A Decent Writer:

Professional Environmental Communication

Among Professional Environmental Managers

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ABSTRACT

The study explores a set of genre-hybrid reviews, 1999–2001, characterised by a standpoint of ecological rationality, and produced by a professional writer for a professional environmental management organisation. The interaction between such managers has not been studied before in terms of professional communication and was delineated as a new field of enquiry. The issues of tact and Face were important for this organisational community, which shared characteristics of contact communities and Communities of Practice. Methods used derive from studies of text in context, and organisational communication.

The assembly of theoretical material is one outcome of the study, which tackled three questions:

1 To assess in what way the reviews made a contribution to the organisation, Weick's equivoque and the notion of the Fractal were combined to explain the text as an active organ for collaborative organisational learning and knowledge management. Thereby the texts are presumed to have contributed to the organisation's goal to enhance knowledge and practice in environmental management among managers drawn from diverse intellectual backgrounds.

2 To address the question of the technical characteristics of the reviews, narrative polyphony concepts provided suspension dialogia, which complemented the notion of translation suspension.

3 To address how the reviewer had managed to reproduce organisational patterns despite his inconsistent moral standpoint, the search for a theoretical position travelled through code-switching, pragmatics and translation, emerging with a concept similar to intersemiosis, labelled 'codehandling'.

The combination of questions produced complex answers. Translation constructs, such as dynamic equivalence, increasingly emerged as productive and suitable to complement emerging endogenous approaches in environmental management literature. The genre-hybrid is argued to have altered the social function of the review. In prioritising interaction, it put at risk the organisation's strategic tact

structure. Nevertheless, the reviewer managed the risk within acceptable limits and produced popular and successful reviews.

DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material previously accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

I consent to make the thesis available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

…….

May 2004

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GLOSSARY

Where indicated [R], definitions are sourced from Bussman Hadumod 1996, translated and edited by G Trauth and K Kazzasi *Routledge dictionary of linguistics and language* Routledge, London. In other cases, definitions are quoted from scholars represented in the bibliography. Otherwise the definitions are original.

abstract compact formal academic summary which eliminates everything except the logic path, method and data findings. The abstract is for insider readers, and machine readers, using key words in dense and concentrated blocks.

advocacy texts which directly advocate for action to reverse environmental degradation, enhance ecological sustainability or present arguments at a variety of levels for respect for ecological relationships

Arc-info the software program operating to manage information in state government offices during the 1980s

assumptive framework intellectual framework of interpretation, schema, script

betweenness one of Gurevitch's descriptions of the suspension dialogic category

cadres groups of Guild members representing occupational or attitude standpoints

code a linguistic variety, such as a language, a dialect, an accent, a discourse variety, a register, a situational variety, or any kind of language which people might characterise with the morphemes -talk, -ese or -speak, such as football-ese, green-speak, potty-talk etc. Sense [4] in the Routledge definitions.

[R: 78] 1 In information theory, the rule for the co-ordination of two different repertoires of signs, which can represent the same information
2 In linguistics, 'code' is used in the sense of 1 above for linguistic signs and the syntactic rules which bind them together. Martinet used the term 'code' for *langue* (language system) as opposed to 'message' for *parole* (language use)
[…] 4 A term in sociolinguistics for class-specific language variations, especially for the different strategies of verbal planning

code-handling a coopted term which applies the translation idea of **intersemiosis** to monolingual interaction. The term arises as an extension of 'code-switching'. It is employed to label as a construct the set of complex unconscious processes which enable the reviewer to replicate the range of responses and positions in The Guild culture. PG 'reads'or 'handles' the codes as members interact in terms of their RO sets, and he uses that reading of the whole gathering to capture the essence of the meeting.

code-switching [R: 78] where multilingual speakers switch between language varieties

Cof P Community of Practice

cohort cognitively, a group of reading elements that are related because they were co-activated at some time during reading

Community of Otherness or Difference [Shields 2000] a contact community

Community of Practice/interpretive a Community of Practice which concerns itself with theoretical development

constraint satisfaction cognitive model which can be argued to work through **construction-integration**

construction-integration the mental activity of first constructing approximate mental representations, then integrating those mental representations into a coherent whole. Intermediate structures are produced through systems of contextual and anaphoric **suppression** and anaphoric **enhancement**.

contact community a community which brings together groups from different backgrounds. Shields' [2000] Community of Otherness or Difference is a contact community.

contact linguistics linguistic theory relating to the study of languages and cultures in contact and conflict

critics **Guild cadre** of policy researchers and academics

dialogics 1 the study of the separate voices woven into texts. Some scholars refer to dialogia as polyphony.

2 'a kind of multiparty translation [Spivak 1993 quoted in Hawes 1999] where an accountable translator speaks with an ethical singularity … speakers speak "essentially"… the translator's job is to mediate the essentialism'.

	Spivak is referring to the various voices in the polyphony or dialogia, by using the analogy of translation.
dialogia	Gurevitch's fourth dialogic category of language use which is characterised by more than one voice. The term is used to refer to the kind of language which Gurevitch sees as characterised by complexity.
differance	Derrida's coined term meaning to defer and to differ
diglossia	[R: 128] any stable linguistic situation in which there exists a strict functional differentiation between a [socially] 'L[ow]-variety' and a distinct 'H[igh]-variety'
discourse	1 [R: 131] generic term for various types of text. The term has been used with various differences in meaning: connected speech (Harris 1952); the product of an interactive process in a sociocultural context (Pike 1954); performance (versus 'text' as a representation of the formal grammatical structure of discourse) (van Dijk 1974); talk (versus written prose or 'text') (Cicourel 1975); conversational interaction (Coulthard 1977); 'language in context across all forms and modes' (Tannen 1981); and process (versus product or 'text') (Brown and Yule 1983) 2 in other studies sometimes used as a short form for '**discourse variety**' or **discourse type**
discourse base	a term used by Tuler and Webler [1999: 443] to include structure and personality characteristics – they also differentiated between interactions that were more or less constructive
discourse type	the variety of language used by a particular group, its typical grammatical forms and its characteristic lexis. In other studies sometimes shortened to 'discourse'.
discourse variety	see discourse type. In other studies sometimes shortened to 'discourse'.
discursive pragmatism	term used by Alvesson [2000(a)] relating to research in organisational communication which makes use of discourse analysis. Alvesson urged a kind of triangulation to ensure credibility in this kind of research.
dynamic equivalence	the outcome produced from the process of **intersemiosis**. Lexical equivalence is contrasted with

	it. Dynamic equivalence produces translation that is not word for word, and is favoured by translators because it retains cultural complexity.
enhancement	cognitive process where appropriate information is made more available by anaphors but not by context
entrepreneurs	**Guild cadre** of natural resources exploiters
equivoque	Weick's concept of the organisation as decision-environment, as abstract rather than concrete
Event-Indexing model	hypothesis that readers build situation models by monitoring at least five event dimensions: protagonist, time, space, causation, and intentionality
Face	1 used in the thesis to label the fragile contact culture that is protected by the Guild's **positive tact structure** 2 public self image [Verschueren 1999: 45] 3 the concept of face has built into it both aspects […Independence (negative face) negative or deference politeness. .and… Involvement (positive face) solidarity politeness…] (Scollon and Scollon 2001: 47) 4 [R: 370] A central concept of politeness theory is 'face', which is taken to be important to individuals in both a positive and negative aspect. One preserves the negative face of an interactant by impeding or interfering with his/her actions and values as little as possible; one attends to the positive face of an interactant by endorsing and supporting the interactant's presumed positive self-image as much as possible.
Fractal	1 a coopted label for the Review, used to indicate a concept similar to that of '**dynamic equivalence**' or '**suspension text**' in translation studies. The notion of the **Fractal** is employed to point first to the replication of the range of responses and positions in Guild culture, or Weickian equivoque, and second to the genre-hybrid. Because the term, 'Fractal' is used to refer to self-similar patterns, where a single fragment replicates the whole, the reference for the Fractal in the thesis implies that PG's Review replicates The Guild in important ways. 2 the name for the product which results from the code-handling process.

The relation of the Fractal to code-handling looks like this: codehandling =[polyphonic transformation/translation intersemiosis]-> dynamic equivalence/suspension text=>Fractal [Weickian equivoque] genre-hybrid Review.
That is to say, that through a sometimes unconscious procedure of 'code-handling' involving processes of reading RO sets, polyphonic transformation and translation intersemiosis, there is produced a Fractal genre-hybrid Review which reproduces Guild patterns, ie a dynamically equivalent text, or an instantiation of Weickian equivoque [the abstract decision environment].

3 sometimes a synonym for the Reviews, emphasising the dynamic nature of the text as Weickian equivoque.

FTA Face Threatening Act
[R: 370] Acts which involve the speaker in breaking away from … face-threatening tendencies are known as 'face-threatening acts'. Ordering someone to do something is *prima facie* threatening to the person's negative face. Positive face is reflected in numerous appreciative conversational gambits.

genre text type, such as poem, play, scientific abstract, cricket commentary.

genre-hybrid a mixture of several different genres, or a new genre. In the thesis genre-hybrid is sometimes another way of talking about the 'Fractal', ie PG's Reviews. The reviews are hybrids because they are neither strictly scientific summaries nor narratives, but a mixture of both.

GIS Global Information System, a satellite positioning system. Although the term is now familiar in the community, when the Guild meeting took place it was still an exotic satellite masterpiece. The natural resources management application is starting to be reported in the press [ABCRN *Bush Telegraph* 25.6.03] as a system of checking whether land clearing is taking place.

greenwash a term built on the analogy with 'whitewash', meaning to make claims about minimal environmentally friendly practice, in order to camouflage other more serious environmentally harmful practices. One example is printing

	environmentally friendly messages on plastic supermarket bags.
Guild	refers to the professional organisation for environmental management which is the context for PG's genre-hybrid summaries
Guild cadre	a label given to each of the five divisions of Guild members identified in the thesis: entrepreneurs, harm minimisers, negotiators, scientific experts and critics.
Gumperz	a linguist theorising on code-switching where the code is seen to be used in discrete ways, indicative of social constructs. Gumperz' theory contrasts with that of Myers-Scotton's RO sets. Gumperz encourages the view that the speaker can use code-switching as a stylistic device. Myers-Scotton's theory starts from the other end, where the speaker is obliged to use certain forms, but can draw attention if she varies them.
Gurevich	a theorist whose article on dialogia identifies four categories: dialogia, monologia, silence, unity
Half-spectrum	a term used to characterise The Guild membership criteria which remove a section of the interested community, by restricting membership to qualified professionals
harm minimisers	**Guild cadre** of natural resources managers
Hawes	a theorist whose article on dialogia identifies the link of dialogia with the translation process. He explains that translation requires suspension, or simultaneous maintenance of multiple interpretations. Hawes contrasts dialogia against dialectic, which he sees as duality or polarisation.
heteroglossia	another word for dialogia, as opposed to monologia. It means the inclusion of a range of perspectives, or voices, in the text. Another word for it is polyphony, on the musical analogy where melodies are mingled.
INTER	interaction between professionals, excluding communication to clients

INTERPECPEM professional environmental communication [PEC] between environmental management professionals [PEM] exclusively [INTER]. An alternative label for this new field is ‘Natrat-talk’.

intercultural communication a general term for linguistic and other semiotic interaction across cultural groups

interdiscourse term used by Scollon and Scollon to refer to a notion similar to that termed **‘**cross-cultural pragmatics’ by others such as Wierzbicka

interlanguage a language variety acquired in contact situations. [R: 235] The relatively systematic transition from initial knowledge of a language to (near)-native proficiency during the process of language acquisition. Often manifested as an unstable set of productive characteristics, interlanguage encodes the rules of both the native language and the target language as well as a set of rules that belong to neither, but rather manifests universal principles inherent in language learner’s competence

interlinguistic process translation between languages

intersemiosis the translation of concepts from one kind of system of signs to another system. Dynamic equivalence is the outcome. This is the process which produces the complex translations favoured by translators.

KIFOWS a type of organisational community – Knowledge Intensive Foundations Organisations Workers And Structures. It means something like a professional society.

Landscape model a connectionist cognitive model with cohort activation, which allows the model to dynamically incorporate the reader’s activation state from the previous reading cycle into the current mental representation.

language as a social semiotic Halliday’s notion that language is social behaviour, and that its structure can be explained in social terms

language in context kinds of enquiry in linguistics, sociology and cultural studies which investigate how language is integral to society, how language constructs society. Functional theories of linguistics are included in this rubric, as are theories of pragmatics.

lect variety of language, a term encompassing the 'code' referred to in theories of code-switching, and including the whole range of language variation from idiolect, to register, discourse variety, sociolect, pidgin, Creole, dialect, and national language.

[R: 272] Term introduced in American variational linguistics to designate regional, social, and other types of language varieties. In compound words (e.g. sociolect, dialect, idiolect, isolect etc.) the first element indicates the type of variety.

Lexical equivalence translating with the correct gloss for each word. This contrasts with dynamic equivalence, where the translator works for equivalence at levels higher than the word, such as the phrase or idiom or pragmatic function or genre. Lexical equivalence is seen as simplistic, while dynamic equivalence is regarded as more complex, richer.

Malmkjaer a translation theorist who makes the point that the TT [target text] specific lexical item is not at such a high degree of importance as are the overall patterns supplied in the TT. That is, she does not recommend a word for word approach. She prefers the translator to hunt for cultural accuracy rather than word accuracy.

Maslow's hierarchy an organisational management theory relating to the satisfaction of human needs, where when survival needs such as hunger and shelter are satisfied, people look to satisfy higher level needs such as community acceptance.

monolingual intersemiosis applying the translation concept within a single language, that is translating from variety to variety within one language using techniques that are not word for word.

monologia Gurevitch's category of language use which is characterised by one dominant voice or variety. In this study the discourse of science is claimed to be monologic.

Myers-Scotton a linguist theorising code-switching in terms of Rights and Obligation sets, the observance of which appears in unmarked forms, and the renegotiation of which appears in marked forms. Myers-Scotton's theory contrasts with that of Gumperz.

Natrat-talk	another way of referring to INTERPECPEM or professional environmental communication [PEC] between environmental management professionals [PEM], exclusive to fellow professionals [INTER]. Formed on analogy with doctor-talk and teacher-talk.
negative-reference groups	defining one's partner as an enemy [Janney and Arndt 1992]
negotiators	**Guild cadre** of business and government
NEPM	National Environment Protection Measures
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRM	Natural Resources Manager/Management
organisational community	a construct which characterises the organisation itself as a community and includes communities within organisations. The construct is used in organisational theory as a point from which to access scholarship about communities to inform organisational practice. **The Guild** refers to the professional organisation for environmental management which is the context for PG's genre-hybrid summaries.
OUTER	communication from professionals to client groups
PEC	professional environmental communicator, professional environmental communication [PEC]
PEM	professional environmental management, professional environmental manager
PG	pseudonym for the reviewer whose work is investigated
politeness	a term used in linguistic pragmatics to refer to information structure in a text and its relation to how the textual goals are addressed. It does not necessarily refer to the function of being polite, but it does relate to successful conversational performance. Politeness theory is the precursor to the Relevance Pragmatic theory and hence to the RO sets theory. Politeness is a subsection of the cooperative maxims of Grice**.** [R: 370] Umbrella term for a combination of interpersonal considerations and linguistic choices affecting the form and function of linguistic interactions. Analysts from diverse fields – pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and anthropology – argue

that the specific ways in which speakers, as interactants, perform speech acts…such as requests, commands, elicitations and offers, both express and reflect the nature of the relationship between them.

Positive frame of communication 'temporarily replaces partners' respective cultures as the nonnegotiable basis of communication' [Janney and Arndt 1992], where the partners tacitly agree to become members of a common, transcendent positive-reference group; where the starting point is some aspect of the situation common to both partners' immediate interests, activities or goals. Also referred to as the **positive tact frame** and the **strategic tact structure**

positive tact frame the same as the **positive frame of communication**, the situation engendered by the Halfspectrum professional filter. Sometimes called the **strategic tact structure**. It refers to The Guild's agenda to avoid confrontation.

pragmatics 1 The study utilises the first, second and fourth of Levinson's [1985] pragmatic categories:
– study of language from a functional perspective
– study of the context-dependent nature of language use and language understanding
– study of nonconventional or not truth-conditional meaning, possibly to be understood as speaker or utterance-meaning rather than sentence-meaning [Levinson quoted in Grundy 1994: 176]

2 ...pragmatics as a general cognitive, social and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behaviour...how does language function in the lives of human beings? [Verschueren 1999: 68]

3 [R: 374] While semantics is concerned with the literal and contextually non-variable meaning of linguistic expressions or with the contextually non-variable side of the truth conditions of propositions or sentences, pragmatics deals with the function of linguistic utterances and the propositions that are expressed by them, depending upon their use in specific situations.

Ramsar The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat adopted on 2 February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar

RC	rational choice models – ‘rational code choices are instances of speakers negotiating new norms’ in Myers-Scotton
register	a kind of language used in given situations. [R: 402] Manner of speaking or writing specific to a certain function, that is, characteristic of a certain domain of communication (or of an institution), for example, the language of religious sermons, of parents with their child, or of an employee with his/her supervisor. Register plays a prominent role in Halliday’s school of Systematic Functional Grammar.
Relevance Pragmatic	Sperber and Wilson’s theory that successful contributions to a language event demonstrate their relevance to what has gone before in the text, and what the community values. The precursor to Myers-Scotton’s RO sets.
review	genre which implies some kind of valuation and a broad summary which does not try to cover all aspects of the source text.
Review	when the word uses uppercase first letter it signals PG’s genre-hybrid reviews. The label is a hypernym, with the task of including every characteristic up for discussion about PG’s reviews, such as the textual manipulation techniques, the narrative polyphony, the genre-hybrid nature of the Reviews, and the intersemiosis. [The label ‘Fractal’ is used for the Reviews as a hyponym to draw attention to intersemiosis, to the translation techniques, to the patterns of the organisation.]
RO sets	Rights and Obligations sets – Myers-Scotton’s RO sets expand Sperber and Wilson’s Relevance Pragmatic by demonstrating that it is through showing an understanding of the community’s rights and obligations that the relevance is achieved. RO sets are ‘the means by which the social negotiation is achieved. Existing social conditions are maintained by adherence to the RO sets in using unmarked forms.’ When the speaker uses unmarked forms, she is conforming to the rights and obligations. When a marked, or unusual, form is used, she is renegotiating the rights and obligations.
S/H	Speaker/Hearer
scientific experts	**Guild cadre** of scientists

SFL Systemic Functional Linguistics is MAK Halliday's theory of language as a social semiotic, involving the construct of the lexicogrammar, instead of the more usual division of the lexicon from the grammar. Halliday explains that all language has social functions, and that society is organised by means of language.

SL source language. The language of the original text which the translator works on.

SMR sender message receiver [transmission models of communication]. These are exemplified in models such as that developed by Shannon and Weaver. Also called conduit models.

ST source text. The original text which the translator will render in the target language.

strategic tact structure sometimes called **the positive tact frame** imposed by the Halfspectrum membership filter, which enables The Guild's strategic tact to operate by protecting the Face of participants, thus enabling The Guild's work to proceed.

strategic tact the requirement of The Guild organisation that confrontation on environmental matters is minimised or eliminated

summary genre which provides a gentler path into theoretical complexity than the scientific abstract; a genre which can provide detail, and which is presumed to reproduce the main structure and points

suppression cognitive process where inappropriate information is made unavailable by context and anaphors

suspension used in Gurevitch's dialogic classifications to indicate the highest degree of recognition of complexity, where oppositions are not brought prematurely to resolution, but are held and valued for their divergence and separateness. Suspension situations are potentially the sites of problem solving because groups normally in contention are able to meet in the suspended situation and maintain the complexity of their positions while searching for solutions.

suspension text in translation a text characterised by dynamic equivalence, in contrast to a text which exhibits lexical equivalence, called a transparent access text. A

	suspension text is considered richer than a transparent access text.
tact	a means of maintaining the sense of cooperation and supportiveness necessary for successful interaction. [Janney and Arndt 1992] Tact is not necessarily silence, but it is the avoidance of confrontation.
Target-oriented	translation oriented to lexical equivalence [word-for-word translation]. Translators regard this as simplistic and non-representative of cultural complexity.
TBL	Triple Bottom Line accounting, including environmental and social outcomes alongside financial outcomes
text	a communication event, either written or spoken, composed of a single mode or a mixture or variation of modes, sometimes including non-linguistic components. Conversations are regarded as texts, along with written documents.
TL	target language. The language the translator is translating into.
transfer-oriented	translation oriented to dynamic equivalence [where the effect on the target reader should match that of the effect on the reader in the original language]. This is a complex kind of translation which translators consider more skilful than word for word translations.
transparent access text	a text where dynamic equivalence has not been reached or even sought, but rather where lexical equivalence [matching word for word] has characterised the translation procedure. This sort of translation is criticised by translators as simplistic.
TT	target text
variety	see code
Weickian equivoque	Weick's concept of the organisation as a decision environment. The organisation is an abstract set of rules for interactions, not a group of people, not a collection of data, not an assembly of physical items.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

There is more detail on some of these terms in the glossary.

GIS	Global Information System
INTER	interaction between professionals
INTERPECPEM	professional environmental communication between environmental management professionals. An alternative label for this new field is ‘Natrat-talk’, meaning talk among environmental management professionals, or ‘natrat shop’**.**
KIFOWS	Knowledge Intensive Foundations Organisations Workers And Structures
NEPM	National Environment Protection measures
OUTERPECPEM	professional environmental communication delivered to clients of the environment professional. The Natrat’s ‘work’.
PEC	professional environmental communicator, professional environmental communication
PEM	professional environmental management, professional environmental manager
'PG'	pseudonym for the reviewer whose work is investigated
RO sets	Rights and Obligations sets
SL	source language
ST	source text
TBL	Triple Bottom Line accounting
TL	target language
TT	target text