

# 18 The structure of newspaper editorials

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## INTRODUCTION

It seems to me that one of the most important contributions of discourse analysis to linguistics is the observation that spoken discourse, mainly conversation, can be subject to structural analysis (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975 and followers). It is very interesting to note that most linguists involved in this type of analysis agree on the fact that the **exchange** is 'the minimal interactive unit most amenable to linguistic structural analysis' (Stubbs 1981: 9) and the unit 'basically concerned with the transmission of information' (Coulthard and Brazil 1981: 99) and, in fact, 'the primary unit of language interaction' (Sinclair and Brazil 1982: 49). If this is the case, one can then assume that the exchange, or a similar unit, may be used in the analysis of written text. In this chapter I intend to show how newspaper editorials, taken as an instance of interaction through written text, can be analysed using a unit called the **triad** (Bolívar 1986). The triad shares similarities with the exchange in that it consists of up to three elements of structure and constitutes the minimal unit of interaction in written text. The difference lies in that we are not examining face-to-face interaction but interaction of another kind.

As is well known, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) use the term 'exchange' to refer to structures that consist of up to three elements: an initiation (I), a response (R) and a follow-up (F). Each initiation consists of an initiating move, informing, eliciting or directing, followed by a second move which fits the initiation. The third follow-up move is seen as obligatory in some contexts but not in others. The two examples below, taken from the analysis of classroom interaction, illustrate this analysis.

- 1 I Can anyone have a guess, a shot at that one?  
R Cleopatra  
F Cleopatra. Good girl. She was the most famous queen, wasn't she, Cleopatra of the Nile.  

(Sinclair and Coulthard 1975: 80)
- 2 I What kind of food would you cut with a knife?  
R Meat.

*(ibid.: 95)*



# ADVANCES IN WRITTEN TEXT ANALYSIS

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ROUTLEDGE

In example 1 the third element is seen as obligatory because the teacher evaluates the answer given by the student, while in example 2 the third element is missing, apparently because the teacher delays the evaluation to make it global and applicable to the answer of several students.

Although Sinclair and Coulthard's observation is very interesting, some linguists believe that the distinction between bipartite and tripartite structures was not properly formalized and the conditions for the third element not explicitly stated (Berry 1981). In fact, most of the later developments of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) have something to say about the third element. Burton (1978) makes an attempt to expand the original model for the purpose of applying it to the description of any type of naturally occurring talk. She recognizes two types of exchanges, explicit boundary exchanges and conversational exchanges, but she seems to dispense with the third element altogether. In her view, 'one would expect features that are prominent in classroom interaction to be less prominent, or even not apparent at all, in other types of talk and vice-versa' (Burton 1981: 62).

Coulthard and Brazil (1979) define the elements of structure in terms of two features:  $\pm$  predicting and  $\pm$  predicted, and use two criteria for identifying the elements: '(1) does the given element generate constraints which amount to a prediction that a particular element will follow; and (2) has a preceding element predicted its occurrence?' (Coulthard and Brazil 1979: 39).

Coulthard and Brazil characterize follow-up as 'not predicting' and 'not predicted', which makes it optional. They see exchanges as consisting of two elements: I R (initiation, response) and maximally four: I (R/I) RF (*ibid.*: 40) and study the elements of structure only in relation to the immediately adjacent move. Stubbs (1981) distinguishes between obligatory and optional feedbacks, but he does not specify the circumstances under which each would occur.

Berry (1981) attempts to bring together the accounts given by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Coulthard and Brazil (1979), Burton (1978) and Stubbs (1979). She makes some very interesting observations. In the first place she believes that there are three part structures in discourse where the third element is predicted. Second, she points to the fact that in the accounts developed later, the relationship between elements of structure is shown between successive elements when, in her view, follow-up is predicted by the initiating move rather than by the immediately preceding move (Berry 1981: 123). Third, she observes that those who have continued with the study of exchange structure seem to lose sight of the fact that both obligatory and optional feedback typically occur in the third place. I believe that these statements are fundamental for examining discourse structures in either spoken or written language. In fact, in the analysis of editorials I have found evidence to sustain the claim that the third element of structure is obligatory in some contexts, and that this depends on the type of initiation. The third element seems to have a fundamental structural function in that it closes the minimal unit of interaction. In editorials this function is still more

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important because the third element presents the evaluation of events as seen by the writer.

Initiations in spoken discourse are of the utmost importance because they impose constraints on what is to come next and so determine the structure of the discourse. This is not so obvious in written text, but it happens all the same. The importance of initiations is well explained by Sinclair and Brazil (1982: 38):

The very name initiation, makes it clear that we are looking ahead – not at what actually follows, to begin with, but at what the initiation does to whatever follows. Then we can assign a value to the next utterance in the context of this particular initiation. Each successive utterance, then, has to fit into an existing framework. It is not just dropped into a pool, but meets a predetermined network of choices, many of which have just been set up by the utterance which has just finished. The notion of 'structure' is very much one of anticipation, and the prominence of structure in conversation helps to explain how we can work with such subtlety and complexity.

Initiations are particularly important in written text because they are responsible for introducing topics and modalities in the discourse. In editorials, initiations can be of at least three types, they **inform**, they **elicit information** or they **organize** the discourse (Bolívar 1986: 238), in a manner similar to spoken interaction. The interesting thing is that the third element is obligatory in triads that have informing and eliciting initiations but optional in triads that organize the discourse, as we shall see later.

Other studies of the structure of conversation reinforce the view that the basic unit of analysis consists of three parts: for example, Hinds (1982) believes that the primary unit is a 'triplet'. He identifies two basic units of this type: (1) question–answer(–acknowledgement) and (2) remark–reply (–acknowledgement). In his view, 'these formulae indicate that a structural unit consists of a question–answer sequence with an optional acknowledgment' (Hinds 1982: 302). Hinds also believes that these triplets are frequently units which are part of a larger conversational scheme, and says (Hinds 1983b: 304): 'If we think of conversations as consisting of a hierarchically ranged sequence of topics and subtopics, these triplets form the basic unit of structure at the lowest level in the hierarchy.'

Apparently, Hinds takes the notion 'topic' as the criterion for identifying units of different sizes, but not necessarily the interaction itself. This allows us to see that there are, in discourse analysis, different ways of approaching the hierarchical description of conversation. Something similar happens with respect to the analysis of written text.

Most of the problems related to the analysis of written text derive from the fact that linguists have different conceptions of what text is. This, in turn, leads to descriptions of text 'organization' or text 'structure', which is not just a simple matter of labels but rather implies two different conceptions of interaction and quite different processes. If the linguist is more concerned



with the interaction between the reader and the text, s/he will focus on the patterns of organization likely to be discovered by the reader (Hoey 1983; Winter 1986); however, if the main concern is the interaction between writer and reader, the attention will focus on the structure of the text in terms of the sequence of speech acts assumed to be performed by the writer (Tadros 1981, 1985; Cooper 1983). I believe that we have to take both processes into account, that is, the retrospective and the prospective patterns of organization in the discourse.

In my own analysis I assume that the initial categories of discourse are (i) **social interaction**; (ii) **two participants**; and (iii) **a text** (Bolívar 1986: 119). The text can be described on two planes; one that relates the text to the participants, and the other that concerns autonomous text processes. Following Sinclair (1983), I call these planes **interactive** and **autonomous**. The distinction allows for the description of both prospective and retrospective discourse patterning in discourse. The difference is important because in the first case we refer to interaction between real (or imagined) participants, while in the second we mean interaction between the reader and the text. In this respect Sinclair claims that 'the forward or prospective control of discourse construction is by negotiation of participants, whereas each participant in a turn has an opportunity to develop his personal messages out of what has gone before, through the creation of retrospective patterns' (Sinclair 1980: 255). In fact, retrospective patterning is so different that 'it is misleading to call it structure at all' (*ibid.*: 256). I use the term **posture** to refer to the prospective changes in the discourse, and the term **recall** to refer to what is traditionally called the semantic content and, in this way, we can account for what the writer is 'doing' and 'saying'. While it is true that the two planes depend on each other, I assume that the interactive plane determines the eventual meaning of the linguistic choices made on the autonomous plane (Bolívar 1986: 132).

### THE MODEL OF ANALYSIS

Coulthard and Brazil (1979) suggest that 'for any unit one must provide two kinds of information: what position or function it has in the structure of other larger units and what its own internal structure is' (1979: 7). With this in mind, I assume that the function of the triad is to negotiate the transmission of information and evaluation in written text. Its internal structure can be described in terms of three fundamental **turns** (Tn) called **lead** (L), **follow** (F) and **valuate** (V), which are realized by **sentences** (s) conceived as 'the product of ordinary language behaviour' and not as 'system sentences' (Lyons 1977: 30). The example below shows a complete triad:

<i>Tn</i>	<i>s</i>	
L	1	Britain and Ireland are now trying, at long last, to work out a less artificial link between them than that which binds two foreign states.

- F 2 This is the most hopeful departure of the past decade because it opens for inspection what had lain concealed for half a century and goes to the root of the anguish in Northern Ireland.
- V 3 The two countries now recognise that though they are independent of one another they cannot be foreign.

This triad is the first in an editorial entitled 'Behind closed Irish doors' (*The Guardian*, 3 March 1981), which forms part of a corpus of twenty-three editorials selected from *The Guardian* during the first three months of 1981.

The triad above represents a coherent piece of text used by the leader-writer not only to negotiate information but also to make evaluations. The first turn, the lead, has the function of introducing the 'aboutness' (Hutchins 1977b) of the triad and a posture or modality; the second turn, the follow, responds to this initiation, keeping the same topic and evaluating the preceding piece of information; and the third turn, the valuate, closes the unit with an evaluation of the preceding two turns. The valuate turn has the function of ending the aboutness of the triad and of closing a postural scheme, so it is the coincidence of a discourse function, termination, and a discourse form, an opinion. While all turns may make evaluations, a particular status attaches to the valuate: it ends the smallest communicative cycle with an evaluation. The difference from other turns is that while the lead presents new information and the follow refers to it, the valuate refers to **both** of them. I call this a **content** triad because its function as a whole is to refer to and evaluate an event or state of affairs, and it is thus different from a **boundary** triad, whose function is to deal with the discourse itself. In the content triad the valuate is obligatory. This does not mean, however, that all triads must have three turns; triads can exhibit more than three turns provided the sequence L F is repeated and V is final, that is, triads such as LFLFV or LFLFLFV can be found when the V turn is delayed by the writer.

In spoken interaction turn-change depends on speaker change, but in written discourse the equivalent to turn change is observed in changes that take place in the main clauses of the sentences, particularly in tense, mood and modality. I prefer not to look at sentences as realizing acts because 'in uttering a sentence one sometimes performs more than one illocutionary act, with different parts of the sentences involved in each of the acts' (McCawley 1981: 210). In the model of analysis I propose, the allocation of more than one sentence to a turn depends on whether subsequent sentences do or do not maintain the same posture, by using signals that indicate the same modality, tense or mood. The analysis of editorials has shown that it is possible to identify certain conditions for the allocation of more than one sentence to a turn, and we can talk about a general system for the maintenance and change of turns in written text (see below).

The triad may combine with other triads in order to make up a unit at a higher rank. I call this larger unit **movement** (Mv). The movement may combine with other movements to make up the largest unit at the highest rank,

which I call **artefact**. Thus a hierarchical model is created, with artefact and sentence at opposite ends of the rank scale.

The triads can be classified according to position and function into **Situation (S)**, **Development (D)** and **Recommendation (R)**. S triads are presented in initial position and have the function of referring to an event and evaluating it. The first S triad in an editorial refers to the current event being evaluated, while the S triads that appear later refer back to the main event, although they may introduce other related events. D triads occur in medial position, after S types, and their function is to develop the reference to and the evaluation of the event considered in the immediately preceding S triad, either the first one in the text or others. R triads occupy final position in the sequence and their function is to close the reference and the evaluation of the event introduced by the S triad that initiates the sequence.

The initiating triad presented above is now shown below together with the triads that follow it. As can be seen, each triad has been assigned a function: the initiating triad is called S, for situation, the one that follows it is D, for development, and the third one is R, for recommendation. The three triads (Td) made up a movement which, in this case, forms the first major part of the artefact.

<i>Td</i>	<i>Tn</i>	<i>s</i>	
	L	1	Britain and Ireland are now trying, at long last, to work out a less artificial link between them than that which binds two foreign states.
S	F	2	This is the most hopeful departure of the past decade because it opens for inspection what had lain concealed for half a century and goes to the root of the anguish in Northern Ireland.
	V	3	The two countries now recognise that though they are independent of one another they cannot be foreign.
	L	4	It is a large task they have taken on, for each side has its privy jealousies and each is aware that a false step, or even a false reading of a right step, could bring out the worst of the Northern paramilitaries into communal war.
D	F	5	Someone in the Northern Ireland Office mentions defence and the Dail is in uproar.
		6	Someone in the Dail mentions federalism and Mr. Paisley stomps the mountains calling up the ghost of Carson to save the holy counties from Rome.
	V	7	But the process has begun of seeing where the islands went wrong in the first place and making whatever corrections are now feasible to a series of mistakes and misconceptions.
	L	8	Is Benelux a model?
		9	Is the Nordic Union?
R	F	10	Probably not, because nothing elsewhere quite simulates the petulance and lopsidedness of the partners in Iona, the islands of the North Atlantic.



- V 11 Whatever emerges, though, has to make irrelevant for all time both the ruthlessness of the Republicans, even when it is directed against themselves, and the grand delusions of embittered loyalists.

In this first movement there are three complete triads, each one with an obligatory turn. The first triad in the movement has the function of presenting the actual event. The event is stated in evaluative terms in the first turn, as seen in the use of 'at long last' and 'a less artificial link', but the reader is informed about what is happening in the world of phenomena. The whole triad has an initiating function in that it gives the grounds for what follows in the next segment of text. The second triad develops the statement of the event and evaluates the preceding piece of discourse. The use of 'they' in turn L of triad D refers back to 'Britain and Ireland' and continues with the main theme of the movement but goes deeper into the problem. The whole triad has a 'response' function and as readers we expect more information or an evaluation after it. The third triad performs the function of evaluator. It ends the movement and evaluates the two preceding triads. This indicates that the internal structure of each movement can be described in terms of triads which follow the natural sequence S D R, similar in function to the turns within a triad but at a higher rank.

The triads that make up a movement cannot be shuffled at will (nor the turns within a triad) because if this is done the result is another text and not the one intended by the writer for the reader he has in mind. In the text just quoted the writer assumes a reader who is fairly well informed about what is happening. I say 'fairly well informed' because the writer makes a semi-explicit statement of the event. He assumes the reader knows about the kind of 'link' that Britain and Ireland are working out.

If the ordering of the triads were changed we might still get a coherent movement, but the meaning and the interaction between the writer and reader would be different. For example, if we initiated the movement with triad D, we would obtain an order that seems perfectly correct from a semantic point of view because the reader could make sense of this new text and understand its content. However, the new organization affects the discourse and a new type of interaction has to be described. In the original text the writer's assumption is that the reader is fairly well informed about the event, while in the new order starting with 'It is a large task they have taken on . . .', the writer's assumption is that the reader is very well informed. The triads in the example above could still be shuffled into another order and efforts could be made to understand and explain the new text. But in doing this we would be showing our capacity to understand and make sense out of parts of text but we would be saying nothing about the interaction between writer and reader in a particular social context.

Movement is the second largest unit in the model. In an editorial a movement may be the whole or part of an artefact; its size cannot be



determined in terms of the number of paragraphs that compose it because movements and paragraphs belong to two different types of organization. The size of a movement depends on the number of triads that relate the text to the world of events within the same modal perspective, and the only condition is that a movement must contain at least one content triad, which is the basic unit of interaction in written text.

The movement that refers to the actual world, a world *that is or was*, is called **type A**, and this can be followed by **type B** movement, which refers to the world of possibilities, or the world *that might be*. If the editorial contains yet another movement, this follows the type B movement. This last movement, **type C**, refers to the world *that should be* and, in fact constitutes a major evaluation that refers back to movements B and A. The three movements in the sequence A B C represent major modal changes in the artefact.

The artefact is analysed fully below so that we can see the sequence of triads and their function in each one of the movements:

*Behind closed Irish doors*

Mov	Td	Tn	s	
A	S	L	1	Britain and Ireland are now trying, at long last, to work out a less artificial link between them than that which binds two foreign states.
		F	2	This is the most hopeful departure of the past decade because it opens for inspection what had lain concealed for half a century and goes to the root of the anguish in Northern Ireland.
		V	3	The two countries now recognise that though they are independent of one another they cannot be foreign.
D	L	L	4	It is a large task they have taken on, for each side has its privy jealousies and each is aware that a false step, or even a false reading of a right step, could bring out the worst of the Northern paramilitaries into communal war.
		F	5	Someone in the Northern Ireland Office mentions defence and the Dail is in uproar.
			6	Someone in the Dail mentions federalism and Mr Paisley stomps the mountains calling up the ghost of Carson to save the holy counties from Rome.
		V	7	But the process has begun of seeing where the islands went wrong in the first place and making whatever corrections are now feasible to a series of mistakes and misconceptions.
	R	L	8	Is Benelux a model?
			9	Is the Nordic Union?
		F	10	Probably not, because nothing elsewhere quite simulates the petulance and lopsidedness of the partners of Iona, the islands of the North Atlantic.

- V 11 Whatever emerges, though, has to make irrelevant for all time both the ruthlessness of the Republicans, even when it is directed against themselves, and the grand delusions of embittered loyalists.
- B S L 12 The end of the Republicans' dirty protest, which has kept them confined and surrounded by filth for years on end, probably has no part in the British-Irish reconciliation.
- 13 More likely it is designed to prevent it from taking a form which the IRA would not like.
- F 14 By one means or another the Republicans want to focus on their demand for political status, which those who committed their offences before a certain date still enjoy.
- V 15 They have had no success with the European Commission on Human Rights, or with the public generally in either country, yet there is just enough truth in their assertion to stimulate the Anglo-Irish negotiators to feats of invention.
- D L 16 In Sunday's communique announcing the fast of Bobby Sands, the Republicans described their crimes as 'selfless'.
- F 17 In that they did not blow up innocent people entirely for personal gain there is a fragment of tortured reason there.
- V 18 They oscillate between demands for political status and simpler requests about clothes and degrees of prison work.
- R L 19 At Christmas the authorities and the prisoners were within range of a settlement.
- F 20 They could be again before Mr Sands comes to his crisis.
- L 21 But if they are, what will Mr Paisley and the UDS say?
- F 22 Treachery?
- 23 Connivance?
- 24 Capitulation?
- V 25 Anything to keep hatred on the boil.
- C S L 26 Mr Humphrey Atkins has said all he can to conciliate the Protestants, not all of whom in any case rise to Mr Paisley's heights of indignation.
- 27 Mr Haughey in Dublin has not contradicted him.
- F 28 At the end of 11 years of almost unremitting bloodshed and disruption calls for patience sound limp.

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This analysis enables us to see three-part structures of different sizes, such as the triad and the movement. We can also see that in all content triads there is an obligatory third element, the evaluate turn, which closes a segment of text with an opinion about the topic introduced by the lead and developed by the follow. However, the third element seems to be optional in units of a larger size, as witnessed by the fact that, although the first and second movements consist of three triads each in the sequence S D R, this is not the case in movement C, which consists of only two triads in the sequence S D. In fact, this seems to be the situation in most editorials analysed in the original corpus. There are no boundary triads in this editorial, but we shall see some examples later.

We can also observe that the triads do not always consist of three turns. For example, triad R in movement B consists of five turns in the sequence LFLFV. This means that the model allows for the delay of turn V provided it is preceded by sequences of LF. This is so because, in these cases, there is more negotiation of information and evaluation. The explanation is that the writer delays the evaluation either to introduce more information or to make the reader wait for his opinion on a particular point. In the analysis of *The Guardian* 1981 corpus there was a total of 147 triads of which 124 (84.4 per cent) consisted of three turns (LFV). Only twenty-three exceptions were found, of which fourteen (60.9 per cent) were made of five turns (LFLFV), four (17.4 per cent) of seven turns (LFLFLFV), and five (21.7 per cent) of two turns (LV). In the case of deviant triads of two turns (LV), the explanation lay in the fact that the F turn was apparently skipped by the writer who jumped from the initiation to the conclusion, or perhaps due to problems of punctuation as in the example below, where a new orthographic sentence could have started with 'Yet':

- L (F) s.11 In the year to September 1980, the Department of Employment estimates that the number of jobs lost in the economy amounted to 806,000, *yet* the number of people registering on the dole in the same period was only 522,000.
- V S.12 In other words, 283,500 people in one year failed to register either because they were not eligible for benefits or because they took early retirement.  
(*The Guardian*, 'Another 103,000 on the dole', 28 January 1981)

The editorial 'Behind closed Irish doors' also shows that turns vary in size. For example, sentences 5 and 6 make up a turn F in triad D of movement A, sentences 8 and 9 make up turn L in triad R of the same movement, sentences 12 and 13 make up turn L in triad S of movement B; sentences 22, 23 and 24 form the second turn F of triad R in the same movement; and sentences 26 and 27 compose turn L in triad S of movement C; while sentences 29 and 30 make up turn V of the same triad. The 1981 corpus shows that turns consisting of one sentence are highly frequent (78.1 per cent) and that turns of two sentences are moderately frequent (15.3 per cent) but that turns consisting of more than two sentences are exceptions. It is interesting to note that turns consisting of more than two sentences are often found in follows and valuates but rarely in leads.

#### TURN-CHANGE AND TURN-MAINTENANCE IN TRIADS

Content triads can be classified into **informing** and **eliciting**, depending on the type of lead that initiates them. The informing triad typically contains a lead turn realized by a sentence in declarative syntax, while the eliciting triad is initiated with a lead in interrogative form. In order to explain turn-change and turn-maintenance in informing triads it is necessary to examine the forms used by the writer in the lead turns. The description must focus on (i) tense selection, (ii) modality selection, and (iii) lexical anticipation. Any choice made in the lead anticipates a particular type of selection in the follow and imposes constraints on the form of the valuate.

#### Tense selection

Tense selection in the lead is important because it indicates the time dimension, and editorials are very sensitive to time. Tense change can be accompanied by adverbials of time such as *last year*, *this year*, *next year*, etc. or by discourse adjuncts which indicate agreement or disagreement such as *In fact*, *Indeed*, *But*, *However*, etc. The example below shows the transition between turns by tense change:

- L s.1 'It is true that the block vote is suspect', Mr Sid Weighell, the railwaymen's leader, told Labour's constitutional conference.  
s.2 'I know because I have got one in my hand.'



- F s.3 In fact, the NUR makes more efforts than many to see that the 180,000 votes Mr Weighell casts for or against this, that or the other cause at party conferences represent the views of a majority of his members.
- V s.4 Even so, Mr Weighell demonstrates a certain unease as he holds up his card at conference after conference –
- s.5 as well he might.  
(*The Guardian*, 'Black marks for block votes', 28 January 1981)

Apparently, turn-maintenance with same tense tends to occur in all types of turns, while the use of sentences with different tense, particularly with quoted text, seems to be typical of leads and follows but not of valuates. This is explained mainly because the role of the valuate is fundamentally to evaluate information and only secondarily to give new information.

Although the transition between past and present is found, as in the example just given, this is not the most common type of transition since the predominant tense in an editorial is the present. The results obtained for triads of three turns only indicate that this tense is used in 74.5 per cent of the cases. It is also observed that the present tense occurs in a similar proportion in all types of turns, which suggests that the transition past to present is not the most frequently used by the writer, but rather present to present or present to past.

### Modality selection

Modality selection is probably the most common way of indicating turn-change and turn-maintenance in an editorial. Modality is important because it belongs to 'a system derived from the interpersonal function of language, expressing the speaker's assessment of probabilities' (Halliday 1970 in Kress 1976: 204), which means that through signals such as modal verbs, modal adjuncts, special nouns, adjectives, verbs and others, the writer indicates his/her attitude towards his/her own speech in the role of declarer. The triad below exemplifies the case of a triad that has chosen an informing lead in the past which is also non-modal. As the information refers to the past, the lead anticipates more information from another point of view or evaluation of this information. What is expressed in the follow is evaluation in hypothetical terms by means of a change into modal verbs ('would') and a return to information about the real world in the valuate, as seen in the use of the present perfect tense 'has reached' and 'As it is', reinforced by the use of 'now':

- L s.12 As the CRE notes: 'Despite intervention from the local MP, the police never *took* any action against the culprits and no charges *were brought*'.
- F s.13 If the family had been white, the reaction *would* have been rather different.

- s.14 There *would* have been outraged banner headlines;
  - s.15 MP's *would* have spoken sonorously of the racialist strains to society,
  - s.16 and the police *would* have wasted no time in bringing prosecutions and restoring law and order.
- V s.16 *As it is*, the intimidation of black people *has reached* such a pitch that even the cautious CRE and the still more cautious Home Office have *now* registered alarm.
- (*The Guardian*, 'On the street where you live', 18 March 1981)

However, the selection of a modal verb or a modal adjunct does not necessarily imply that the lead anticipates a modality change in the same way that the selection of present or past tense does not inevitably anticipate a tense change. A whole triad may be written in modal verbs or in the present tense. What must be done then is to see how a triad in the same tense indicates modal changes and how one written in modals expresses changes in types of modality, tense and other signals such as lexical anticipation.

### Lexical anticipation

Lexical anticipation can also serve as a signal of turn-change. This is defined as the phenomenon whereby a lexical item signals in advance a relation (Winter 1977a, 1979). According to Winter, the relation itself is a 'lexical realization' and allows for signals to indicate a prospective as well as a retrospective realization. I use the term only to refer to prospective realizations on the grounds that the writer has the commitment to clarify the signal in a linear progression and also because anticipation in itself is not enough to show the transition between turns but rather a complement to either tense or modality changes. The analysis of the 1981 corpus suggests that lexical anticipation in the lead can be expressed by means of a noun, an adjective or a prepositional phrase. These signals are typically evaluative and therefore anticipate information that must clarify the given information. The two triads below show cases of anticipation with a noun and with an adjective.

- L s.1 Between now and the end of the financial year on March 31, health authorities are likely to be casting around for *projects* on which they can spend money at speed.
- F s.2 Wards may have closed;
- s.3 doctors may be trying to save their hospitals' money by shunting prescriptions into local chemists;
- s.5 patients may be foregoing prescriptions because they can't afford the charges.
- s.6 But *new wallpaper, fresh paint*, perhaps *the odd bit of new furniture*, are likely to grace many a hospital or administration office.

- V s.7 *The doctrine of annuality, or the bureaucrats' spring fever* is upon us once again.  
(*The Guardian*, 'Spend, spend, spend, think', 20 February 1981)

The relation between 'projects' in L and 'new wallpaper', 'fresh paint', 'the odd bit of new furniture' in F constitute the two parts of the lexical realization, while 'the doctrine of annuality, or the bureaucrats' spring fever' in V evaluate both.

- L s.1 Hollywood – the new Hollywood – where westerns are out of fashion – might have rejected it as *too corny*.  
F s.2 In Teheran with minutes to go, after innumerable twists, turns and desperations, the 52 take off for freedom.  
s.3 On the West side of the Capitol, looking steadfastly across the swathe of Washington, a rugged old actor exhorts Americans, 'you, the citizens of this blessed land', to dream 'heroic dreams'.  
V s.4 Distinctly *too corny*:  
s.5 far better something realistic, like Charlton Heston jumping between jets at 35,000 feet.  
(*The Guardian*, 'Exemplars of a true freedom', 21 January 1981)

This time, with the signal 'too corny', the writer commits himself to explaining his first evaluation. He does so in F (s.2 and s.3), but he makes the final evaluation in V repeating 'too corny' followed by an ironic comment.

Lexical anticipation must be distinguished from enumeration, which is a category of prediction (Tadros 1981) that commits the writer to perform an act of discourse. While anticipation commits the writer to give new information of some kind in another turn, enumeration implies a stronger commitment which forces the writer to keep the turn in order to complete the information in one turn. The difference between an anticipation and a prediction can be seen in that the first part of the prediction carries a signal that belongs to the class 'numeral' or 'enumerables', that is, exact numerals like *two, three, double*, etc. and sub-technical words such as *reasons, issues*, etc., which are inexact numerals (Tadros 1981: 143). Since enumeration by definition may include more than two sentences, this type of floor maintenance is the longest type found. However, even the longest turn in the 1981 corpus does not contain more than seven sentences. The important point is that the lead turn presents the enumerating and the enumerated parts of the prediction because these sentences are not evaluated individually but as a whole.

The lead turn that initiates an eliciting triad is typically realized by a sentence in interrogative syntax and has the function of asking a question in order to obtain an answer. The distinction between elicitations and rhetorical questions must be kept clear. In editorials, rhetorical questions are used to give information in evaluative terms or simply to evaluate information already given. The analysis of the 1981 corpus reveals that eliciting triads are

not often used by the leader-writer of *The Guardian*. However, it is significant that most of them occur in type R triads, which could indicate a tendency to negotiate final evaluation in a dialogic manner.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF BOUNDARY TRIADS

Boundary triads, those whose main function is to deal with the discourse and not necessarily with the content, are used before or between movements and very rarely between triads. They can be classified into at least three types, depending on the class of act they express or imply. They may indicate (i) *an act of identification*, which explicitly states or gives some orientation about the event to be dealt with, as in 'Let us spare a thought this weekend for the King of Spain' ('The disease of the kingdom', *The Guardian*, 20 February 1981); (ii) *an act of analysis or explanation*, as in 'So it is worth examining the "suspect" mechanism behind block vote' ('Black marks for block votes', *The Guardian*, 28 January 1981); (iii) *an act of conclusion and/or recommendation*, as in 'Bystanders (like this newspaper) who happen to share much of the diagnosis can hardly cavil over the ends and means. But there are no simplicities' ('A footnote, a chapter, a chance?', *The Guardian*, 3 March 1981).

Boundary triads can also act as *reminders*, with the purpose of guiding the reader, as in 'We are still in the world of ifs' ('A footnote, a chapter, a chance?', *The Guardian*, 3 March 1981) in the middle of a movement B to indicate that the world of possibilities is still being analysed. Most of these triads consist of only one obligatory turn. However, cases of triads consisting of two turns (LdFd) were found in the 1981 corpus. In these cases the writer mainly addresses the attention to his own text with some kind of evaluation, but it is a different kind of evaluation. See, for example, the first part of the editorial below in which the actual event is introduced in the second triad of the first movement, after a triad that presents a hypothetical situation:

- |   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| L | s.1 | Mr and Mrs N. are a white couple with three children who live on an almost all black council state.                                  |
| F | s.2 | As soon as they moved there, one of their windows was broken and their neighbours banged constantly on their front and back doors.   |
|   | s.3 | A month later, a large stone was catapulted through the main bedroom window, narrowly missing Mr N. and the baby who was in his cot. |
|   | s.4 | A few days later, an air pellet was shot through the same window;  |
|   | s.5 | almost every time the family left the house, black people shouted abuse and threw stones.  |
| V | s.6 | Within two months, the family were living under siege, too terrified to go to work or even open a window.                            |



- Ld s.7 This *report* is, it must be admitted, not entirely accurate;  
 Fd s.8 it is in fact the negative of a true photograph.  
 L s.9 The events did indeed occur, and are recorded with other similarly distressing events in the *report* on racial harassment produced yesterday by the Commission for Racial Equality.  
 F s.10 But the victims, of course, were black and their oppressors white.  
 V s.11 Mr and Mrs N. are a Bengali couple who eventually had to move away to escape such harassment.  
 (*The Guardian*, 'On the street where you live', 18 March 1981)

This editorial allows us to see the difference between reference to the discourse ('report' in s.7) and reference to the world ('report' in s.9). In the first instance the writer names his own act of reporting; in the second he informs about something that happened in the world of phenomena.

As already seen, initiations are fundamental because they select the topic and a posture. They are particularly important in the first triads of movement A because the reference to the event is often made in the first and second turn of the first triad, although exceptions such as the above are also found when the writer takes more text to present the actual event, either because he assumes the reader needs to be reminded or told about what has happened, or for stylistic reasons. Follow turns seem to function mainly as a transition between the initial information (or evaluation) and the final evaluation. In fact, as observed in the 1981 corpus, apparently the topics most frequently developed derive from L and V turns but not from F.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF VALUATE TURNS

We must now examine valuate turns in more detail, because they are responsible for closing the smallest unit of interaction with an opinion. On the basis of the evidence obtained, valuate turns can be classified into three main groups that I have called **concluders**, **prophecies** and **directives**. The function of concluders is to intimate that a conclusion has been reached, with reference to the present time, which in this case is the time of publication of the newspaper. Concluders can be further sub-classified into (i) **logical conclusion or result**, (ii) **temporal result**, and (iii) **informative comments**. The first two are indicated by signals such as *Therefore*, *Thus*, *Now*, *As a result*, *If . . . then*, *In general*, *At the moment*, etc., but the last one consists of sentences in the past or present tense used by the writer to offer new information that evaluates preceding turns and cannot be taken as an initial posture. Tadros had already noticed this phenomenon when she said that 'the position of the reporting clause in its sentence and paragraph must be taken into account. Where the report is the only one and it comes at the end, it is not predictive but interpreted as a comment' (Tadros 1981: 27). It is worth remembering though that, in our case, the discourse structure does not always overlap with the paragraph organization (Bolívar 1986: 209).

It is also worth noticing that the signals themselves can be misleading. It is the signal in the context of the sentence where it appears and in the context of the sentences that precede and follow which will indicate whether the signal must be interpreted as belonging to the valuate turn or to an initial posture or to a response in a follow.

Prophecies are valuate turns which consist of declarative sentences whose function is to predict future events in life. They must be distinguished from textual predictions, such as Tadros (1981), where the writer sets up a prediction which must be fulfilled in the discourse itself. The use of prophecies allows the writer to make an evaluation of the situations s/he presents and also to indicate the assessment of probabilities for future developments. These prophecies may be the writer's or may be assigned to others and are typically realized by verbs that indicate futurity.

Directives in editorials may be found in any type of turn, but only those directives in valuates have the function of proposing or suggesting 'desirable' courses of action. Directives in valuates can take different forms and can be found in various degrees of explicitness. The most explicit form is the imperative, but not the most frequent. Directives can be sub-classified into **direct** and **indirect**. Direct directives can be defined as declarative turns consisting of sentences which carry signals that indicate the agent, the kind of action to be performed and, optionally, the circumstances of the action, in the main clause of the sentence that makes up the valuate turn. If the turn consists of more than one sentence the signal will be found in the first sentence of the sequence and only exceptionally in the second. The directive is indirect when the suggestion for action has to be inferred from the context of the discourse. The use of *should* and *need* may be quite different in direct directives, and expressions such as *It is essential that*, and the construction *If . . . then*, as well as questions, are often found in indirect directives.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study of editorials from other British newspapers has confirmed the analysis and the existence of three-part structures. The difference between editorials seems to depend mainly on how each newspaper evaluates the world, and on the assumptions they make about the reader's knowledge of events and states of affairs but, above all, on their assumptions about sharing or not sharing the same system of evaluation. These differences are often expressed in the number of turns that triads may take, in the use of boundary triads, in the preference of some type of syntax over another, and in the manipulation of the paragraph organization, so that initiations of paragraphs overlap with leads, follows or valuates, depending on the particular interests of the newspapers (Bolívar 1986: 309).

The consistent use of three-part structures makes us wonder whether this only applies to editorials or whether this is a type of structure that exists in other types of discourse. One also wonders why three parts and not four or

five. Is it, perhaps, that we are faced with a rhetorical convention that goes back to Plato and Aristotle or to Kant and Hegel? Or is it that the three parts are used in an editorial because there is a cultural constraint that forces the writer to do so? The analysis of *The Guardian* 1981 corpus, and also *The Times* for 1981, as well as other analyses I have done after these, suggest that the minimal unit of interaction, the triad, is made up of three turns with distinct functions in the discourse: the lead introduces the aboutness and a posture, the follow responds and the valuate closes the cycle with an evaluation. Both the lead and the valuate represent more definite attitudes, but the follow acts like a mediator, a sort of 'cushion' or transition towards the final evaluation.

Studies in contrastive rhetoric point to the fact that not all cultures seem to follow the same rhetorical conventions (Kaplan 1966, 1982; Kaplan and Ostler 1972; Hinds 1976, 1980, 1982, 1983a, b, c), but there is evidence that three-part structures are also found in other languages. For example, Hinds notes that in Japanese there is a style known as the *jo-ha-kyu*, or 'introduction', 'development' and 'climax', which, in his view, is 'similar to normal English rhetorical style' (Hinds 1983c: 80). In his comparison of English and Japanese paragraphs, Hinds also notes that Japanese paragraphs are structured in three parts, and says: 'The overall structure of a Japanese paragraph contains (1) an introduction, (2) directly or indirectly related comments, and (3) an optional generalization, summation or both' (Hinds 1980: 158).

However, he also brings to our attention a major rhetorical style which 'does not exist in English' (Hinds 1983a: 183). The style is termed *ki-shoo-ten-ketsu* and refers to a pattern originating in classical Chinese poetry. The four parts indicate a pattern of expository prose where *ki* introduces the topic, *shoo* develops it, *ten* forms an abrupt transition or a vaguely related point and *ketsu* concludes the topic (*ibid.*: 158). Hinds points out that this pattern represents potential problems for ESL learners since *ten* introduces information considered irrelevant by western audiences, and *ketsu* is defined differently in Japanese than conclusion is in English.

Hinds' remark is particularly relevant to the description of newspaper editorials and the existence of three-part structures in discourse because he takes the primary data from a Japanese daily newspaper called *Asahi Shimbun*, whose editorial comments are translated into English 'sentence by sentence' (*ibid.*: 187). According to Hinds' analysis, these comments are structured in four parts and follow the *ki-shoo-ten-ketsu* pattern. However, when we compare them with the English editorials, we realize that the difference derives from the form in which Japanese writers negotiate the evaluation. We note that the segments called *ten* and *ketsu* can easily be interpreted as only one part whose function is similar to that of movement C, but with a more complex internal structure where the *ten* is introduced as a preliminary to mitigate the conclusion or recommendation. Apparently, Japanese expository writers avoid reaching conclusions or making evaluations

in an abrupt manner and they introduce this preliminary part in order to distract the reader's attention and so follow implicit rules of politeness. At this point, it might be argued that the discourse of Japanese editorials reflects tacit rules of interaction in the Japanese culture, but this can only be confirmed by studying how Japanese people interact in everyday life and how they negotiate evaluations. The three-part structures of English editorials, though, seem to indicate a similarity with English spoken interaction in that there are three-part structures in spoken discourse as well.

The comparison between Japanese and English rhetorical structures cannot be taken as sufficient evidence to claim that three-part structures are universal and that they occur in all types of discourse, but it is worth finding out what types of discourse they occur in and what forms these structures take in different cases. It would be interesting to start by examining a larger sample of British editorials and comparing them with editorials written in other languages, in other cultures.