CHAPTER 5  Representing the world: the experiential metafunction

ANSWERS

1  Complex transitivity analysis

It is even more important
[[that justice and the rule of law be upheld]]

C- Pr: rel, attr  Attribute -arrier
  Goal          Pr: mat

It seems odd
[[that the memos were simply typed on blank sheets of paper]]

C- Pr: rel, attr  Attribute -arrier
  Goal          Pr: mat     Circ

[[So what they did]] was
[[to equip themselves with the tools [[they needed]]]]

Value Pr: rel, id  Token
Actor     Pr: mat     Scope     Circ
          Attribute     Carrier Pr: rel, attr

[[What I’d like to suggest]] is
[[that there are additional arguments [[… realities]]]]

Value Pr: rel, id  Token
Sayer     Pr: verbal
          Pr: Existent
          exist

[[that are relevant to today’s realities]]

Carrier Pr: rel, attr  Attribute

It was US intelligence photos
[[that provided the raw information about Iranian positions]]

V- Pr: rel, id  Token -value
Actor     Pr: mat     Goal

It was the Reagan administration
[[that stopped Congress from Saddam’s use of poison gas]]

V- Pr: rel, id  Token -value
Initiator Pr- Sayer -verbal  Target

2  Transitivity in newspaper reports
The children’s minister, Margaret Hodge, argued that ‘a total ban on smacking could potentially criminalise most parents in this country’.

<<who had sought to win round rebels in a meeting with the prime minister on Monday>>

‘The government simply does not believe every instance of smacking is a criminal offence.

Do you really believe we can support good parenting by [we] threatening the strong arm of the law?’

By the end of the year mothers or fathers [could be jailed for up to five years]

[mothers or fathers] caught smacking their children if they leave the slightest mark
The move horrified legal experts and police

**Phenomenon**  
Pr: mental, reaction  
Senser

who say the law will be unenforceable

**Sayer**  
Pr: verbal  
Carrier  
Pr: rel, attributive  
Attribute

Mr Blair was accused of [[taking the Nanny State … neighbours]]

**Target**  
Pr: verbal  
**Verbiage**

[Mr Blair] [[taking the Nanny State into a new dimension with a measure [[ ]]]]

**Actor**  
Pr: material  
**Goal**  
**Circumstance**  
**Circumstance**

[[that could turn children against parents and friends against neighbours]]

**Actor**  
Pr: mat.  
**Goal**  
**Circumstance**  
**Goal**  
**Circumstance**

3 Working with transitivity profiles

One feature that immediately stands out is that there are two columns in the *Daily Mail* analysis that are not there in the *Guardian*: Blair and the police (neither appears at all as a participant in the *Guardian* text). The reasons why Blair features frequently, and in a range of participant roles, in the *Daily Mail* will need to be investigated in the text. The newspaper was well-known for consistently attacking Blair, so one can predict that he is likely to appear in a negative light; but it will also be worth considering why he appears so often as an individually-named person (markedly more frequently than any other individuals in either text).

The inclusion of the police in the *Daily Mail* seems to be part of a larger pattern. We can divide the groups of participants into two main domains: the political and the everyday. In the *Guardian*, the political domain (‘politicians’ and ‘ban’) is very much dominant: 33 out of 46 participant roles. At a more delicate level, the politicians appear as Sayer and Senser comparatively more often (8 cases vs. 2 in the other text): it seems likely that their views are being given more attention. On the other hand, while the *Daily Mail* also focuses on the political, though to a lesser degree, the everyday is more salient than in the *Guardian*. The ‘parents’ and ‘children’ groups both occur markedly more frequently; and the ‘police’ group belongs here as well, since they would be responsible for applying the law in the world outside politics. Together, these make up 29 of the 73 participant roles.

It seems likely that this difference can be connected with the general orientation of the two newspapers. On the whole, the *Guardian* is more concerned with political developments, observing and recording history in the making, as it were. Events are seen as illustrating or embodying more general issues. The *Daily Mail*, in contrast, is more concerned with ‘human interest’ stories, focusing
attention on how events impact on ordinary people. It seems plausible that this may also be a factor in
the greater attention paid to Blair as an individual: there is a tendency to personalise events, making
them more concrete and comprehensible to their readership. Each of these approaches appeals to
different readers, who select the newspaper which fits more comfortably with their views of the
world.

This brief discussion has only aimed to indicate aspects of the texts which seem worth
following up, and I should also point out that I have drawn on my own experience of the types of texts
being analysed. This then gives some ‘hooks’ on which to hang the more detailed analysis, which is
carried out by going back to the texts and looking at the individual participant roles in context.