SEMIOTICS-IDEOLOGY-LANGUAGE

Terry Threadgold

...''For ideology operates, not so much as a coherent system of statements imposed on a population from above, but rather through a complex series of mechanisms whereby meaning is mobilised in the discursive practices of everyday life for the maintenance of relations of domination. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to search for ways in which the theory of ideology can be linked with methods for the analysis of the discursive forms in which ideology is expressed.'' (Thompson 1984:64).

Some introductions exceed their generic purpose. This will be such an introduction. In it I want to range beyond the specific papers contained in this collection and to explore work done since the conference. This work which is related to issues raised in the conference papers, suggests directions in which a semiotic theory of language and ideology might lie.

As Michael Halliday pointed out in his introductory remarks at this conference, language, or the study of language which is linguistics, is for many, in no way different to or separate from the study of semiotics, that is the study of the way that meanings are made in social systems. This is not, however, true for all linguists or for all semioticians. Linguistics has often failed to concern itself with the crucial relationship between meanings, contexts and realisations which is central to the study of language and ideology. Similarly, Semiotics, in its mainstream manifestations, has often used linguistics as a metaphor, rather than as a tool for discourse analysis, and has thus contributed to the production of the ''disembodied signifier'', to the notion (discussed so pertinently in Ann Freadman's paper in this collection) that ideologies float about without any relationship to discursive or linguistic form.

The productive bringing together of these two traditions at this conference — the mainstream semiotic work and its articulation in film theory, psychoanalysis and feminism, the work of social theorists like Foucault, and work in a particular kind of linguistics, the systemic

functional theory of language as social semiotic developed by Michael Halliday and others, a tradition in linguistics (and discourse analysis) which is, I believe, totally compatible with recent developments in semiotic theory, and which deserves to be much more widely known than it is — is what constitutes the importance and suggestiveness of this selection of conference papers.

If, in this context, language is a problematic concept (what do we think language is? How do we theorise it. Is it Austin's speech acts or Chomsky's competence? Or is it a meaning potential produced and received in specific social and historical conditions (contexts) in which social agents (subjects) act and interact?) ideology is no less so. From its earliest uses in France (derived from the *ideologues* of the post-revolutionary period) and in the writings of Marx and Engels it has carried negative connotations. The term has been incorporated into the language of the social sciences where it does not easily escape this negative sense. Ideology is always *other,* the voice of the *other,* not *my* voice. The study of ideology then raises the question of the subject, and of the subject's relations to objects. The subject's critical practice must always be part of the object domain. The study of ideology therefore involves a relationship which is central to the issues of social enquiry and critique that a critical social semiotic theory must confront.

It is only very recently that theories of ideology have been elaborated and developed through work on language and representation. Ideas do not circulate in the air. They are produced and reproduced as spoken or written utterances, in verbal or other media. To study ideology is then always, in some sense, to study the ways in which language and meaning are used in everyday forms of social interaction. This is why a theory of language and a linguistic tradition which concerns itself with ideology will be much richer than narrow approaches to linguistics and the philosophy of language which concern themselves only with systems of signs, fixed meanings, or language as communication or well-formed sentences. A theory of language as social semiotic and of language and ideology has to concern itself with language as a form of social interaction, a meaning potential in and through which subjects and the social are constructed and reproduced and cultural and human conflict are negotiated.

In the current literature in the social sciences and the humanities, "ideology" is used in two very different ways. The first use is an attempt to neutralise the negative connotations of the term. "Ideology" is seen as ubiquitous and the term becomes a description of "systems of ideas or belief" or "symbolic practices". The second use preserves the negative connotation and expresses a critique of ideology which sees it as essential to the process of maintaining and supporting domination

and asymmetrical power relations.

The two are not mutually exclusive. Neither view would any longer accept the marxist "false consciousness" argument that ideology is a distorted image of the "real". If ideology operates through language as social interaction it is after all part of what constitutes and reproduces the "real". Both views have largely abandoned the notion of ideology as a dominant body of shared values and beliefs in favour of an analysis of the complex ways in which meaning/signification (or ideology) serves to maintain relations of domination. Such an analysis depends upon an account of relations of power and domination which takes into account cultural conflict and the problem of lack of concensus about systems of ideas or beliefs which characterise social systems and includes an account of the relations between action, institutions and social structure.

In exploring the relationship between social meaning-making practices (semiotics) and language and ideology, the papers in this collection are engaging in a kind of research which involves not only a study of the socio-historical conditions in which subjects act and interact; an analysis of the conditions in which subjects are constructed as such in discourse and in which discourse is produced and received; but also a detailed discursive analysis of the lexico-grammatical and phonological structures of texts, and an interpretation of that analysis (Halliday's 'metagrammatical readings'). This analysis shows how meanings, systems of ideas and beliefs, ideologies, are constructed *in discourse* and function to maintain and transmit existing power relations. In this sense they provide important insights into the vexed question of subjectivity, the relationship between action and social structure, between psychology and the social and the complex relationships between meanings, contexts and concrete textual realisations, in ways which are enriching for semiotics and linguistics and for the analysis and understanding of ideology and language. The papers belong then in a context of ongoing debate and in important ways extend that context.

Issues and Problems

If semiotics and linguistics are to be mutually compatible and productive we need to explore our own practices as both the ideology of semiotics and the semiotics of ideology. We need too to explore certain mis-/understandings and mis-/readings, and the transmission of linguistic and semiotic texts themselves. This will help us to see where we are at and why. To proceed beyond this point we also need to mix metaphors, to leap some inter-/disciplinary fences, to begin to analyse the relations and the differences between work being done in very different fields and to try to see how separate enterprises might come

together to mutual advantage.

Foucault, despite his critique of linguistics, may be a useful addition to systemic theory, and that theory may allow the explicit working through of some of Foucault's suggestive but difficult ideas: Bakhtin/-Voloshinov may turn out to have unrecognised modern counterparts: recent work in certain kinds of linguistics may allow a re-assessment of Barthes denotation/connotation distinction: and the ideology in/of semiotics may turn out to be obfuscating or limiting the reading of "linguistics" so that the term is equated with some kinds of linguistics to the total exclusion of others.

Thus we find Stuart Hall after a lengthy discussion of language and ideology in 1980 still bewailing the absence of "an adequate socio-linguistics" which might be able to confront and deal with the issues raised by semiotic and psychoanalytic theories of language and the work of Foucault. This was written at a time when — I would suggest —the outline of an adequate semiotic theory of language, which would not make this arbitrary distinction between linguistics and sociolinguistics, was already available. Yet it is not until late 1984 that a general book on ideology (Thompson) gives a privileged place to theories of language and witnesses the beginnings of a paradigm shift in including in a book that deals with Bourdieu, Giddens, Ricoeur, Pêcheux and Habermas, an account of the East Anglian work on language and ideology and a mention of Halliday.

> "within linguistics the term 'discourse analysis' is often associated with authors such as Harris and Halliday... whose writings, for many years overshadowed by those of Chomsky, are becoming the object of renewed attention." (Thompson 1984:98)

What has been missing has been any attempt to account for particular, concrete linguistic forms as realisations of meaning and contexts. That is, we have lacked any adequate account of the relationship between the micro- and macro-levels of linguistic, semiotic and social analysis. What I propose to do here is to explore, in a series of necessarily brief accounts, some of the available and existing approaches. I have made no attempt to cover the field exhaustively. Particular questions and issues are raised by the papers in this volume and it is with these issues that I am concerned.

Together they provide valuable insights into the kind of critical social semiotic theory and practice which may contribute to the analysis of language and ideology.

1. The Film Theory Position

The study of ideology has always been concerned not only with

political ideas and doctrines but also with the ways in which social structures and relations are produced and maintained through the representation of institutions and events. The question of representation is particularly pertinent in film or screen theory (referred to in Freadman and Threadgold in this collection). It was in work relating to film texts and practices that the relationship between language, ideology and "the subject" was first extensively debated. This work was published in the two journals *Screen* and *Screen Education* and had far-reaching implications for the analysis of signifying practices in general and for debates about language, ideology and representation in particular. The work draws on a number of different areas of French theoretical writing among which early semiotics (the work of Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes), film theory (the work of Christian Metz, the debates between the journals *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Cinétique*) the theory of ideology (Althusser and particularly the 'Ideological State Apparatuses' essay) the psychoanalytic writings of the Lacan group, the Anglo-American traditions of discourse analysis (usually work based on Austin, Searle and Grice, names that have become synonymous with discourse analysis since Derrida's (e.g. 1982) critique of this) and recent theories of language and discourse (Kristeva, the "Tel Quel" group, Foucault) are perhaps the most important. The screen theory approach has also been very much influenced by the critique of "realism" and realist or "Hollywood" narrative (as the dominant filmic practice), a critique which originates in Russian formalism and in the work of Bertolt Brecht.

The early semiotics of Lévi-Strauss and Barthes established a paradigm for the study of signifying systems which was based in the linguistics of Saussure and constituted a definitive break with earlier theories which had assumed that "reality" was transparently reflected in language. Signification was now seen as a practice, involving the production of meaning. Analyses which problematised meaning in this way addressed themselves to the relations between elements and the rules governing their combination in signifying systems. This effectively decentred the autonomous Cartesian subject. The authorial "I", the origin and guarantor of the "truth" of any enunciation, was displaced.

Within cinema studies this break with empiricist theories of language foregrounded the question of subjectivity. Neither Althusser's early theory of ideology nor Lévi-Strauss's "myth" or Barthes' "codes", proved able to adequately theorise what might replace the Cartesian subject. The problem of the relations between action, institutions and social structure remained. It was here that Lacan's readings of Freud became a source for the theorising of subjectivity.

Lacan's work (e.g. 1966), like Lévi-Strauss's, sees the subject's

"entry into culture" as founded on its entry into the order of signification and symbolic representation. Unlike Lévi-Strauss, however, he locates this order both in the social and cultural system *and* in the psychic systems of the subject. The entry into the symbolic is the means whereby the subject is constituted in language. The subject is no longer considered a unitary self-identical individual, but a set of contradictory "positions", constituted in large part by unconscious processes, and fixed by those positions and processes in a certain relation to knowledge and language. In Lacan's re-reading of Freud the formation of the subject is a highly linguistic one, albeit linguistics of the metaphorical kind, ("the unconscious is structured like a language"). The subject is a function not of "instincts" or "id" but of representation and signification. The genesis of the ego or "self" in the "mirror-stage" is visually represented and is a specific effect of the psychic relation between the subject and the image. This makes it especially easy to relate the function of the primary and secondary psychical processes through which subjects are constituted and the processes of representation and identification in film. Metz's (1975) article 'The Imaginary Signifier' is the *locus classicus* of this Lacanian position.

Althusser may be indirectly responsible for this use of the Lacanian account of subjectivity. In 1971 (160ff), Althusser argued that all ideologies work by and through the constitution of the subject and gave the name 'interpellation' to the process by which ideological discourses constitute or 'hail' subjects. The whole question of language, ideology, representation and subjectivity as debated in this context set out to account for the way biological individuals become social subjects, for the way those subjects are fixed in positions in language and representation, and for the way they are interpellated into specific ideological discourses. The theory gives texts a central place. However the "productivity" of the text is defined exclusively in terms of the capacity of the text to position the "viewer" in a place of unproblematic identification or knowledge. There can be no struggle at the site of the interface between subject and text because contradictory positions have already been determined at the psychic level. Here then, the functioning of language, the practices of representation *and* the operations of ideology are all explained by Lacanian accounts of subjectivity. In these debates, it must be noted that *all* ideology is by definition patriarchal ideology, and since the subject is the mechanism through which ideology functions, all ideological struggle must take place at the level of the subject.

This theory has involved a major reworking and displacement of previous theories. In particular, the premises of historical materialism, which attempts to relate ideologies to political and economic practices

and to specific social formations and historical conjunctures, have been translated and reduced to the domain of the subject. There are many problems with this, not the least of which are the absence of any substantive reference to social formations and the transcendental or universal form in which the psychoanalytic contradictory subject is predicated. It is extremely difficult to relate this universal, trans-historical and trans-social subject to the premises of a historical materialism which refers subjectivities to historically specific modes of production and definite societies. The problem is that a theory of how the subject-in-general is formed does not offer in itself an adequate account of how historically *specific* subjects, that is speaking, context-bound subjects, function in relation to particular discourses or historically specific ideologies in specific social formations. Theories of subject formation may be a necessary part, but are not yet a sufficient, explanation of these processes.

Finally, it is a theory which is inescapably phallocentric, since the mechanism, in Lacan, which enables the entry into the symbolic is dependent on the resolution of the castration complex. The differences and distinctions which make the subject's access to language and representation possible are founded on a marking of sexual difference, conceived on the primacy of one sex over the other. It is hard to see how, in these terms, if "the Law of the Father" is "the Law of the Culture" in general, patriarchy is not woman's inescapable and irreversible destiny.

This would make the concept of ideological struggle impossible, since it would involve struggle against the very conditions in which language itself is constituted. The subject is always, by definition "inside" patriarchal language/ideology. This argument makes it impossible to explain either the concrete differences between historically, geographically and culturally different patriarchal ideologies, or the way such ideologies might be interrupted or contravened. There is no account, for example, of how a subject might be positioned in language without being committed to patriarchal ideology. This is the problem with Kristeva's (1974) identification of ideological struggle with the practice of the *avant-garde*. Language is presumed *a priori* as patriarchal — a simplistic resolution which is fraught with difficulties because it confuses the functioning of specific patriarchal ideologies with the conditions of language itself.

Now, apart from the difficulty of explaining a specific instance of the text/reader relationship by a universalist theory of the subject, cinema theory isolates the encounter of text and reader from all social and historical structures and from other texts. At the moment of textual encounter, besides the text in focus, other discourses — discourses from other discursive formations which depend on the subject's positioning

in other practices — cultural, educational, institutional — are always in play.

The attempt in the wider semiotic context of cultural studies to explore the problem of language, ideology and subjectivity in ways that might take these aspects of the problem into account and move beyond the screen theory position has involved, again, Barthes[1] and Kristeva's work (particularly her popularising of Bakhtin), the work of Voloshinov/Bakhtin and the Bakhtin circle, and the work of Michel Foucault, as well as that of Bernstein, Bourdieu, Althusser, Gramsci, Pêcheux and others (see Hall *et al.*, 1980; Thompson 1984). In semiotics the issues have been dealt with by, for example, Eco (1976) and Teresa de Lauretis (1984).

2. Texts, Readers and Subjects

To recapitulate then, the model of the reading process offered by cinema theory remains basically empiricist. Most filmic texts are regarded as operating within the conventions and practices of 'realism' and therefore as being governed by the rules of *the* classic realist text. Such texts position viewers in a transparent, unproblematic relation to knowledge. Readers actually produce the "real" in the reading process but the text appears to simply reflect pre-existent reality. The discursive strategies of the realist text position subjects in an empiricist relation to knowledge/language, so that the reader appears merely as observer. The "realist" text is not "read" but "consumed" by the socially stable reader. In effect this forecloses the possibility of the reading process being involved in the production of meaning. The ideology is *in the signifier*, in the text "objectively" considered. Readers are constrained by their unconscious positionings which are confirmed and stabilised in the structure of the realist discourse.

This is clearly too simple a model to explain the connections between language, semiosis (social meaning making practices) and subjects. First it identifies the subject inscribed in the text with the concrete social individual who reads it in ways which, as we shall see, are untenable. Second it is a position which appears to run counter to two of the most important advances previously established by linguistics and semiotics — the esentially polysemic nature of sign production in discourse, and the consequently interrogative and expansive nature of all readings. While there has to be a relationship between encoding and decoding, the theory of the polysemic nature of discourse would argue against any necessary correspondence or identity between them (Eco 1976, 1981). Voloshinov (1930) stressed the important fact that it is the

'multi-accentuality of the sign' which makes it possible for discourse to become an "arena of struggle", and related this to the question of the monologism of the dominant discourse/ideology: "The ruling class tries to impart a supraclass, eternal character to the ideological sign, to extinguish or drive inward the struggle between social value judgements which occurs in it, to make the sign uniaccentual" (1930:23).

This suggests that a text of the dominant discourse (that is a socially valorised text) by inscribing certain preferred discursive positions from which its discourse appears "natural", "transparent" in relation to the "real", does privilege or prefer a certain reading. However it also opens up the possibility of other readings, and specifically of other subject positions than those inscribed by the text. The subject who reads is already positioned in an interdiscursive space, at the intersection of other texts, institutions, discursive formations and ideological structures. This reader will have to make the reading most fully inscribed in the text, if the text is to be intelligible, but it does not follow that he/she will necessarily comply with its dominant ideological problematic. One must therefore distinguish between making a dominant reading of a text, adopting some aspects of a text's ideological problematic, and being wholly or partly positioned by textually inscribed subject positions.

There is no single text/reader relation. text/subject relations depend on a complex of interacting factors including (1) the text's "mode of address", those discursive operations which seek to define the form of the text/reader relation (Neale 1977), (2) the text's dominant ideological problematic, that is the set of discursive operations by which a problematic organises its field of reference as a particular agenda of issues, a repertoire of questions asked or not asked, a matrix of propositions, its preferred themes (Neale 1977), (3) other problematics, conflicting ideologies, which may also structure the text, (4) the subject positions inscribed in the text and (5) the process by which social subjects/readers, already constituted as "subjects" by and for a multiplicity of other discourses, are successfully or not interpellated (positioned) by any single text.

What is involved here is a considerable advance on the psycho-analytic version of the subject in the typical cinema theory account outlined above. It does involve certain critical distinctions, articulated most explicitly in the linguistic work of Michel Pêcheux (1975), which questions the assumption that all specific discursive effects can be reduced to a universal set of psychic mechanisms but includes an account of the psychoanalytic and universal subject, a position which Bernstein in his most recent writings (1984) seems prepared to share. The specific constitution of each individual subject is conceived of as

involving two important stages. There is a single, original interpellation — the entry into language and the symbolic. This constitutes a *space*, a place where in the second-stage, a complex of continually interpellated subject forms interrelate. Each subject form is determined by a multiplicity of discursive processes. The discursive subject is therefore, in Pêcheux's terms, an "interdiscourse", the product of the effect of discursive practices (which provide already available subject positions) traversing the subject through its history.

This formulation distinguishes between the subject-in-general, and the way that subject is subsequently positioned by the complex of discourses that make up the discursive formation of specific social formations. This distinction relocates the struggle over ideology in language at the intersection between constituted subjects and specific discursive positions, at the level of the interplay between the subject and the discursive, an interplay which inevitably involves contradictory positions for the subject.

This returns us to the crucial differences between the textual or discursive subject and the social subject. The latter, already historically situated at the intersection of competing and contradictory discourses, always exceeds the subject implied by/inscribed in any text. It follows that meaning produced in the encounter between text and subject cannot be read straight off from the characteristics of the texts, its discursive strategies. What also has to be taken into account are the "use to which a particular text is put, its function within a particular conjuncture, in particular institutional spaces, and in relation to particular audiences." (Neale 1977;39-40).[3] And texts cannot be considered in isolation from the historical conditions of their production — their production (by writers and readers) in a context of discourses in struggle and the production within them and through them of the systems of knowledge and belief we call ideologies. Nor can texts be isolated from their positioning in the field of articulation secured between discursive and economic/political practices. Both the text and the subject are constituted in and by what Pêcheux has called the interdiscursive and Kristeva and others have called intertextuality: both text and subject are traversed and intersected by contradictory discourses.[4] These contradictions arise from the subject positions which different discourses inscribe, and from the contexts and institutional sites within which they are articulated and transformed.

What is more the meanings of texts will be constructed differently depending on the discourses[5] (knowledges, prejudices, resistances) which are brought to bear on the text by the reader. Different audiences will have at their disposal different repertoires of discourses.[6] It will be the position of subjects in the social formation which will determine

which sets of discourses a given subject is likely to encounter and in what forms. That is, speaking subjects (writers) and audiences (subject/-readers) *are* economically, politically and ideologically determined by the differential access which they have to sets of discourses.

Pêcheux's work then focusses on discourse as a social process and attempts to elucidate the socio-historical conditions under which words change their meanings within a single language when spoken or read from different positions. This is a crucial critique of the Saussurean notion of "value" in *langue*, for it makes it very clear that meaning is constituted not only systematically but also by the relations of synonymy, substitution and paraphrase that may exist between the linguistic elements of a given discursive formation and which produce semantic "slipping"/"sliding"/metaphor.

These questions, of course, in a more "sociological" form were central to Bernstein's early work (1971, 1973) and to that of Bourdieu (1977). That they have disappeared from the discussion is no doubt attributable to the general critique of "sociological" approaches in film theory. Bernstein, and sociological formulations in general have been extensively criticised for the overly deterministic relation they posited between class and language, in that they presumed a too simple correspondence between social structure and discourse, based on a too simple notion of how classes are constituted and on the ascription of fixed ideologies to whole classes.

Althusser's (1971) concept of interpellation and contradictory discourses already emphasised the unstable, contingent and dynamic aspects of subject positioning and problematised the notion of a unitary, homogeneous concept of social class or of class-consciousness. But it is too simple to then argue by inversion that any relationship posited between discursive formations and class formations must be "reductionist": and indeed there is a good deal of evidence that the simple relationship between the two ascribed to Bernstein represents in itself a mis-reading of his work (Hasan 1973; Bernstein 1982) and a failure to recognise the important implications of that work for establishing a range of possible coding and decoding positions or orientations.[7]

There is certainly no unproblematic link between classes and meaning systems, but the economic and political constitution of classes will have real effects on the access of groups of agents to discourses, as will other structures and relations like those of gender and patriarchal relations, race and ethnicity and so on. Thus the relationship between classes and meaning systems has to be reworked to account for the way discursive formations intervene between "classes" and "languages" (or "semiotic styles" Hasan 1984). The socio-economic position of subjects will not allow us to deduce which discursive frameworks (either as

performance or as interpretative codes) will be mobilised in particular subject/text encounters. But position in the social structure will have a constraining effect on the discursive coding or decoding strategies available to different subjects and will affect the way discursive repertoires (access to genres or registers and context-types) are distributed. The key factors in constraining individual access to discourses may not be "class" in the economic sense at all but almost certainly does involve "class" in a broadly social and political sense. The key sites for the distribution of "cultural capital" (Bourdieu's term) are probably as Bernstein and Bourdieu suggested, the family and the school, or, as Althusser (1977) (after Gramsci) argued, the family-school couplet. Gender, ethnicity and immediate social context are other factors which may affect which specific discourses will be replicated or engaged with in any specific subject/text encounter; the distribution of the discourses of representation (the media, literature, art and so on) and other cultural apparatuses will also structure the discursive competences of socially constructed performers and audiences differently.

It is at this point then that the need for what Stuart Hall called "an adequate sociolinguistics" becomes apparent. For these general theoretical propositions must be elaborated at a more concrete level which will account for the specificity of linguistic and semantic structures in relation to this text/subject/reader problematic. I would suggest that it is in a theory of language as social semiotic as outlined by Halliday (1978) and through a semantically organised functional grammar (Halliday 1985) that these problems may begin to find some of their answers. Certainly this particular linguistic semiotic is totally compatible with the kind of view of text/reader subject relations outlined above (Threadgold 1986). That it has been ignored for so long in the context of cultural studies and semiotics has to do with the justified critique of mainstream linguistics (the dominant Anglo-American discourse analysis tradition) within that framework and with the consequent widespread failure to deal with linguistic specificity in a context where "denotation" and subjectivity have become suspect categories.

There are two exceptions to this general criticism. The first has been the work of the East Anglia group (Fowler 1981; Kress and Hodge 1979) which has consistently explored the possibilities of linguistic analysis, and specifically of Halliday's systemic functional grammar and theory of language as a social semiotic (1978; 1985) in relation to the wider context of semiotic enquiry outlined above and in order to deal with problems of language and ideology. The shortcomings of these approaches have been as Kress (1985) himself points out, in the failure to move beyond the initial work of description and analysis to the sorts of questions we have been dealing with in this section (Kress 1985: 65-7).

Fowler's (1981) work goes some way towards remedying these deficiencies but it still fails to adequately theorise the speaking subject and the discursive positioning of that subject in relation to power and knowledge.

Another group which has explicitly examined these issues was established in 1975 at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham and is of interest because it is representative of ways of tackling the problems of language, ideology and subjectivity within cultural studies and within the general area of semiotic approaches to signifying practices.

The group actually set out to overcome the kind of marginalisation of specifically linguistic concerns which I alluded to above and had the dual aim of establishing the theoretical importance of linguistics to cultural studies and of clarifying the different traditions of linguistic theory and research currently available. Interestingly they saw one of the reasons for the general failure of work in cultural studies to come to terms with the significance of language as being based in the otherwise important work of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, which provided the centre's first theoretical grounding, and seemed to include a specific interest in language and communication (Hall *et al.*, 1980: Ch. 14).

For both Hoggart and Williams culture is seen as meaningful and meanings are based in practical social experience: but this involves an expressive theory of language in which meaning is based in essentially subjective acts of perception. The notion is that linguistic utterances are to be interpreted in terms of the "feelings", the "real meanings" that lie behind them (Hoggart 1958: 17). Thus one "looks through" the linguistic level to the content. The level of the signifier, the specificity of the linguistic utterances becomes *transparent*. It is this kind of view of language which hindered the development of a specific theoretical interest in language and signifying practices which would actually look *at* rather than *through* the way meanings are constructed and communicated.

The group took as its object theories of language since Saussure (Hall *et al.*, 1980: 182ff). It looked at work within the tradition of Anglo-American discourse analysis, formalist linguistics, Barthes' early work on myths (which implicates the work of Saussure, Hjelmslev and Jakobson), Benveniste, the work of the "Tel Quel" group including the later Barthes, Kristeva, Sollers and Lacan's theory of language, and included Derrida's critique of Saussure, Marxist theories of language and ideology (Marx, Stalin, Voloshinov, and Althusser) and Foucault's theory of discursive formations which it saw as a historically specific approach to language in contrast to, for example, the universalism of the psychoanalytic approach. The work of the group actually emerged in the context of work on the media which had confronted Barthes'

(1967: 89-90) language/metalanguage, denotation/connotation model of signification, and found it wanting.

This has interesting consequences for the kind of work that is then pursued at the centre and in mainstream semiotic approaches to language in general. For there is a difference between the study of "signifying systems" and the detailed study of the linguistic signifier. Lemke (1985 p.5) has identified this as the difficulty of articulating the "macro" levels of theory with the "micro" levels of detailed analysis and suggests that the reasons the necessary mediating structures have not been found are themselves ideological — they would subvert the dominant ideology of bourgeois individualism with its attendant belief in individual intentionality and creativity. The absence of work which attempts to co-articulate the two has to do with the Derridean critique of the Saussurean sign, Foucault's critique of theories of language as totalising systems, and the problems raised by Barthes' extraordinarily influential use of the Hjelmslevian concept of denotative/connotative semiotics.[8] All of these things, taken together, I would suggest, have made semioticians and those working in areas like cultural studies feel that it is somehow ideologically suspect to analyse the lexico-grammatical level of language. This is because such analysis (and linguistic methodology in general) is wrongly associated with the very ideology to which Lemke (1985) refers.

Denotation/Connotation

In his work on myth, Roland Barthes (1973) accepted the Saussurean definition of the sign, seeing signifier and signified as only arbitrarily related, and made a distinction between language and metalanguage which is based on Hjelmslev's (1943) account of denotative and connotative semiotic systems. His famous example of a black soldier saluting a French flag in *Paris-Match* involves a level of denotation (the soldier saluting the flag) and a level of connotation (the "myth" of French imperialism, the subservience of colonised races) whose signifier is the already constituted denotative sign. Thus we have a signifying system functioning as the expression form for another signifying system. The denoted level, which is read as "truth", "real", is what naturalises the ideology of the connotated level, allowing the myth to be innocently consumed (not questioned).

This has been criticised at several different levels (for example Hall *et al.*, 1980:178-82). Barthes' apparent acceptance of the Saussurean concept of the sign, particularly its arbitrariness, and of the dichotomy *langue/parole,* was problematic for a semiotics concerned with signifying systems and the social practices of their production. His myth/language

distinction reduces the functions of language as a system to denotation, which implies that the linguistic sign has a given, fixed meaning which is not in any sense context-dependent. It could thus be seen as participating in the "objectivist", literal meaning epistemologies which see meanings as stable or fixed. Barthes has also been criticised for defining the social function of myths (ideology) in terms of a formal analysis of their internal systems without taking into account the specificity of non-verbal signifying systems or the social practices involved in their production. In this sense, he is seen as reducing *all signification* to language, or at least to a formal system derived from linguistic theory. Barthes' failure to deal with subjectivity and different coding orientations reduces "ideology" to "bourgeois ideology", and fails to recognise that "ideology" is not "out there", imposed as it were from above, but rather, is part of the signification itself. Ideologies are constructed in language as contextualised social discourse.

Some of these criticisms are mutually contradictory and they all require some comment, since in a number of ways they testify to certain fundamental absences in the reading of Barthes[1] and of the Hjelmslevian framework from which his work derives. These absences (meanings that cannot be made/are invisible) derive from the epistemology of literal vs. figurative meaning which Thibault (unpublished) has called the dominant folk theoretical tradition in Western scholarship.

Umberto Eco (1984: 35) has demonstrated more than adequately the inferential nature of sign processes at both the denotative and connotative levels of semiosis within the Hjelmslevian model. Denotative signs are "motivated" (not "natural" or "arbitrary" any more than connotative meanings) and both are constructed, articulated, and immanent in the patterned linguistic exchanges of which the social semiotic is constituted. Moreover as Halliday's work shows (1985: Threadgold & Martin this volume) the denotative level of meaning is not a conduit system whereby fixed and finite meanings are transmitted from sender to addressee, but rather a polyphonic structure open both to the multi-functional readings of a semantically organised functional grammar (Halliday 1985) and to the multiple accentuation described by Voloshinov (1973: 23) and constantly shifting in relation to contexts and subject positionings or coding orientations. In an important sense then, the distinction Barthes makes, is not between literal and figurative, or literal and context-dependent or socio-cultural meaning. There is no such distinction. What he was trying to show was that the already context-dependent and motivated and therefore multi-accented meanings of the denotative level are always further contextualised by more global meanings or semiotic systems. Moreover, there can be no sense in which "denotative" meanings are essentially prior to "connotative" meanings.

This is why Barthes' emphasis, on the connotative semiotic as the domain through which ideology entered the language system with its emphasis on bourgeois ideology and the absence of any notion of subjective coding orientations or resistant signifying practices is particularly unhelpful. It has served to maintain an untenable view of language as a homogeneous system in which some meanings are central and others peripheral, some normal and others deviant, some true and others ideological, such that the central/normal and true (the denotative) come to have a logical and inevitable priority. This is untenable because there is no signifying practice which is not ideological; ideology cannot be isolated at the connotative level and thus the distinction denotative/connotative breaks down. What is more, like Althusser's account (1971), Barthes' account represents the ideological process as too monologic, too functionally adapted to the reproduction of the dominant ideology.

The work of Voloshinov and Gramsci which introduced into the language/ideology arena the notion of a "struggle over meaning" provides a correction to both these tendencies in Barthes' work.

> "Existence reflected in the sign is not merely reflected but refracted. How is this refraction of existence in the ideological sign determined? By an intersecting of differently oriented social interests in every ideological sign. Sign becomes an arena of class struggle. This social multi-accentuality of the ideological sign is a very crucial aspect..." (Voloshinov 1930: 23).

The sign is by definition ideological and meaning is not the unproblematic functional reproduction of the world in language, but a struggle between different kinds of social accenting in discourse (what Bakhtin called heteroglossia). Voloshinov's point was that uni-accentuality, where there appeared to be only one, given, "supraclass" meaning, where there appeared to be a system of equivalence between language and reality, was always the result of a practice of closure which was the most pertinent effect of the struggle over meaning. But because equivalence was secured through discursive practice, meanings which had once been coupled could be put asunder. The struggle in discourse consisted then precisely in the process of articulation and disarticulation identified by Gramsci and developed by Laclau (1977). What was important was the way in which different social interests or forces might conduct an ideological struggle so as to disarticulate a signifier from one preferred or dominant meaning system, and rearticulate it within another, different chain of connotations (see Eco 1976; Thibault unpublished; Lemke 1985 forthcoming; Threadgold forthcoming). This had a number of important consequences. First, signs cannot be assigned, permanently, to any one side in the struggle. The struggle

over meaning is to some extent a class struggle but not one in which whole discourses or texts can be unproblematically assigned to whole social classes or groups in any fixed or determinant way. Every text is a "polytext" "that necessarily situates itself in a system of opposing viewpoints, all of which speak through it to make the politics of the community" (Lemke 1985: 17). Second, this makes it very clear that ideological struggle in discourse is realised at the lowest (the denotative) lexico-grammatical level and cannot be treated only as a connotative semiotic (although this is certainly ideological). And third, this problematises the whole question of the adequacy or the necessity of a connotative semiotic level to handle ideology in discourse.

If ideology can be realised by the different semantic accentings of the same linguistic sign, it follows that language and ideology, although intimately connected, *cannot* be one and the same thing.[11] The concept of the connotative semiotic explains how the meanings realised at the lowest lexico-grammatical levels become the expression form for meanings at a higher, global, semiotic level, but it fails to make the necessary analytic distinction between language and ideology. The problem is how to analyse the ideologies (systems of knowledge and belief) which are immanent in social semiotic exchanges without simply adopting the underlying assumptions of discourse participants or restricting the analysis to the level of the meanings that can be "read off" at the lexico-grammatical level.

This is where we have to consider the "articulation" of ideology in and through discourse in relation to the inter-discursive or intertextual and in relation to subjects already positioned within a range of existing discourses, subjects who speak, and are spoken by, those discourses. It is only by elaborating the functioning of intertextuality, the inter-discursive, in and through discourse as an aspect of those structures that mediate between macro-and micro-levels (Lemke 1985) that we can describe the interface between language as specific textual instantiations of meaning and that same language as the realisation of the wider set of "typical doings and sayings" that constitute a community and its discursive formations.[12]

4. The Work of the Systemic-Functional School

Referring earlier to the East Anglian work on language and ideology (see above p. 26) I suggested that the work of Kress, Fowler and others, which frequently makes use of systemic theory, had contributed in important and suggestive ways to the exploration of the often ill-defined relationship between detailed linguistic and social analysis. However, as Kress himself has pointed out recently (1985, 1985a) these accounts

remained, for various reasons, inadequate. In much of the work there is still an assumption that the analyst can simply "read off" the meaning from the grammar, and while the accounts presuppose a social theory which would deal with the link between ideology and power or control, and would confront the question of the relations between class, race and gender (for example) there is never any systematic discussion of those relations. Thus the theory of society remains largely implicit in these accounts.

Moreover, because the work frequently makes use of a Chomskian transformational framework it is often dogged by the effects of the deep/surface dichotomy — the notion that the analyst can read *through* the deceptive surface forms of language to some underlying reality: a notion which fails to confront the epistemological questions of critique and justification, which fails to theorise acting within the constraints of semiosis, and which perpetuates a false dichotomy between deep and surface phenomena. John B. Thompson (1984: 124) has said of the approach that it remains "largely linguistic" and suggests that what this work still points to is the need for a method for "the critical interpretation" of linguistic expressions.

It is here, it seems to me, that the work of the systemic functional school of linguistics, deserves to be better known.[13] It is not that this work yet provides all the answers. It does not and I shall point to a number of problems below: but recent, still largely unpublished work, by a group of scholars within this tradition, is beginning to outline the shape which such a method might take and is doing so in ways that are a considerable advance on anything that is being produced in other contexts where these questions are currently being raised (see Thread-gold 1986a).

There is no space here to outline in detail the nature of Michael Halliday's theory of language as social semiotic (1978) or his functional semantics/grammar (1985). I have elsewhere (Threadgold 1986, 1986b) suggested that there are important connections between Halliday's theories and practice and work like that of Voloshinov/Bakhtin and Eco which has been central to the development of semiotic theory in general and I have argued the fundamental importance of some such theory of language to any adequate critical social semiotic theory.

That systemic theory has remained invisible for so long in many of the contexts where these issues have been discussed is in itself an effect of the semiotics of ideology or the ideology of semiotics. Systemic theory has for a long time stood well outside the dominant scientific paradigm in linguistics (Kuhn 1962). Halliday's own work has consistently refused the dominant dichotomies of that paradigm and the ideology of which these are textual realisations — the *langue/parole,* system/

process, competence/performance, semantics/pragmatics, text/context, form/content, syntax (grammar)/semantics, deep/surface, arbitrary/-motivated, cognitive/social, speech/writing, and even production/inter-pretation disjunctions of that tradition are all questioned, debated and in various ways re-thought in his work. (See Hasan, this volume, on the deep/surface dichotomy).[14] In some ways, the re-locating or de-locating of the boundaries implied by these oppositions in Halliday's work always centres around the complex and often ill-understood question of the dialectical relationship between text and context which is *realisation*. Again, there is no space here to deal with this in detail, but it has to do with the way in which single wordings function simultaneously as realisations of the macro-functions of language (the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual), the immediate context of situation (field, tenor and mode), and the social structure (Halliday's (1978) higher order semiotic systems).[15] The semiotic constructs which are the textual realisations of these relationships are what Halliday (1978) calls coding orientation (after Bernstein 1971) and register.

More recently (1985: 47) Halliday has included the concept of intertextuality (after Lemke 1985 a) an important step, since, without it, one is left with trying to explain what Voloshinov called the "multi-accentuality" of the sign function in terms of the inadequate notion of Saussurean "value". Meaning is not constituted simply by the para-digmatic or syntagmatic relationships between the elements of the linguistic system. The synonymy, substitution and paraphrase which characterise the metaphorical processes in which meanings constantly "slip/slide" and words change their meanings under specific socio-historical conditions when spoken from different *positions* (coding orientations) within *one* language or even *one* text, must be explained in terms of the relations between the linguistic elements of a given discursive formation and the "voices" (Bernstein 1984) or "discourses" (Foucault 1972) which articulate them within any given text. These relations are what are here called intertextuality.[16] In all of these respects then Halliday's work is located outside the dominant linguistic paradigms of this century. This explains why as Thompson puts it (1984), it has until very recently been "overshadowed" by that paradigm, indeed why in some contexts it has remained invisible. For it was not until the Derridean and Foucaldian deconstruction of the linguistic sign and of Western rationality began to take effect, indeed to effect an epistemological break, that Halliday's own deconstruction of prevailing dichotomies and the ideologies they realise, could become itself a possible (able to be read/understood/permissable) meaning. Which is why the extraordinarily disparate projects of Derrida and Halliday are not necessarily incompatible.[17]

Halliday's semantic and functional grammar is now well enough developed to be extraordinarily useful for the task of discourse analysis, and work on register and the immediate semiotic construct of situation has been extremely productive (Halliday 1978; Halliday & Hasan 1985; Lemke 1985; Thibault 1984, 1986). In the first case, the grammar (Halliday 1985) is able to deal with the lowest lexico-grammatical and phonological levels of text-description, and with higher-order discursive semiotic systems such as the logical structures of argumentation and the generic systems which constrain these like narrative, exposition and so on (Martin 1985). In the second, registers are identified as linguistic varieties which are specific to certain situation-types. They are constituted by typical co-patternings of linguistic reasources from the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language which can be correlated with, and are realisations of, aspects of field, tenor and mode, the categories used to analyse the semiotic construct of situation. (Halliday 1978; Halliday & Hasan 1985). Registers and situation-type are mutually predictable.

However the level of social analysis, which would correspond to Halliday's (1978) higher order social semiotic of *social system* is much less well-developed. Most of the published work avoids this level of analysis (see for example Martin, this volume, and Hasan's (1985) Contextual Configuration which deals only with the immediate context of situation). These accounts acknowledge the inseparability of the analysis of ideology from the socio-historical analysis of the forms of power and control which meaning production serves to sustain. However they fall short of offering any explanation of action and institutions as social contexts in which subjects are constituted and pursue their aims within the parameters made possible by institutional structures and the various constraints which these exert on the media by which discourse is transmitted. Cate Poynton's recent work on Language and Gender (1985) and Kress's (1985 a) work on linguistics and sociocultural practices begin to make good this lacuna within systemic theory. The work of Jay Lemke (1984, 1985) and Paul Thibault (1984, 1986) offers further important theoretical insights which must be developed if the theory is to finally escape the charge of "remaining largely linguistic" (Thompson 1984).

At this level, then, there is currently far less agreement among the major writers in the field, and the terminology is far more diverse, and less consistent, an effect of the different intertextual processes thorough which the critical texts have been produced. The problem again revolves around the question of "realisation" but is related to that of production and interpretation (subjectivity, subject positioning). How many levels of realisation do we need? Martin (this volume) suggests

genre[18] and ideology as well as register. But what are the appropriate levels? Both Lemke and Thibault, influenced by Halliday, Bernstein, Bakhtin and Foucault, avoid the term genre in favour of "register-types" and wider discursive and intertextual relationships and systems which they call "thematic" and "frame" systems respectively and see as discursively produced. This is close to Kress's (1985) use of genre (register-type) and discourse (in the Foucaldian sense). All three accounts avoid identifying ideology with language but also avoid seeing ideology as essentially outside linguistic processes, imposed from above. In all three cases this is possible only because both production and reception are taken into account, so that the positioning of subjects in and through discourse, and the question of intertextuality, is theorised. This avoids the problems in Martin's account, which, like the earlier East Anglian work, and Barthes' account of denotation/connotation, is too narrowly linguistic in focus and too specifically production oriented, collapsing the complex level of subjective coding orientations ("voices", positions), action, institutions and discursive formations — the level of social analysis — into a single level of ideology.

Martin's is however a very important contribution to the understanding of the process of realisation as this is envisaged within the Hjelmslevian framework of denotative and connotative semiotic systems. At the same time Martin's account provides a timely caution for those who would discard the complexities of denotation in the Hjelmslevian and Barthesian sense in the mistaken belief that it constitutes a (transparent) referential theory of meaning and in favour of the much more problematic, both semiotically and ideologically, post-structuralist notion of the disembodied signifier.

The work of Paul Thibault (unpublished: 57) and of Jay Lemke (1985) on intertextual thematic systems provides interesting suggestions as to the way intertextuality as semiotic frame structures (Thibault unpublished) mediates between textually specific lexico-grammatical patternings, (Halliday 1978; Halliday & Hasan 1985; Lemke 1985) typical register-types and the abstract intertextual systems of the higher order social semiotic. Intertextual thematic systems or frames are semiotic constructs which mediate between the cultural context of institutions and ideologies (discursive formations, genres, and activity-types, the sayings and doings of the community) and the register-types realised in specific contexts of situation. The social action of speaking subjects (which involves ideology as point of view and as purpose as in Martin's account) is then dealt with explicitly in terms of coding orientations which position subjects in differential ways in relation to *the thematic systems and typical register-types (Martin would say fields and genres) of the community. This work has interesting*

connections with Bernstein's most recent analyses.

Bernstein (1984) tries to connect the social relations of classes through a number of intermediate constructs to the "voices" and "messages" of texts. His concepts of classification and framing make a useful distinction between the social control of typologies and of interaction. These define what may be said and done and still be socially recognisable as having a coherent "voice". His important concept of "code" or "coding orientation" then shows how "voices" (or register types) are related to texts and typical situation types. At the same time codes position subjects by giving them unequal or differential access to the "voices" (registers) of the community. This aspect of his work provides an important elaboration of the relation between register, situation and social system which intersects in a number of interesting ways with Foucault's (1972) otherwise very different approach to the question of discursively positioned subjects (Lemke 1985).

Thus, while Martin's account of language and ideology within a systemic framework is suggestive, it has many of the drawbacks of Barthes' account to which it is closely related. In this respect it and Hasan's (1985) account, while more explicit in some ways than Halliday's (1978, 1985) are still necessarily working at the lower levels of his overall conceptualisation of the complexity of the language/culture, text/context, language as social semiotic problematic (1978, 1985). In some ways, their work remains at the text/context of situation level, whereas Lemke and Thibault, attempting to flesh out Halliday's 1978 view of the problem have concentrated more on the mediating dialectical structures of realisation between text and context. Moving outside systemic linguistics to the semiotic, structuralist, and broader traditions of cultural studies where the problems of language and ideology have been debated, they have been able to provide valuable insights into the ways to make the connections between theories of signifying systems, society and culture and the specific levels of lexicogrammatical, semantic realisations in texts. Their work also suggests ways of accounting for the coding of ideology at every point in that level of linguistic realisation.

Most importantly they have shown that the levels called register and genre are themselves, like the lower lexico-grammatical levels, ideological and intertextual constructs and that ideology is neither imposed from above nor equivalent to language, although it may be coded and transmitted through language. Systems of knowledge and belief, ideologies, are constructed in discourse, they are not "out there" separate from language, but nor are they constructed in isolation from the inter-discursive or the intertextual, or the historical specificity of textual production and consumption.

5. The Speaking Subject, the Critique of Bourgeois Individualism The Tel Quel Group, Kristeva and Foucault

The papers in this volume, in their heterogeneity, have connections and relationships which are suggestive, in bringing together a theory of language as social semiotic which deals with language and ideology, and more broadly based semiotic and psychoanalytic approaches to this same problem, of ways in which the micro-levels of analysis and the macro-levels might be articulated together. There are reasons why this has not previously occurred. Such an articulation involves a degree of social determinism which runs counter to the dominant humanist ideology of individualism pervading much of the discourse of social science, including linguistics. On the other hand, the general absence of detailed *linguistic* accounts of textual practices within semiotics and cultural studies can be attributed to a fear of becoming implicated in that ideology — a fear which is based on dominant readings of the denotation of Barthes famous example, and on a general failure to distinguish between models of language which do and models which do not participate in that ideology. I have suggested that systemic-functional linguistics on the whole does not.

The critique of so-called genuine "denotative" theories of meaning, "conduit models of language" (Martin, after Reddy 1979), is sometimes summed up under the rubric of "the Derridean critique of the linguistic sign", and has gone on both within systemic linguistics and outside it. Much of this work has seriously disrupted the literal/referential vs. figurative/socio-cultural opposition in Western theories of meaning, suggesting new ways of viewing social meaning making practices.

This disruption of the oppositions of the prevailing ideology involves the speaking subject, in language as well as in ideology and politics (including sexual politics). Here, several quite disparate traditions can be identified.

The sociolinguistic or ethnographic tradition has posed the question of the speaking subject within a phenomenological framework, offering an individualistic, interactional model of communication in which the subject as intentional consciousness is the source of speech acts whose meanings are negotiated in social interaction with other intentional conscious subjects. Work in this tradition involves analysis of spoken discourse in face-to-face interaction and is underpinned by an interactionist form of social psychological theory. The problem here is that the communicative situation is conceived as a kind of stage setting in which the actors are free to do as they will, including freely selecting from the language system conceptualised as a resource. Such an approach is

committed to individualism and accords well with the aesthetic ideology of humanism which emphasises individual creativity, the autonomy and singularity of the art object, and the private, individual character of reading. The work of Fish, Iser, in literary theory, of Berger and Lukmann, Goffman, and Bauman and Sherzer in ethnography are examples of this kind of approach which has been broadly critiqued from a number of points of view (see Coward and Ellis (1977)).

The sociolinguistic view of the subject is in tension with the historical materialist view, which sees the subject as the bearer of social relations and ideologies. This view, modified by the work of Voloshinov (1930) and Althusser's theoretical challenge to economic reductionism (1971) involves the serious consideration of signifying practices in which the subject is seen as constituted in language. The mechanism by which ideology works is through this positioning of the subject in discourse. In a neo-materialist theory of the subject there can be no dialogue between speaking subjects, nor can meanings be made in any situation, which are not determined by the broader context of the whole culture. Thus discourse must be seen from a macro-sociolinguistic perspective (Fowler 1981) as the product and expression of broadly based facts of social, cultural and economic organisation. This is the sense in which the immediate speech situation and what is said and done within it are constituted by and simultaneously constitute social macro-structure (Fowler 1981; Halliday 1978, 1985; Lemke 1985; Thibault 1985).

This position is again different to the neo-semiological approach of the Tel Quel Group and the post-Althusserian attempts to base a materialist theory of language and ideology on psychoanalysis and Lacan's theory of language, as for example in the work of Julia Kristeva or of Coward and Ellis. Kristeva's work is of considerable interest because it links up with the other important area of influence on the debate about language, ideology and subjectivity, that is, feminism and the question of masculine and feminine discourses. Her work has also provided alternative (and specifically linguistic) approaches to handling the problem of the literary poetic text.

5.1 The Tel Quel Group and Kristeva

The Tel Quel Group, to which Kristeva belonged, reject both a conception of subjectivity as rational consciousness and rationalist theories of representation, in which they include the denotation/connotation model of language (for them an *a priori* fixing of meaning with the language system). Drawing on Lacan's dictum that "the unconscious is structured like a language", they analyse texts as

chains of signifiers in which meaning is achieved only retrospectively through the closure that results from the positioning of a subject, split between consciousness and the unconscious, in language. This is difficult and complex but important work whose basic premise is that any analysis of social structures which maintains the breach between subjective and objective is inadequate to the political task of explaining the marxist concept of "practice" and change. What is needed, it is argued, is an understanding of the psychological process by which individuals are "subjected" to the social structures.

Althusser (1971) in marking the discoveries of Marx and Freud as parallel, began to explore these processes by questioning the constitution of the subject, the point at which the active production and transmission of ideology takes place on a day to day basis. His ambiguous use of Lacan is probably due to the outcast nature of psychoanalysis at the time of his influential essay (1971). The work which deals in detail with the subject in ideology is to be found in the formal developments that have taken place in semiology in Paris since that time.

In this context Kristeva (1974) elaborated a new concept of 'signifying practice' which included an understanding of what she called the subjective 'leap of understanding' involved in the generation of new meanings. This concept of practice could only be grasped by using the Freudian notion of the formation of the human subject through the dialectic of drives and social constraints. It is a conception which posits a human subject formed by what is repressed from consciousness: that is, the unconscious. Primary repression, for Freud, founds the unconscious. Certain key signifiers are refused access to consciousness and deprived of their signifying ambiguity by repression. Repression bans precisely those signifiers most historically and personally meaningful to the subject. The unconscious is produced in the same process as that by which the individual enters the symbolic (acquires language), abandoning the pre-Oedipal pleasures and, particularly, the mother.

Kristeva views language as a Saussurean series of differences. Meaning is established only retrospectively out of the "endless tautology" of language, the production of logical semantic and intercommunicational structures by a subject. Meaning occurs through the function of a subject and is not the fixed position of a sign.

In explaining the way the production of new ideas takes place Kristeva uses the term "rejection" (*le rejet*). This indicates the drive which meets the symbolic organisation of language and has to structure itself accordingly ("The rejected drive either inverts and recognises itself within these laws, making symbolic theses from them and blocking itself") (1974:181) or transgresses that system. This experience is one of consciousness encountering an external process which it has

not yet organised into language, has not yet symbolised. The subject is thrown into a state of internal crisis. This subject-in-process is produced by social contradictions which articulate themselves within subjectivity. The signifying practices then intervene to constitute a new understanding and resolve the conflict (Kristeva 1974:181; 1976).

This account is compatible with Voloshinov's Marxist account where ideology is treated as a material force in the constitution of the social subject (1930:39). There the necessary positioning of the subject in language is stressed as the condition of communication. The individual is constructed by social structures, crossed by and producing contradictions, but also in some sense constitutive of the social reality which constructs it.

Kristeva's notion of signifying practice is dependent on a crucial distinction between what she calls the symbolic and the semiotic. Signifying practice involves both the symbolic order (language, law and the phallus — the masculine and patriarchal order) and the marginal, repressed, "feminine" discourses of poetry, art, and "holiness", which she sees as drawing directly on repressed pre-Oedipal drives and calls "semiotic". All signifying practice involves both semiotic and symbolic moments of "significance", but one or the other will be dominant in different types of discourse. Scientific discourse is predominantly symbolic, while poetic discourse is transgressed by the semiotic, drawing on repressed elements, elements associated in patriarchy with maternity and the mother. The unconscious basis of language, the repressed relation to the mother's body, is what Kristeva calls the "semiotic chora". It is the organisation of the drives (prior to language) which is as yet undetermined by historically specific familial and wider social relations. The semiotic chora finds its representation in discourse only indirectly in rhythm, intonation and lexical and syntactical transformations which pose a constant threat to the symbolic (hence revolution *in* language).

The site of this challenge to the symbolic order is the individual split subject. After subjection to language and the patriarchal order, the subject is not fixed and conscious of itself once and for all. It is constantly in process and risks a return to more archaic, semiotic processes whenever it speaks. Thus the individual subject, in language, is as much a potential site for revolution as are social structures. The individual and the social can be linked by the role of social or symbolic relations in organising the "chora", the space shared by the mother's and child's (inseparable and indistinguishable) bodies. Here she links what she calls the mode of sign production with the mode of socio-economic production (Kristeva 1976).[21]

Kristeva's work, like Voloshinov's, is essentially text-based, and she is always concerned with the problem of the co-articulation of the macro-social levels of analysis and the micro-levels of detailed linguistic analysis.

However she offers no adequate theoretical account of the relationship between language and subjectivity and wider social structures. It is hard to see how the account of the way desire is organised by the universally conceived patriarchal Oedipal structure (as in Freud, Lacan and Levi-Strauss), which does not allow for historically specific analysis, can be compatible with a materialist attempt to account for the production of texts & discourses, or social relations.

What is needed is a historically specific analysis of the structures of unconscious and conscious subjectivity which would allow the process of internalisation and resistance to ideology to be included in an account of language and subject positions within language. Henriques *et al.,* (1984) provide some very interesting suggestions as to how this might be done.

Extraordinarily influential, in work of this kind, which has attempted to build on the work of the psychoanalytical and semiotic accounts outlined above or to extend social semiotic theory within the traditions discussed in the last section, has been the work of Michel Foucault.

The influence of Foucault in this area is somewhat difficult to deal with in a short space and particularly so in the context of work on semiotics, language and ideology, given his critique of the concept of ideology and his specific denunciation of the semiotic focus on meaning, representation and signification, as opposed to force, energy, and struggle. Moreover, there are enormous differences between Foucault's position in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and that of *The History of Sexuality,* and the use of Foucault in semiotics derives almost entirely from the former. Yet his work is used so often (Hall *et al.,* 1980; Gurevitch *et al.,* 1982) within this context as a way of moving forward from a number of earlier positions — the critique of transparent readings, the concern for the historical specificity of signifying systems, the importance of the construction of subjectivity within language, and the question of the positioning of subjects within discourse/ideology —to a historically specific account of language, ideology (displaced by Foucault's account of power) and the subject, that we cannot, I think, ignore it.

5.2 Foucault

Foucault's most explicit statements on language are made in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* where he takes issue with that he calls

formalization and *interpretation,* the dominant modes of analysis in all the human sciences, including incipient linguistics in the classical epoch. Formalisation involves conceptualising language as a formal, autonomous system, so that, past and present uses of the language can be reduced to the uniform and general features of the system. The critique of interpretation on the other hand involves challenging the oppositions internal/external, conscious/unconscious, deep/surface and so on, which are realised, for example, in theories of language, in the assumption that the external or surface forms of language conceal a deep internal structure or significance which it is the task of interpretation to discover. Foucault argues that this concealed significance can be identified with "sovereign subjectivity" (the knowing subject), and the denotative moment (the equation of the signifier with the "real" or "truth").

Both tendencies, Foucault would argue, ignore or suppress the historical contingency of particular discursive & epistemological formulations. Thus, while Foucault is not interested in or relevant to questions of the signifying nature of discourse, nor the construction of subjectivity as a psychic/ideological effect, his work has been regarded as helpful at the level of the interface between linguistic specificity and culture or social structure (Lemke 1985).

Foucault's basic concern is with what he calls *discursive practices* which he sees as coherent formations characterised by the *regularity* with which *statements* are combined, co-exist, and have specific uses and effects under certain determinate historical conditions. These statements, involving a particular repertoire of concepts, conform to a specific "regime of truth" (what can be said, and what cannot be said), and offer a definite set of subject positions. These knowledges/ discourses, together with non-discursive practices (such as confinement, institutionalisation) and the control of bodies are what collectively constitute, for example, "madness", "medicine" or "criminality". The principle of discursive regularity positions subjects across a variety of sites within a discourse, giving rise to the modes of speaking which are possible within it. This same principle determines who can and cannot speak, and is the institutional site on which subjects are constituted as speakers of certain discourses. The concern with a "sovereign subjectivity" is displaced by an analysis of the specific political effects of the attribution of the "author-function" (1972:94).

This means that the Foucaldian account of subjectivity is not at all concerned with that area theorised in psychoanalytical accounts, the relationship between discursive subject positions, the subject positioned at the intersection of the discourses which speak (and construct) it, and the particular individuals who occupy those positions. Rather, the

desplacement of the concept of ideology by the account of power means that subjects are constituted in power relations as they are positioned in discourse. Power and power relations are "immanent" in discourse, in the distribution and hierarchisation of the various discursive subject positions within a field of unequal relations. Power cannot be "held" by, does not result from "the choice or decision of an individual subject" (Foucault 1972: 95).

Thus, in his account of *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault identifies, in the historically specific nineteenth century construction of "sexuality" as an object of knowledge, the new ways in which the body is constituted in discourse to produce a distinctly modern politics of reproduction, population and welfare, individual psychology and the emergence of a number of new discursive objects (subject positions), "the mother", "the child", "the pervert".

It is in specifying the conditions of possibility for the emergence or existence of discursive formations in relation to the overall state of the discursive apparatus (involving other practices, other discourses and institutional sites), that Foucault's work marks a radical shift in the language/ideology/subjectivity debate. Yet at the same time, Foucault's theory of discourse, precisely because of its critique of ideology and of general theoretical tendencies in theories of language, presents specific difficulties for an adequate theory of the role of language and subjectivity in ideologies.

Discursive analysis seems most relevant in examining the discourses of established "institutionalised" desciplines like medicine, and psycho-analysis. The boundaries between these and what Foucault calls the "non-discursive", the practices "outside" of language such as punishment behaviour and so on, are more problematic. These may involve statements which do not clearly belong to "official" discursive practice — the "statements" of popular culture, common sense and so on — which reproduce and articulate a number of interrelated social practices from the familial to the educational and religious — what Laclau (1977) has called "popular ideological discourse" and what Hasan (this volume) identifies as the everyday ways of saying and doing that constitute the production and reproduction of ideology.

If these are to be taken into account we have to return to a theory of language in its manifold relationships to the other semiotic systems, the signifying practices of the culture, which will allow a detailed analysis of the specificity of linguistic structures not only in relation to the "discursive" field of official practices and subject positions, but in relation to that wider intertextual constitution of discourse and subjectivity, characterised by heteroglossia and conflict, which would encompass the possible relations between the discursive and the "non-

discursive" in Foucault's theory. We thus have to return to that semiotic focus on signification which Foucault's work specifically denounced.

5.3 A Critical Social Semiotic Theory

What is suggested then by the various approaches to language, subjectivity and ideology examined here, and by the bringing together at this conference of papers which adopt a heterogeneity of viewpoints from this general framework, is the kind of critical social semiotic theory which might be necessary to deal with the problem of the dialectical relationship between specific linguistic realisations and the discursive constitution of the macro-social order. What is suggested is an approach that might delocate (Bernstein 1984) the subject/object, literal/figurative and referential/socio-cultural dichotomies that are inherent in much current social, semiotic, and linguistic theory and deal with the social and discursive construction of ideology and subjectivity in such a way as to give an understanding of power relations in a process of struggle (in something of Voloshinov's (1929) or Gramsci's (1971) sense) which is culture.

Such a theory would be text-based, with its textual analysis based on the semantically organised functional grammar of Halliday (1985). It is only with such a grammar which is concerned with the patterns of use of the linguistic system and with the typical constraints on the uses of its meaning resources in given social context-types, that we can adequately model the systems of semantic classification through which different discursive realities are constructed. This approach does not look at language as a formal object of logical analysis and does not draw any artificial distinction between the lexico-grammatical and phonological levels of linguistic realisation and semantic patterns. (The "inside" and "outside" of language). Nor is this a conduit model of language (the denotative/representational argument). Acts of communication are forms of social discourse which maintain and regulate social activities, and define status and power relations. As such they are a part of and a metaphor for the social actions and belief systems of a given social order. Every linguistic act is meaningful because it belongs to a larger pattern of sayings and doings in terms of which it is recognisable as a typical form of social action (Martin's genre) and a typical way of making sense of the world. Thus it is that language, as action, ensures that certain ways of talking and doing are maintained, guaranteeing the stability of the social system, but at the expense of other models of saying and doing which might threaten any stability. The typical ways of seeing the world, which we might characterise as

the typical systems of knowledge and belief in a community, are constructed in and through the social meaning making practices of that community. As such they are assumed to be immanent in the semantic relations and patterned exchanges which are enacted by these practices of systems of social *and* discursive practice. They are thus accessible to detailed linguistic analysis as specific discursive formations (Threadgold, this volume), what Lemke (1985) and Thibault (1986) have called thematic systems and defined as co-patterned lexico-semantic and ideational-grammatical relations which occur in some text or intertextual set. Thibault (1986) has suggested the intermediate construct of frame-system analysis, an abstraction from the semantic data of the intertextually constructed thematic systems, as a way of relating these specific textual systems to the higher-order social semiotic codes, and to social-situation types or register — and abstract intertextual systems. The codes (Bernstein's coding orientations) are what specify the subject's discursive position and thus regulate the realisation forms of the knowledge and belief systems of discourse participants and organise these into frame-structures. Thus knowing and believing, and the construction of the systems of knowledge and belief we call ideologies, are social semiotic in nature, origin and function. They are discursively produced in interactional contexts and can therefore be contested and changed.

There is no inside and outside of the social semiotic system. Every element in this process, including the participant-observer, is the interpretant (Eco 1976) of every other element at all levels of systemic organisation. "Human knowledge and belief systems and their associated social practices can act on and change the system of relations precisely because they are part of the system of relations" (Thibault unpublished paper; 15).

This then is the way in which the macro and micro levels, the social and the individual, the subject and the object, the literal and the figurative, disjoined at least since the seventeenth century and the Cartesian Cogito and the ideology of individualism, might be discursively repositioned.

5.4 The Conference Papers

There are, as I suggested at the outset, important ways in which the heterogeneous approaches brought together in the following papers already point the way towards a productive re-thinking of the issues, in the direction of the kind of theory outlined above. Not the least among these tendencies is the productive conjunction of systemic linguistics with other semiotic approaches which suggests ways of extending both,

and the bringing together of debates about language, ideology and subjectivity in general with approaches to the literary. These debates which attempt to account for the ideological production of "literature" itself, critique the notion of literature as autonomous, aesthetic object, and place the emphasis on literary discourse, like all social discourse, as a productive signifying practice and the site for potential political and ideological conflict and struggle.

The papers of Clunies-Ross and Rumsey are ethnographic in the culturalist tradition, positing an unproblematic conscious, active subjectivity and locating *ideology* in the common-sense and institutionalised discursive forms of a variety of cultural practices. Such practices consist of apparently shared meanings and values, which appear, to individual speaking subjects, to be given *a priori,* denotative meanings, but which are in fact historically constructed. Rumsey's paper looks at the social contexts and functions of the oratory of the New Guinea Highlands from the Nebilyer Valley. Exploring the phenomenon of the apparent freedom of exegesis of "bent" or figurative speech in Nebilyer political oratory, Rumsey distinguishes the dominant ideology which is maintained and supported by the use of metaphor from a number of conflicting ideologies which are constructed in and through this complex interrelationship of speaker/text/exegete and social context. The politics of metaphor as polysemy is that it allows the dominant view, which takes the intergroup context for granted and stresses the power of 'big men'' who are of "one mind" and can, by speech, co-ordinate the minds of others, to suppress the fact that polysemy, because it involves a range of meanings to which no-one is committed, is a device for testing the historically ephemeral and unstable system of intergroup relations, and indeed for constructing and reconstructing them.

Clunies-Ross' paper is also concerned with the social contexts and functions of oblique and ambiguous forms of verbal art. Her careful analysis of the lexical categories of 13th century Icelandic agonistic texts argues that these encode an ideology which polarised true and false descriptions while providing an elaborate verbal means (Skaldic verse) of obscuring the polarities. This is an expression of a society with no overt socio-political hierarchy where a *de facto* ruling class of powerful families places a high value on individual honour and reputation. The laws which protect this honour, by prohibiting slander, in fact generate an elaborate formal means of slandering, that is of evading the law, while appearing *not* to do so. The consequence is an underlying ideology in Icelandic law, in the social practices of nicknaming and in the poetic theory of the period which centres around the socially constructed dichotomy "fair description" vs "exaggeration".

Alex Jones' paper which has links with Halliday's (1961) and Bernstein's (1971-73) work attempts to correlate patterns of lexical collocation in Australian poetry of the 1890's with personality and behaviour types and economic conditions. He does this by isolating what he calls the four major dimensions of the semantic space of Australian poetry in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. These are information density, and the variable weightings given to the members of the following dichotomies, active vs passive, realism vs idealism and apprehension vs complacency. Arguing that the amount of information a society generates varies with the capital it holds, he explores the way text interacts with context, by correlating economic conditions with the variables of the semantic space.

Rosemary Huisman's paper, working within the same general framework as Rumsey's and Clunies-Ross', investigates the ideologies that were effective in the institutionalisation of Old English Literature as a field of tertiary study. Her texts are the writings and statements of Old English scholars from the sixteenth century to the present day, texts which demonstrate clearly how the ideological commitment of a scholar delineates and predetermines the area and results of his scholarship. She is able to show how the Old English canon has been constituted and reconstituted in the light of religious and political commitment, assumptions about race and about the nature of literature. The paper focusses in important ways on the ideological production of the category "literature" itself and on the socially and historically constructed and political nature of apparently "given" and "natural" literary canons.

Ruqaiya Hasan's definition of ideology as "a socially constructed system of ideas which appears as if inevitable" situates her work within this same general framework except that she specifically locates her understanding of ideology in relation to Whorf and Bernstein. Her paper is about the ideology of women's work, that is to say, the system of ideas that surrounds the work women do in the privacy of their own homes. She is not concerned here with the historical construction of the ideology, but with the way the constructed ideology is transmitted in mother-child talk as what Whorf called a "configurative rapport", the bringing together of patterns of language, which, taken together, construct a consistent semantic frame, the existence of which is to be explained through Bernstein's notion of "coding orientation". It is in such patterns of everyday speech that systems of knowledge and belief are constructed and perpetuated precisely because ideologies are "orchestrated simultaneously at multiple levels of human existence." For example the ideology that women's work is "non-work" is legitimated as soon as it is contextualised within the wage-based economy. Hasan's

paper is an important contribution, not least because of its cogent account and use of Whorf and Bernstein, whose work is so often misunderstood, but also because it explicitly confronts the deep/surface issue of Foucault's critique of interpretation in language theories, and deals with the language/ideology homology, demonstrating that there is no bi-unique connection between language and ideology. Finally it deals explicitly with the troubled area of what is called the "non-discursive" (in Foucault's theories) articulating the connection between what he called the "discursive" level of official practice and the "non-discursive" level of everyday sayings and doings, and insisting on the importance of the simultaneous operation of ideology at all these levels as the basis for understanding how dominant ideologies are transmitted and maintained.

Jim Martin's paper works on the language and ideology problem within the tradition of linguistics that is broadly framed by the work of Firth, Hjelmslev, Halliday, Whorf and the East Anglian research on language and ideology. Like Hasan he defines ideologies in the text as product (a synoptic account) as the "fashions of speaking" or the patterns of language, what he calls "linguistic conspiracies", which are consistently taken up by groups of speakers in specific situation-types. He uses systemic-functional linguistics to analyse the lexico-grammatical level of his texts and to specify these fashions of speaking linguistically. His Hjelmslevian modelling of context as a series of connotative semiotics which make meaning by "skewing choices in lower level semiotics" is an attempt to show how the grammatical choices in texts are foregrounded as the expression not only of genre and register choices but also particular ideological stances. Thus the use to which the text is being put (ideology) constrains genre (institutionalised purpose) and this controls the choice in register which will involve "fashions of speaking". The value of Martin's work is in showing *how* the "single-wording" of the text, already multi-functional and poly-phonic in Halliday's sense (1978, 1985) simultaneously codes (is also the expression — form for) a multiplicity of other meanings from higher-order semiotic systems.

John Lechte's and Anne Cranny-Francis' papers both tackle, from different perspectives, a problem which is not articulated in either of these linguistically-based papers, but which is raised again in the linguistic context by Freadman and Threadgold. That is, what Bakhtin called the polyphony of the text, its heteroglossia or "many-voicedness", its dialogic nature which articulates the contradictory discourses of social heterogeneity and conflict. Lechte's work which is essentially Kristevan, and therefore problematises the subject as a heterogeneity, the speaking subject traversed by contradictory discourses, deals with the dialogic nature of Bakhtin's Menippean text, arguing explicitly (in

this context where "consciousness" is already problematised) against a Marxist concept of ideology as "false-consciousness" as an explanation for human action.

Anne-Cranny Francis on the other hand, is concerned to tease out the multiplicity of often contradictory ideologies in Morris' *News from Nowhere,* and to demonstrate the way the self-reflexive discourse of this Utopian text contains the theory of its own intertextual production. Her focus is on the argument that such self-reflexivity and heterogeneity is potentially both a critique of the capitalist society it negates and productive of new meanings in the form of new socialist theory. This is explicitly contrary to Lechte's argument for the autonomy of the artistic text as product. He demonstrates how the text articulates the discourses of social heteroglossia from the place of heterogeneity which is the writing subject (and the place of the death of the author) but argues against the notion that a fictive text can have *direct* political or moral effects, suggesting that politics and morality must be reconceptualised in signifying terms.

Theo van Leeuwen's paper, dealing with the production of a television news item, again takes up the question of the ideological and intertextual production of the text, showing very clearly how the text as final product conceals the intertextual process of its production. His use of systemic-functional linguistics to analyse the interviews out of which the text is produced and the final news item itself, explores the ideological transformations effected by the editing process, and the effects of changing contexts on the production of meaning. Van Leeuwen's work here is in accord with the papers discussed so far in that they are all concerned primarily with the process of the production of the text and or with the text as product. What has not been looked at here is the process of interpretation or reception of texts.

It is here that Gunther Kress's paper (1985) and Ian Reid's intervened productively in the process of the conference. Both involved criticism of linguistic models and of systemic linguistics in particular. Kress's major criticism is that linguistics concentrates on the processes of production of texts and has little to say about how texts are understood. he argues that we have reached a position where we can accept that all texts are inescapably ideologically structured and we can relate this structure to social structures and to the processes of origin of the texts. The purpose of such socially and semiotically critical deconstruction is presumably political, but he argues, we cannot understand how the present ideological determinations of texts can be or might be altered, without theorising the linguistic and social activity of the reader as textual consumer. This is of course a common argument in general semiotic theory (Eco; 1981) and was raised a long time ago by

Vodička (1942) but Kress is right to point out that current linguistic theories and theoretical practice[22] tend to practice deconstruction from the point of view of the producer, who is therefore privileged at the expense of the consumer, a practice which naturalises the view that meanings are produced and imposed.

This assumes that texts are constructed as unproblematic, coherent, unities, that readers have to read texts the way they have been constructed, and that readers see texts as ideologically or discursively "of one piece" (Kress 1985: 65-67). Kress sees linguistics as participating in the reproduction and transmission of the same ideological narrative of active producer, passive consumer, that is identified by van Leeuwen in his analysis of the television news item.

It is on precisely this problem, the unproblematised notion of the text in linguistic theory, the uncritical acceptance of the ideologically produced "coherent/autonomous" text, the failure to theorise the intertextual processes of its production, as described by van Leeuwen, Lechte and Cranny-Francis, that Ian Reid's paper focusses. He argues for an investigation of the means by which texts implicitly propose plausible positions for transacting their semantic business, a process which involves the suppression of alternative reading positions, and a process in which as Kress (1985: 72) put it, "discourses attempt to reconcile contradictions, disjunctions and discontinuities by making that which is social seem natural and the problematic seem obvious". Like Kress, he sees this as requiring a related investigation of the institutional, discursive and social positioning of readers which would allow a theorisation of the individual as social agent (Kress: 72) and of the subject as reader as either compliant or resistant to the reading position foregrounded in the text. For Reid, who is concerned with narrative as social semiotic exchange, this would involve a radical problematising of Halliday's account of the exchange of meanings in interpersonal exchanges, and of Hasan's acceptance of the "unity" of the text, in order to look at the way narrative contracts "allow for displacements or positional shifts between narrator and narratee", and at the only ever provisional completion of the story within this process of exchange.

These are important points which are suggestive of ways in which the theory of context and of the discursively produced subject in systemic linguistics needs to be *explicitly* extended to include the problem of the interaction of the reader (as a subject who also has a history, a context and a specific position at the intersection of the discourses which speak it) with the always already constituted text.

However that interaction would not be possible if the text were in fact a "seamless web", an unproblematic unity. This is why it is also necessary to theorise what Voloshinov called the "multi-accentuality"

of the sign, a problem which has been called "intertextuality". To investigate this problem is to attempt to theorise the interaction between specific lexico-grammatical structures in texts and the shifting contexts and intertextual resources which are brought to bear in the production and interpretation of texts, and which produce text as conflicting discourses, allowing for varying reading positions.

It should be pointed out that these problems have not been ignored in systemic theory and that Reid's criticisms are based on relatively early work in the field (Halliday 1978; Halliday and Hasan 1976).

Halliday's recent work on projection (1985: but available unpublished since 1982) seems, as I have suggested elsewhere (1986), to provide a radical re-thinking of the earlier too simple view of narrative exchange. This does provide an account which can handle the description of the *mise en abîme* of narrative embeddings and the complexity of discursive subject positioning which result and has already been used to do just that. (Thibault 1984, unpublished Ph.d. thesis). The question of the reader needs much more work, but I see no reason why the existing theory cannot handle that problem. The question of the autonomy of the text is a more serious one, particularly as it relates to the literary text and the continued unproblematic acceptance, of the notion of the autonomy, and therefore of the *difference* of literary texts *per texts*. It is the old ordinary/poetic language question, a question the whole semiotic enterprise as discussed in this introduction, but particularly the work of, for example, Kristeva and Eco, has radically resituated. To accept Reid's criticism is not to undervalue the crucial importance of understanding the generic and specific nature of coherence in English texts (Hasan 1985), but it is to point to the historical and ideological contingency of the production of that kind of textual unity, in both reading and writing practices.

The concept of text as closed or as open, as unity with a relatively fixed meaning, or as discursive conflict available to a number of contingent readings, is already historically culturally and ideologically produced, as Hasan's (Fawcett *et al* 1984) own work on the ideology of coherence and explicitness in English has demonstrated. What happens in the interpretation of texts depends as much on genres of reading as on genres of writing. And neither can be understood, to take up Reid's other criticism (that Halliday's and Hasan's notion of textual unity/cohesion is too narrowly linguistic) without some such concept as intertextuality. I pointed out earlier that Halliday now includes intertextuality in his account of the making of meanings and the most recent systemic work is demonstrating more and more clearly that relations of coherence in discourse are not interpreted in terms of the language system alone. We make sense of texts at the lexico-grammatical level and we do it in

specific ways because of *other* texts with which we are familiar. Hasan's own recent work on cohesive harmony (1984; 1985), Lemke's on thematic systems (1985) and Thibault's on intertextual frame systems (1986) show an increasing emphasis on the importance of the intertextual in the production of coherence. The most important linguistic development here has been Thibault's perception of what he calls the "chunking" aspect of linguistic/semiotic competence in which the syntagmatic/paradigmatic opposition breaks down. (Thibault 1986 unpublished).

The semiotic systems of genre (Martin, Hasan and Kress) and register-type (Lemke, Thibault, Halliday) are accounts of textual realisations of intertextual systems, and involve attempts to specify the text-types or textual capital of a community. This work then provides one way of talking about the texts to which speaking subjects have access and which may enter into their textual productions and interpretations (Kress 1985: Poynton 1985). Halliday's multi-functional account of the "polyphony" of text (1978) and Martin's (1985: this volume) extension of this to include the mapping of global semiotic constructs onto the lexico-grammar of texts, provide the theoretical linguistic basis for the description of the contradictory discursive fields, and the "many-voicedness" of lexico-grammatical structures. But this valuable work needs to be focussed not just on "ordinary" texts but also on the "literary". Indeed the ordinary/literary opposition must be re-thought within this context. It is precisely this semiotic problematising of ordinary/poetic and of text/reader/writer and context that Freadman's and Threadgold's papers explore. The possibility of using aspects of systemic-functional theory to provide the basic method of analysis in a critical semiotic theory of language, ideology and subjectivity within this framework is the central focus of Threadgold's paper.

Both papers work within a tradition that recognises no inside/outside of semiosis and include their work and interventionist theoretical practice as part of the analysis. Both recognise a historically contingent and problematised subjectivity, subjects positioned at the intersection of the discourses they speak and which speak them, speaking *and* reading subjects. Both explore the conflicting discourses which are consequently articulated in texts as products and social processes, the social heteroglossia which may be supressed in the interests of foregrounded or dominant readings, or which may simply remain invisible, neither a permissable nor a possible reading in a given historical conjuncture. And both explore the constantly shifting contexts within which discursively produced subjectivities make compliant or resistant or different readings of the same material text; evidence not only of the polysemy of texts, but also of the impossibility of the

equation language equals ideology. Systems of knowledge and belief are constructed in and through texts as social discourse within an extraordinarily complex contextual configuration. These papers show this to be so whether the texts are of the aesthetic, poetic variety or the founding and transmitting texts of the subject of semiotics itself.

Freadman's paper deals with structuralism/semiotics not as a finished product but as a set of controversies, exploring in particular the ideologies and intertexts in phenomenology, reflective theory and 19th century visual psychology involved in the conflation of signification and representation which marks Jakobson's (as opposed to Benveniste's) construction and transmission of the texts of Saussure and Peirce. These are what render the shift in focus in Saussure from the representational to the systemic (the distinction he maintains between representation and signification) and the later Peirce (where signs are made rather than used, and not part of a pre-existent code) invisible to Jakobson and Eco. They re-emerge in the naive representationalism of Metz and Wollen, and are central to the use of Peirce as a supplement to the theory of the signified in Hjelmslev and Jakobson where the signified returns as representation because the sign "mediates" or "vehicles" the signified instead of enabling it.

It is a crucial paper with which to end the discussion of language and ideology in this introduction because it tackles the question of the semiotics of ideology through the ideology of semiotics and demonstrates the power of human systems of knowledge and belief and the social practices of reading and writing associated with them and in which they are constructed to act on and change those systems precisely because they are a part of them.

FOOTNOTES

1. This work, it should be pointed out, has rarely, if ever, referred to linguistic theories like systemic and stratificational linguistics which make use of a network notation. Such theories emphasise relationships rather than entities and give a central place to the relationship between language and culture. As Umberto Eco (1984) has pointed out these theories rely on an inferential rather than equivalence based concept of the sign. They therefore have a great deal to offer semiotics (Threadgold 1986) in that they present models of language which are equally applicable to modelling non-verbal semiotic systems (Preziosi 1984: van Leeuwen 1985: O'Toole 1985 — personal communication-unpublished systemic model for visual and musical semiotics) and appear to be equally useful for modelling culture and ideology as systems of knowledge and belief in discourse. (Thibault unpublished).

2. Work in systemic linguistics, notably that of Cate Poynton, *Language and Gender,* Deakin U.P. 1985, makes some extraordinarily useful suggestions about this.

3. It is here that work in semiotics and cultural studies begins to draw very close to the model of language as social semiotic articulated within Michael Halliday's work (1978) and that of Hasan, Martin, Thibault and Lemke within the systemic-functional tradition. This is the "who is doing what with this text to whom" question of Lemke (1984), or Martin's genre as "a staged goal-oriented social process" (this volume) and Neale's questions are precisely those which the elaboration of register and genre as the interface between lexico-grammar and social structure endeavours to deal with within this theory.

4. Thibault's important (unpublished) work on thematic systems analysis and the construction of knowledge and belief systems in discourse is an attempt to come to terms with the complexities of the levels of realisation in discourse which Pêcheux (1975) and Kristeva (1980) have called the pre-signifieds, the intertexts, the complex of existing discourses in which the statements and enunciations of any particular discourse are always already placed. Pêcheux's notion of the "pre-constituted" is a way of accounting semantically for what Gramsci (1971: 326-7) called the inventory of "common sense", Foucault (1972) calls discursive formations and the non-discursive, and Halliday (1978) refers to as the higher order social semiotic.

   It is in making reference, in their systems of narration, to "what was already known" that discourses reproduce the common stock of knowledge in society. It is in this sense that ideological discourse represents "how things really are" while concealing the interdiscursive and intertextual processes out of which it is constructed.

5. Eco (1976) would say 'code', Martin (this volume) and Poynton (1985) would say genre, Thibault and Lemke (1985) would speak of social semiotic codes, thematic systems or context-and register-types in which the patterns of use of the meaning potential of the language are skewed in non-random ways (i.e. the typical co-patternings of meaning relations that occur in some context types). Foucault (1972) calls these regularities of discourse and there are clear parallels between his use of "discourse" and for example Hasan's (1985) use of genre in systemic-functional theory.

6. What in systemic terms would be expressed as different coding orientations, or differential access to generic or register norms: and there is at present no great consistency in the use of these latter terms (see below).

7. Halliday (1978) includes Bernstein's social semiotic codes, or coding orientations (Hasan 1973) in his account of language as social semiotic, seeing these as derived from certain key socialising contexts, the family and the school, and constraining access to what he calls "register", varieties of language (discourses) defined according to use in specific contexts of situation.

8. This is relevant in the context of this conference where that model reappears in Jim Martin's work within the systemic-functional tradition.

9. This is clear in work from a variety of traditions which sees meaning as not 'given' in a referential theory of language but socially produced. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in linguistic anthropology suggested that each culture had a different way of classifying the world and that this would be reflected in the linguistic and semantic structures of different societies. Lévi-Strauss' project to show the classificatory sets which underlay the myths of primitive societies was similar and consonant with Barthes' work on modern myth. This tendency was also present in the "social construction of reality" approach of Berger and Luckmann (1966), in the work of the ethnomethodologists with their concern for the strategies involved in the understanding of everyday situations, the production of social knowledge, and the strategies involved in conversation and in the approach of the East Anglian linguistics group (Fowler 1981: Kress and Hodge 1979). It is also implicit in all work within systemic-functional linguistics (see Martin, Hasan this volume: Halliday 1978).

10. This process has affinities with what Halliday has called semogenesis (1985).

11. This is a basic problem with the psychoanalytic account which sees the entry into language and the symbolic as the same as the entry into ideology.

12. I have suggested elsewhere (1986) that these semiotic constructs could be described in terms of Eco's (1976) Sememe. Thibault (forthcoming) and Lemke (1985 forthcoming) have used the concepts thematic systems and intertextual frames respectively.

13. It would be impossible here to specify all those involved but in so far as it is a "school", it centres around the Linguistics department at the University of Sydney and Michael Halliday's own work (see Preface), but is also very much alive, in slightly different forms, at Glendon College, York University, Toronto, where Michael Gregory's work is central and at the Polytechnic of Wales, Cardiff, where Robin Fawcett is the dominant name: and there are many places in the United States where important work is being done or where the work is known and appreciated.

14. The implications of this have not always been understood, even among systemicists. For example, Robin Fawcett (1980) criticises Halliday for failing to distinguish clearly between grammar and semantics, and that criticism is taken up again by Butler (1985: Ch. 5), both writers re-asserting the form/content dichotomy of the classical rhetorical tradition and failing to see the value for a theory of semiotics of re-thinking this disjunction.

15. Fawcett (1980), for example, still maintains a disjunction between mind and body, cognitive and social, in his account of the relationship between text and context, which would place systems of knowledge and belief "outside" language (or indeed any other semiotic modality, be it visual, musical, architectural or whatever), an inside/outside dichotomy which does not see the importance of "realisation" as a concept which denies any such ideological separation.

16. It is here that Halliday's work begins to have explicit parallels with Bakhtin's concept of "polyphony" (Bakhtin 1981) and with more recent work by Bernstein (1984) which is considerably influenced by Bourdieu (1981) and a Foucaldian perspective on discourse.

17. See for example "Signature, Event, Context", in Derrida (1982) as a part of Derrida's critique of speech-act theory.

18. The use of the term genre in systemic theory is full of unresolved problems. See Threadgold (forthcoming).

19. For a full account of the Freud/Lacan position see Hall *et al* (1980, Ch. 16).

20. See Footnote 1 above.

21. Vygotsky (1934, 1962, Ch. 7) explains cognitive structures as internalised, decontextualised forms of dialogic social interaction (Wertsch 1982). This account is comparable to Voloshinov's (1930) view of the relationship between individual consciousness and the social and has its parallels with the Kristevan account. All three are attempts to renegotiate the subject/object split in social theory and provide therefore, whatever the problems involved in the specific theories, extraordinarily valuable insights.

22. Perhaps the question of practice is the most crucial here since Halliday's (1978) model of language as social semiotic is explicitly neutral between production and interpretation and can be used both ways.

REFERENCES

ALTHUSSER, Louis (1971) "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* London: New Left Books.

BAKHTIN, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* Holquist, M. ed., Austin: Univ. of Texas Press.

BARTHES, R. (1972) *Elements of Semiology,* London: Cape.

BARTHES, R. (1974) *Mythologies,* selected and transl. A. Lavers, London: Granada.

BARTHES, R. (1977) "The Rhetoric of the Image" in Stephen Heath, *Image-Music-Text,* London: Fontana.

BERNSTEIN, Basil (1971) *Class, Codes and Control I: Theoretical Studies towards a Sociology of language.* (Primary Socialization, Language and Education) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

BERNSTEIN, Basil ed. (1973) *Class, Codes and Control II: Applied Studies towards a Sociology of Language.* (Primary Socialization: Language and Education) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

BERNSTEIN, Basil (1984) 'Codes, Modalities and Cultural Reproduction', in Michael W. Apple ed., *Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education: Essays on Class, Ideology and the State.* London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

BOURDIEU, Pierre (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice* Richard Nice transl., Camb: Camb U.P.

BOURDIEU, Pierre (1981) *Ce que parler veut dire: l'économie des échanges linguistiques,* Paris: Fayard.

BUTLER, Christopher S. (1985) *Systemic Linguistics: Theory and Applications,* London: Batsford.

CHAMBERS, Ross (1984) *Story and Situation: Narrative Seduction and the Power of Fiction,* Manchester: Manchester U.P.

COWARD, R. and ELLIS, J. (1977) *Language and Materialism,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

DERRIDA, Jacques (1973) *Speech and Phenomena,* Evanston, Ill: Northwestern U.P.

DERRIDA, Jacques (1974) *Of Grammatology,* Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins U.P.

DERRIDA, Jacques (1982) *Margins of Philosophy,* Sussex: the Harvester Press.

ECO, Umberto (1976) *A Theory of Semiotics,* Bloomington: Indiana Univ Press.

ECO, Umberto (1981) The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts, London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd.

ECO, Umberto (1984) *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language,* London: Macmillan.

FAWCETT, Robin P. (1980) *Cognitive Linguistics and Social Interaction: Towards an integrated model of a systemic functional grammar and the other components of a communicating mind,* Heidleburg and Exeter University: Julius Gross Verlag.

FAWCETT, R.P., HALLIDAY, M.A.K., LAMB, S.M., and MAKKAI, A. eds., (1984) *The Semiotics of Culture and Language,* Vols. I & II, London: Frances Pinter.

FOUCAULT, Michel (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* London: Tavistock.

FOUCAULT, Michel (1973) *The Order of Things,* New York: Vintage Press.

FOWLER, Roger (1981) *Literature as Social Discourse; The Practice of Linguistic Criticism,* Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press.

FOWLER, R., HODGE, R., KRESS, G. and TREW, T. (1979) *Language and Control,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

GIDDENS, Anthony (1976) *New Rules of Sociological Method: A Positive Critique of Interpretative Sociologies,* London: Hutchinson.

GRAMSCI, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks,* London: Lawrence and Wishart.

GREGORY, Michael and CARROLL, Susanne (1978) *Language and Situation,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

GUREVITCH, Michael, Tony Bennet, James Curran and Janet Woollacott eds. (1982) *Culture, Society and the Media,* London: Methuen.

HABERMAS, Jurgen (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests,* J.J. Shapiro transl., London: Heinemann.

HABERMAS, Jurgen (1974) *Theory and Practice,* J. Viertel transl., London: Heinemann.

HALL, Stuart, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe, and Paul Willis, eds., (1980) *Culture, Media, Language,* Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79, London: Hutchinson.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K., (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic,* London: Arnold.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K. (1985) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar,* London: Arnold.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K., and Ruqaiya HASAN (1976) *Cohesion in English,* London: Longman.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K., and Ruqaiya HASAN (1985) *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective,* Geelong, Vic: Deakin U.P.

HASAN, Ruqaiya (1973) "Code, Register and Social Dialect" in Bernstein ed. *Class, Codes and Control,* Vol. 2 London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

HASAN, Ruqaiya (1985) *Linguistics, Language and Verbal Art,* Geelong, Vic: Deakin U.P.

HENRIQUES, Julian, Wendy Holloway, Cathy Urwin, Couze Venn, Valerie Walkerdine (1984) *Changing the Subject,* London: Methuen.

HIRST, Paul and Penny WOOLLEY (1982) *Social Relations and Human Attributes,* London and New York: Tavistock.

HJELMSLEV, Louis (1943) *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language,* Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1961.

KRESS, Gunther and Robert HODGE (1979) *Language as Ideology,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

KRESS, Gunther (1982) *Learning to Write,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

KRESS, Gunther (1985) "Discourses, texts, readers and the pro-nuclear arguments" in *Language and the Nuclear Arms Debate: Nukespeak Today* ed. Paul Chiltern, London: Frances Pinter.

KRESS, Gunther (1985a) *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice,* Geelong, Vic. Deakin: U.P.

KRISTEVA, Julia (1974) *La Revolution du langage Poétique,* Paris, Seuil.

KRISTEVA, Julia (1976) "Signifying Practice and Mode of Production", *Edinburgh Magazine.*

KRISTEVA, Julia (1980) *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* New York: Columbia University Press.

KUHN, Thomas S. (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. 2 No. 2. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

LACAN, Jacques, *Ecrits,* Paris: Seuil.

LACLAU, E. (1977) *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory,* London: NLB.

de LAURETIS, Teresa (1984) *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema,* Bloomington: Indiana U.P.

van LEEUWEN, Theo (1985) 'Rhythmic Structure of the Film text', in *Discourse and Communication: New Approaches to the Analysis of Mass Media Discourse and Communication.* ed Teun A. van Dijik, Berlin, N.Y.: Walter de Gruyter.

LEMKE, Jay L. (1983) "Thematic Analysis: Systems, Structures, and Strategies". RSSI, Vol. 3.

LEMKE, Jay L. (1984) "Ideology, Intertextuality and the Notion of Register", in *Systemic Perspectives on Discourse,* Vol. XV, 2, James D. Benson and William S. Greaves eds. *Advances in Discourse Processes, Norwood. New Jersey: Ablex.*

LEMKE, Jay L. (1985) "Textual Politics: Heteroglossia, Discourse Analysis and Social Dynamics", unpublished paper given at the International Summer Institute for Structuralist and Semiotic Studies, Bloomington, University of Indiana, 1985.

LEVI-STRAUSS, Claude (1983) Structural Anthropology, New York: Basic Books.

MARTIN, J.R. (1984) "Lexical Cohesion, field and genre: parcelling experience and discourse goals", to be published in *Proceedings of second Rice Symposium in Linguistics and Semiotics: Text Semantics and Discourse Semantics.*

MARTIN, J.R. (1985) "The Language of Madness: Method or disorder", *unpublished paper.*

MARTIN, J.R. (1985a) *Factual Writing: exploring and challenging social reality,* Geelong, Vic: Deakin U.P.

METZ, Christian (1975) 'The Imaginary Signifier', *Screen,* Vol. 16 No. 2.

NEALE, Steve (1977) 'Propaganda' in *Screen,* Vol. 18, No. 3.

O'TOOLE, Michael L. (1984) Notes Towards a Semiotics of Art, A Functional Semiotics of Architecture, A Functional Semiotics of Music, unpublished.

PECHEUX, Michel (1975) *Language, Semantics and Ideology,* trans. by H. Nagpal, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982.

PREZIOSI, Donald (1984) 'Relations between Environmental and Linguistic Structure', in Vol. 2 Language and Other Semiotic Systems of Culture, *The Semiotics of Culture and Language,* ed R.P. Fawcett *et al.,* London: Frances Pinter.

REDDY, Michael J. (1979) "The Conduit Metaphor. A Case of Frame Conflict in our Language about Language", in *Metaphor and Thought, Andrew Ortony ed. 284-324,* Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

RICOEUR, Paul (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation.* ed. and tr. John B. Thompson, Camb. U.P.

THIBAULT, Paul J. (1984) 'Narrative Structure and Narrative function in Vladimir Nabakov's Ada: A contribution to the development of a critical, neo-materialist social semiotic theory of texts as the products of social meaning making practices", Unpublished Ph.d. thesis: University of Sydney.

THIBAULT, Paul J. (1986) "Thematic System Analysis and the Construction of Knowledge and Belief Systems in Discourse", Unpublished paper.

THOMPSON, John B, (1984) *Studies in the Theory of Ideology,* Camb.: Polity Press.

THREADGOLD, Terry (1986) "The Semiotics of Halliday, Voloshinov and Eco" *American Journal of Semiotics,* forthcoming.

THREADGOLD, Terry (1986a) "Its Great Music, but can you dance to it?" ISISSS '85 in review, *Semiotica,* forthcoming.

THREADGOLD, Terry (1986b) "Semiotics? Semiotic Practice? What is it and why are 'they' Still doing it?' *Intervention,* 1986.

THREADGOLD, Terry "What did Milton say Belial said and Why don't the critics believe him?" to appear in J. Benson and W. Greaves eds., *Proceedings of the 12th International Systemics Workshop,* New Jersey: Ablex.

VODIČKA, Felix (1942) "Response to Verbal Art", in *Semiotics of Art,* ed. Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik, 1984, Camb. Mass and London: the MIT Press.

VOLOSHINOV, V.N. (1930) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language,* trans. by L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik, 1973, N.Y. and London: Seminar Press.

WHORF, Benjamin Lee (1956) *Language, Thought and Reality,* ed. J.R. Carroll, Camb.: MIT Press.

WUTHNOW, Robert, James D. Hunter, Albert Bergeson, Edith Kurzweil (1984) *Cultural Analysis: the work of Peter L. Berger, Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault and Jurgen Habermas,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.