Changing LUK: Nation and narration in *Life in the United Kingdom*

Dr Arthur Chapman, UCL Institute of Education, University College London

arthur.chapman@ucl.ac.uk

Abstract

Since 2004, an official history of the United Kingdom has been published by the British government in the form of the 'history' chapter of the British Home Office's publication *Life in the United Kingdom* (*LUK*). This publication has been through three editions (2004, 2007 and 2013) each of which has rewritten the 'history' chapter, marginally in 2007 and more significantly in 2013.

Contextualising *LUK*, this paper uses grammatical analysis and, in particular, an analysis of 'transitivity', to explore differences in the narrative strategies adopted by *LUK*'s history chapters over time, focusing on the first and the third editions of the guide. Similarities and differences over time in the content and overall structure, in the orientation to the past, in the narrative function and in the appraisal and attitudes to the past exhibited by *LUK*'s history chapters are identified using content and 'transitivity' analysis. Striking differences in the narrative strategies adopted by both texts are surfaced by sentence level grammatical analysis which is offered as a tool for operationalising narrative categories.

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United Kingdom

Introduction

Narrative involves structure, patterning the representation of time. Narrative has been
understood as continuity, in the sense that narrative acquires 'unity' by 'implicit reference to a
continuous subject' to whom differing predicates are attributed at $Time_1$, $Time_2$, $Time_3$, and so
on.[1] Narrative has been understood as emplotment: first, cyclically, beginning with an initial
situation of equilibrium between forces or states of affairs and moving, through a variable
number of iterations, to a subsequent re-establishment of equilibrium; and, second, tropically,
in terms of archetypal patterning and plot-genres.[2] Narrative has also been understood in
cognitivist and constructivist terms, as emerging through interactions between readers, who
apply sense-seeking schemata as they read, and structural features of texts.[3] This paper explores
narrative grammatically, focusing on the grammatical relations through which narration is
constructed, and, in particular, on how relationships of transitivity weave actors, their actions
and those they act-upon together into narrative patterns and 'who / whom' relationships.[4] The
paper focuses on grammar for two reasons: first, in order to explore the hypothesis that this
level of analysis can be particularly effective in revealing shifts and contrasts in the political
and ideological strategies deployed by authors in narrative construction; and, second, to explore
the hypothesis that a granular analysis of grammatical relationships can facilitate the
operationalisation of narrative typologies and categories for the purposes of empirical research.

This paper applies grammatical analysis of narrative to a case study of a changing official story
- the 'history' chapter in the United Kingdom (UK) Home Office's publication *Life in the*

United Kingdom (*LUK*). The case is of interest, first, as an example of an 'official' narrative – it allows us to explore how practical pasts are constructed through narrative - and, second, because it has been revised twice, it allows interactions between practical pasts and changing presents to be analysed.

Texts and Method

LUK was created to serve the residency and citizenship requirements of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, 2002 and to help prepare candidates for tests that must be passed as one precondition for a successful application for permanent residency status in the UK and, subsequently, for citizenship.[5] The guide is now in its third edition – it was first published in 2004, revised in a second edition in 2007 and substantially rewritten in a third edition in 2013.[6] All editions of *LUK* contain a range of information about the present and a chapter on national history. This paper reports a comparative analysis of the history chapter in the first and in the third editions of *LUK*.

The two chapters are of variable length. The third edition's history chapter is longer than the first edition's chapter, being 54, rather than 25, pages long and representing 30%, rather than 17%, of *LUK* as a whole. Both editions of the chapter contain a discursive narrative account of British history and, in addition, the third edition's chapter contains approximately 21 pages of illustrations, bullet-pointed biographical material and self-assessment lists of points on which understanding should be checked. Nevertheless, counting their main narrative text only, the two chapters are comparable in size, both being approximately 11, 000 words long (see Table 1, below). In order to make a strict 'like for like' comparison, the analysis reported below focuses almost exclusively on the history chapters' main text only.

Orientation

LUK aims to provide political education. In the first edition, the focus is on

> those institutions, values and beliefs that the four nations [of the United Kingdom] have in common… the laws and customs of the constitution, the crown as a symbol of unity and, for over three centuries, parliamentary and representative government.[7]

In the third edition, the focus in on

> fundamental values and principles which those living in the UK should respect and support… based on history and traditions and… protected by law, customs and expectations.[8]

The historical narrative presented in *LUK* aims to serve orientational needs and arguably expresses 'anxiety' of the kind that Rüsen sees as driving all historical meaning-making.[9] As van Oers has argued, the first guide emerged from the context of the Oldham Riots of 2001 – a moment at which concerns about what policy discourses termed 'community cohesion' and 'social exclusion' were raised and addressed through a multiculturalist response.[10] The third edition of the guide arose, circuitously, in response to the London Bombings of 2005, in a context where liberal multiculturalism was perceived by many policy makers as having failed and where it was increasingly eclipsed by policies stressing participation, community and shared values.[11]

The guides function to help prepare new residents to demonstrate knowledge of 'Life in the UK' in officially administered multiple-choice tests assessing mastery of the information that they contain.[12] Because of controversy occasioned by historical errors in the text first edition of the history chapter, history was excluded from testing under the first two editions of the guide and questions based on the history chapter were introduced with the third edition.[13] Whatever the pedagogic merits

and demerits of the proposition that cohesive national identity can be built by ensuring 'mastery' of narrative content alone, narratological questions arise, namely:

- How do these texts mobilise historical narrative for practical purposes?

- How do the guides differ in their narrative strategies and in the types of historical narrative that they construct?

Constructing a 'national story'

Textual Relationships to Readers and to the Past

The first and the third editions of *LUK* differ in their titles and in the titles of their history chapters. The first edition is subtitled *A journey into citizenship* and the third *A guide for new residents*. Whereas the first suggests a process - a journey - the second is a thing - a guide. Whereas the first concerns citizenship - a political status - the second is addressed to candidate 'residents', a status that grants rights but not political agency. Although the second subtitle is the most accurate in practical terms, since passing a test based on *LUK* is a necessary condition for 'permanent residency', the subtitles do, nevertheless, construct their readers differently.[14] The first subtitle positions readers as active - *they go* on a journey. The third edition positions the text that as active – *it gives* guidance *to* its readers.

The titles of the history chapters contain striking differences also. The first edition's history chapter is entitled 'The Making of the United Kingdom' and the third edition's is entitled 'A Long and Illustrious History'. The former is explicit in identifying its subject ('the United Kingdom') and in identifying a dynamic process of change to be narrated (the UK's 'making'). The latter is, literally, adjectival and attributes predicates ('long' and 'illustrious') to a 'history'

which appears to be static – it just 'is' these things in continuity over time. In terms of the typical 'tasks' that Allan Megill has identified historical writing as performing, one can say that the first chapter title suggests an explanatory purpose - a narrative account of a process – *how* the UK was 'made'; and the third edition's chapter title suggests a descriptive and attributive aim – attaching positive qualities to a history.[15]

The first edition's history chapter begins with introductory text explaining its aims –

> To understand a country well and the character of its inhabitants, some history is needed… What follows tries to be a coherent if brief narrative of how the different nations came together. However, it also mentions some events and persons, which, while not always important parts of that narrative of the making of the British state, yet are often mentioned in books, newspapers, broadcasts and sometimes in conversation and might puzzle new arrivals to our shores.[16]

The aims are, then, to provide an historical background that can enable contemporary Britain to be understood but also to provide the historical elements of what E.D. Hirsch calls 'cultural literacy' - the knowledge needed to understand national media and everyday conversation, a precondition, in Anderson's account, for 'national' imagining and belonging.[17] No explanation of aims is present in the third edition's history chapter, although the function of the guide as a whole is explained as aiming to ensure that readers acquire 'a broad general knowledge of the culture, laws and history of the UK', a 'cultural literacy' aim.[18]

This first edition's introductory text also foregrounds the inevitability of interpretation and the personalised and subjective nature of the history that it presents –

> Any account of British history is… an interpretation. No one person would agree with another what to put in, what to leave out, and how to say it.[19]

No equivalent comment is present in the third edition, which presents *a* history without foregrounding its constructed nature. The contrast between the 'personal' approach taken by the first text and the 'impersonal' approach presented in the second text is apparent also in the use of pronouns. The narrator is literally present in the text in first edition, identifying with those whose history is narrated through the use of the first-person plural ('we' appears 15 times) and the pronoun 'our' (9 instances). Narrative identification of this kind is absent in third edition's history chapter, where 'we' is used three times only and to explain the usage of terms rather than to assert identity with the narrated past.

Both editions' history chapters establish relationships of continuity with the past that they narrate by noting instances where the past is still present in the present, however, this occurs twice as frequently in the third edition's chapter (40 instances) as in the first edition's chapter (20 instances).

Narrative Framing and thematic coherence

A further striking difference in the structure of the two texts is apparent in their overall narrative framing (Leerssen, 2008, p.73). After the prefatory paragraph on purpose and interpretation that we have discussed above, the first edition's chapter opens with a section entitled 'What's in a Name?' (HO, 2006, p.17-18), that is largely in the present tense and that features the first-person plural and concludes with a section entitled 'Today' which, again, is largely in the present tense and similar in featuring 'we' frequently (HO, 2006, pp.41-42). Neither text features a continuous narrative subject throughout – as one might expect, on Danto's model, referenced at the start of this chapter: some sections narrate the actions of Romans, some of kings, some of the Scots, some of Britain, and so on. This lack of a continuous narrative subject is unsurprising since, although both texts aim to provide a history for the present, tracing

developments over millennia, no historical 'British' subject was continuously available over this time period, since 'Britishness is a constructed identity… created by legal magic in 1707' through the Act of Union (Brooks, 2016, p.56).

Despite the lack of a continuous narrative subject, the first edition manages, nevertheless, to construct a degree of overall narrative coherence by thematic means. Themes – notably diversity - are introduced in 'What's in a Name?', re-appear at a number of points in the narrative (for example, on page 19) and recur in the concluding section which explicitly draws out continuities over time:

> We have been… a multi-national and multi-cultural society for a long time now without losing both our over-arching British identity or our… cultural and national identities. (HO, 2006, p.42).

Things are very different in the third edition's history chapter. The thematic unities constructed in the first edition are evacuated – at the start and the end and for the most part throughout. The chapter begins immediately to narrate without prefatory theme-embedding comment and continues in the same manner, subsequently.

Representing the Past: What?

We have seen that the two chapters construct contrasting relationships to the past. Do the two chapters structure the content of their narratives in similar or in contrasting ways?

Both chapters are divided into sections and subsections. Table 1 below compares section titles, corresponding time periods and the number of words devoted to each period, and Figure 1 restates word count data in terms of the percentage of each text devoted to each time period.

Table 1. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: chapter titles and the distribution of content between time periods stated in words

Period	1st Edition Section titles	Word counts	3rd Edition Section titles	Word counts
[Not applicable]	What's in a name?	504	[Not present]	0
Pre-1066	Early Britain	807	Early Britain	1207
1066 -1480s	The Middle Ages	1247	The Middle Ages	1387
1480s - c.1700	The Early Modern Period	2616	The Tudors and Stuarts	2463
c.1700 - c.1900	Stability and the Growth of Empire	3005	A global power	3039
c.1900 - 1945	The 20th century	980	The 20th century	1490
1945 - Present	Britain since 1945	1984	Britain since 1945	1348
		11143		10934

Although the third edition's chapter lacks the section 'What's in a name', discussed further below, the overall structures of the two chapters are very similar – they share periodization and four of six period titles.

Figure 1. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: distribution of content between time periods stated in percentages
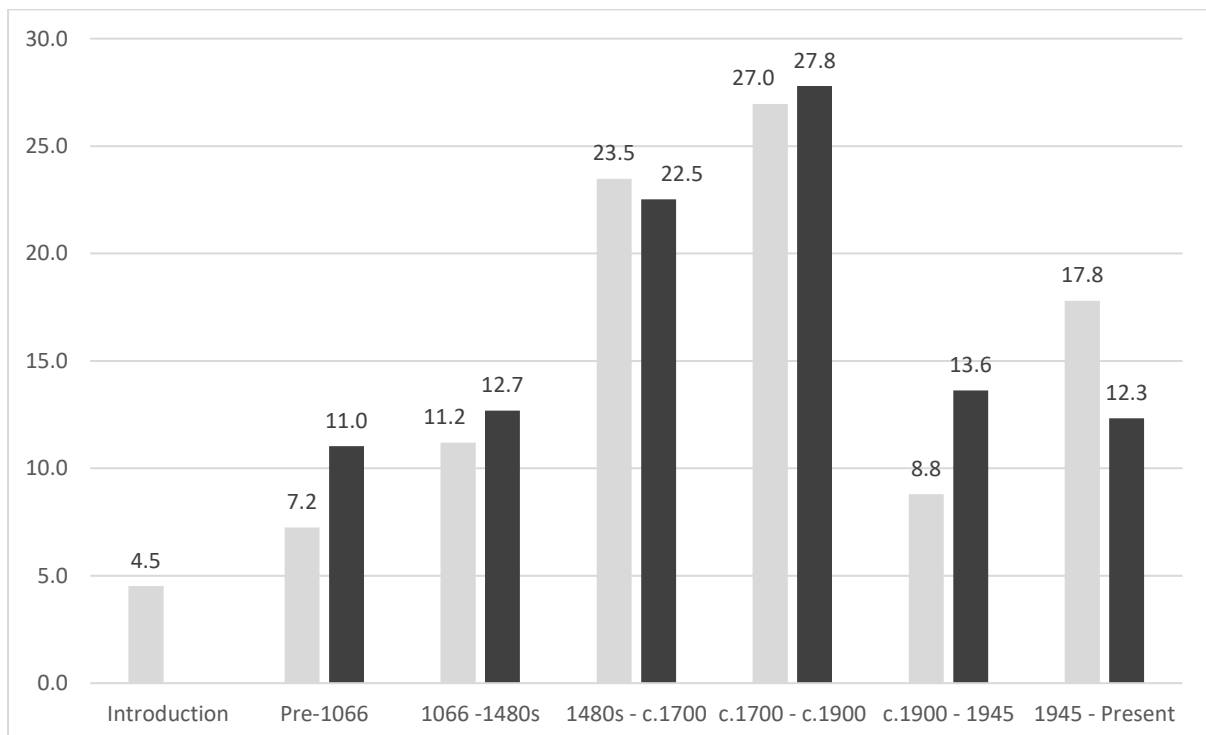
Except for the pre-1066 period, where third edition gives fuller coverage, the ratio between 'time of narration and narrated time' is nearly identical in both texts: the last two sections, covering c.1900 to the present, represent 26% of both texts, the period c.1700-c.1900 represents 27% of both texts, and the period from the 1480s-1700, represents 22-23% of the two texts, respectively.[20]

Differences begin to emerge at the level of subsection headings, but the two texts remain more similar than different. There were forty subsection headings in the first edition's chapter and fifty in the third edition's chapter. Twelve of these are identical in both chapters (e.g. 'The Welfare State') and eighteen are very similar (e.g. 'The Republic or "The Commonwealth"' and 'Oliver Cromwell and the English republic'). Ten that are present in the first edition are absent in third edition (e.g., 'Domestic politics 1951-1979') – and an additional ten are added in third edition's (e.g. 'Exploration, poetry and drama'). Subheadings were coded into content categories, for example, 'political' (e.g. 'The origins of Parliament') and 'sociocultural' (e.g. 'Social change in the 1960s'). Table 2 compares category coding for the subsection headings in the two narratives in terms of percentage totals.

Table 2. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: the incidence of subsection headings coded under content categories in counts and percentages stated in descending order by the last column. *

Category	1st Edition Category incidence (count)	1st Edition Category incidence (percentage)	3rd Edition Category incidence (count)	3rd Edition Category incidence (percentage)	Percentage incidence compared (1st Edition minus 3rd Edition)
Political	32	50.8	40	46.0	4.8
Social policy	3	4.8	2	2.3	2.5
Unclassified	1	1.6	0	0.0	1.6
Trade and Economics	8	12.7	10	11.5	1.2
Sociocultural	4	6.3	6	6.9	-0.6
Migration	3	4.8	5	5.7	-0.9
Military	10	15.9	15	17.2	-1.3
Religion	2	3.2	5	5.7	-2.5
Culture	0	0.0	4	4.6	-4.6
	63	100.0	87	100.0	

*'N' in the table is greater than the number of headings because headings were often coded under more than one category.

The table suggests that, again, the two guides are more similar than different in terms of the overall organisation of their content: in both, the three most important categories are the 'political', the 'military' and 'trade and economics', accounting for 79.4% (first edition) and 74.7% (third edition) of items coded. The first edition's subsection headers are marginally more focused on politics (by +4.8%) and social policy (by +2.5%) and marginally less focussed on culture (by -4.6%) and religion (by -2.5%) than the third edition's headers.

Representing the Past: How?

Even where content is structured in similar ways at the level of topic and sub-topic headings or in terms of thematic content, the presentation of material can differ in contrasting ways at the level of the sentence:

- What is 'theme' in one text can become 'rheme' in another and be foregrounded or backgrounded as a result;

- Predication can ascribe differing properties to the same objects through denotation or connotation; and

- The agents narrated and their modes of relationship can vary significantly through 'transitivity' – 'who / whom' relationships established by allocating agentive and non-agentive roles to narrative 'participants'.[21]

In order to explore the extent to which the two history chapters were similar or different at the level of the sentence and sentence grammar, four parallel episodes were selected for analysis. Episodes with contemporary significance in national memory culture were identified, indicated by the fact that they have been publicly memorialised in the period since the first publication the guide:

- Magna Carta, whose 800th anniversary was marked in 2015;

- The Battle of Agincourt, whose 600th anniversary was marked in 2015;

- The abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire, whose 200th anniversary was marked in 2007; and

- The First World War, the centenary of whose start began to be marked from 2014.

Like most events celebrated officially, these commemorations have often been controversial.[22] It seems probable that the ways in which these episodes are treated in *LUK* will be revelatory of the approach that our two editions take to constructing national identity narratives.

The text relating to these four episodes from the first and the third editions of *LUK* was inputted to NVivo and analysed deductively – data was coded data to transitivity categories. [23] Transitivity analysis is a fine-grained mode of grammatical analysis that, in effect, asks the question '*Who* does *what* to *whom*?' of any text to which it applies. Specifically, this text was analysed in terms of:

- *Participants* present and their distribution to the roles of 'Actors' (the subjects of verbs) and 'the Acted-upon' (semantic objects);

- *Processes* used in the narratives to construct the actions narrated, in the form of verbs; and

- *Circumstances* included in the narratives to construct the situation or context in which the process/es articulated by verbs took place.

Transitivity analysis: participants

Participants in narratives can be represented as agents - 'actors' (the subjects of verbs) - or as 'acted-upon' (semantic objects). Participants can, in turn, be foregrounded - positioned before the verbs that they govern / are governed by - or backgrounded - positioned after these verbs. Actors can be omitted, so that processes appear without the explicit attribution of agency. These five possibilities are illustrated by the codes and quotations below. Items were coded as: (1) 'Agent before the verb' (2) 'Acted-upon after the verb'; (3) 'Agent after the verb'; (4) 'Acted-upon before the verb'; and (5) 'No agent'. The last quotation illustrates both (4) and (5).

(1) <u>The new Labour Party</u>, born out of discontent at poverty and the class system;[24]

(2) In 1215 the great barons forced a charter of rights from <u>a tyrannical King John</u>;[25]

(3) The first formal anti-slavery groups were set up by <u>the Quakers</u>;[26]
`
(4) / (5) <u>All the resources of new technologies, of bureaucratic control and fervid patriotism</u> were used and exploited.[27]

In the first and the second of these possibilities, semantic 'who / whom' relationships are fully realised at text level. In the third and the fourth, some semantic components are backgrounded or absent: in the third, action is thematised not agency, and in the last two the acted-upon are thematised and actors are absented.

All participants in the four episodes were coded using these categories. In total 133 items were coded in the first edition and 142 in the third edition. Figure 2 identifies the extent to which items in these categories play a greater role in the third edition's text (positive values) and the extent to which items in these categories play a greater role in the first edition's text (negative values), expressed in percentages.

Figure 2. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: differences in the incidence of participants in the roles of 'Actor' and 'Acted-upon' and their location before and after verbs in the two the narratives, stated as percentage differences*
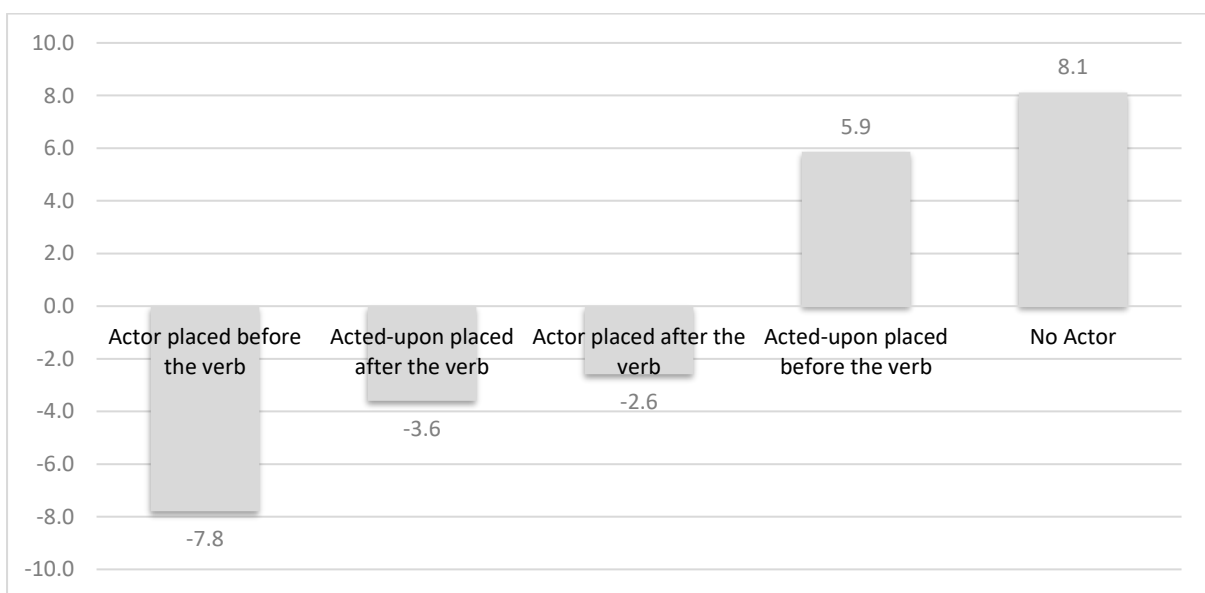
*Negative values indicate greater incidence in the 1st Edition text and positive values indicate greater incidence in the 3rd Edition text.

The figure indicates that semantic and text level features align more clearly in first edition than in third edition's and that the backgrounding and the absenting of agency are more prevalent in third edition.

Transitivity analysis: processes

The processes included in narratives can be of various types - 'Actors' can be the subjects of verbs which identify their actions, their thinking, their motivations, what they say, and so on.

Processes were coded as: (1) 'Material' (acting / doing); (2) 'Mental' (thinking, knowing, feeling, desiring, believing); (3) 'Relational' (having / being); (4) 'Existential' (is/are, were/was); and (5) 'Verbal' (saying, telling). This coding is exemplified in the examples below:

(1) The largest rebellions of the Welsh had <u>been put down</u>;[28]

(2) The kings of England constantly <u>attempted to</u> control the kings of Scotland;[29]

(3) The numbers attending Parliament <u>increased</u>;[30]

(4) In Scotland, the English kings <u>were</u> less successful;[31]

(5) In the nineteenth century historians and statesmen <u>presented it as</u> a charter of liberties for all. [32]

The prevalence of particular process types is likely to be consequential for the depth with which a narrative characterises actors. Narratives dominated by the first ('Material') and fourth ('Existential') of these process types focus on *externalities* – what was the case and what was done. Narratives dominated by the second process type ('Mental') focus on *internalities* – perceptions, beliefs and intentions. Narratives in which the fifth process type ('Verbal') plays a significant role focus on what was said (*dramatization*) and / or on what has been said subsequently (*interpretation*).

All processes in the four episodes were identified and coded using these categories. In total 80 items were coded in the first edition's text and 83 in the third edition's text. Figure 3 presents this coding in the same manner as Figure 2 above.

Figure 3. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: differences in the incidence of processes by process type (e.g. mental process, material processes) in the two the narratives stated as percentage differences*
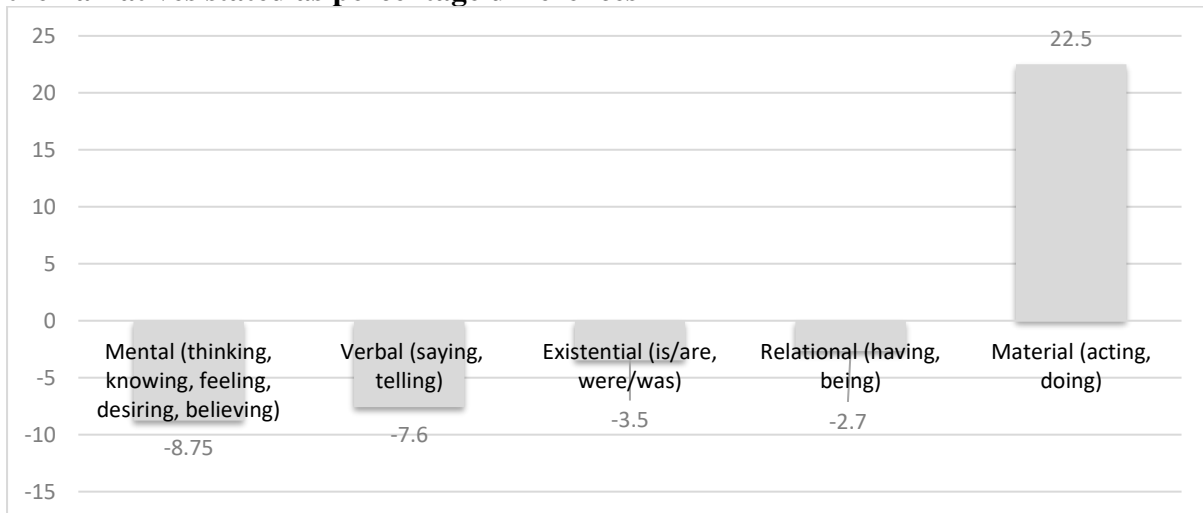
* Negative values indicate greater incidence in the 1st Edition text and positive values indicate greater incidence in the 3rd Edition text.

The figure indicates that the features of external narrative are more prevalent in the third edition and that internalities and dramatization and / or interpretation are more prevalent in first edition of the history chapter.

Transitivity analysis: circumstances

The circumstances included in narratives can be of various types: information can be provided about the contexts in which actions occur, about the qualities of actors or the qualities of those they act-upon, and so on. Circumstances were coded as identifying: (1) features of 'Context / situation'; (2) 'Means (how / with what?)'; (3) 'When? (temporal location)'; (4) 'Qualities' (e.g. predicates of states of affairs or individuals); (5) 'Significance'

(explicit evaluation); (6) 'Extent / scale'; (7) 'Who / What?' (e.g. text specifying additional

participants); (8) 'Why? (cause /reason); and (9) 'Where? (spatial location).' This coding is

exemplified below:

> (1) Ten(s) of thousands died in mid-passage <u>chained in the overcrowded holds</u> of the slave ships.[33]
>
> (2) To control the kings of Scotland <u>by supporting rival claimants to the throne</u>. [34]
>
> (3) <u>By the middle of the 15th century</u> the last Welsh rebellions had been defeated. (HO, 2013, p.21)
>
> (4) William Wilberforce, <u>an evangelical Christian and a member of Parliament</u>[35]
>
> (5) <u>The most terrible and bloody war since</u> the wars of religion three centuries before.[36]
>
> (6) <u>Only a small part of the population</u> was able to join in electing the members of the Commons[37]
>
> (7) Huge castles, <u>including Conwy and Caernarvon</u>, were built [38]
>
> (8) The English parliament survived <u>because it was more broadly based than others</u>[39]
>
> (9) They worked… <u>in mines in South Africa</u> [40]

The prevalence of particular circumstances is likely to have consequences for the narrative

'tasks' performed by a text.[41] In ideal-typical terms, a pure *descriptive chronicle* would be

likely to be dominated by circumstances of types (3) (temporal location), (7) (Who / What) and

(9) (spatial location); an *explanatory narrative* by circumstances of types (1) (context /

situation), (2) (means) and (8) (cause / reason); and an *evaluative narrative* by circumstances

of types (4) (qualities of states of affairs or individuals) and (5) (significance).

All circumstances in the four episodes selected for analysis in the two narratives were identified

and coded using these categories. In total 90 items were identified and coded in the first edition

and 100 in third edition. Figure 4 presents this coding in the same manner as Figures 2 and 3

above.

Figure 4. The first and the third editions' history chapters compared: differences in the incidence of circumstances by circumstance type (e.g. temporal circumstances, spatial circumstances) in the two the narratives stated as percentage differences*
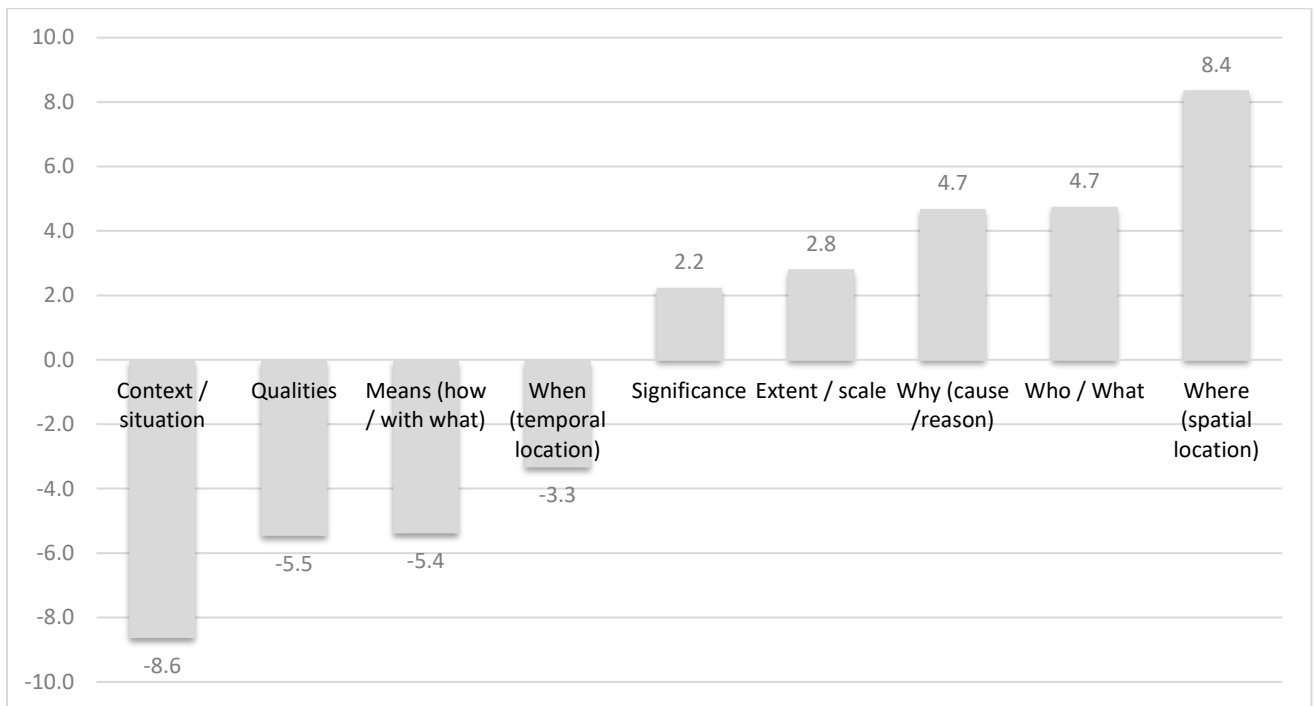
* Negative values indicate greater incidence in the 1st Edition text and positive values indicate greater incidence in the 3rd Edition text.

Neither of these two editions of the history chapter are ideal-typical: circumstances likely to typify a *descriptive chronicle* ('where' and 'what') and circumstances likely to typify an *explanatory narrative* ('why') are prevalent in third edition; circumstances likely to typify an *explanatory narrative* ('context / situation' and 'means') and circumstances likely to typify an *evaluative narrative* ('qualities') are prevalent in the first edition. This analysis does, however, surface a clear difference in the types of historical narration that the two editions' history chapters engage in, summarised in Table 3 below: there appears to be some regression in the sophistication of the historiographic tasks attempted by the history chapters between the first and the third editions of *LUK*.

Table 3. Narrative Types prevalent in the history chapters of the 1st and in the 3rd editions of *LUK*

Narrative Type	1st Edition	3rd Edition
Descriptive chronicle	✘	✓
Explanatory narrative	✓	✓
Evaluative narrative	✓	✘

Transitivity analysis: qualitative illustration

The foregoing analysis has pointed to some clear and to some suggestive differences in the narrative texture of the two history chapters examined. What do these formal differences amount to in practice?

In the case of Magna Carta, it is apparent in both texts that the common people were not participants in the narrative or direct beneficiaries of the charter, the third edition's text stating that 'King John was forced by his noblemen to agree to a number of demands' and that the charter 'protected the rights of the nobility'.[42] However, only the first edition's text is explicit in offering direct interpretive comment on these aspects of the charter:

> In the nineteenth century historians and statesmen presented it as a charter of liberties for all. But in fact it had little in it for ordinary people, even though centuries later a myth grew up that made it sound like a modern charter of human rights. This was not so but it did show that in England the power of the king was not absolute.[43]

The sections of both texts that discuss Agincourt also discuss English wars against Wales, Scotland and Ireland.[44] Whereas the third edition's text has the English kings fighting - the 'English kinds fought with the Welsh, Scottish and Irish…' and 'fought with France' - in the first edition they 'put down' rebellions in Wales, 'destroy' Welsh power and 'claim' the French crown – all terms that add evaluative connotations not present in the verb 'fought'. Whereas,

in third edition's narrative the English language is 'introduced' to Wales, the first edition

choses instead to have it 'imposed'. The descriptions of Agincourt in both texts also differ in

analogous ways, although this time it is the first edition that is less directly evaluative in its

linguistic choices. In first edition, the battle is presented as one of a class ('great pitched battles,

such as Agincourt') and the fact that it was 'celebrated in Shakespeare's play of *Henry V*' is

noted in parenthesis, but in third edition the battle is characterized in a directly

celebratory manner – *as* 'One of the most famous battles of the Hundred Years War' in

which 'King Henry V's vastly outnumbered English army defeated the French'.[45]

In the cases of both Agincourt and the conquest of Wales, the texts differ in their

representation of agency, the first edition attending to actors other than the English. We are

told that

> Welsh survived among the common people and a bilingual class of small landowners.
> Language and culture are remarkably resistant to political power.[46]

Whereas the third edition concludes by saying that 'The English left France in the

1450s', the first edition's narrative gives agency to the French and concludes by noting

that the English 'were driven out by continual small-scale actions by the French, almost

guerrilla warfare, and eventually by civil war at home'.[47]

Similar contrasts in appraisal and agentification are apparent in the two texts' treatment of the

slave trade.[48] Both texts acknowledge the dependence of British economic prosperity on the

trade but whereas the first edition calls it 'evil' the third edition describes the trade as

'booming'. The form in which agency is realized in sentence structure tends, in the third

edition's text, to minimize the role of Britain in the trade. Captured Africans are described as

coming ('Slaves came') from 'West Africa' – a description that is accurate as a statement of

their geographical origin but that, also, appears to attribute agency to the slaves: the acted-upon are thematised and located in the agentive position before the verb - they 'came', they were not 'taken'. They are further described as 'travelling on British ships', again, a form of words that puts captured Africans in the subject position in an active role. The first edition's text has 'British ships' in the subject position, 'supplying' colonies with 'men and women seized or bought in West Africa' to work on the sugar, cotton, and tobacco plantations', a trade on the basis of which named British cities are described as 'flourishing'. The first edition tells us that 'tens of thousands died in mid-passage chained in the overcrowded holds of the slave ships' whereas the third edition simply states that the conditions in the ships in which the slaves were travelling were 'horrible'. Before the third edition explains the trade, it tells us that 'While slavery was illegal within Britain itself, by the 18th century it was a fully established overseas industry, dominated by Britain and the American colonies', a form of words that distances slavery from Britain, locating it 'overseas'.[49] The first edition's text, by contrast, narrates the '1769' Somerset case and argues that there were many thousands of slaves in Britain for most of the eighteenth century whose status was affected by the ruling.[50] Both texts are inaccurate to an extent – the Somerset ruling dates from 1772 – but the first edition is more accurate than the third whose inaccuracies tend to paint Britain in a more favourable light than the record allows. [51]

Attributions of agency differ in similar ways in the treatment of slave trade abolition and its consequences in the two texts. Whereas both texts mention slave uprisings, only the first edition grants them a role in bringing about abolition. Whereas the first edition attributes agency to 'public opinion in Britain' which 'led to the abolition', under the influence of 'evangelical Christians like William Wilberforce… and… slave revolts in the West Indies', the agentive roles in the third edition's text are taken by Wilberforce who, along with other abolitionists,

'succeeded in turning public opinion against the slave trade.'[52] The activities of the British state subsequent to the abolition of slavery are presented very differently in both texts also. Whereas the first edition states that 'the British navy patrolled the Atlantic to stop slave ships of any other nation' the third edition is more explicitly evaluative and states that 'The Royal Navy stopped slave ships from other countries, freed the slaves and punished the slave traders'.[53] Where the third edition presents the Navy as an agent of freedom and justice, the first edition opens the Navy's role up to interpretation, concluding that it 'can be endlessly debated whether they were then creating international law or whether they were, in the eyes of other nations, breaking it'.[54]

The treatment of the First World War in first edition is much briefer than in third edition – the former covers it in 70 words and the latter in 249.[55] The third edition's text begins with the assassination in Sarajevo, explains its role as a 'trigger', identifies 'other factors', names the combatant countries on both sides, notes the contribution of imperial troops and the extent of casualties before concluding by stating that 'The First World War ended at 11.00 am on 11th November 1918 with victory for Britain and its allies'.[56] By contrast, the first edition's text focuses explicitly on significance, evaluating the war comparatively ('the most terrible and bloody war since the wars of religion three centuries before'), explaining how 'new technologies… bureaucratic control and fervid patriotism were used and exploited' to prosecute the war, describing an aspect of the war that came 'to dominate popular imagination', noting post-war 'recriminations' directed 'at the generals and at "the older generation"' and concluding by saying:

> War memorials became a common sight in nearly every town and village in Britain, usually Christian crosses inscribed with the names of the dead. [57]

Where one text closes with victory the other closes with casualties and mourning.

Conclusion: Re-structuring the National Story

In terms of the content to be narrated, then, this chapter has shown that there are substantial continuities between the narratives presented in the first and the third editions of *Life in the UK*, and that, despite some variation, they do not differ significantly at the level of the 'fabula' or basic story. Both are very similar:

- In terms of the overall organisation of their content and in terms of the types of history that they include (Table 1, above); and

- In terms of the relationships that they construct between the 'time of narration and narrated time' and in terms of the proportions of text covering differing categories of content. [58]

At a macro level, then, and in terms of content to be narrated, one can say that little changes between 2004 and 2013. Although there are many instances where new content is introduced in third edition, such as the addition of lists of combatant countries in the First World War, and instances where the first edition content is deleted in the third edition, such as the Somerset Case, the lineaments of the first edition can very clearly be traced in the third edition. Most, though not all, of the content is retained and key purposes of the narrative remain constant in both texts, for example, to narrate the development of parliamentary democracy and to narrate the unification of four nations into the UK. Continuities in overall content are apparent also in the absences common to both texts, notably the lack of reference to the labour movement: trade unions figure only once in both narratives, and appear, as it were, from nowhere in an account of the crises of the 1970s when, both texts concur in averring, it was generally agreed that they had become too powerful.[59] What this power consisted in, where it came from and why and

how it came to be regarded as excessive all remain unaccounted for and mysterious in both texts.

Despite these continuities in content to be narrated, this chapter has demonstrated significant differences in the manner in which these contents are narrated. The two texts differ markedly, as we have seen, in the relationships that they aim to construct with their readers and with the past, and in the tasks they set out to perform, as indicated by their titles. The texts differ also in the prevalence of both explicit interpretive discourse and thematic narrative framing in the first edition and their absence in the third.

In addition to these global differences, contrasts in the narrative strategies adopted by each text are revealed by sentence-level grammatical analysis focused on 'who / whom' patterns of transitivity. There is a greater prevalence in the third edition of the absenting of agency, of external narration, of the features of an ideal-typical chronicle, and so on. In Rimmon-Kenan's terms, then, we can say that the two narratives differ more in their 'texts' and their 'narrations' than in their 'story', and these differences in emplotment are largely realised through a re-writing of the grammar of narration of the text at a sentence level.[60]

In addition to surfacing such differences at sentence level, grammatical analysis has proved valuable in operationalising macro-contrasts in narrative types (see Table 3). As was noted in the discussion of patterns of transitivity above, the presence or absence of different types of narrative - such as, for example, an explanatory dramatization narrating internal features of agents such as their motivations and perceptions - can be determined by examining the extent to which particular types of process or circumstance are present in a text's narrative discourse. Granular grammatical analysis, then, enables these two texts to be systematically differentiated

and also points to analytical tools likely to be of wide application in the narrative analysis of

historical texts more generally.

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