

Discourse functions of the Evaluative Enhanced Theme Construction¹

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Abstract

By drawing on Halliday's relevant theories, this paper investigates the discourse functions of what is called, in the present terminology, the Evaluative Enhanced Theme Construction in English or the EETC, (which is termed the extraposition construction in traditional grammar). We prefer the present terminology because this construction is typically employed to express evaluation, and the evaluative meaning is syntactically enhanced. After a structural analysis of the EETC in semantic terms, we put forward our interpretation of the structure of text, whose parts are semantically (rather than structurally) related to each other. Hence to investigate the discourse function of a construction is to see how it is semantically related to its co-text. Observation of occurrence of EETC in actual texts shows that EETC typically relates to its co-text through the logico-semantic relation of evaluation-basis. When it occurs paragraph-initially or finally, it tends to co-occur with hyper-Theme or hyper-New, and it chunks prospectively or retrospectively respectively through this logico-semantic relation, with the chunking force extending over the whole paragraph. When it occurs in between the hyper-Theme and the hyper-New, its discourse functions tend to be more localized. Our data also reveal that different types of EETC with respect to the evaluated entities function differently in the organization of text; such difference is attributable to the different ontological status of the evaluated entities.

Keywords

Theme, information, text, structure, discourse function

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1. Introduction

The construction we shall investigate is what is called **extraposition** in traditional grammar (e.g., Jespersen 1937/1965; Poutsma 1928; Quirk *et al.* 1972, 1985; Biber *et al.* 1999; Huddleston and Pullum 2002), which is exemplified by:

- (1) It was true that she would not enter a shop in her own country. (BNC CDX 2931)²
- (2) It is hard to read these sentences without a smile. (BNC A7C 1523)

Since we are interested in the meaning expressed and the functions performed by the construction, we prefer the functionally-oriented term (**the Evaluative Enhanced Theme Construction**, henceforth **EETC**, Wang 2006)³ to the traditional formally-oriented term. The latter inherently presupposes that a syntactic transformation has taken place to derive, for example, (1) from the allegedly pre-existing “canonical” form of (3):

- (3) That she would not enter a shop in her own country was true.

which, if considered from a functional perspective, does not necessarily exist (cf. Mair 1990: 29-30, 40). We abandon the traditional term because of the inevitable transformational “baggage” associated with it – the terms that we use for talking about a phenomenon may well affect the way we conceptualize the phenomenon.

This construction is believed to be effective in expressing evaluative meaning (cf., e.g., Collins 1994; Francis 1995; Lemke 1998; Biber *et al.* 1999; Hunston and Sinclair 2000; Herriman 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Gómez-González 2001; Fawcett 2003). For example, *true* and *hard* in (1) and (2) are evaluative by nature. Biber and Finegan (1989) and Francis (1995) see the EETC as a syntactic “frame” for expressing evaluation. Following Francis (1995), Lemke (1998: 36) uses this frame as “a useful heuristic for exploring the semantics of evaluation, at least in the domain of propositions and proposals”. With the EETC as the testing tool, Lemke (1998) works out seven “evaluative semantic dimensions”. Hunston and Sinclair (2000) regard the EETC as one of the particular grammatical patterns which select and therefore identify evaluative items, and which are “typically” and “primarily” used to express evaluation.

What is particular about the EETC is that it not only makes available an effective way of expressing evaluative meaning, it also encodes this meaning in a matrix clause headed by the anticipatory *it*, which enables the speaker to disguise the source of the opinion and

2 BNC stands for *British National Corpus*, and letters and numbers following BNC indicate the exact source of the examples.

3 We prefer the functional term both because the traditional term implies an alleged transformation for this construction to come into being, which, according to functional grammarians (e.g., Fawcett 2003) does not actually take place, and because the functional term transparently throws light on the function the construction serves. What is more, these two terms are not exact equivalents to one another. Generally, our semantically- and functionally-oriented term is broader in coverage than the traditional formally-oriented term. For example, we consider the following examples as cases of EETC:

- (A) ... it would be better if you did not mention this night's events to anyone. (BNC AEB 2835)
- (B) It seemed as if the entire structure of the office block must surely collapse in a grinding, tearing, disintegrating avalanche of rubble. (BNC G0E 3830)

in which the Evaluateds are introduced by *if*- and *as if*-clause respectively. Such cases are not counted as examples of extraposition in traditional grammar.

thereby makes the evaluation appear to be objective (Halliday 1994: 355; Collins 1994: 19, 22; Herriman 2000b). Another functional property of the EETC is that the evaluative meaning is fronted or thematised, hence it gains the thematic prominence and serves as the point of departure and as a frame for what is to follow within the construction (Gómez-González 2001: 272-273; Wang 2006).

Thus, the EETC has the functional properties of bringing the evaluative meaning into highlight by encoding it into a matrix clause so that the speaker can negotiate with the hearer about the evaluative meaning, and he may ultimately convey this meaning to the hearer with the source of evaluation concealed as is wished by the speaker. This evaluation in turn serves as the perspective from which what follows the matrix clause in the construction is to be interpreted (Herriman 2000a: 226).

For the convenience of discussion, we need to introduce terms to describe the functional structure of the EETC. These terms are: **Evaluated**, **Evaluator**, and **Hinge**. The Evaluated refers to the entity being evaluated (events, actions, states, propositions, etc.); it is generally denoted by the “extraposed clause” in traditional terms. The Evaluator refers to the specific evaluative item which is employed to evaluate the Evaluated with respect to certain evaluative categories. For example, the Evaluator *true* in (1) evaluates the Evaluated *that she would not enter a shop in her own country* in terms of *epistemic modality*. In a typical instance of EETC, the Evaluator is related to the Evaluated through a **Hinge**, as illustrated by *was* and *is* in (1) and (2). Thus in the present terminology, (1) can be analyzed as:

It	was	true	that she would not enter a shop in her own country
It	is	hard	to read these sentences without a smile
	Hinge	Evaluator	Evaluated

The Evaluator, Evaluated, Hinge, and Evaluation in the EETC

In this article, we shall investigate the discourse functions performed by the EETC in the organization of text, by drawing on Halliday’s relevant theories. Apart from the present introductory section, there are five sections to follow. Section 2 describes the structure of text from the semantic perspective. Section 3 is an analysis of the organizational role of evaluation in text. Section 4, which is the main body of this article, describes how the EETC, as a typical locus of evaluative meaning, functions in the organization of text. Section 5 investigates the interrelation between the different types of EETC and their discourse functions. Section 6 summarizes the whole article and makes some concluding remarks.

2. The structure of text

The relationship between the clause and the text is different from that between the clause and the group/phrase and between the group/phrase and the word, and so on, the latter being one of composition (i.e., the clause is composed of groups/phrases, and the group/phrase of words, etc.). But texts are not constructed out of clauses in a simple “brick-by-brick” fashion (Hoey 1983: 9), neither are they simply strings of paragraphs, as can be shown by the fact that randomly collected sentences and paragraphs do not make sense as a text. This means that the structure of a text must be sought in a different light.

If we approach the structure of text from the semantic perspective, we may find that clauses/clause complexes are related with one another semantically (Hoey 1983: 17). Halliday (1978, 1982, 1994) sees the whole process of producing the text as a process of meaning and the text itself as a semantic unit:

Text is the process of meaning; and a text is the product of that process. A text is therefore a semantic entity; ... (Halliday 1982: 209)

The important thing about the nature of text is that, although when we write it down it looks as though it is made of words and sentences [i.e., clauses or clause complexes], it is really made of meanings. (Halliday and Hasan 1985: 10)

This has consequences for the ways in which we approach the structure of a text. As Halliday (1994: 338-9) points out elsewhere,

Is there then no structure above the clause complex? There is; but not grammatical structure. A text has structure, but it is semantic structure, not grammatical. ... It [a text] consists of elements of its own, which vary from one register to another: narrative, transactional, expository and so on. Each has its own elements and configurations...

That is to say, the structural configuration of the text is different in kind from that of the clause. The structure of a text can also be described as a configuration of functions, but the functions are of a different kind. For example, a well-known formulization of the structure of narratives of personal experience is proposed by Labov (1972) as:

Abstract ^ Orientation ^ Complication ^ Evaluation ^ Resolution ^ Coda

Hoey (1983, 2001) proposes that the structure of

Situation ^ Problem ^ Response ^ Evaluation

is one of the commonest structures of all texts. Apart from these, other scholars propose generalized patterns for texts of other registers (cf. Halliday 1982).

On the other hand, a text is a dynamic process; it has a “semantic flow” (Halliday 1982: 219). This flow finds expression in the diminuendo-crescendo movement of “Theme” and “Rheme” of the text, analogous to that of the clause (Halliday 1982: 219-220; Halliday and Hasan 1985: 181-182; Martin 1992: 437). In the process of text production, there is a movement from the “Theme”, to something that is “not Theme”. At the same time, there is a complementary movement from “not New” towards “New”. As Halliday (1982: 229) writes,

The classic movement of a paragraph, beginning with a topic sentence (from theme to elaboration) and culminating – having a high point, unmarkedly but not obligatorily final – in a climax (from prelude to main point), is one of the clearest manifestations of the analogy between clause and text.

Martin calls such “Theme” and “New” hyper-Theme and hyper-New with respect to a paragraph:

a hyper-Theme is an introductory sentence or groups of sentences which is established to predict a particular pattern of interaction among strings, chains and Theme selection in following sentences. (Martin 1992: 437)

Hyper-Theme predicts what the following phases in the paragraph will be about. At the same time, new information accumulates in each clause as the text unfolds:

[T]his accumulation of new information is often distilled in a final sentence, that thus functions as a hyper-New to the phase. Hyper-Themes tell us where we're going in a phase; hyper-News tell us where we have been. (Martin and Rose 2003: 182)

As with Theme and New, hyper-Theme and hyper-New function complementarily. Hyper-Themes project forward, scaffolding the paragraph with respect to its rhetorical purpose; hyper-News on the other hand look back, gathering up the meanings which have accumulated to elaborate a paragraph's point. The result is a "texture sandwich in which texts project both forward and back as they unfold" (Martin 1992: 456; cf. Martin and Rose 2003: 181). According to Martin (1992: 456), this texture sandwich is in accord with the common sense formula of Introduction ^ Body ^ Conclusion for expository texts and Labov's formula for narrative experience as has been mentioned above.

3. Evaluation in text

As the above discussion indicates, evaluation is part of the semantic structure of the text. But in a larger sense, language functions at both descriptive and evaluative levels. Though different scholars have captured these functions under different categories, it is safe to state that they all agree that there is a thread of evaluative meaning running through texts of different registers. As Vološinov (1973: 105) points out,

No utterance can be put together without value judgement. Every utterance is above all an *evaluative orientation*. Therefore, each element in a living utterance not only has a meaning but also has a value. (quoted in Sarangi 2003: 165) (original emphasis)

In this light, evaluation is not only seen as part of the semantic structure of the text, it is also seen as the "point" of text of any register. As Hunston (1994: 206) observes,

One of the key functions of evaluation in any genre is to indicate the "point" of the text, or part of the text, to the hearer or reader.

This is so because no speaker is content with an objective presentation of information (indeed there is no such a thing as objective presentation), his point of presenting information is to convey his evaluation (explicitly or implicitly, consciously or unconsciously) of the information in question (see Hunston and Thompson 2000; Davidse and Simon-Vandenberghe 2001; Macken-Horarik and Martin 2003). This even holds true in the case of academic writing, in which the speaker does not just report the result of the experiment; more importantly, he will tell the hearer his interpretation, explanation, and hypothesis in connection to the report. Here lies the significance of the discussion and conclusion section of academic writing (Hunston 1994, 2000).

From these observations, we can proceed to argue that evaluation is an inherent property of text. This property in turn finds expression at the surface of text. As a corollary, evaluation also plays an important role in the organization of the text (see Hunston 1994, 2000; Thompson and Zhou 2000).

It is in this light that Bolívar (2001: 131) conceives text as "a mode of interaction in which evaluation has the fundamental role of contributing to the shape of text structure". In her discussion of the role played by evaluation in discourse organization, Hunston (1994) considers how units may be identified externally, that is, in terms of the boundaries between

them. She finds that changes in status indicate transitions from one unit to the next, while value and relevance⁴ serve to hold together sections that may cover several status categories. For example, she observes that relevance markers serve an important organizational role by breathing relevance to a text or to a stretch of text of any length. According to Hunston, relevance markers may function in two directions:

Relevance markers may be prospective or retrospective. Retrospective relevance markers have an anaphoric element and place the preceding text within a category of significance; prospective relevance markers have a cataphoric element and state the significance of the subsequent text. (Hunston 1994: 198)

In this way, evaluation can be seen as an indicator of text organization for it tends to occur at the boundary points in a text. Therefore, one of the ways to explore text organization is to investigate how evaluation is presented and developed in texts, and how it is integrated into texts.

From these observations, we can come to the conclusion that evaluation has chunking function in the organization of text; it has the function of hanging together a text or a stretch of text. This is so because evaluation is the speaker's expression of viewpoint. It tends to be justified, explained, interpreted, specified, or clarified so that it may be accepted by the hearer. Therefore, from a text-organizational perspective, evaluation necessitates the preceding or subsequent justification, explanation, interpretation, specification, or clarification. In a certain sense, we can say that the primary purpose of text is the presentation and justification of the speaker's evaluation and that the speaker's communicative goal lies in the acceptance of the evaluation on the part of the hearer.

In the literature, the chunking function of evaluation has been formulated into different models. A commonly proposed model is that of evaluation-basis: evaluation tends to be followed or preceded by basis. The evaluation-basis pattern forms one of the basic logico-semantic relations in discourse organization (Hoey 1983, 2001; Jordan 2001). Indeed, Jordan (2001: 160) goes so far as to argue that this pattern can be seen as the most fundamental relation in any language.

4. Discourse functions of the EETC

In this section, we shall investigate how the EETC, as a typical site of evaluation, functions in the organization of text. Specifically, our consideration is within the boundaries of the paragraph. In written texts, the EETC occurs as a sentence. The paragraph is composed of sentences which are logico-semantically related to one another. Therefore, we take the paragraph as the typical site for exploring the discourse functions of the EETC.

As we have seen in Section 2 of this article, hyper-Theme and hyper-New constitute the two prominent points of the paragraph, with prospective and retrospective orientations respectively. We shall investigate how the EETC functions at the discourse level when it functions as the hyper-Theme and the hyper-New. We shall see that, as an enhanced Theme construction, the EETC inherently gains prominence, which coincides with the prominent property of hyper-Theme and hyper-New. On the other hand, evaluation necessitates

⁴ According to Hunston (1994: 194-199), the **status** function of evaluation is to evaluate entities in terms of *certain-uncertain*. **Value** is the assessment of worth of entities in terms of *good-bad*. **Relevance** is the evaluation in terms of *important-unimportant*.

justification or basis. When the EETC occurs paragraph-initially, it has a prospective chunking function: it tends to be justified in what follows in the paragraph. When it occurs paragraph-finally, it has a retrospective chunking function: it tends to be justified in the preceding phase(s) of the paragraph. The backward and forward chunking function of the EETC is coexistent with the prospective and retrospective orientation of hyper-Theme and hyper-New respectively.

Apart from these, we shall consider the function of the EETC when it occurs in between the initial and the final position in the paragraph. We shall also consider some other semantic relations that the EETC may bear to its co-text.

4.1 The EETC as hyper-Theme

To investigate how the EETC functions as hyper-Theme, let us see the following example, in which the EETC introduces the whole paragraph. (For the convenience of discussion, the sentences are numbered.)

- (4) [1] *It will be clear that the key “drivers” of linguistic change are both social and material in nature.* [2] Economic developments, technological innovations, new social networks or demographic shifts are all likely to give rise to language change. [3] We can also see that some kinds of change extend over longer periods of time than others: language shift may take 50-100 years, while a significant change in the number of people learning English as a foreign language can occur within a few years. [4] Certain age groups also play a more important role in instigating and advancing change than others. [5] The complex interaction between these factors means that it is perfectly possible that there will be widespread shifts in the way language are used in the future. (Graddol 1999: 17)⁵

Example (4) is taken from the book, *The future of English?*. The present paragraph is about the factors which may cause linguistic change. The EETC (i.e., the italicized part) functions as the hyper-Theme for the whole paragraph. It sets up, as it were, a point of departure for the paragraph – *the key “drivers” of linguistic change are both social and material in nature*, which is in turn framed as *clear*. These drivers are then set out in Sentences [2], [3], and [4]: these include economic developments, technological innovations, new social networks, and demographic shifts, of which, demographic shifts are further elaborated on (*a significant change in the number of people learning English as a foreign language can occur within a few years* and *Certain age groups also play a more important role in instigating and advancing change than others*) until the speaker comes to the conclusion in Sentence [5]: *there will be widespread shifts in the way language are used in the future*. Since the evaluation in the present case is “clear”, it is unnecessary for it to be justified. But it functions in the organization of the paragraph in a different way. That is, the EETC has the function of highlighting the propositional content denoted by the Evaluated through the syntactic means of *it will be clear that ...*. In the present case, this highlighting coincides with the prominence of the hyper-Theme. Therefore, the EETC legitimately functions as the hyper-Theme when it occurs at the initial position of a paragraph. It gives the hearer an

5 Graddol, D. 1999. *The future of English?*. Beijing: Waiyu Jiaoxue yu Yanjiu Chubanshe (“Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press”).

orientation as to what is to come.

More commonly, the EETC chunks by virtue of evaluative meaning. When the EETC occurs paragraph-initially, it points forward to the justification, elaboration, or development in what follows. This function of the EETC as hyper-Theme followed by justification is illustrated by Example (5):

- (5) [1] *It is unlikely that the world will be transformed by some extraordinary invention in the next few decades.* [2] New technology takes times to develop, be implemented and then to have important transformative effects. [3] Any technology which is to have significant social, economic and linguistic effects in the near future will be already known. [4] David (1990) shows how the introduction of the dynamo – permitting commercial use of electricity – took, from the early 1880s, another 40 year to yield significant productivity gains. [5] Likewise, the building of the first computers and development of high-level computer languages in the 1940s only now have a significant impact on people's work and leisure. [6] The impact of technology on everyday life is determined by the speed of institutional and social change rather than by the speed of technological invention and scientific discovery. (Graddol 1999: 30)

In (4), the Evaluated is evaluated as *clear*, which exempts the speaker from offering a basis for the evaluation: it is not necessary for the speaker to justify a claim which is clear. Indeed, *that the key "drivers" of linguistic change are both social and material in nature* is clear enough and needs no further justification. This allows the speaker to develop the hyper-Theme in other aspects than offering basis, as the above analysis indicates. Unlike the EETC in (4), that in (5) necessitates a basis. This is so simply because the hearer needs to be convinced of the evaluation. When the speaker evaluates the proposition denoted by *the world will be transformed by some extraordinary invention in the next few decades as unlikely*, he can expect from the hearer such questions as "Why do you think it is unlikely?" and "What is your justification for it?".

Therefore, in what follows the EETC, the speaker sets out to offer basis for the evaluation. Sentences [2] and [3] supply basis for the evaluation in general terms. The reasoning is as follows: Since it takes time for new technology to have transformative effects, if any technology is to have such effects, it will be already known. But such technology is not known; therefore *it is unlikely that the world will be transformed by some extraordinary invention in the next few decades*. Sentences [4] and [5] offer basis for the evaluation by going into the particular cases of dynamo and computer respectively to prove that it takes a few decades for a technology to have transformative effects. Sentence [6] offers an explanation as to why new technology does not produce immediate effects on social life – the time it takes for new technology to produce transformative effect is determined by the speed of institutionalization and socialization of the new technology. In this light, we can say that Sentences [2], [3], [4], [5], and [6] function collectively to provide basis for the evaluation made in Sentence [1].

As Martin and Rose (2003: 183) observe, hyper-Themes typically involve evaluation, which is in turn justified in what follows in the paragraph. Therefore, it is not uncommon to find the EETC functioning as hyper-Theme. Apart from highlighting the propositional content, it has a prospective chunking function by virtue of the logico-semantic relation between evaluation and basis.

4.2 The EETC as hyper-New

Another position in which the EETC often occurs is the end of the paragraph, in which case it functions naturally as the hyper-New: It represents the high point, the climax of the paragraph.

A paragraph begins with the hyper-Theme, which provides a ground from which the point of the paragraph may be launched. As the paragraph progresses, new information accumulates until it reaches the high point in the final sentence. As with hyper-Theme, hyper-New is also a kind of prominent element of the paragraph, hence it is likely to be highlighted syntactically. The EETC is one of the syntactic means which may help to build up this prominence. For example, in

- (6) The “rationality” of the rush to English for economic reasons is also far from uncontested: a variety of cultural and political movements exist around the world promoting views which are directly or indirectly “anti-English”; other regional languages may gain in political importance to national governments as patterns of trade and political alliances change; there is widely believed to be a changing attitude in the world’s public towards decisions based on concerns with quality of life rather than simple financial benefit. *It may be that, in the longer term, an alternative logic will guide people’s responses to economic and technological change.* We explore this idea at the end of the book. (Graddol 1999: 21)

the speaker starts from the controversial idea that the rush to English is for economic reasons. Then he argues against this idea from three perspectives: the “anti-English” movements, the importance gained by other regional languages, and the changing life attitudes. On the basis of these three arguments, the speaker comes to the conclusion that *it may be that, in the longer term, an alternative logic will guide people’s responses to economic and technological change.* In this way, the EETC represents the climax, the end-prominence, hence the hyper-New of the paragraph. (The last sentence of the paragraph is metadiscoursal in function and it does not contribute to the semantics of the paragraph.) Although the evaluation is present and there is the evaluation-basis logico-semantic relation between the conclusion and preceding co-text in the paragraph, the primary function of the EETC in the present paragraph is to highlight the highpoint of the paragraph, rather than express evaluation of the Evaluated. This can be proved by the fact that, when the evaluation is cut off, the Evaluated still stands as a conclusion for the paragraph, although it is less salient than when it appears in the form of EETC.

Different from (6), the basis-evaluation relation is more salient in (7):

- (7) [1] English is rarely the main, or direct cause of this language loss, but its global high profile and its close association with social and economic changes in developing countries are likely to make it a target for those campaigning against the destruction of cultural diversity which language extinction implies. [2] *It would not be surprising if anti-English movements worldwide begin to associate language loss with the rise of global English.* (Graddol 1999: 39)

In (7), the speaker’s point is to tell the hearer that anti-English campaigners tend to associate language extinction with the global rise of English and that this is *not surprising*. This association is ill-grounded; hence it is presumably surprising, for there is no direct link between language extinction and the rising status of English. But according to the speaker, *it would not be surprising* if such an association actually occurs to the campaigners,

because as is made clear beforehand, *its global high profile and its close association with social and economic changes in developing countries are likely to make it a target for those campaigning against the destruction of cultural diversity which language extinction implies*. Therefore the two sentences in (4) stand in a basis-evaluation relation with each other. The evaluation expressed in [2] is supported by the basis offered in [1].

From these two examples, it can be observed that, when occurring in the final position of a paragraph, the EETC chunks differently than when it occurs paragraph-initially. While in the latter case, the speaker first presents the evaluation, then proceeds to elaborate on the idea expressed in the EETC or provides basis for the evaluation; in the former case, the basis is offered first, then the speaker comes to the evaluation on the grounds of the basis. That is to say, while paragraph-initial EETC chunks prospectively, paragraph-final EETC chunks retrospectively.

It is not coincidental that these different orientations of the EETC respective to its occurrence at the paragraph-initial or final position are coextensive with those of hyper-Theme and hyper-New, the former projecting forward and the latter looking back, gathering up the meanings until it reaches the paragraph's point. Hyper-Themes tell us where we're going in a phase; hyper-News tell us where we have been. When the EETC occurs as the hyper-Theme, it looks forward, anticipating basis for the evaluation. When it occurs as the hyper-New, it looks back, presupposing the existence of basis. That is to say, the two prominent positions of the paragraph can both be legitimately occupied by the EETC due to its characteristic syntactico-semantic feature and its chunking function.

4.3 Other discourse functions

4.3.1 The functions of the EETC in between the hyper-Theme and hyper-New

In this section, we shall consider two instances of EETC in the middle of the paragraph. As is with the EETC as hyper-Theme and hyper-New, the EETC in between them also chunks in two directions: prospectively and retrospectively. For example,

- (8) [1] Wartime leaders have always faced the worst fear: defeat in battle. [2] But in democracies at least, war leaders also confront another danger: success. [3] The qualities that make for great statesmanship in wartime – determination, a single focus on victory, a black-and-white conviction of who is friend or foe – can often seem crude or overbearing when peace comes around. [4] The most dramatic example of this in Western history is Winston Churchill. [5] *It is no exaggeration to say that without him, Britain may well have been destroyed by Hitler*. [6] He was the difference between victory and defeat. [7] But almost the minute that victory was declared, the voters turned on their hero. [8] He lost the postwar election. [9] Even more striking, he lost it in one of the biggest landslides in Britain's parliamentary history. [10] He wasn't just defeated. [11] He was buried. (Time, March, 8, 2004: 56)

In (8), which is a paragraph about different kinds of statesmanship required for wartime and peacetime politics, Churchill is used as a case to illustrate the speaker's point: a hero in wartime may turn out to be a sheer loser in peacetime. In this paragraph, Sentences [1], [2], [3] state the general point, while Sentences [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], and [11] illustrate the general point through the particular case of Churchill. Within the block of the particular

case, sentence [5], which is an instance of EETC, stands in an evaluation-basis relation to [6]. [5] and [6] collectively stand in a relation of concession to [7], [8], [9], [10], and [11], with the latter extending the former. [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], and [11] collectively elaborate on [4]. Therefore, the EETC in this example has a relatively local discourse function: it chunks forward by expecting the basis conveyed in [6] and forms a semantic block within the paragraph, which in turn bears an adversative relation to what follows.

Example (9) illustrates a different case where the EETC chunks backward:

- (9) [1] The quantity of Internet materials in languages other than English is set to expand dramatically in the next decade. [2] English will remain pre-eminent for some time, but it will eventually become one language amongst many. [3] *It is therefore misleading to suggest English is somehow the native language of the Internet.* [4] It will be used in cyberspace in the same way as it is deployed elsewhere: in international forums, for the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge, in advertising, for the promotion of consumer goods and for after-sales services. (Graddol 1999: 61)

The evaluation conveyed in the EETC (i.e., [3]) in this example is based on the two preceding sentences (i.e., [1] and [2]), [3] is then elaborated on in [4]. That is to say, sentences [1], [2], and [3] form a block due to the backward chunking function of the evaluation conveyed in [3]. This block stands in a relation of elaboration⁶ with [4] so that the paragraph hangs together as a coherent whole.

It can be observed from these two examples that when occurring in between the hyper-Theme and the hyper-New, the chunking function (be it prospective or retrospective) tends to be more localized than when it occurs as the hyper-Theme or the hyper-New. While in the latter case, the discourse function of the EETC tends to extend over the whole paragraph, in the former case, it usually forms a block, which is in turn semantically related to the more global co-text in the paragraph in various ways.

4.3.2 Introducing counter-argument

Up to now, we have been considering the discourse functions of the EETC with respect to the organization of paragraph. Our consideration is restricted to the chunking function of the EETC by virtue of the logico-semantic relation of evaluation-basis. In fact, the EETC can be related to its co-text in more varied ways. In what follows, we shall explore such discourse functions of the EETC.

The first case that we shall investigate is one in which the EETC is employed to introduce a counter-argument, which is then argued against in the following text, as is illustrated in Example (10):

- (10) *It has been suggested that the English language will provide the key to Britain's economic prosperity in the future.* After all, if much of the world's business is conducted in English, this surely will be of advantage to native speakers. This book presents arguments which challenge this idea and suggests that in future Britain's monolingualism may become a liability which offsets any economic advantage gained from possessing extensive native-speaker resources in the global language. (Graddol 1999: 57)

⁶ For the logico-semantic relation of elaboration, see Halliday (1994: 225-229).

In this paragraph, the speaker first presents a target argument by the syntactic means of the EETC (i.e., *it has been suggested* ...). In this case, the evaluative meaning involved is that of evidentiality. It indicates that it is some other person than the speaker himself who holds such an opinion and he does not necessarily agree to this opinion. In fact, he opposes this very opinion and bends on arguing against it in the paragraph (and in the paragraphs to follow). In order to do so, he first proposes an unreal condition and the result that may follow from this supposed condition. Then he goes on to argue against the target argument by reminding the hearer that the arguments presented in this book point to an opposite position (this paragraph appears in the final part of the book) and he states directly that Britain's monolingualism may turn out to be a liability. From an organizational point of view, the speaker's presentation of the counter-argument, the process of arguing against it, and the presentation of the speaker's argument is an organizing strategy in themselves.

4.3.3 Introducing conceded argument

Another common relation that the EETC may bear to its following co-text is that of concession-assertion. In this case, the Evaluation often occurs in such forms as: *it is true that...*, *it may be true...*, *it seems that...*, as is exemplified by Example (11):

- (11)[1] Cowardice is *prima facie* a fault of the Chinese; but I am not sure that they are really lacking in courage. [2] *It is true that, in battles between rival tuchuns, both sides run away, and victory rests with the side that first discovers the flight of the other.* [3] But this proves only that the Chinese soldier is a rational man. [4] No cause of any importance is involved, and the armies consist of mere mercenaries. [5] When there is a serious issue, as, for instance, in the Taiping Rebellion, the Chinese are said to fight well, particularly if they have good officers. ... (Russell 1994)⁷

In this example, Sentences [2] and [3], [4], [5] stand in a concession-assertion relation. In this relation, the speaker first acknowledges the truth of the argument, which is to be conceded, that is, *in battles between rival tuchuns, both sides run away, and victory rests with the side that first discovers the flight of the other.* But this seemingly convincing argument is to be dismissed as unimportant or irrelevant (though it is true) compared with his assertion; this fact does not prove that Chinese soldiers lack courage, rather it proves that they are rational – they see through the fact that *no cause of any importance is involved, and the armies consist of mere mercenaries.* Then the speaker proceeds to assert that Chinese soldiers are courageous. In this way, [2] and [3], [4], [5] form a block by virtue of the logico-semantic link of concession-assertion, and this block gives support to the more general argument presented in [1].

When the EETC is used to introduce a counter-argument or launch a concession-assertion semantic block, it does not chunk by virtue of the semantic relation of evaluation-basis. This is so partly because the evaluation in question needs not to be justified. Instead, the truth of the evaluated proposition is taken for granted, though it is to be dismissed as irrelevant with respect to the speaker's assertion as in the case of concession-assertion; or the evaluation only functions to indicate the source of the argument, which is to be refuted.

⁷ Russell, B. 1994. The Chinese Character (2). *Yingyu Shijie* ("The World of English"). 1994 (6): 14-27.

In either case, it necessitates no basis either. When evaluation is presented and it necessitates no justification, other semantic relations are bound to arise between the EETC and its co-text. All in all, we can argue that, though the text may not develop by virtue of the evaluation expressed in the EETC (as in the last two cases), it unfolds with respect to it.

So far, we have considered the discourse functions of the EETC from two perspectives: that of text-progression in terms of hyper-Theme and hyper-New and that of logico-semantics, that is, we have considered in what logico-semantic relation the EETC stands with its co-text and how it functions in the organization of the text. Our investigation is preliminary and tentative. The observations made so far are just general tendencies, rather than absolute categorical rules. In the next part, we shall probe into the interrelation between the discourse functions served by the EETC and the different types of EETC in terms of the Evaluated.

5. The interrelation between the types of EETC and their discourse functions

Instances of the EETC can be classified into two types with respect to the evaluated entities: EETCs with second-order entities as Evaluateds and those with third-order entities as Evaluateds (Lyons 1977: 442-445)⁸. Here we shall probe into such questions as: Do the two types function differently in the organization of text, and is the difference related to the evaluated entities? If yes, why does there exist such interrelationship?

As we consider these questions, we may notice that, of all but one (i.e., Example (7), whose Evaluated denotes a condition) EETC examples we have so far considered in the preceding sections in this article, the Evaluateds all belong to third-order entities. These examples may lead us to further argue that the discourse functions we have discussed in this article are typically performed by the EETCs whose Evaluateds are third-order entities. But there is one question remaining: What are the discourse functions fulfilled by the EETC with second-order entities as the Evaluateds? To answer this question, let us consider (12) and (13):

(12)[1] In the 19th century, *it was common to refer to English as “the language of administration” for one-third of the world’s population.* [2] *It is interesting to compare this figure with Crystal’s present-day estimate (1997) that the aggregated population of all countries in which English has any special status (the total number of people “exposed to English”), represents around one-third of the world’s population.* [3] *It is not surprising that the figures are similar, since the more populous of the 75 or so countries in which English has special status are former colonies of Britain.* (Graddol 1999: 11)

(13)[1] So far, I have spoken chiefly of the good sides of the Chinese character; but of

8 Lyons differentiates three types of entities: first-order entities, second-order entities, and third-order entities. Generally speaking, first-order entities are physical objects such as animals, people, plants, and artifacts; second-order entities are events, actions, state, situations, etc.; and third order entities are propositions, questions, ideas, conditions, etc. As is observed, first-order entities never occur in the EETC as the Evaluated. That is, the entities denoted by the Evaluated in the EETC belong to second- and third- order entities. The former are typically realized by *to*-infinitive clauses (though they may be realized by *ing*-clauses, *that*-clauses, among others); while the latter are typically realized by *that*-clauses (though they may be realized by *what*-clauses, *if*-clauses, among others). For more detailed discussion, see Wang 2006.

course China, like every other nation has its bad sides also. [2] *It is disagreeable to me to speak of these, as I experienced so much courtesy and real kindness from the Chinese that I should prefer to say only nice things about them.* [3] *But for the sake of China, as well as for the sake of truth, it would be a mistake to conceal what is less admirable.* [4] I will only ask the reader to remember that, on the balance, I think the Chinese one of the best nations I have come across, and am prepared to draw up a graver indictment against every one of the Great Powers. ... (Russell 1994)

In (12), the paragraph consists of three sentences, interestingly, each being an instance of the EETC whose Evaluated is a second-order entity. In Sentences [1] and [2], the Evaluateds are both actions denoted by infinitive clauses, while, in [3], it is a situation denoted by a *that*-clause. Though the actions and the situation are evaluated respectively as *common*, *interesting*, and *not surprising*, the evaluations are not elaborated on, or justified in the co-text. Instead, the semantic relation that these sentences bear to each other is that of extension⁹; they are not linked to each other by virtue of evaluation. [2] is an extension of [1] and [3] is an extension of [1] and [2]. Such semantic relation is not characteristic of the EETC as we have discussed in the above sections, that is, such relation can be found between other types of sentences. In this respect, [3] is different from [1] and [2] in that the evaluation in it is actually justified in the clause introduced by *since*, though the justification is limited to the sentence boundaries (i.e., in the second half of the same sentence).

In (13), there are two instances of the EETC, that is, [2] and [3] and the Evaluateds in them are both second-order entities. Similar to [3] of Example (12), the evaluation in these two EETC examples are justified, though the justification does not extend over the sentence boundaries. They are not linked to other sentences in the paragraph through the semantic relation of evaluation-basis. [1] is extended by [2] and [3], the latter two standing in an extension relation with each other. [4] is enhanced by [1] and [2], [3]¹⁰: [4] being a conclusion which is reached after the points raised in [1] and [2], [3] have been considered.

On the basis of such actual examples as cited in the above sections, we can come to the following general observation with respect to the different discourse functions performed by the two types of EETC: while EETCs with third-order entities as the Evaluateds tend to function in the text by virtue of the evaluative meaning and their chunking force can be felt more extensively in the organization of text, EETCs with second-order entities as the Evaluateds do not usually function in discourse by virtue of evaluation. That is, the evaluation may not chunk at all and the discourse functions of this type of EETC are not characteristically different from those of other syntactic patterns. Furthermore, their discourse functions tend to be more localized than those of their third-order counterparts.

This general tendency is not unmotivated with respect to the ontological status of second and third-order entities. In Hunston's (2000) terminology, second-order entities belong to world entities and third-order entities belong to discourse entities. The former exist in the objective or subjective world and they take place at specific time in specific place; while the latter are abstract, being outside time and space, they are usually asserted or denied, inferred or believed, remembered or forgotten. It is often difficult to make a distinction between the propositional content of third-order entities and the linguistic forms

9 For the logico-semantic relation of extension, see Halliday (1994: 230-232).

10 For the logico-semantic relation of enhancement, see Halliday (1994: 232-241).

which are employed to express the content.

On the other hand, as Sinclair (1981) proposes, a text has two different planes: the **interactive** plane and the **autonomous** plane. This distinction may be interpreted in terms of the roles of the speaker and the hearer. At any one time, the speaker is an informer, and the hearer is informed of the content of the text (the autonomous plane). Simultaneously, the speaker is a text constructor, and the hearer is informed of the structure of the text (the interactive plane). According to Sinclair (1981), every sentence in a text operates on the two planes simultaneously, although some sentences draw attention to their status on the interactive plane, while others draw attention to their status on the autonomous plane.

The distinction between EETCs of third-order entities and those of second-order entities is relatable to Sinclair's distinction between these two planes of text (cf., Hunston 2000). By this, we are postulating that the two types of EETCs typically function on different planes of text, or their functions are differently salient on different planes of text: EETCs of second-order entities explicitly function on the autonomous plane, while the discourse functions of EETCs of third-order entities are more salient on the interactive plane (Sinclair 1981; Hunston 2000).

On the interactive plane in Sinclair's model, every discourse entity functions in the organization of the text: the speaker signals to the hearer the role of any particular discourse entity in the larger meanings being expressed in the text as a whole. For example, the use of *It is true...But...* to start consecutive sentences indicates to the hearer that whatever is said in the first statement should be understood as a concession and that the following statement is an assertion. Thus, evaluation on this plane relates to the function of discourse entities in text: for example, the speaker's assertion (which is not normally open to contradiction by the speaker within the same text) functions differently in the text from someone else's opinion (which is likely to be confronted by the speaker, as is shown by Example (10) in Section 4.3.2 of this article). On the second plane, the autonomous plane, the text says things about the world – in other words, we are looking at the text in terms of its content rather than in terms of its construction. Evaluation on this plane relates to the expression of the speaker's 'angle' on the world: whether an action is difficult or easy, whether a situation is common or uncommon, and so on. As is shown, evaluation on this plane does not typically signal the organization of the text, that is, it does not function saliently on the interactive plane (Sinclair 1981; Hunston 2000). This in part explains why EETCs of second-order entities do not function as EETCs of third-order entities do in the organization of text and why their chunking function is more limited and localized.

6. Conclusions

This article explores the functions of the EETC in text organization. Since our perspective is a discursive one, we first consider some related properties of text. According to Halliday's model, a text is seen as a semantic unit, whose structure is a configuration of different semantic elements. On the other hand, a text is analogous to a clause in the sense that a text has the prominent points of macro-Theme and macro-New, the paragraph counterparts being hyper-Theme and hyper-New.

It is noted, at the same time, that evaluation is an indispensable ingredient of any text. It is even claimed that evaluation constitutes the point of any text. It plays an important role in the development and organization of text by virtue of the common textual pattern that evaluation tends to be preceded or followed by justification. Therefore, evaluation has a

forward or backward chunking function and the EETC as a typical locus of evaluative meaning functions accordingly in organizing the text.

The forward and backward chunking functions of the EETC typically coincide with the prospective and retrospective orientation of hyper-Theme and hyper-New respectively within the boundaries of the paragraph when the EETC occurs paragraph-initially or finally. When occurring paragraph-initially, the EETC functions as the hyper-Theme, which is further developed or enhanced in the following co-text, which typically offers basis for the evaluation expressed by the EETC in question. When the EETC occurs paragraph-finally, the preceding co-text usually provides basis for the evaluation. It is also found that this prospective or retrospective chunking function of the EETC may occur at the more local or more extended level than that of a paragraph.

Apart from chunking segments of text together by virtue of the logico-semantic relation of evaluation-basis, the EETC may also be related to its co-text on other semantic bases. For example, it may be employed to launch a concession-assertion block or to introduce a counter-argument. In both these cases, the point of the EETC is not to convey speaker's evaluation, but to present a point to be dismissed or to frame and foreground a counter-argument.

These are the general tendencies rather than absolute rules regarding the discourse functions of the EETC. There are also cases of EETC which do not function in these characteristic ways. That is, they may not chunk by virtue of the evaluative meaning. This is especially true with EETCs whose Evaluateds are second-order entities. Even when they chunk through evaluation, the chunking force is more localized than that of EETCs whose Evaluateds are third-order entities. The different discourse behaviors of the two types of EETC are ascribable to the ontological nature of second- and third-order entities: While the former are world entities, which tend to function more explicitly on the autonomous plane of discourse; the latter are discourse entities, which tend to function more explicitly on the interactive plane, hence they play a more salient role in the organization of text.

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