be “a verbal or mental process, or a nominal group with a verbal or a mental process noun (locution or idea) as its Head” (Halliday, 1994:264). He adds that there is another type of projection: “We refer to this type as FACT” (Halliday, 1994:264). In a factual projecting clause, the process need not be verbal or mental, “but it comes as it were ready packaged in projected form” as a fact (Halliday, 1994:264). This form of projection is more objective; there is no human participant doing the projecting and the Subject is commonly *it*, for example *it is believed*, *it is hoped*, etc. Halliday adds that *it* is not a “participant in the projecting process but is simply a Subject place-holder” (Halliday, 1994:266). As a place-holder the real Subject can be found in the continuing clause. Halliday states that there are four sub-classes of fact: cases, chances, proofs and needs (Halliday, 1994:266). ‘Cases’ refer to non-modalised propositions, e.g. *it is the case that*; ‘chances’ refer to modalised propositions, e.g. *it may be the case that*; and ‘proofs’ refer to “propositions with indications, which are equivalent to caused modalities, ‘this proves/implies (i.e. makes it certain/probable) that...’” (Halliday, 1994:267). The fourth type of factual projection, ‘needs’, is realised by instances of “nouns of modulation”, e.g. *requirement*, *need*, *expectation* (Halliday, 1994:268).

Thompson (1994), however, approaches projection of facts, or what he refers to as the “packaging of facts”, from a different angle. Evaluating Halliday's view of projection, he argues that there are two different things occurring simultaneously, involving both “the logico-semantic relationship and part of the outcome of that relationship” (1994:2). In Thompson's view, Halliday's description of the logico-semantic relationship between locution and mental projection is clear. However, Thompson (1994) argues that Halliday fails to fully account for factual projection. In factual projection, Thompson suggests:

we have to resort to a relation between the projected clause and some (probably unreal) 'original' message: a fact is a fact by virtue of its relation to a meaning which might have been an independent proposition.

(Thompson, 1994:2).

Thompson argues that there is a difference in that locutionary and mental projections are syntagmatic, whilst factual projection is semantically paradigmatic. This argument is supported by Martin (2001) who states that locutionary and mental projections are associated with "what you say in relation to what you said before and what you are going to say next" whereas factual projection is associated with "what you say in relation to what you could have said" (Martin, 2001:151). Thompson (1994) suggests that projected facts should be studied in relation to proposed facts and real-world things. He proposes a cline of 'proposition – fact – thing'. However, the boundaries of these categories, 'proposition – fact – thing', seem a little vague and the categories may need to be refined further before they can be applied to a corpus of data.

Davies (1988, 1994, 1997) and Thompson (1994, 1996) agree that projection of a fact is a way of packaging something said or thought by another in a form that may appear to be more objective and factual: "facts are a way of indicating to the reader that you have already begun to order and interpret the data to package the world" (Thompson, 1994:9). It could be suggested that in the findings presented below, factual projection gives the writer an option to present something as already packaged and decided when perhaps it is not yet fully formed and/or completed. For example, *It is anticipated that the growth in demand for video material from both students and academic staff will continue* (Report 3, clause complex 41). In this example, the projecting clause *it is anticipated* is basically representing an idea that has been assessed and analysed, and the projected clause is hypothesising that *the growth... will continue*.

### 6.3.3 What is the Subject within factual projection?

The findings suggest, in line with Davies (1988, 1997), Thompson (1994, 1996) and Harvey (1995), that when projecting a fact using the objective structure, e.g. *it is becoming apparent that*, the writer also includes their own viewpoint within the text. Thus, in the present analysis

there are a number of *it is* projecting clauses, which along with the Subject of the main clause constitute an extended Theme for the clause complex.

In opposition to this analysis, Halliday would argue that only *it* in such projecting clauses should be counted as Theme (1994:60). However, Davies (1988) and Thompson (1996) argue that within a clause complex the Theme should be extended to include not only *it*, but also the whole of the projecting clause. Thompson adds that when *it* is used in a projecting clause, although it has no meaning potential, it is not possible to conflate the projecting clause and the projected clause into one clause and still maintain the same intended meaning. For example, the initial clause in Example 6.4 is not a projecting clause and the clause complex can be rewritten as one clause with the meaning potential still maintained:

**Example 6.4**

It is students on distance learning programmes [[who are experiencing difficulties in getting hold of the learning materials needed for their courses]].

In the above example, *it* is a dummy Subject that can be conflated with *students on distance learning programmes*. The clause in Example 6.4 is a single clause with a predicated Theme. It can thus be rewritten, showing clearly that the *it* and the Subject *students* are the same and the meaning is not changed (Halliday, 1994:58):

**Example 6.5**

Students on distance learning programmes are experiencing difficulties in getting hold of the learning materials needed for their courses.

However, a clause complex with a projecting factual clause with *it* in the initial position behaves very differently, for example:

**Example 6.6**

It is becoming apparent that	some students on distance learning programmes	are experiencing difficulties in getting hold of the learning materials needed for their courses.
marked Theme	Subject/Theme	Rheme
$\alpha$	$\beta$	

Report 3, clause complex 5

This clause complex could be written with a different Theme choice, for example:

**Example 6.7**

That students on distance learning programmes are experiencing difficulties in getting hold of the learning materials needed for their courses is becoming apparent.

However, the clause complex is made up of more than one clause and has a different marked Theme, with a hypotactic enhancing clause in initial position. It would be difficult to rewrite this clause complex as a single clause and still maintain the same meaning. The thematic meaning of the clauses in Examples 6.6 and 6.7 highlight the impact of different choices of Theme. In Example 6.6, it could be suggested that the *it* clause is introducing the speaker's attitude in a way that is not present in Example 6.7. As Thompson points out:

this [the *it* in a projecting clause] still involves a grammatical operation (the use of 'it' as a place-holder) which serves to set up as the starting-point of the message the speaker's own comment. One's own attitude is a natural starting-point, and thematised comment is extremely common in many kinds of discourse.

(Thompson, 1996:129)

Thompson claims that examples such as *it is true* and *it may be* should all be included in the Theme of a clause complex and he labels this structure thematised comment. Thematised comment, he states, allows speakers to include a personal comment or viewpoint in the initial position.

Davies (1988) states that while the potential of "empty subject offers a powerful tool... it also relieves the writer of any responsibility for the viewpoint" (Davies, 1988:197). The use of *it* in projecting clauses reduces the writer's visibility and allows the writer to put forward a viewpoint in what would appear to be a more objective manner. Davies (1988) argues that this is a common device used in academic discourse. As a tool within workplace English texts, the procedure allows the writer to express information in what appears to be company terms and practices, where the modal responsibility is depersonalised and objectified. Davies's (1988, 1994, 1997) three studies follow a particular position as exemplified by Davies (1997) where she argues that marked choices of Theme "appear to 'frame' the message by specifying discourse goals or projecting evaluation" (Davies, 1997:56).

Thompson (1996) adds that at a discourse level "thematised comment occurs at key transition points in the text and it obscures the method of development of the text if one simply labels 'it' as Theme." (Thompson, 1996:130). Davies would agree with Thompson and,

from a limited set of data, argues strongly that thematised comment is crucial to understanding the writer's viewpoint in a text. She states that "these framing elements are typically non-recurrent and as such signal changes/shifts or stages in the progression of the discourse" (Davies, 1997:55). Harvey (1995), referring to scientific reports, believes that such use of the "impersonal structure followed by a non-factive verb" – her example is *It is generally agreed that* – is a "strategic decision" that represents the merging voices of the research team involved in writing a report and the discipline (1995:197). She adds that another use of the same structure is to invite the reader to "participate in the argumentative process" (1995:197); her examples here are *it is important to bear in mind that* and *it is instructive to view that*. Here she argues that the reader *you* is implicit in the structure.

Thus, the present study argues that when using thematised comment (to adopt Thompson's term but following the argument put forward by both Davies and Thompson), the writer has chosen to use this device, and not any other, for a reason; and that reason is to express the writer's viewpoint. Davies (1988, 1997), Thompson (1994, 1996) and Iedema (1995) all stress that these links between projection and the interpersonal, and between projection and Theme choice would benefit greatly from further investigation. The aim of this chapter is to investigate projection with reference to a corpus of workplace texts. The findings presented in Section 6.4 suggest that projection could be categorised in a more sophisticated manner and three categories of projection are posited.

#### 6.3.4 Projecting clauses as Theme

As contended in Section 3.2.3, Theme at a clause complex level goes up to and includes the Subject of the main clause. Thus, the present study follows an inductive approach where the findings emerge from the data and certain patterns appear by 'trusting the text' (Sinclair, 1992; Creswell, 1994; Thompson, 2000). One of the most noticeable patterns was the use of projecting clauses as the Theme of a clause complex. The patterns and function of such projecting clauses in Theme position will be discussed in the following section.

## 6.4 Findings

The categories emerging from the data, based on the theoretical considerations presented above, will be outlined in this section.

#### 6.4.1 Projecting clauses: patterns of usage

One characteristic of the texts in the present study is that of the corpus of 62 texts, 42 texts (67.7%) have one or more projecting clauses in thematic position. In total, there are 203 (13.7%) projecting clauses in thematic position in the corpus. Although this appears to be a rather small percentage, the finding suggests that projection is a key feature involved in construing interpersonal meaning and influencing the manner in which the message is interpreted by the reader. The possible choices selected by writers in the present study have been categorised into three broad categories as outlined below.

#### 6.4.2 Description of analytical system

The three distinct categories of projection identified and outlined in Section 4.4.6 are based on previous work in the area by Halliday (1994) and Thompson (1994, 1996). It is suggested in the present analysis that the three categories of projection should be considered part of a cline: thematised subjective viewpoint – thematised comment – thematised obligation / inclination.

All projecting clauses were extracted from the analysis in Appendix II and can be found in Appendix VI. The outcomes of the analysis in Appendix VI are subdivided into thematised subjective viewpoint, thematised comment and thematised obligation/inclination, and whether the projecting clause is projecting an idea or a locution, as defined below. The results from the analysis of each category are outlined below.

#### 6.4.3 Brief overview of findings

Projection appears to be an important lexico-grammatical feature in all three text types. One or more projecting clauses in thematic position are found in 60.6% of memos, 57.1% of letters and 90% of reports. The average number of projecting clauses in thematic position occurring within each text type is: memos 1.63, letters 1.9 and reports 11.2. The highest number of projecting clauses in any one text is 18 (in Report 7). This text has 44 clauses/clause complexes, of which 41.9% are projecting clauses in thematic position within the clause complexes. The number of projecting clauses found in each text varies tremendously, and the number of projecting clauses does not appear to be related to the size of the text, i.e. if a text has a large number of clause complexes, this does not necessarily mean the number of projecting clauses will be high. After analysing the data, there appears to be no particular



pattern whereby one could predict where the projecting clauses would appear within each text type.

Although projection is seen to be a part of most texts, the low frequency suggests that they are used sparingly and specifically to construe a viewpoint in the text. However, it is argued that the influence of writer viewpoint, realised by the projecting clause, will to some extent affect the reader’s impression and the manner in which the meaning is interpreted. Naturally, there are many choices for the writer to construe interpersonal meaning and projection is only one such possible choice.

**Table 6.1 Type and number of projecting clauses by text-type**

	Memo (n=49)	Letter (n=42)	Report (n=112)	Total (n=203)
Thematised subjective viewpoint	35 (71.4%)	32 (76.2%)	77 (68.7%)	144 (70.9%)
Thematised comment	11 (22.4%)	9 (21.4%)	35 (31.3%)	55 (27.1%)
Thematised obligation/inclination	3 (6.1%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (2.0%)
Total	49 (24.1%)	42 (20.7%)	112 (55.2%)	203 (100%)

In total there are 489 extended Themes in the corpus, 203 occurrences (41.5%) of which are projecting clause complexes. The type and frequency of the other extended Themes found in the corpus are shown in Table 5.8. The type and frequency of projecting clauses appears to vary in different text types. As shown in Table 6.1, thematised subjective viewpoint is the most frequent realisation of projection in all three text types (70.9%). Letters have the most frequent realisation of thematised subjective viewpoint (76.2%), followed closely by memos and reports (71.4% and 68.7% respectively). In the three text types, thematised comment appears to be realised to the same limited extent in memos and letters, 22.4% and 21.4% respectively. Thematised comment is more frequently realised in reports (31.3%). In all text types, thematised obligation/inclination is the least frequent, occurring just 6.1% and 2.4% of the time in memos and letters, respectively, and there are no realisations of this structure in reports.

#### 6.4.4 Findings: thematised subjective viewpoint

The first and the most prevalent form of projection, thematised subjective viewpoint, can be seen to be an explicit realisation of the writer's viewpoint. This category conforms to the description outlined above where Halliday suggests that projection is the realisation of stating explicitly or implicitly a subjective probability (1994:355). In addition, within thematised subjective viewpoint there is a more delicate division.

Thematised subjective viewpoint is subdivided into three finer groups of projection: thematised subjective viewpoint (i), (ii) and (iii). These categories make a distinction on the basis of the realisation of the Subject of the projecting clause, which is realised either by a pronoun or a noun. Thematised subjective viewpoint (i) represents the subjective explicit end of the cline, where the Subject of the projecting clause is realised by the first person pronoun *I*, as shown in Examples 6.8 and 6.9:

##### **Example 6.8**

I do not agree with Mr Woo's statement [that] the Company has failed to meet its obligation as indicated in his appointment letter dated August 9, 1995.

Letter 21, clause complex 5

##### **Example 6.9**

I note [that] presently our China Rep Office have to pay a training service fee to Shenzhen Training Centre.

Memo 23, clause complex 1

Thematised subjective viewpoint (ii) has a projecting clause whose Subject is realised by the personal pronoun *you* or *we*, as illustrated in Examples 6.9 and 6.10.

##### **Example 6.10**

On a general note we understand that the main purpose of the regulations is to establish a safety management network at all stages of a project, not just the construction phase.

Letter 2, clause complex 3

##### **Example 6.11**

We believe many investors will follow the above strategy.

Report 6, clause complex 84

Thematised subjective viewpoint (iii) has a projecting clause whose Subject is realised by a common noun rather than a pronoun, as shown in Examples 6.12 and 6.13:

**Example 6.12**

The Design Team have recommended that a re-tender exercise be undertaken following substantial redesign of the project.

Report 2, clause complex 10

**Example 6.13**

The Secretary for Works has said that with the passage of time, the weightings will change gradually.

Report 10, clause complex 34

Thematised subjective viewpoint implies that there is some form of subjectivity construed in the message of the projecting clause and that the choice of Subject in the projecting clause is a distinguishing feature.

6.4.5 Findings: thematised comment

This is perhaps the most contentious category. Halliday, although stating that projection can be a projection of 'fact', would not include a projecting clause of fact as Theme. However, following Davies (1988, 1994, 1997) and Thompson (1994, 1996), thematised comment, along with the grammatical Subject, has been analysed as the extended Theme of the clause complex.

The thematised comment category, although not as frequently used as thematised subjective viewpoint, did appear frequently in the data. In total there were 55 instances of thematised comment, and they occurred in all three text types. Here the writer often used a place-holder *it* to introduce the projecting Theme. Occasionally, an objective generalisation is made using phrases such as *Experience has shown* (Report 7, clause complex 22) etc. Here *it* has been replaced by an objective phrase which makes some sort of generalisation, and the writer is stating their viewpoint through a grammatical construction which semantically signifies objectivity. The writer has chosen *it is believed* rather than *I believe* to express viewpoint, a conscious choice which would tend to infer a more objective viewpoint for the intended reader. The possible reasons or implications for these linguistic choices are discussed in the following section.

## 6.4.6 Factual projection within the data

Although thematised comment does not occur as frequently as thematised subjective viewpoint, there are some occurrences of this construct in each of the three text types. There are respectively 11, 9, and 24 examples of thematised comment in memos, letter and reports. (Appendix VI lists the examples of thematised comment found in the data.) However, the semantic properties of these constructions are an important issue. Thematised comment allows authors to interject their viewpoint in a manner which superficially appears to be objective. Thus, thematised comment “serves to set up as a starting-point of the message the speaker’s own comment” (Thompson, 1996:129). The author could have chosen to use other devices to represent the same information, but in these instances the author chooses to start the message with an *it* projecting clause, such as *it is important*, which reveals a degree of objective modality. The question is, why is such a device selected and what is the meaning potential of this linguistic choice? Some examples of thematised comment from the corpus are given below:

**Example 6.14**

It is important [that] AFL ensures that all costs of such assistance be accounted for honestly.

Memo 19, clause complex 4

**Example 6.15**

It would appear to be the Landlord’s mistake [that] they had not provided the correct plan to the other tenant.

Letter 20, clause complex 9

**Example 6.16**

It is unlikely that this process could be completed within the remaining life of the Council.

Report 4, clause complex 63

According to Halliday (1994), these examples are all explicitly objective, but clearly also demonstrate the writer’s viewpoint. In Example 6.16 the writer chooses an objectified form, i.e. *it is unlikely that*, as well as the attribute *unlikely*, to encode a particular viewpoint in relation to a negative assessment that the process will be completed.

In addition, within thematised comment which implicitly encodes the writer’s attitude, it seems natural that in such realisations there would be a number of other means adopted to

construe writer viewpoint; for example, it is possible to find Modal Adjuncts within a thematised comment. As pointed out in Sections 3.4.1 and 5.2, Modal Adjuncts are explicit interpersonal markers (Halliday, 1994:49). Some examples of Modal Adjuncts found in thematised comment in this data set are: *in my opinion*, *only*, *with this in mind*, *of course*, *almost certain* and *at first sight*. Such Modal Adjuncts are used to further emphasise the writer's viewpoint. In Section 5.2 the lack of Modal Adjuncts in the Theme of the main clause is highlighted. Although Modal Adjuncts may be infrequent in the main clause, they appear to be more frequently realised in the projecting clause. Perhaps it is at this point that the writer has chosen a projecting clause to express a viewpoint that is believed to be tenable, and the writer is able to add other evaluative language to support the particular viewpoint taken.

In Examples 6.17 and 6.18, there are two examples of Modal Adjuncts found within the projecting clauses. These are *only* and *please* in Examples 6.17 and 6.18, respectively.

**Example 6.17**

It was only subsequent to that, when [sic] the Landlord had negotiated with the other tenant a certain rent because of the (mistaken) belief that the pedestrian flow would be higher because of the position of the escalator.

Letter 20, clause complex 8

**Example 6.18**

With regard to the karaoke entertainment [[ held in Citic Plaza Hotel on 27 Aug. 93]] please be advised that our share of the cost for the karaoke entertainment was KK100.50.

Memo 20, clause complex 5

Letter 20 is discussed in detail in Section 6.5.5 below.

6.4.7 Findings: Thematised obligation/inclination

As pointed out above, Halliday distinguishes between modalisation, which is associated with probability and usuality, and modulation, which is associated with a more imperative type of modality. Thematised obligation/inclination applies Halliday's notion of modulation, where some form of obligation or inclination is embedded within the projecting clause (Halliday, 1994:354).

Within the corpus there are very few examples of projecting clauses of obligation/inclination. In coding these items, Halliday's view of modulation has been followed (Halliday, 1994:357).

In the corpus of nearly 32,000 words, there are only four examples of modularity in projecting clauses. All four examples are given below:

**Example 6.19**

We must therefore take the view that the activation was caused by a genuine smoke incident.

Memo 11c, clause complex 20

**Example 6.20**

It has been decided therefore that all staff who are called upon to assist in these non-scheme activities maintain time sheets showing clearly the time devoted to non-scheme activities.

Memo 19, clause complex 6

**Example 6.21**

The Government has decided that there should be no tax liability for the year.

Memo 27, clause complex 39

**Example 6.22**

Please note that under the Companies Ordinance, a company's balance sheet must be approved by two directors before it may be issued, circulated or published.

Letter 17, clause complex 2

The obligation or inclination expressed in these examples represent, in one way or another, the reporting of a decision. They either state that something has been *decided* or, in the case of the last example, i.e. *note*, remind the recipient to take account of action which is company policy. In most instances the obligation is stated from a subjective viewpoint. It must be added, however, that the obligation is subjective; it is not stated from an individual, but rather from an organisational perspective. This suggests that if a writer in the workplace context is stating an obligation or inclination, linguistic choices other than thematised obligation/inclination are selected.

Even in the full CPW and EWM corpora, few examples of modulation were found. Those that were discovered were usually clauses used to express regulations or official policy. For example, in a memo related to a company's policy on advertising, modularity was used to express the restrictions imposed by a bank: *It is not allowed to imply or indicate the "ability" of the corporation and it is not allowed to construe an "offer" to acquire or dispose of securities*. These examples are more consistent with legal English and it could be that they are more common in legal text types than in general workplace texts (see Bowles, 1995; Feak et

al., 2001). They could also perhaps be found in texts which serve the purpose of stating company regulations or policies.

## 6.5 Discussion

The discussion section is divided into two main parts. The first part, Sections 6.5.1 to 6.5.4, discusses the findings in relation to results found in each of the three types of projection. The discussion draws upon example texts to illustrate the points under consideration. The second part, Section 6.5.5, draws together discussion points and generalises some of the relevant issues identified.

### 6.5.1 Identity, status and power within projecting clauses

With respect to projecting clauses in thematic position, there is a difference between saying *I believe* and *we believe* and *Company X / Person X believes*. Iedema (1995) points out that this movement, where the proposer moves from the subjective *I* to *Company X*, is a way of shifting the modal responsibility for the proposal (1995:137, 1998, 2000).

If the projecting clause is coming from a specific individual then it may perhaps be less powerful than if the weight of the whole company were behind the proposition being put forward. Thus, when a person or a group of people are writing within the workplace, the writer establishes their identity, status and power within the text (Fairclough, 1992; Ivanič, 1998). As noted previously, Fairclough (1992), Iedema (1995, 1997, 2000), Ivanič (1998) and others support the view that discourse is socially constitutive and that status and relations are reflected in the language chosen.

With reference to memos and letters where the writer and reader generally know one another, the written word can be very influential in determining the social identity of the writer and the relations between the reader and writer. The reader will react to the identity constructed by the writer. Sometimes in the case of memos or letters, just knowing the identity of the writer can cause a certain reaction in the reader. For example, it could be suggested that if a memo were headed with the name of two very different writers the identity of the writer may change the way the recipient reacts to the discourse encoded in the written message in the memo. Or, as one informant interviewed on the CPW project stated, she would change her writing style to suit the person to whom she was writing (Nunan et al., 1996). She stated that when she wrote

to her American superior, her style would be markedly different from that used when writing to her English superior. Thus consideration of the role, position, ethnic background and ‘identity’ of a writer and the intended reader greatly affect the language chosen, and writers frequently change register to accommodate different readers.

#### 6.5.2 Projection and the use of explicit - subjective *I* in workplace texts

This argument can be more clearly demonstrated with regard to memos and letters, since the author and intended reader of these texts are usually known and regularly named. In contrast, reports are frequently written collaboratively and are often anonymous. The intended audience of a report generally tends to be far wider than that of an internal office memo or letter. An annual report may be sent to all shareholders, who are often ‘faceless’ and unknown. The writer of a report, or indeed the company which issues a report, views the ‘image’ or ‘identity’ embodied in the report as being a very important aspect (Davies et al., 1999).

The writer’s decision to use *I* or *we* or *Company X* is often a conscious one. As noted above, the choice of the way in which the individual or group wishes to construct their identity within the text will affect the subsequent relations developed through the discourse of the text. The choice and power invested in the selection of *I* or *we* or *Company X* may vary depending on the individual status of certain members of a company. “Writing not only conveys a message about content but also conveys a message about the writer.” (Clark & Ivanič, 1997:143). For example, with reference to projecting clauses, if the projecting clause is written by a senior executive who holds an extremely powerful position within the company, then the power of using *I* in a proposal is far greater than if it were someone less senior. In addition, it is clear that if the writer is using *I* to project an idea or locution, then the writer is taking on the modal responsibility for their proposal (Iedema, 1995, 1997), as shown in the example from Memo 3 below.



**Text 6.1**

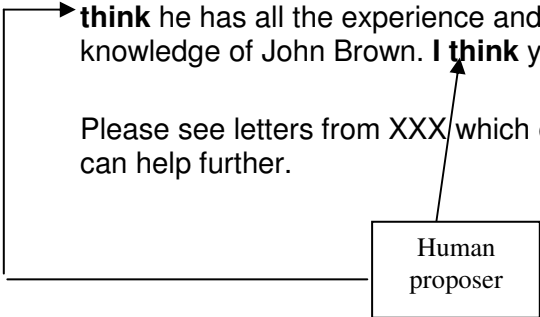
Memo 3

I am uncertain whether or not you know J E Jones. We would have considered him for the FRD (UK) marketing role but he was unavailable because of a new attractive assignment with SSB in Switzerland. This has now miscarried, so he is available.

Very seriously, I recommend him to you for the Sector Marketing Director role. **I think** he has all the experience and qualities you need for this except, of course, knowledge of John Brown. **I think** you will like him if you meet him.

Please see letters from XXX which explain the background and let me know if I can help further.

Human  
proposer



Here, the proposer feels confident and is able to put forward a personal viewpoint when recommending Jones for a position. The writer uses the two projecting clauses highlighted above to support the idea that the candidate is suitable. However, if the writer here were to use *we* (at company X) *think he has all the experience*, then the writer would be demonstrating support within the company and the projected information could possibly be more influential. The use of *we* in workplace and technical writing is used to “endorse corporate goals” (Couture, 1992:19). However, the context and situation are not available. Therefore, it could also be suggested that in this example, the writer’s choice to use *we* could in fact be indicating a distancing from the opinion being expressed, and therefore the recommendation would be less influential. It could be argued that whichever identity the writer chooses to project, whether *I*, *we* or *Company X*, the writer presents an important selection in ‘role identification’ or, as van Leeuwen (1996:54) puts it, “belonging to a company or organisation begins to play an important role in identification”.

However, the discussion of the writer’s identity in these data is difficult to substantiate since any discussion is typically conducted from the position of the text analyst and not from those directly involved in constructing the texts. The interview data collected in both the EWM and CPW research projects revealed that in interviews very little discussion focused on specific lexico-grammatical structures. However, it is clear from the perspective of a text analysis and

from data collected in focused interview groups (Chapter Eight) that linguistic choices do affect interpersonal relationships greatly. A writer's choice to use *you should* or *please ensure* creates a noticeable difference in the reaction of the reader (a more detailed discussion is presented in Chapter Eight), although it should be remembered that a text analyst may in fact interpret texts rather differently from authentic users of the text (Bhatia, 1993a; Berry, 1996).

### 6.5.3 Explicit - subjective projection in reports

It should also be noted that even though reports are often viewed as more formal text types, they do, to some extent, include projecting clauses where there is a human proposer. There were 17 occurrences where *I* was found within the projecting clauses of reports in the present data. In her research, Harvey (1995) points out that personal use of *I* seldom occurs in scientific reports. Based on the literature in this area, *I* should be found infrequently in reports. Some examples of *I* found in projecting clauses in reports are repeated in Examples 6.23 and 6.24:

#### **Example 6.23**

I have recommended to the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands that in future a re-submission to the ExCo should be made before the award of a contract if the cost has increased significantly,

Report 8, clause complex 95

#### **Example 6.24**

I have expressed my concern to the Director of Social Welfare that the present provision of 6.8 C&A places per 1,000 elderly persons fails even to achieve the previous planning ratio of 8 per 1,000 elderly persons adopted six years ago.

Report 9, clause complex 51

The use of *I* here, it is suggested, is chosen to explicitly realise the writer's involvement and viewpoint in relation to estimation and an expression of concern.

In the corpus reports, more than four times as many verbal projections (63) were identified compared to mental projections (14). One reason for this may be that the purpose of a report is multi-functional. A report is a macro genre which combines different genres; a report can include provision, recount, exposition, argumentation in favour of a point, or a combination of these (Iedema, 1995:239). Harvey (1995) supports this argument in her case study of scientific reports, where she found that the macro-acts of a report include introducing, informing,

describing, stating, appraising, asserting, reasserting, challenging, contending, assuming, estimating, warning, exhorting, suggesting, and recommending (Harvey, 1995:196-7). Thus, since the purpose of a report is multi-functional, there is a possibility that there would be a wide range of projecting clauses.

However, this does not explain why there are 63 locutionary projecting clauses compared to 14 mental projections in the reports analysed. Perhaps one answer is that a report is summarising activities and events which have occurred, and in doing so is required to state what others have said in relation to those activities and events. Another possible answer is the fact that two of the reports are involved in discussing the actions and activities of a particular individual, e.g. *the Director of Housing* (Report 7) and a range of individuals, e.g. *Secretary for the Treasury, the Director of Works, the Director of Environmental Protection and the Secretary for Planning*, who are all named in the projecting clauses in Report 8. These two reports are not completely representative of reports in general, although it would appear that the writer chooses to project what was said and suggested by the people involved. As pointed out by Halliday (1994) and Thompson (1996), by reporting the ‘gist’ the writer has the opportunity to add their own interpretation.

#### 6.5.4 Locutionary projection in reports

A report generally draws upon background details from events and previous actions. As pointed out by Iedema (2000:47), meetings lead to minutes of meetings, which provide information for more communication, and the notes are incorporated into reports which in turn lead to other linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. Therefore, it is not surprising that sometimes quotes or paraphrasing of previous events, communication or actions are incorporated into a report. An understanding of the intertextuality of a text and the function of locutionary projections to construe meanings of past discourse can assist in explaining why locutionary projection is the most frequent type of projection realised in reports.

The findings, though, may be a bit misleading. When looking at the texts individually and the projecting clauses within each text, it can be seen that a majority of the verbal projections are found in only two or three of the reports. The main purpose of these reports appears to be to describe the present situation of a particular matter, and verbal processes realise what someone else has said. For example, in Text 6.2, a report from the CPW corpus collected from

an accountant at the Housing Authority of Hong Kong, a number of locutionary projections occur where the Director of Housing is reported to have made a number of points.

The extract from the report demonstrates a dependency by the writer on locutionary projection to express their viewpoint. The writer exploits locutionary projection in thematic position in order to establish a particular stance on the topic discussed and to summarise/present previous decisions and statements. The projecting clauses are shown in bold.

**Text 6.2, Report 7**

Report of the Director of Audit on the results of value for money audits

**Housing Department 9 Provision and utilization of space in the Housing Authority Headquarters (HAHQ) Building [EXTRACT ONLY]**

- 9.5        **The Director of Housing proposed that some HAHQ Special Facilities (2,346 square metres net)** should be relocated to a commercial complex at the Homantin South Development. **He also proposed** that- the Applications Section and Commercial Properties Division (3,645 square metres net) should be relocated to the Wang Tau Hom Estate Phase, 12 Development. Both the new developments were scheduled to be completed in 1999. **The Director of Housing said** that after the relocation, the HAHQ-Special Facilities would be allocated a net area of 7,000 square metres. With regard to the Applications Section and Commercial Properties Division, after the relocation, all units related to applicant' and commercial properties (some of which are now situated outside the HAHQ Building) would be combined so as to provide a "one-stop" service to the public. These proposals were approved by the Establishment and Finance Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority.
- 9.6        **An audit examination of the Director of Housing's May 1993 submissions to the Establishment and Finance Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority revealed** that no reference was made to the designed capacity for accommodation, 3,927 staff in the HAHQ Building. As a result, no explanation was given as to why, despite the fact that there were only 2,770 staff working in the HAHQ Building in 1993, additional space was required. **I have expressed my concern to the Director of Housing** that this information was not included in the submissions to the Establishment and Finance Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority.
- 9.7        In response to my observations, **the Director of Housing has said** that while he accepts that the HAHQ Building was planned on the basis of a projected HQ staff of 3,927 staff in 1994-95, this was only a preliminary design concept in 1985 when detailed space requirements had yet to be firmed up. For example, space

requirements for the HAHQ Special Facilities were still under consideration within the Department. **Experience has shown** that more space was needed for these special facilities than had been anticipated in 1985. As a result, less space could be set aside for office use.

- 9.8 **The Director of Housing has also clarified** that the office space to [sic] staff working in the HAHQ Building, a net floor area of 3,466 square metres would have been saved. **I have therefore recommended to the Director of Housing** that he should adopt government standards in allocating office space to his staff.
- 9.11 In response to my observations, **the Director of Housing has explained** that the allocation of office space in the new HAHQ Building, when it was occupied in 1990 was generally on a par with the approved government standards then prevailing, whereas the standards referred to by me were new standards revised by the Government which were not promulgated for implementation until March 1992. By that time, the Housing Department has already moved into the new HAHQ Building. **The Director further pointed out** that when the revised standards were promulgated there was no requirement for all government departments to revise their existing office layouts to conform to the new standards.
- 9.12 Notwithstanding the above, **the Director of Housing accepts** the need to explore ways and means to achieve greater economy and **[he] states** that this is an on-going exercise within the HAHQ Building. Some revision of the office layout has already been carried out by and within the Administration and Policy Branch recently and as a result, 20% additional staff have been accommodated in the space allocated without requiring additional space outside the building. Similar reviews will be carried out in the Construction Branch and the Housing Management Branch to see whether there is additional room for economy in the use of office space in those areas.

Within this very short extract from a larger text there are a number of projecting clauses. Nearly all of the processes in the projecting clauses are locutionary, and include *inform*, *propose*, *say*, *express*, *clarify*, *recommend*, *explain* and *accept*. There are two instances of *reveal* and *show*, which are not typically projecting processes. However, in this instance *reveal* is referring to a report 'revealing' information which is similar to locutionary projection; the words in the report are *informing* and *telling* the reader. In addition, in the wording *experience has shown that* where what could be analysed as a relational process *show* is closely associated with *experience*, i.e. *knowledge teaches us that*, and as such, the process

*show* is projecting, in a metaphorical sense, what we know from our *experience*. Here, the writer either reports what the Director of Housing said, realised through verbal processes, or believes through his own disagreement with, or displeasure about, what has happened by adding his personal opinion, e.g. *I have expressed my concern to the Director of Housing that this information was not included in the submissions to the Establishment and Finance Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority*. In two cases the writer uses a Circumstantial Adjunct of Contingency, *in response to my observations*, prior to a projecting clause as a 'Contextual Frame', as background to the Director's response and to emphasise his involvement. Circumstantial Adjuncts act as framing elements as part of an extended Theme, as discussed in Section 5.4.1. By using thematised subjective viewpoint projection, the writer is choosing to construe his personal interpretation of the situation in initial position before reporting the 'gist' of what was said by the Director of Housing. In this text it is quite obvious that the writer is unhappy with the present situation and has decided, whether correctly or incorrectly, to place a great deal of the responsibility for what has happened on the Director of Housing. He continually construes the Director of Housing's suggestions and words in order to create a negative impression, i.e. that what the Director of Housing has suggested happened does not match what happened in reality. There are a variety of other possible linguistic choices that the writer could have selected to make meaning, but it seems the writer wanted to place the modal responsibility, in part if not totally, on the Director of Housing. The writer positions himself on the basis of how participants address themselves and others and the way in which their ideas are represented (see Iedema, 1995:14).

The words being reported may not be exactly what was said by the Director of Housing. The fact that someone else is reporting his words, in a less-negotiable written form compared to a less formal written or spoken discourse where these points were presented prior to the written report, allows a different interpretation to be instantiated (Thompson, 1996). The writer here manipulates his authority, as author, by being able to add his own personal opinion. The writer also uses certain linguistic features such as Circumstantial Adjuncts to establish and embellish a context related to the way in which he, the writer, perceives what is happening.

6.5.5 Discussion of findings in thematised comment: an example text

The discussion below illustrates how projecting clauses in Text 6.2 add to the meaning of the message. The text is a letter to Furnish Ltd., a furniture retail store, from their legal advisors. The issue discussed in the letter is whether Furnish Ltd. is liable to their landlord and other tenants for indemnity incurred during the construction of a set of escalators. The discussion of the linguistic choices found in this letter will be limited to the function and purpose of the projecting clauses in thematic position. The projecting clause and Subject which together act as the Theme for the independent clauses are shown in Table 6.2. The projecting clauses are shown in bold in Text 6.3.

**Text 6.3, Letter 20**

Dear Elaine,  
2/F & 3/F, Sun Building

Further to my letter of 30th November 1995 and as spoken, I wish to advise as follows:

Under a contract of indemnity, the holder of the indemnity (i.e. the Landlord) is generally entitled to recover the amount payable by him by virtue of any judgement recovered against or compromise reasonably made by him in any legal proceedings in respect of any matters comprised by the indemnity, including costs (Halbury's Laws of England 4th Edition).

Therefore, generally, the Landlord is entitled to claim under the indemnity as soon as his liability to the other tenant has arisen and it may be before he has actually made payment.

However, the Landlord has to act reasonably and if he does, and the other tenant's claim is legitimate and can be related to the matters covered by the indemnity, Furnish Ltd. would be obliged to pay.

The question is of course whether the other tenant's claim is "in respect of any matters comprised by the indemnity".

Based on our conversation, **you informed me** that the other tenant had not yet signed the lease with the Landlord when the Landlord had allowed Furnish Ltd. to do contract work as stated in paragraphs (a) to (d) of the Indemnity.

**It was only subsequent to** that, when the Landlord had negotiated with the other tenant a certain rent because of the (mistaken) belief that the pedestrian flow would be higher because of the position of the escalator. **It would appear to be the Landlord's mistake** that they had not provided the correct plan to the other tenant.

Based on the information you have given me, Furnish Ltd. would have a good case to argue, firstly, that in terms of timing, the approval was given before any agreement was reached with the other tenant.

In any event, even if the lease had been concluded before the Landlord gave Furnish Ltd. their consent, the indemnity should not extend to the knock-on effect of such relocation of an escalator because with a reduction in rents in one area, will be an increase in rents to another wherever the escalator has been moved to, so the Landlord suffers no loss. If the relocation is for the benefit of Furnish Ltd., then

presumably the benefit has been factored in to the rent that FURNISH pay. **Also, the indemnity given by Furnish Ltd. in clause 3, by its wording, implies** that Furnish Ltd. will indemnify the Landlord and/or the management company against all losses “that may arise directly or indirectly as a result of our carrying-out such A&A works”.

In my opinion, it is during the Period when the works are being carried out when MEA has the obligation to indemnify if losses, claims etc. are made. Once the works are completed, there is no further obligation.

Furnish Ltd. cannot be expected to indemnify the Landlord for any impact the relocation of the escalators will have on the rentals. That is a separate issue not covered by this indemnity. The Landlord had given their consent to relocate the escalators.

Please clarify whether the building of the column by Furnish Ltd. has any impact on the tenant at shops 123C? This may be a separate factor especially if the column was without approval.

**Also, at the time the indemnity was being negotiated, was there any discussion** that Furnish Ltd. would have to bear losses in rents due to the relocation of the escalator.

**As spoken the Landlord cannot expect Furnish Ltd.** to satisfy any claims made against them by simply taking the Landlord’s word that they have suffered certain losses. To an extent, they are put to strict proof but that does not mean that the other tenant must necessarily commence legal proceedings against the Landlord before the Landlord can claim from Furnish Ltd. But the other tenant’s claim has to be related to the indemnity give and the Landlord can only compromise reasonably.

As stated in my earlier letter, there may be a variety of reasons why the rent has been revised and one factor may be due to Furnish Ltd. works and Furnish Ltd. may be liable for loss of rent for the period when the works were being carried out because of disruptions etc. However, **I was given the impression** that the centre has not even officially opened yet so the other tenant’s sales might not in any event have been affected by Furnish Ltd. works.

My advice is not to admit any loss suffered by the Landlord and require the Landlord to show (from the other tenant or otherwise) that they have indeed incurred such losses.

Their claim is very substantial in the circumstances, and potentially amounts to several millions of dollars! **I believe** Furnish Ltd. have a good arguable defence and if the matter cannot be resolved amicably, the matter may have to proceed to litigation albeit Furnish Ltd. may have to incur increased legal costs (for Furnish Ltd., the Landlord and possibly the other tenant) if the Landlord is able to prove their losses.

Please keep me informed of the progress of your discussion with the Landlord.

The letter commences by setting the background and the intertextuality within which the contents of the letter are communicated, i.e. *Further to my letter* and *As spoken*, and also states the purpose of the letter which is to advise (an analysis of such Circumstantial Adjuncts is given in Section 5.4.1). In the first five clauses/clause complexes, the writer presents background information about the present situation, the contract and the parties involved. In clause



complex 6, *the question is whether the other tenant's claim is "in respect of any matters comprised by the indemnity"*, the real issue of whether the other tenant has a claim is realised. It is only after this point, when the context is set, that the writer uses projection to report previous discussions, and offers a viewpoint on the matter.

In order to discuss the aspect of marked Theme further, a simplified version of the analysis of Theme in Appendix II is presented. The presentation of data in these tables follows the model provided in Martin and Rose (forthcoming) where Marked Theme includes the marked Theme and any textual or interpersonal Theme which precedes it. The marked Theme goes up to and includes the projecting Theme and the lexical item *that*, if present. This subsequently means that the Subject/Theme may include other aspects of Theme such as a textual or interpersonal Theme which is not categorised as part of the marked Theme. For example, in clause complex 7 in Table 6.2, there are two marked Themes *based on our conversation*, and *you informed me that*, and both are included in the column marked Theme. In clause complex 8 the Subject Theme includes a textual Theme *when*.

**Table 6.2 Projecting Theme in Letter 20** (projection in bold)

Clause no.	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme	Rheme
7.	Based on our conversation, <b>you informed me that</b>	the other tenant	had not yet signed the lease with the Landlord when the Landlord had allowed Furnish Ltd. to do certain work as stated in paragraphs (a) to (d) of the Indemnity.
8.	<b>It was only subsequent to that,</b>	when [sic] the Landlord	had negotiated with the other tenant a certain rent because of the (mistaken) belief that the pedestrian flow would be higher because of the position of the escalator [sic].
9.	<b>It would appear to be the Landlord's mistake that</b>	they	had not provided the correct plan to the other tenant.
13.	Also, <b>the indemnity given by Furnish Ltd. in clause 3, by its wording, implies that</b>	Furnish Ltd.	will indemnify the Landlord and/or the management company against all losses "that may arise directly or indirectly as a result of our carrying-out such A&A works.
21.	Also, <b>at the time the indemnity was being negotiated, was there any</b>	Furnish Ltd.	would have to bear losses in rents due to the relocation of the escalator.

Clause no.	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme	Rheme
	<b>discussion</b> that		
22.	As spoken <b>the Landlord cannot expect</b>	Furnish Ltd.	to satisfy any claims made against them by simply taking the Landlord's word that they have suffered certain losses.
24.	but <b>that does not mean</b> that	the other tenant	must necessarily commence legal proceedings against the Landlord before the Landlord can claim from Furnish Ltd.
29.	However, <b>I was given the impression</b> that	the centre	has not even officially opened yet
32.	and [ <b>my advice is to] require the Landlord to show (from the other tenant or otherwise)</b> that	they	have indeed incurred such losses.
35.	<b>I believe</b>	Furnish Ltd.	have a good arguable defence

As shown in Table 6.2, it is in clause complex 7 that the first projecting clause is realised. At this point the writer, a solicitor, chooses to add further background information *based on our conversation you informed me that the other tenant*. This Circumstantial Adjunct of cause: behalf is a 'Contextual Frame' situating and referring to previous discussions, which is followed by a subjective locutionary projection *you informed me that*. A thematised subjective viewpoint is realised as the writer needs to establish the intertextuality for the present text, i.e., *we spoke, you told me X and this is how I read what you have told me in the eyes of the law*. Then the first example of thematised comment is used to project an objective point which occurred, *it was only subsequent to that, when the Landlord* (clause complex 8). Here the writer elects not to start with *the Landlord* as the Theme of the message, but rather chooses to explicitly objectify the issue *it was only subsequent to*. This choice of projecting clause is very similar to a textual Theme, e.g. *after that*. However, the projecting clause is realised, perhaps to reflect legal jargon, to sound more factual, more objective and to illustrate the point that the *Landlord* entered into negotiation after the indemnity with their client was signed. There are issues here related to the ungrammatical structure of this sentence which cannot be resolved through an analysis.

The writer continues with a projection of thematised comment, *It would appear to be the Landlord's mistake that they*, and the solicitor uses a modal finite *would* in order to avoid making a definite statement. In the projecting clause 9, and in the following projecting clause 13, *would appear* and *implies* are definite choices selected to demonstrate the writer's attitude,

so that the writer is seen to support the client's argument and at the same time indicate that support is offered in a modalised form.

The projecting clause 13 is stating a fact by projecting a legal clause from the indemnity itself, i.e. *by its wording implies that*. The legal document here is projecting that Furnish Ltd. are covered by the stipulations set down in their contract. Using legal texts to project what has been said is a very powerful type of projection as the legal text is used as a tool of adjudication, and in this instance the words of the legal texts state that someone else is liable. The projection in clause complex 21 is an indirect question *was there any discussion that*, the aim of which is to establish exactly what had been discussed.

The letter then continues to list details and request further details about the present situation. The two instantiations of projection in this text, in clause complexes 29 and 35, are both explicit thematised subjective viewpoints projecting ideas, *I was given the impression*, and *I believe Furnish Ltd*. Again the choice of a projecting clause appears to be a conscious one by the writer and in this text these projecting clauses are used to show the writer's viewpoint and support. In clause complex 32, there are two projecting clauses: one is ellipsed [*my advice is to*] and the other is *require the Landlord to show*, where the writer is involved in projecting their *advice that the Landlord show* the losses incurred. In the clause complex *However, I was given the impression that the centre has not even officially opened yet so the other tenant's sales might not in any event have been affected by Furnish Ltd. works*, the projecting clause could quite easily be removed and the clause complex could simply state *The centre has not even officially opened yet so the other tenant's sales might not in any event have been affected by Furnish Ltd works*. But by including *however I was given the impression that* the writer is shifting modal responsibility to an unnamed other party. Note the use of the Modal Adjuncts *yet* and *even* in this clause, *has not yet even officially opened*, which adds to the negative impact of the Landlord's claim.

It is worth noting that within this context thematised comment has been used to give advice and to support the views of the intended reader. However, whether this is a common feature of thematised comment is questionable, as it is highly likely, following Davies's (1994, 1997) suggestion that it may be the case that thematised comment is used for different purposes in different genres.

## 6.6 Drawing together the discussion

### 6.6.1 The need for a detailed analysis

To date, in workplace English pedagogy and in general English pedagogy, little attention has been given to projecting clauses. Davies (1988, 1997), Nesbitt and Plum (1988), Thompson (1994, 1996), Iedema (1995) and Harvey (1995) have all discussed projection to a limited degree. However, there needs to be continued and extended research into authentic data to draw out linguistic practices and examples on which a better understanding of language in use – and a more robust approach to language pedagogy – can be based.

It is highly likely that projecting clauses play a significant role in many other discourse communities. Davies (1988) uses some examples from academic English to introduce and establish her theory of ‘writer viewpoint’ and ‘Contextual Frames’. She believes that the Contextual Frames, in which she includes projecting clauses, are important features which help to establish the interaction of a text. She adds that such Contextual Frames allow the writer to express viewpoint in both an explicit and implicit manner and that it is very important that such linguistic features are taught to writers:

the visibility dimension is presented as a feature of the language to which students will need to be sensitised if they are to recognise and evaluate the viewpoints of other researchers, and ultimately to present their own research viewpoints

(Davies, 1988:182)

Here, Davies is talking about projection and Contextual Frames and the way in which they embody the writer’s viewpoints. She refers to academic English where clauses such as *It is suggested by X that*, or *X argues that Y is ...* are often found in the introduction, literature review and discussion sections of papers (Davies, 1988). Even in academic English, however, there has been little inquiry into the construction of projecting clauses. Projection is seen to be important in aiding the understanding of writer viewpoint. Most of the research here focuses on the types of reporting verb used (Thompson and Ye, 1991; Hunston, 1994) and what Hyland (1996, 1997) calls hedging and boosting. The only report of such occurrences in workplace English are found in Iedema (1995), whose data are restricted to directives, and Harvey (1995), who mentions this construction only briefly. It seems, as will be argued below, that

projection is an important feature in workplace English texts and perhaps in other discourses, and that it thus deserves greater attention.

Applying an inductive approach to the analysis of the data, allowing categories and issues of interest to emerge from the data, showed that a detailed analysis needed to be carried out. Thus, during the process of analysis, the data lead to an extension of work already carried out by Davies (1988, 1997), Thompson (1994, 1996) and Iedema (1995). These categories are not new and are drawn from separate theoretical descriptions. The present study used the categories in an analysis of Theme in the corpus and has investigated the way in which they construe viewpoint in a corpus of memos, letters and reports.

#### 6.6.2 The three types of projection identified

Thematised subjective viewpoint represents the implicit or explicit subjective involvement of the named author/s within the text. Here the writer uses *I*, *you*, *we*, or a nominal group with a proper noun as Head, e.g. *the Design Team* or *the Secretary for Works*. It seems that if the writer is using a projecting clause as a precursor for what they want to say, they generally use *I*, *we* or the name of the person or company they are referring to. This use of the thematised subjective viewpoint to either implicitly or explicitly project what the writer wishes to report is the most common type of projecting clause and is found in all three text types analysed. There were both mental and verbal projections, although mental projections, which used *I* in the projecting clause, were most common in memos. Projecting clauses such as *I know*, *I believe* and *I think*, were also very common in memos. Here, the writer was usually addressing a known audience and so used the first person to establish the identity of the individual who generated the idea. This study provides evidence that writer viewpoint is evident through the use of thematised subjective viewpoint.

It seems that thematised subjective viewpoint projecting clauses are realised in a very different manner in reports. Here the findings show that an overwhelming number of the projecting clauses in thematic position are verbal projections. The findings show that mental projections in reports are far less frequent and are generally realised through the use of a second person pronoun. Often the Subject of the projecting clause is *he*, e.g. *he believes that*, *he envisages that*. Occasionally the company or part of the company is doing the projecting, for example, *the library is also concerned that* (Report 3, clause complex 22), or *the Exco also*

*noted that* (Report 8, clause complex 32). As outlined above, projection in reports is far more frequently realised by using a verbal process where someone is being reported for saying something, for example *he proposed that* (Report 7, clause complex 4). On a number of occasions, the person who is being reported is named, e.g. *the Director of Housing has said that* (Report 7, clause complex 37). The purpose of the text determines the use of projecting clauses. To summarise, projecting clauses with *I* are present in all three text types, but are far more common in memos. Projecting clauses with *he* or a named person are far more common in reports.

The second category, thematised comment, although not as frequently used as thematised subjective viewpoint, appeared quite often in the data. In total, there were 42 instances of thematised comment, and thematised comment occurs in all three text types analysed. The writer often uses a place-holder *it* to introduce the projecting Theme, and occasionally an objective generalisation is made by using phrases such as *experience has shown* (Report 7, clause complex 22), *the speculation that* (Report 6, clause complex, 17), etc. Here, *it* is replaced by an objective phrase, usually a nominal group, which makes some sort of generalisation. The writer has chosen *it is believed* to express their viewpoint in what appears to be a more factual manner. The possible reasons for, and the implications of, these linguistic choices will be discussed in the following section.

Based on the findings so far, it is possible to respond to the first of the three questions posed at the beginning of the chapter:

- 1) Are there any particular patterns in the memos, letters and reports of projecting clauses found in thematic position?

A pattern in the choice of projecting clauses acting as Theme has emerged. In memos and reports the findings show that it is more likely that subjective explicit and implicit projecting clauses will be realised. Moreover, in reports there are typically far more locutionary projecting clauses than there are mental projecting clauses. However, the data sample is still relatively small and a more extensive analysis of a larger sample may be able to suggest that similar patterns may occur with a greater frequency. Furthermore, this study has looked only at projection in thematic position. The findings also show that there are a number of cases when projection occurs within the Rheme of clause complex.

### 6.6.3 Projecting clauses: identity and power

Finally, to return to the second and third questions posed earlier in the chapter:

- 2) What is the particular function of projecting clauses found in thematic position?
- 3) To what extent are projecting clauses found in thematic position in the memos, letters and reports?

The findings suggest that projecting clauses are serving a particular purpose in that they ‘frame’ the writer’s viewpoint and allow the writer to define themselves. More specifically, the findings corroborate Davies’s (1988, 1994, 1997) and Thompson’s (1996) views that projection as Theme acts explicitly or implicitly to construe interpersonal meaning. In addition, the present study supports research carried out by Brown and Herndl (1986:22), who state that language choices in workplace writing are not randomly made, rather that they are “logical grammatical choices – considering their syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and phonological function” (although phonological choice is not relevant to written texts). Thus, grammatical choices such as whether to use a projecting clause are made to some extent consciously in order to encode the desired message intended by the writer. It seems that in projecting clauses, which are chosen to represent a fact or to explicitly show the writer’s subjective viewpoint, the “choice is significant, communicating information about the speakers and their attitudes toward hearers, topics, contexts and so on” (Brown and Herndl, 1986:23).

Hierarchical power is generally clearly delineated within the workplace. The clearly defined hierarchical boundaries will control the writer’s selection of grammatical patterns. Whether the writer chooses to use a thematised subjective viewpoint or thematised comment to project their ideas is to some extent controlled by their position within the workplace and their position in relation to the intended reader of the text. As pointed out by Winsor (1993), “writers relate to texts within a hierarchical power structure that limits the control any writer has” (1993:180). Or as Brown and Herndl point out:

The perceived function of the writing depends upon where one stands in the production cycle.

(Brown and Herndl, 1986:20)

Thus, the grammatical structures chosen by writers will in fact reflect their position within the workplace. However, an analysis of writers who choose to use projecting clauses and the type

of projecting clauses they choose in relation to their status would be very interesting, but one that is beyond the scope of the present study.

## **6.7 Concluding remarks**

When reading texts from the business world, subtleties such as the use of projection and, at a finer level, the type of projection chosen, may cause problems for readers. For example, a non-native English speaker may not recognise the implicit nature of such realisations and this could result in a breakdown of communication. Perhaps the findings lead to concern as to whether such implicit linguistic resources should be included as part of the pedagogy in this area. Fairclough (1992) argues that one reason for such subtlety in the grammar is that the discourse of institutional practices has changed and that the overt markers of power and asymmetry have become more covert. He states that the ways of linguistically realising power are becoming “more potent, with the result that power asymmetry becomes more subtle rather than disappearing” (Fairclough, 1992:203). The findings are limited in the evidence they provide, and simply raise questions which need to be addressed. Perhaps there is a need for the principles of language and the way in which control is accomplished within an organisation to be researched and made more explicit. Furthermore, this would surely involve the need for explicit teaching of these subtle forms of language. Unless this happens, there will be a decline in the number of people who have the appropriate skills to participate in roles of any social importance, or understand the grammatical features and the social importance of linguistic choices (Martin, 1991, 1993a; Rothery, 1993). The aim, as stated previously, is to understand language better in order to inform pedagogy. Following Iedema (1995) and others, “A pedagogy aiming for critical literacy deconstructs the ‘genres of power’ in terms of context, choice and meaning” (Iedema, 1995:12). Once the deconstruction and analysis of context, choice and meaning have been undertaken, a major hurdle in sharing this knowledge will have been removed. Hopefully, the findings from research will find their way to teachers who can then add to their understanding that language is power, language has a cultural base, and certain contexts construct and have specialised ways of making meaning.