

SIGNALLING THE ORGANISATION OF WRITTEN TEXTS: HYPER-THEMES IN MANAGEMENT AND HISTORY ESSAYS*¹

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RESUMO

Este artigo examina como os processos de tecnicizar e racionalizar são flexionados na dimensão superior da organização do discurso escrito através dos hipertemas. Partindo da análise de ensaios produzidos por calouros dos cursos de Administração de Empresas e História, identifica o papel dos hipertemas no desenvolvimento da estrutura argumentativa. Demonstra que os hipertemas têm função dual, estabelecendo conexões retrospectivas e prospectivas com a estrutura argumentativa e apresentando padrões lexico-gramaticais e coligacionais distintos, de acordo com a disciplina.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: referência; hipertemas; padrões lexicogramaticais; EAP.

1. Introduction

Among the many demands made of emergent academic writers, the resources to 'technicalise' and 'rationalise' are paramount. That is, writers must be able to give names to things, and to connect these names to each other, in order to theorise about the world around them. Many resources interweave to enable these fundamental processes, but they depend initially on the two key motifs of a stratified linguistic

system: the potential to refer, and the potential to expand. In a discussion of scientific discourses, Halliday (1998, p. 195) argues:

In these [scientific] discourses, the semiotic power of *referring* is being further exploited so as to create *technical taxonomies*: constructs of virtual objects that represent the distillation of experience (typically experience that has itself been enriched by design, in the form of experiment). The semiotic power of *expanding* - relating one process to another by a logical-semantic relation such as time - is being further exploited so as to create *chains of reasoning*: drawing conclusions from observation (often observation of experimental data) and construing a line of argument leading on from one step to the next.

Through the reconstrual possibilities afforded by stratification and its inherent metaphoric power, processes and qualities can be named, and connected to each other. Thus, a picture of the world can be technicalised, and reasoned about. This becomes a critical component of success in academic writing, enabling writers to shift *up* in levels of abstraction. Importantly, however, it is not enough to simply provide a list of 'names'; abstraction and theorisation needs to be explicitly signalled, and connected in some overt framework. The student who can successfully predict where they are going, flag where they are, and reiterate where they have been, is more likely to be able to convince through their writing than the student who cannot. In this paper, I will examine how the fundamental processes of technicalising and rationalising are inflected in the higher-level structuring of written texts, via *hyper-Themes*. Through an examination of First year University essays in Management and History, the role of hyper-Themes in the development of basic argumentative frameworks will be identified. It will be seen that hyper-Themes have a dual function, establishing retrospective and prospective connections to the argumentative framework, and that they have distinctive lexicogrammatical and colligational patterns, according to the discipline.

2. Data: First Year Management and History essays

Two sets of 20 essays were collected¹ from First Year subjects in Management and History. For Management, each essay answered the question: "Explain how country differences make international management a different proposition from management in a purely

domestic context.” The essay was the final assignment for their subject. Each essay was already graded and commented upon by their subject lecturer, and grades ranged from 80% down to a Fail, with writing quality deteriorating rapidly in association with the grade. Essays were ranked in descending order of merit from ‘M1’ to ‘M20’. Many of the writers are not native English speakers, and there are a number of infelicities in expression which indicate this, although ‘surface’ errors, such as the incorrect form of a verb, are not relevant to the current discussion.

For History, essays were also already graded by the subject lecturer, and ranked in descending order of merit, from ‘H1’ to ‘H20’. The history essays answered several different questions; H1, H2 and H3 answered the question “How did Dutch colonialism foster the development of Indonesia’s present ruling class?”; H7 answered the question “How did Javanese society change as a result of Dutch influence?” and so on. Extracts from both sets of essays are included in the appendix and are referred to in the paper. The essays are used illustratively as evidence of trends in each set.

It is apparent that the History students are generally more sophisticated in their grasp of the written mode than their Management counterparts. More relevant for this paper, however, is a basic contrast in approach between the two disciplines in terms of structuring the fundamental argument. While to a certain extent they each rely on similar resources to achieve successful structures, there also seem to be distinct disciplinary differences. As many scholars have observed, the disciplines have their own distinctive characteristics, their own ways of semiotically reconstruing, reasoning about, and participating in the world², yet they do so with the ‘same’ resources. This would suggest that, if we are to maximise our potential for assisting students in their moves towards demanding forms of literacy, then we need to continue to explore these differences, both analytically and pedagogically.

3. Basic argumentative frameworks of the Management and History Essays

To begin to understand how the essays are organised, it is useful to examine the relations between paragraphs. Given that a paragraph tends to be organised around one key idea, that is, that it “has a relatively

strong sense of internal coherence” (GREENBAUM; QUIRK, 1990, p. 464), it is in the relationship of paragraphs to each other that we can begin to see the essay’s organisation of ideas, or the conceptual framework around which it is based. Of course as is well known, the paragraph is itself just an orthographic unit, and can be a very problematic category to work with (particularly when examining the work of apprentice writers), nevertheless, we will use it as our basic unit of structure here, at least to begin with (but see LE, 1999 for further discussion). In addition, we will focus on paragraph beginnings only; while the beginning of the paragraph is not *necessarily* where links have to be foregrounded, it usually is, so this will be our point of departure.

The fundamental argumentative structures of each set of essays can be viewed either synoptically or dynamically. A synoptic view of the conceptual organisation of ideas for M1 is presented in Figure 1 (relevant extracts of M1, awarded 80%, are presented in the Appendix).

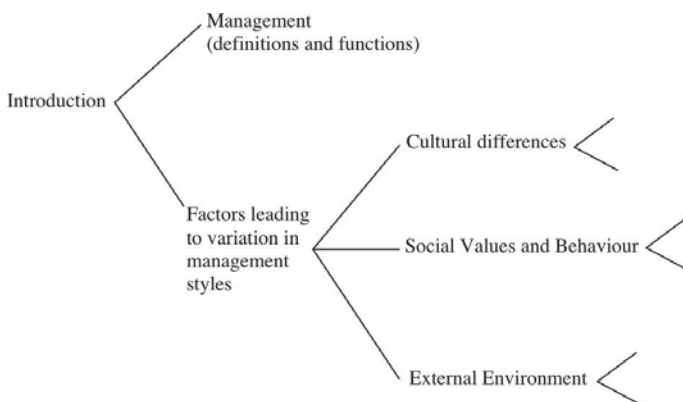


Figure 1. Synoptic view of the first management essay (M1)

The introductory paragraph establishes the main area of concern, variation in management style, and outlines the paper. The following paragraph spends some time defining ‘management’ and its components, then the remainder of the essay is organised around three factors

explaining variation in management styles, arising from cultural differences, social behaviour and values, and the external environment. Each of these points is then developed in further detail.

This synoptic overview represents a kind of ‘cleaning up’ of the essay’s organisation; a willing and co-operative reading of the text. If we follow the text dynamically, paragraph by paragraph, this conceptual map does not necessarily coincide with the linear development of the text. For example, the major point about ‘cultural differences’ introduced in P3, is not further developed until much later in the essay, in P7; clearly pointing to a weakness in the student’s organisation of the essay.

In addition to highlighting possible strengths or weaknesses in the underlying structure, a more dynamic view of the paragraph relations reveals how one step in the argument leads on from another. In order to examine the relation of ideas to each other, at the level of the paragraph, we will use Halliday’s description of logico-semantic relations as a basis (cf. HALLIDAY, 1985/1994; MATTHIESSEN, 1995). While Halliday explores these primarily to account for relations between clauses, he also notes (1985, p. 202) that the logico-semantic relations “... are not limited to the clause complex, but represent basic semantic motifs that run throughout the language as a whole.”³

Briefly, then, the logico-semantic relations fall into the two key types of expansion and projection. Most relevant to this study are the categories of expansion, given the particular role that they have in creating chains of reasoning, that is:

Elaboration: ‘i.e’, symbolised by ‘=’

one clause expands another by elaborating on it (or some portion of it): restating in other words, specifying in greater detail, commenting or exemplifying.

Extension: ‘and’, symbolised by ‘+’

one clause expands another by extending beyond it: adding some new element, giving an exception to it, or offering an alternative.

Enhancement: ‘so, yet, then’, symbolised by ‘x’

one clause expands another by embellishing around it: qualifying it with some circumstantial feature of time, place, cause or condition. (HALLIDAY, 1985, p. 196-197 / 1994, p. 220)

4. Preferred frameworks in the Management essays

Figure 2 presents a dynamic view of organisational relations in M1. In this Figure, elaborating relations are presented with an arrow to the right; extending relations with a downward arrow, and elaborating relations with a downward curved arrow.

Elaborating relations can be seen between P1 and P2. The first Paragraph, P1, begins with a thesis statement that international and domestic management will differ as a result of cultural differences, social behaviour and values, and the external environment. The second paragraph, P2, provides a definition of management, so it *elaborates* the first, as it specifies in further detail something which has already been introduced.

Enhancing relations can be seen between P2 and P3. Paragraph 3 argues that variation in management styles arises from cultural differences between countries. This paragraph thus also elaborates something introduced in Paragraph 1; at the same time it is in an enhancing relation to P2, because it explains one of the causes of variation in management styles, as introduced at the end of P2.

Extending relations can be seen between P3 and P4. In P4, factors other than cultural differences are introduced (social structure, religion, values and history). This paragraph thus also elaborates the introduction; and in this case, it is in a clear extension relation to the immediately preceding paragraph, as it adds something new to the conceptual framework.

Thus, in this essay, the preferred expansion relations are in terms of elaboration and extension, that is, they mostly elaborate on given concepts, and extend points in a list. (Enhancement is certainly present but is generally not used as a core structural element).

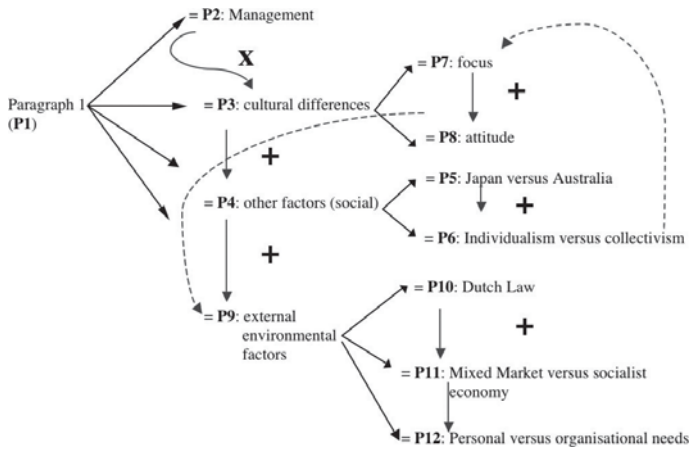


Figure 2. Dynamic view of the first management essay (M1): logico-semantic relations.

This pattern also emerges as the core of M2 (awarded 75%), where P5-8 lists those factors which differ between countries, following an introduction which defines management and the problems faced by multinational corporation (P1-4). These relations are illustrated in Figure 3.

M3 (awarded 70%) uses a similar structure; at the end of its introductory section, P4, it uses a macro-Theme to predict the core argument: 'There are four important differences relevant to international management. These include culture, communication, motivation and leadership'. The paper is then structured into four sections, clearly signalled by headings, again with each major section simultaneously elaborating and extending the basic structure.

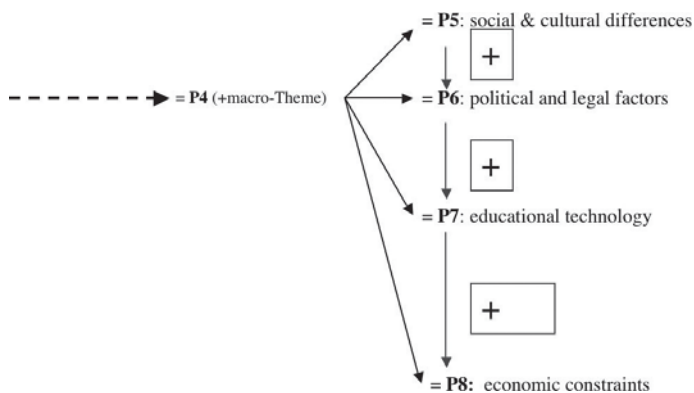


Figure 3. Dynamic view of the second management essay.

These descriptions, while not definitive, begin to reveal the argumentative framework that the students build in the texts. There are clear groupings of content, arising because the student can develop superordinate categories like ‘cultural differences’, and ‘external environmental factors’; this is evidence of their ability to technicalise. At the same time, there are clear relationships and connections between these groupings; the named elements are linked together, to rationalise.

Thus, each essay builds up an argument about the differences between international and domestic management; they construct their own picture, in this case a taxonomy, of key ideas in the essay and the relations between them. Taxonomies ‘classify and name (things) within a larger system, according to their similarities and differences’ (COLLINS *COBUILD* DICTIONARY, 1987). The two main types of taxonomic relations are superordination, ‘based on subclassification’ and composition, ‘based on the relation of parts to wholes’ (MARTIN, 1992, p. 295).

Most familiar from their use in scientific classification systems, taxonomies are also ‘a feature of everyday language’ (HALLIDAY, 1998, p. 197), as well as being found in many domains of academic writing, where control or understanding of content can be at least partly manifested by the development of field-related and instantial taxonomies (HALLIDAY, 1998, p. 221). That which is represented in this, and the other, management essays is not necessarily the same as a scientific

taxonomy, but it is analogous to it, and so I will refer to it as a *conceptual* taxonomy.

As illustrated, the taxonomies in the Management essays are primarily structured around classification: types of factors (which vary across countries/cultures). It seems that they are answering the question: 'What are the factors which vary between international and domestic management?' Yet the actual essay question was: "Explain how country differences make international management a different proposition from management in a purely domestic context" - which would seem to suggest the explanation genre as the preferred answer. While still successful, the students' essays are not, in fact, structured to answer the question which was asked. Note that the causal explanation *is* (sometimes) present in their essays, and is found as post-modification, 'a further cultural difference *that affects management practices amongst different countries*'; 'political and legal factors *that are likely to exert heavy direct influence on multinational organisations*', etc. However this is secondary to the core argument structure, where the post-modifiers indicate a simple listing about 'factors which vary': 'many other factors *which vary across countries*'.

5. Preferred frameworks in the History essays

A taxonomy is not the only way of representing the world, however, and the History essays reveal a different structure. Rather than a taxonomic structure, the History essays show a cascading-type structure, with one argument leading on to the next. Enhancing relations are the preferred organisational device.

A dynamic view of the argumentative relations in H1 is presented in Figure 4. H1, awarded 90%, in fact challenges the basic presupposition behind the question, "How did Dutch colonialism foster the development of Indonesia's present ruling class?". H1 argues that the New Order rose to power independently of the Old, and so can not be said to have been fostered by it, even though they are similar across a number of dimensions. Thus in terms of Coffin's (1997) description of History genres, it is a clear example of a *Challenge*.

The first half of H1, paragraphs 2-4 (just over half the essay) explains how the army in Indonesia has come to be the ruling class, in terms of economic activity (P2), the political and economic circumstances of 1942-1965 (P3), and the history of the military (P4). The second part

describes the similarities between the New and Old orders, in terms of similarities in administration (P5), economic and technical advancement combined with political repression (P6), and reliance on force (P7). However the conclusion (P8) underscores that these similarities ‘are not evidence that Dutch colonialism fostered the development of the ruling elite’.

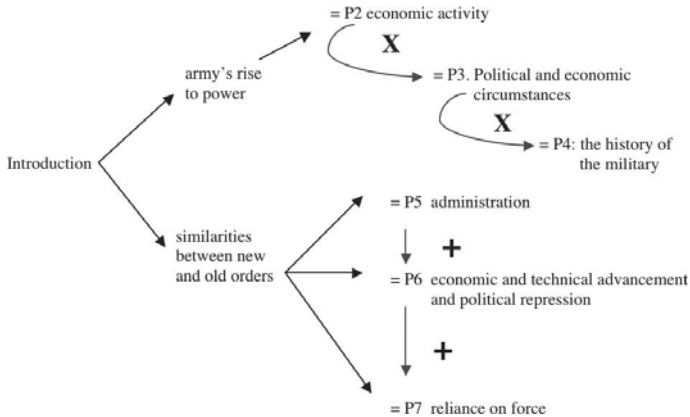


Figure 4. Dynamic view of the first history essay (H1).

The two ‘halves’ of the essay, P2-4, and P5-8, are quite different in their structure. Only in the second half of the essay do taxonomic-like structures appear. The first half of the essay is structured around enhancement, not elaboration or extension. One paragraph is used to qualify another.

For example, P2 introduces the economic policies of the military since 1965; an aspect of this is initially elaborated in P3 (ownership being foreign/Chinese), but then this elaboration is used as agent (anaphoric ‘This’) to explain the consequence of the ownership of capital on the indigenous bourgeoisie (agentive ‘this’ in: ‘This in turn has served to inhibit the development of an indigenous bourgeoisie ...’). Thus a sequence of events (the economy of that time) is ‘picked up’ and related causally to another.

It is notable that among the History essays, only the second half of H1 includes any kind of 'branching' structure similar to the patterns found in Management. H2 and H3, awarded 85% and 80% respectively, do not challenge the basic thesis underlying the question, but give an explanation which answers the question directly. So, they are significantly different in genre⁴, and as with the first half of H1, they each build up a description of an event and connect it causally to another, to create an explanation sequence. As Coffin notes (1997, p. 218), 'causality becomes a staging and ordering device'. For example, from H2 (awarded 85%), we see connections such as the following: P9 introduces the 1830s, and Dutch administration via the cultivation system; these are linked to changes in the ruling class in P10, linked to regent corruption and exploitation in P11.

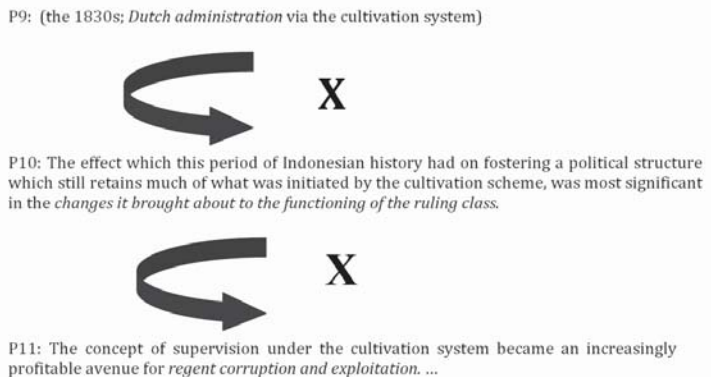


Figure 5. Extracts from H2.

And in H3 (awarded 80%), P2 introduces the Forced Cultivation System and double bureaucracy; linked to the native nobility as official governing body in P3, which also introduces the dismantling of the cultivation system, this being linked to the expanding economy in P4.

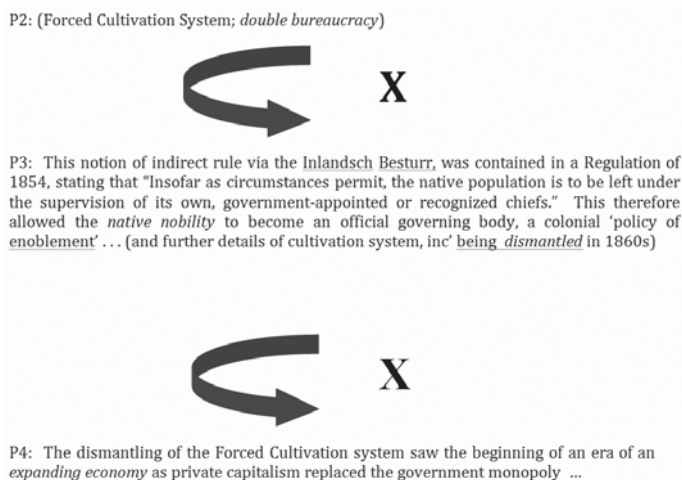


Figure 6. Extracts from H3.

Thus, the preferred structuring relation in History is that of enhancement; elaboration and extension are also used, but only in H1 are they used to frame (part of) the core argument. So, instead of a basic branching structure, a cascade-like structure, supporting the genre of explanation and challenge, is preferred. While this description is only a simple indicator of underlying structures, it suggests that these two disciplines, at least at this level, have distinct preferences for basic organisational relations.

6. Signalling the organisation through hyper-Themes

If, then, these are some of the basic frameworks and preferred logico-semantic relations in the Management and History essays, how is it that these relations are signalled? Of course, as with connections between clauses, certain relations will hold with or without an explicit marker of that connection (such as a conjunction), but generally they are explicitly signalled, and one of the main resources for signalling and foregrounding the conceptual framework of the essay is the hyper-Theme.

Hyper-Themes are an extension of the general principle of thematic organisation in text, where Theme is used to signal a point of departure (cf. HALLIDAY, 1994).⁵ Introduced by Danes (1974) to account

for one particular pattern of Theme-Rheme progression, namely that whereby ‘successive Themes can be related to a single preceding Theme’ (MARTIN 1992, p. 437). This principle is extended by Martin to account for ‘the Theme of a paragraph’, defining a hyper-Theme as “an introductory sentence or group of sentences which is established to predict a particular pattern of interaction among [lexical] strings, [reference] chains and Theme selection in following sentences” (*ibid.*) That is, the hyper-Theme functions predictively.

This is of course closely aligned to the school-rhetoric notion of the *topic sentence*. When discussed in academic writing textbooks, the topic sentence is usually described as something relevant to the paragraph, which encapsulates ‘general’ and ‘specific’ levels of detail in the paragraph. It is described by Oshima and Hogue, for instance, as ‘stating the topic and the controlling idea of the paragraph’ (OSHIMA; HOGUE, 1991, p. 19; similar definitions can be found in many other academic writing textbooks, for example ROOKS, 1998; ARNAUDET; BARRETT, 1990). In formal terms, the definitions given of topic sentences tend not to be very specific in elucidating exactly what it is, lexically or grammatically, which constitutes the ‘general’ idea/topic and ‘limiting’ or ‘specific’ idea/topic.

Martin, however, does describe the hyper-Theme in further lexicogrammatical detail. The range of devices he discusses include the following (MARTIN, 1992, p. 440ff; MARTIN, 1993):

- (i) grammatical metaphor (nominalisations), especially Vocabulary 3 items (Winter 1977) and Anaphoric Nouns (Francis 1985). Examples include ‘difference’ and ‘similarity’
- (ii) conjunctive relations, realised explicitly (*‘Furthermore...’*) or incongruently (*‘A further similarity...’*)
- (iii) relational processes, used to classify and describe, as well as to construe logical connections (*‘A further similarity is ...’*)

All these features are typically characteristic of hyper-Themes, although none are obligatory. Also, while ‘Theme’ in SFL is associated with point of departure, equating with first position in English, the ‘topic sentence’ of traditional rhetoric is often described as being able to occur in the middle, or even at the end, of a paragraph, so its realization seems hard to pin down. Thus there is scope to expand on the description of hyper-Themes in terms of their function and realization.

7. Hyper-themes in Management 1

A key distinguishing feature of the hyper-Themes in the Management and History essays is that, in addition to predicting the development of the paragraph, they also connect 'back' to the unfolding conceptual framework of the essay. Not every paragraph will realise this function, of course, only those paragraphs which have a core role to play in outlining the framework of the essay. But this does accord with Martin's suggestion (1992, p. 447) that the hyper-Theme is a metaphorical marked Theme for the text. Just as a marked Theme in a clause tends to signal a shift in the method of development of a text, so too the hyper-Theme, at least in its dual role, signals a shift in the conceptual development of the text as a whole. The point of departure is not, then, an orthographic place, that is, the beginning of the paragraph, but a structural place, namely a step in the argument.

So, for example, in M1 we see a number of examples which clearly fulfil this dual role.

M1:P2:S10:L	eadership and motivation styles will be different across countries...
M1:P3:S1:	<i>Variations in management styles between international and domestic organisations will primarily arise from the cultural differences present in various countries.</i>

Towards the end of P2, the writer says that 'Leadership and motivation styles will be different across countries...' and this is encapsulated and picked up as Given information in the opening sentence of P3, 'Variations in management styles between international and domestic organisations (will primarily arise from the cultural differences present in various countries)', using lexical and grammatical metaphor to enable the shift ('down in rank, and sideways in class and function'; HALLIDAY, p. 1998) from 'will be different' to 'variation'. This opening nominal group points retrospectively to something already established, presenting it as given, and creates an instantial node in the unfolding taxonomy. The remainder of this sentence relates this variation causally ('will primarily arise from') to the presence of cultural differences in various countries ('... the cultural differences present in various countries'). 'Cultural differences' is New information (other than having

been presented in the introduction) and has not yet been lexicalised, so it functions to predict forward for this paragraph.

The opening sentence of P3, then, simultaneously creates a new node for the conceptual taxonomy, connects retrospectively to a preceding node, and predicts forward to the development of the remainder of the paragraph. It thus acts as a nexus point for the organisational relations of the essay, distilling these prospective and retrospective functions, enabling connections to be made to an unfolding conceptual taxonomy.

M1:P4: *Along with cultural differences, there are also many other factors that differ across countries.*

The opening of P4, 'Along with cultural differences, there are also many other factors that differ across countries', clearly marks that this paragraph is moving on to a different point. The conjunctive phrase 'along with' marks extension in terms of an addition, an addition to the lexically-repeated preceding node of 'cultural differences'. Thus, this sentence locates itself very explicitly in relation to the unfolding taxonomy. It thus extends the immediately preceding node, but *in relation to* that which is established in the introduction, in P1, so it is also an elaboration of P1. At the same time, it suggests that there are factors other than cultural differences which vary across countries ('... there are also many other factors that differ across countries'). So this sentence predicts forwards, as well as connecting backwards.

In History, there are connections which also fulfil this dual function, of facing forwards and back.

H2:P10: The effect which this period of Indonesian history had on fostering a political structure which still retains much of what was initiated by the cultivation scheme, was most significant in the changes it brought about to the functioning of the ruling class.
(*points back* to P9, which discusses Dutch influence in the 1830s; and *points forward* by enhancing in terms of explaining the changes it brought)

H3: P4 The dismantling of the Forced Cultivation System saw the beginning of an era of an expanding economy as private capitalism replaced government monopoly.
(*points back* to P3, which discusses the demise of the Forced Cultivation

System, and *points forward* by enhancing in terms of explaining the consequences of this demise)

While these sentences from History are dual facing, they tend not to point (back) to an over-arching framework, as is the case for the Management examples. The connections in History are more local, moving from one part of an unfolding explanation to another. As already noted, this effect arises because of the preference for enhancing relations in these History essays, producing a cascade structure instead of a taxonomic one. The connections between 'points' (such as they are) in a cascade are very local: one level flows on to another; in a taxonomy, nodes are explicitly connected 'up' to higher levels of abstraction/generality and 'down' to lower levels of specificity, so location of any one node reveals (at least part of) the larger picture.

But in both cases, the successful hyper-Themes face both directions. This expanded notion of the function of hyper-Themes enables us to begin to differentiate these connections from those which face in one direction only.

Thus in M1:P6: 'Many countries tend to encourage individualism' - 'countries' of course repeats an existing lexical chain, and 'individualism' could be connected hyponymically to 'ideology' (as introduced in P5) so it is not unconnected to the remainder of the essay, but unlike some of the other sentences, there are no explicit markers of the taxonomic connections. As it is, the cooperative reader can work out the relevance of this paragraph to the essay as a whole, but that relevance is not made explicit for the reader. Similarly, there are a number of other examples from Management which seem to point forward, but which fail to connect to any overarching framework.

M1:P11: Australia is a mixed market economy.

M2:P11: Japanese companies have taken such a commanding lead in doing business that other countries have a slim chance of catching up.

M3:P22: Motivations vary across countries.

Also in History, there are examples which certainly connect with preceding parts of the text, usually through lexical repetition, but which do not seem to bring that connection 'forward' into an explanatory (ie

enhancing) framework. There are relationships here, but again, the nature of that relationship (ie enhancing, causal etc) is not made explicit. For example:

- H1:P2: The current Indonesian ruling group could be better described as a military caste than a class.
- H2:P3: Political power in pre-colonial Indonesian society, featured at its apex t he divine power of a king.
- H3:P5: Education was slow in coming to the native population despite the fact that the 1854 constitution stressed Dutch responsibility for it.

Thus in both History and Management, these might still count as topic sentences in terms of traditional descriptions, as they are 'general' ideas which the remainder of the paragraph can make more explicit. They can also be said to fulfil the predictive function of the hyper-Theme. However, in terms of the retrospective function of the hyper-Theme, they are ineffective.

This dual-function of the hyper-Theme enables us to distinguish different kinds of paragraph beginnings. When both functions are fully and successfully realised, a clear and unambiguous hyper-Theme results, however, when only one function is realised, identification of the hyper-Theme becomes less certain, though there is certainly still what might be called a 'topic sentence.'

At the same time, this dual-function of the hyper-Theme also enables us to separate the hyper-Theme from orthographic position (ie first sentence in the paragraph). Based on this functional understanding, there can be sentences functioning as hyper-Theme, which are *not* in first position.

It is important to note, however, that *signals* of structure are not in themselves enough to actually achieve a successful structure. Even the clearest of hyper-Themes doesn't necessarily fulfil its promises. Consider the following:

- M1:P3: Variations in management styles between international and domestic organisations, will primarily arise from the cultural differences present in various countries. Culture will affect an individual's social behaviour and their way of communicating with others. The culture

in a particular country is an important contributor to an individual's personality. It determines such factors as a person's independence, aggression, competition and coordination.

M1:P4: Along with cultural differences, there are also many other factors that differ across countries.

M1:P7: A cultural difference is also shown...

M1:P8: A further cultural difference...

M1: P3 promises to explain 'cultural differences', but it goes on to simply give further definitions of 'culture', ('Culture will affect...; The culture in a particular country is...; It...') and examples of cultural differences are not actually presented until P7 and P8. So, the opening of P3 looks quite effective as a link, and enables us to see how it functions to scaffold a framework for this essay, but it is in fact a false lead. Similar problems can be found in the Management essays, and as the essays become less successful overall, these problems become endemic, indicating that basic control of conceptual structure, as well as its signalling, is one of the key areas for literacy development.

8. Structure and colligational patterns in the hyper-Themes

When the hyper-Themes are used effectively, they add an enormous amount to the organisational framework of the essays. What then are the lexicogrammatical resources which enable the hyper-Themes to fulfil this dual function of retrospective and prospective connections? In the first instance, there is the familiar resource of grammatical metaphor, used to name, and so encapsulate, a figure or a sequence (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 1999, p. 236). In M1:P3, for example, 'variations' refers back to the preceding clause 'will be different'. This is - as we know - one of the most important ways of beginning to technicalise: to provide names to processes and sequences, and then to use those names as a further point of departure.

At the same time as using grammatical metaphor in this way, other closely related devices are also deployed, including generic nouns, and semiotic abstractions (MARTIN, 1997; HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 1999); these are not quite metaphor 'proper' (cf. discussions in DEREWIANKA, 1995), but developmentally, can be seen as steps on a

continuum, moving from the concrete, towards a general notion of ‘abstraction’. See Figure 7.

The organising role of these items has been well documented by Winter, with his description of Vocabulary 3 items (WINTER, 1977), Hoey, with lexical signals (HOEY, *passim*) and Francis, with metalinguistic labels (FRANCIS, 1994). The various descriptions of these categories overlap, both with each other and with grammatical metaphor ‘proper’. They share the features of being metadiscursive, able to refer to text, and of facilitating semantic connections between sections of text, either prospectively or retrospectively.

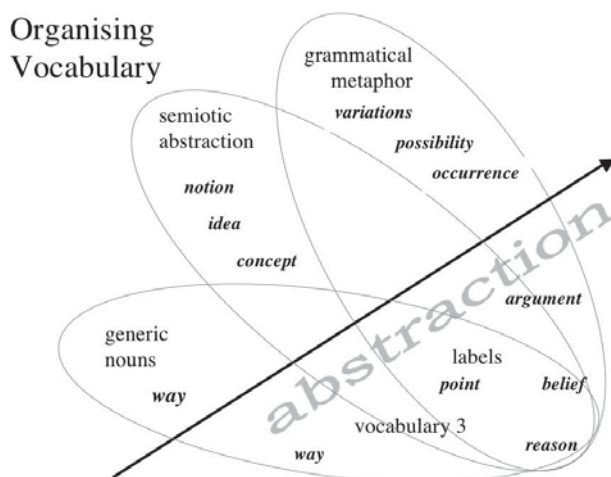


Figure 7. Organizing vocabulary.

Winter’s original suggestion of Vocabulary 3 was proposed to account for one group of ‘organising’ Vocabulary items (as opposed to Vocabulary 1, which includes subordinators, like ‘by, after, unless, although’, and as opposed to Vocabulary 2, which includes ‘sentence connectors like ‘thus’ [CARTER 1989, p. 75]) which ‘fulfil an anticipatory function. They project the reader forward by creating expectations of what is to ensue in the next part of the discourse.’ (CARTER 1989, p. 75). Vocabulary 3 includes items such as ‘cause; contrast; fact; point; reason; way’.

Later scholars argue that these relations can also be established instantially in text, and that the organisational link can be backwards as well as forwards (cf. HOEY, 1998; FRANCIS, 1994).

Francis, for example, proposes the category of *advance* and *retrospective* labels (FRANCIS, 1994; building on her work on anaphoric nouns, FRANCIS 1985) extending Halliday and Hasan's (1976) category of general nouns, to include those nouns which are, in the first instance, *metadiscursive*, that is, used 'to talk about the ongoing discourse' (FRANCIS, 1985, p. 3, as cited by CARTER, 1989, p. 79). To be classified as an A-noun, a metadiscursive item must function as a proform, and thus be anaphorically cohesive, and it must also 'face forwards', that is, 'be presented as the *given* information in terms of which the *new* propositional content of the clause or sentence in which it occurs is formulated' (*ibid*).

These labels are an aspect of nominal group lexical cohesion, and Francis identifies *metalinguistic labels* as an important subset; again, items like 'argument, point' (FRANCIS, 1994, p. 83). As these items are able to name and refer, they have an inherent organising potential. It is this potential which is critical to the management of the dual function of the hyper-Theme, in terms of its retrospective connection to an already-established framework, and its prospective connection to additional components of that framework. This is illustrated in Figure 8, with reference to M1: P10.

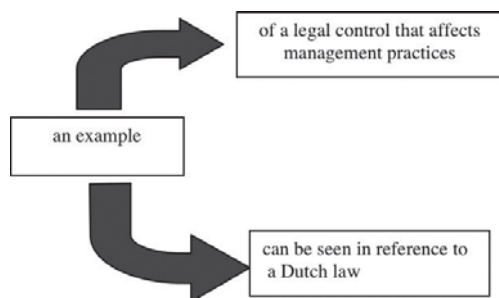


Figure 8. Retrospective and prospective connections.

Importantly, it is not just the *presence* of these labels which is important, but the fact that they appear in distinct colligational patterns.

That is, they have a “strong tendency to occur in a particular position” and “tend to co-occur with a particular grammatical class of items” (HOEY, 1998, p. 3). As Hoey suggests, (what we call) topic sentences are the product of micro-wording choices:

“... the topic sentence is dead. It is not the case that the decision to make a topic sentence affects the wording of the beginning of that sentence. What appears to be the case is that the wording at the beginning of the sentence dictates whether we perceive it to be a topic sentence. In other words, topic sentences are the product of micro-wording choices, they do not dictate such choices” (HOEY, 1998, p.3).

For example, as Francis observes (1994), the retrospective labels are typically associated with Given information, in Theme position. The advance labels tend to be associated with New information, in Rheme position. The labels are typically the Head noun.

M1: P7: S1	
A cultural difference	is also shown in the way countries tend to be focussed...
<i>retrospective label</i> (to paragraph 3)	<i>advance label</i> (to current paragraph)
<i>Head Noun</i>	<i>Head Noun</i>
<i>Theme/Given</i>	<i>Rheme/New</i>

Figure 9: Colligational patterns

However, this does not always have to be the case (for instance, advance labels can occur in Theme position) and it seems that it may be possible to describe more delicate colligational patterns associated with the use of these labels.

8.1 *Post-modification*

In most cases, and especially in Elaborating paragraphs, while the label in Theme position is presented as ‘Given’ information, it is not the label *as such* which is Given; in fact the label itself is an advance one, pointing forward to the New information of the clause, but the

group of which it is part is made to be retrospective through lexically-specific post-modification. It is the post-modification which is cohesive with preceding information. In Elaborating paragraphs, as in Figure 10, the lexical nature of the Head noun, ‘example’, indicates the elaborating relationship, mediating the move from the general - realised by the post-modification - to the specific, realised in New position. A similar pattern is found for Extending paragraphs. See Figures 10 and 11.

<u>M1: P10: S1</u>		
<u>An example</u> ← →	of a legal control that affects management practices (to previous paragraph) ←	can be seen in reference to a Dutch law. (to current paragraph) →
<u>Head Noun</u>	<u>Post-Modifier: lexically specific and cohesive</u>	
<u>Theme/Given</u>	<u>Rheme/New</u>	

Figure 10: Colligational patterns: lexically-specific post-modification (Elaborating).

<u>M1: P7:S1</u>				
<u>A cultural</u> ←	<u>difference</u> ←→	<u>is also shown in</u> →	<u>the way</u> →	<u>countries tend to be focussed...</u>
<u>pre-M: Classifier: lexically cohesive</u>	<u>Head Noun</u>	<u>textual marker</u>	<u>Head Noun / advance label</u>	
<u>Theme/Given</u>		<u>Rheme/New</u>		

Figure 11. Colligational patterns: lexically-specific post-modification (Extending).

8.2 Textual markers and pre-modification

In the hyper-Theme of Extending paragraphs, the Theme typically includes a textual marker, realised congruently as a conjunction (such as ‘Furthermore’) or metaphorically as a pre-Modifier in the nominal group (A further difference...). Also, the label may be pre-modified by a Classifier which is retrospective, that is, lexically cohesive with a preceding node (as well as the post-modification already seen above). Again, this pattern is to be anticipated; as the function of extension is to add, it seems logical

to find explicit markers of that which is being added. The label itself is 'made' to be retrospective by virtue of the pre-classification; at the same time, the textual marker 'makes' it prospective; we anticipate lexicalisation of this item in the near context. In the Extending paragraph, we also find a label in Rheme position. Again these occur as a Head noun, and may be relexicalised by its own Qualifier, but there is a sense in which these labels also 'point forward' to the remainder of the paragraph. (ie. they will be relexicalised there). See Figure 12.

8.3 Grammatical metaphor

In the hyper-Themes of Enhancing paragraphs, we see similar colligational trends as observed elsewhere; labels as Head noun in Theme/Given and Rheme/New positions, and specific lexicalisation in (pre- and) post-modifying position. But what tends to characterise these hyper-Themes is a clearer preference for grammatical metaphor (as opposed to something more identifiable as, say, a semiotic abstraction), as well as a relational process which itself encodes an enhancing connection between the two Participants in the clause.

M1: P8				
A further	cultural	difference	that affects management practices among different countries	is the attitude to work itself.
→	←	→	←	→
textual marker	pre-M: Classifier; lexically cohesive	Head Noun		Head Noun / advance
Theme/Given				Rheme/New

Figure 12. Colligational patterns: pre-modification and textual markers (Extending).

H3: P4: S1		
<u>The dismantling of the Forced Cultivation system</u>	saw	<u>the beginning of an era of an expanding economy as private capitalism replaced the government monopoly.</u>
←		→
<i>Head; retrospective / gm</i>	<i>Pro: rel</i>	<i>Head; advance; gm</i>
<i>Theme/Given</i>		<i>Rheme/New</i>

Figure 13. Colligational patterns grammatical metaphor (Enhancing).

The hyper-Themes in History make more frequent use of (clear) grammatical metaphors than is the case for Management. The use of grammatical metaphor is already well established as a feature of History writing (EGGINS *et al*, 1993; MARTIN 1994; COFFIN, 1997). It is typically used to encapsulate an event already presented in a more congruent way, and to use that encapsulation as point of departure for another argument. Thus in H3:P4 above ‘The dismantling’ refers back to a clause in P3 ‘As the Forced Cultivation System was slowly dismantled in the 1860’s. So, it is by placing one event in a causal relationship with another, that the nature and effects of history are explained.

Other labels which are more obviously semiotic abstractions or metadiscursive seem to be used to mediate the introduction of metaphors ‘proper’. Thus in H2: P11: ‘the *concept* of supervision’ seems to be used to mediate the introduction of ‘supervision’, which encapsulates the sequence of events introduced in P10, but which has no lexical equivalent in the preceding text. In H2: P3: ‘this notion of indirect rule’ refers back to P2, ‘They [the Dutch] chose to rule through the local Regent.’ Thus these labels seem to be used to mediate a grammatical metaphor which is analogous with, but not directly parallel to, a preceding figure or sequence. Thus, grammatical metaphor ‘proper’ seems to be more evident as an organising resource in the History texts, which prefer the enhancing relation between paragraphs.

9. Difference: referring to and expanding on a different basis

The Management and History essays have different preferred logico-semantic connections between paragraphs, resulting in different underlying frameworks for their essays. The foregrounding of semiotic

abstractions and metadiscursive labels in Management means that that which is referred to, or named, is an aspect of the text itself. In History, the foregrounding of metaphorical processes means that the 'doubling of semiosis' (TAVERNIERS, 2003) is complete: a figure or sequence is repackaged to become an intrinsic component of the text; a covert move which effectively absorbs its own processes of textual manipulation.

While generic nouns, semiotic abstractions and metaphor all contribute towards increasing abstraction in text, with the first two, the move is, so to speak, still 'visible'; with the latter, it is no longer transparent. This supports Coffin's description of the 'gatekeeping' function of History, with the covert manipulation of text providing a more powerful (because more valued) resource for argumentation.

However, it is not just the organising vocabulary which is important; control of the supporting patterns is also crucial. Even in the more successful essays, from both disciplines, there are many points where the students would be able to improve their writing by accessing the resources of analysis and abstraction, both the appropriate organising vocabulary, and the colligational structures which support them. The student who can only write 'the first factor, the second factor, the final factor', without explaining what the factors are, is not in fact creating a strong structural framework.

If we return to M1: P4:, 'Along with cultural differences, there are also many other factors that differ across countries', we can see here that, while this seems to function quite explicitly and successfully as a link in the essay's unfolding structure, it is in fact rather vague. 'Cultural differences' is not Qualified, and 'many other factors' is Qualified by the slightly vague 'that differ across countries'. In other words, the explicit lexical marking of the exact taxonomic link, 'variation in management styles' has been lost (and note that it is at this point in this essay that the student slides from the enhancing framework established in P3, to the elaborating/extending framework of this and subsequent paragraphs).

This is just one example, among dozens and dozens in these essays, where the overall framework could be improved with attention to the organising vocabulary and supporting colligational structures. Among the weaker essays, these problems become endemic, to the point that there is no evident argumentative framework at all. While there is not space in this paper to demonstrate these weaknesses, the absence of a

clear argumentative framework is evident in the failure to use effective metadiscursive labels and appropriate supporting colligational structures. Students are confined to a descriptive listing of 'factors', which are linked by lexical cohesion to the general topic, but which are not linked to any more abstract framework, that is, a position on the topic.

10. Conclusions: similarities and differences in the signalling of structure between Management and History

Most teachers of academic writing would be very familiar with these kinds of weaknesses, where there is a need to move students away from description, and 'up' to analysis and abstraction. This is a general requirement of academic writing and of course goes far beyond the demands of hyper-Themes, but it *is* particularly important to foreground analysis and description in the hyper-Themes, in order to provide the initial scaffolding for the argument.

The stronger essays in both Management and History are able to use lexicogrammatical resources to develop analysis and abstraction. They are able to refer to and name key points in their texts, whether via metaphor, a semiotic abstraction, or a metadiscursive label, and so to move from a congruent representation of content to a metaphorical encapsulation of significant steps in an argument. In conjunction with the associated colligational patterns, these devices (the metaphors, the labels) are foregrounded in the hyper-Themes, providing a metaframework for the essay, and functioning as a nexus, pointing forward and back, enabling a writer to connect the points they have named. The successful student is thus able to use these resources to shift between levels of abstraction; the weaker writers are unable to do this.

In examining these resources in further detail, I have claimed that hyper-Themes have a dual, not a singular function, that they may be used to create and support different kinds of frameworks, according to the main logico-semantic patterns they realise, and that there are distinctive lexicogrammatical resources which characterise the hyper-Themes. With this enhanced understanding of hyper-Themes, we can begin to explain different degrees of success (or otherwise) in the hyper-Themes of particular texts, and begin to differentiate them from the traditional notion of topic sentences.

In some ways, the hyper-Themes and associated resources are used to similar effect in Management and History. That is, their core

function is to shift the ground: to move from the familiar to more abstract and analytical levels of discussion. With their dual face, pointing back and forward to the overarching framework, they foreground the processes of technicalising and rationalising, that is, naming a particular view of the world, and weaving that into a larger picture. Many resources are harnessed to this effect, but it begins with the ability to name, or refer, through grammatical metaphor, semiotic abstractions, and metadiscursive labels, and is dependent on the ability to expand, or rationalise, about these things in relation to each other. The colligational patterns supporting these structures are critical to their success.

But despite these inherent similarities, it is also the case that Management and History prefer different patterns, confirming the now well-established notion that the disciplines are, indeed, of different 'tribes and territories'. The essays examined here show clear preferences for fundamentally different argumentative structures: taxonomic classification versus cascading argument, each of which is supported by its own particular patterns of hyper-Theme. The variations here point to the need for much more vigorous exploration of disciplinary differences, and the need to incorporate such findings into pedagogical materials and practices⁶. As long as Universities and other institutions continue to struggle with the literacy demands of a broad demographic in the student population, these needs remain paramount.

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I will examine how the fundamental processes of technicalising and rationalising are inflected in the higher-level structuring of written texts, via *hyper-Themes*. Through an examination of First year University essays in Management and History, the role of hyper-Themes in the development of basic argumentative frameworks will be identified. It will be seen that hyper-Themes have a dual function, establishing retrospective and prospective connections to the argumentative framework, and that they have distinctive lexicogrammatical and colligational patterns, according to the discipline.

KEYWORDS: hyper-Themes; referring expressions; EAP; lexicogrammatical patterns.

NOTES

¹From the University of Wollongong, Australia.

² See, for example, Christie and Martin (1997) for discussion of a number of different educational and bureaucratic discourses; Bhatia (1999) on the specificities of 'genre knowledge' required in different contexts; Bazerman (1998), Becher (1989), and Hyland (2000) on the 'tribes and territories' of academia.

³ There are certainly other frameworks which can provide complementary pictures of the relations we are trying to capture here, including Martin's description of conjunctive relations (1992); Rhetorical Structure Theory, as developed by Mann, Matthiessen and Thompson (1992), and exemplified in relation to academic language by Stuart-Smith (1998) and Benwell (1999); or Winter and Hoey's descriptions of lexical signals (WINTER, *passim*; HOEY, *passim*).

⁴ See papers in Christie and Martin 1997, which observe the topographical relations between genres across a number of different disciplines.

⁵ See also Halliday (1994), Fries (1981, 1995), and Martin (1992) for detailed theoretical background, and Martin (1999) for an effective and accessible explanation.

⁶ See Thurston and Candlin (1997) for an interesting beginning here, and Jones, 2000, for extensive materials on taxonomies.

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APPENDIX 1

Management: "Explain how country differences make international management a different proposition from management in a purely domestic context."

M1 (80%)

P1 Within any organisation, people and their attitudes will vary widely. International management will often be completely different to management in a purely domestic context. This arises primarily as a result of the cultural differences present amongst countries. Along with these differences, comes

varying social behaviour and values, which management must take into consideration when adopting a leadership style. In particular, management practices in Japan often reflect a different attitude to employees, than is seen in our own domestic environment. The external environment in different countries will also contribute to variations in management styles. As a result, management functions will vary accordingly.

P2:S1 Management is the process of coordinating the activities of individuals and groups in order to attain some objective.

P3:S1 Variations in management styles between international and domestic organisations, will primarily arise from the cultural differences present in various countries.

P4:S1 Along with cultural differences, there are also many other factors that differ across countries.

P5:S1 A particular example between a managers perception of employees in an international organisation compared to that in the domestic context, is demonstrated by comparing the ideology of Japanese and American management.

P6:S1 Many countries tend to encourage individualism.

P7:S1 A cultural difference is also shown in the way countries tend to be focused.

P8:S1 A further cultural difference, that affects management practices amongst different countries, is the attitude to work itself.

P9:S1 The impact of external environmental factors in different countries, will also reflect in management styles.

P10:S1 An example of a legal control that affects management practices can be seen in reference to a Dutch law.

P11:S1 Australia is a mixed market economy, with little government interference.

P12:S1 Within the external environment, a dilemma also exists between an individual's need for satisfying personal goals and an organisations need for efficiency.

P13 (Conclusion) Country differences, particularly in cultural beliefs, makes international management quite different to management in our domestic context.

APPENDIX 2

M2 (75%): *Extracts*

P4: S8: The following paragraphs includes many of the significant differences between cultures that affect the practice of multinational, and for which managers are often unprepared.

P5: S1: Firstly, there is social and cultural differences, which can and does affect the operations of multinational organisations.

P6: S1: Secondly, there is political and legal factors that are likely to exert heavy direct influence on multinational organisations, since there are different political and legal policies in the 170 or so countries in the world.

P7: S1: Thirdly, there is education and technology.

P8: S1: Finally, there are economic constraints.

APPENDIX 3

M3 (70%): *Extracts*

P4: There are four important differences relevant to international management. These include culture, communication, motivation and leadership.

P5: S1–2: Culture can be thought of as a set of values and morals that are generally accepted and followed by most members of a society. One factor that makes international management a problem for organisations is adjusting to foreign cultures.

APPENDIX 4

History: “How did Dutch colonialism foster the development of Indonesia’s present ruling class?”

H1: (90%)

P1 The contention that Dutch colonialism ‘fostered the development’ of the present Indonesian ruling class’ is dubious. This paper will argue that the present ruler of Indonesia, the Indonesian army, has emerged not as the product of Dutch colonialism, but from the circumstances of the collapse of the Dutch empire in Indonesia and the economic and political difficulties encountered by the Indonesian republic in the 1950s and 60s. These circumstances, and the army’s response to them, created the opportunity for a military takeover in 1965. While it is true that there are strong elements of similarity and continuity between the New Order regime and the Dutch colonial administration, these occur in the nature of the state apparatus and the policies it pursues, and not in the group that is in control of it. The present directors of that state, and not its functionaries, constitute the Indonesian ‘ruling class’.

P2: S1 The current Indonesian ruling group could be better described as a military caste than a class.

P3: S1-2 In this type of economic activity, ownership (but not control) of capital rests with foreign or Chinese firms. This in turn has served to inhibit the development of an indigenous bourgeoisie.

P4: S1 The Republican army was originally the creation of the Japanese during their occupation of Indonesia from 1942 to 1945, and they not only armed and trained an Indonesian-officered military force, but also imbued it with an Indonesian nationalist ideology.

P5: S1 The similarities and elements of continuity between the New Order government and Dutch rule can be found in the manner in which both have administered the country, but not in the social group or class which rules it.

P6: S1 Both colonial and New Order regimes have pursued a policy of economic and technical advancement, with a corresponding repression of political activity, which serves to facilitate the economic exploitation of the country for the benefit of the ruling caste.

P7: S1 A further similarity is that both systems have relied ultimately on force.

P8 (Conclusion) All these elements of Dutch colonial rule appropriated by the New Order government serve to facilitate its complete political and economic exploitation of the country.

APPENDIX 5

H2 (85%) *Extracts*

P9: (... the 1830s; Dutch administration via the cultivation system...)

P10: S1: The effect which this period of Indonesian history had on fostering a political structure which still retains much of what was initiated by the cultivation scheme, was most significant in the changes it brought about to the functioning of the ruling class.

P11: S1: The concept of supervision under the cultivation system became an increasingly profitable avenue for regent corruption and exploitation.

APPENDIX 6

H3 (80%) *Extracts*

P2: (... Forced Cultivation System; double bureaucracy...)

P3: S1-2 This notion of indirect rule via the *Inlandsch Bestuur*, known in indigenous terms as the *Pangreh Praja*, was contained in a Regulation of 1854 stating that "... insofar as circumstances permit, the native population is to be

left under the supervision of its own, government-appointed or-recognized chiefs”. This therefore allowed the native nobility to become an official governing body, a colonial “policy of ennoblement”. (+ further details of cultivation system, inc’ being dismantled in 1860s)

P4: S1: The dismantling of the Forced Cultivation system saw the beginning of an era of an expanding economy as private capitalism replaced the government monopoly.

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