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Values and Attitudes in Ancient and Modern History

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Abstract

The demanding literacy levels required of senior secondary students are widely acknowledged, yet the area of literacy in the senior secondary high school remains relatively under researched. In particular, there is a lack of detailed studies which aim to differentiate the literacy expectations of different subject areas. A first step in this process is to differentiate the underlying objectives stated for different subjects. This paper will report on preliminary research into the rationales and values statements contained in the Stage 6 Modern and Ancient History syllabi carried out as part of a larger research project investigating the literacy demands of Stage 6 Humanities Subjects in NSW. An Appraisal analysis of these syllabi shows how these subjects argue quite differently for their importance in terms of relevance to and skill building for students. The analysis will indicate how a complex interplay of judgement and appreciation is constructed in these documents and contribute to understandings of difference within the discipline of history in the senior high school.

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

There has been widespread acknowledgement within the teaching profession that literacy development is an important issue in schools and ‘controversy over literacy has become a permanent fixture of educational debate and policy’ (Green, Hodgens & Luke 1997:7). This concern has been matched with important responses from the fields of research in educational and applied linguistics (Coffin 1997; Painter et al. 1986; Rothery & Gerot 1986; Veel 2006; Wignell 1987). However, much of the effort in exploring the literacy demands of curriculum and the needs of students has focused on the contexts of primary school and junior high school, and/or on the needs of students with English as a second language or dialect. The literacy development needs of senior school students, that is students in their final two years of schooling, have received less attention (Cambourne 2001; Cumming & Wyatt-Smith 2001). Their needs are somewhat different due to the nature of the HSC and the pressures of external testing and constant school-based assessments bring. In order to do well at this level of school, students need an understanding of how their audience and their communicative purpose will shape the form of their writing, as different types of texts are used to achieve different purposes in different settings, resulting in collections of different text types referred to as *genres* (Coffin 1996). Many teachers feel under-equipped to be able to assist these students to reach the sophisticated level of control over written academic language that is necessary across several different text types if students are going to achieve success in their HSC examinations. Moreover, teachers struggle with limited timeframes in which to teach both subject content (which many teachers still perceive to be their primary, even *only*, focus) and literacy and many are unconfident in the area of literacy and how to go about teaching it, preferring to leave it up to the ‘experts’.

Year 11 and 12 provide a transition stage between the junior school and tertiary education. In these two years of study as students are apprenticed into new ways of writing and negotiating meaning which will prepare them for the requirements of writing literature reviews, research reports and theses at various tertiary levels. In subjects such as Modern and Ancient History, high levels of academic literacy are required to meet syllabus demands as students often must integrate multiple sources and the views of acknowledged experts into their writing, oftentimes evaluating the reliability of these while still maintaining the appearance of objectivity. The Senior High School context is therefore a significant research site as there is a significant need to work in the area of literacy pedagogy.

1.2 Background

This research arises out of problems I encountered as the chair of the literacy committee in a senior high school in Sydney's west. On consultation with teachers I found the prevailing attitude was to recognise that students had literacy needs but also discovered either frustration or apathy and cynicism born out of perceived lack of skill in the area of literacy pedagogy and repeated cycles of what was seen to be 'faddish' approaches to literacy. Furthermore, I believe the new HSC syllabi introduced in recent years into NSW schools have incorporated more of a focus on the heteroglossic (multiple-voiced) nature of text and that overall, they require much more sophisticated control of resources for managing interpersonal stance as they almost inevitably require students to do things like 'analyse', 'evaluate' 'synthesise information from a range of sources' and 'assess the significance' (NSW Board of Studies 2004a) of ideas, theories or events.

Surveying the existent literature it seems that although much has been written on the subjects of literacy and junior high school students (e.g. the Write it Right Project for the NSW Department of Education Disadvantaged Schools Program in the 1990s) and literacy and university students (Hood 2004; Hyland 2000; Swales 1990), there is less literature which directly addresses the particular needs of senior high school students studying for their HSC. A previous analysis of the discourse semantics of texts produced as assessment tasks in senior Ancient History suggested that students were indeed expected to construct texts which were on the one hand 'objective' but on the other hand evaluated different sources in terms of reliability and accuracy and to construct an argument integrating multiple viewpoints negotiating the same knowledge space (Matruglio 2004). These requirements necessitated a sophisticated control of the Appraisal System (especially resources of Engagement). I believe that a more detailed study of several humanities syllabi, HSC exam papers and the resultant texts produced for assessment tasks will help elucidate exactly what the requirements for success in the HSC are. Once these requirements are made explicit and accessible to teachers, teachers and literacy experts can work together to produce teaching materials that will aim to improve literacy levels for students across NSW.

2 Literature Review

This paper begins with a social orientation to language and literacy pedagogy in line with recent research emphasizing the importance of a social approach to language teaching (Columbi & Schleppegrell 2002; Gee 2002; Merino & Hammond 2002; Ramanathan 2002) in order to enable students to make 'connections between the "grammar" of a social language and the work of recognizing and enacting socially

situated identities' (Gee 2002). Recognising the importance of a social perspective on language, this study begins from a Systemic Functional Linguistics' (SFL) definition of language as a 'social semiotic'.

2.1 *Literacy in Schools*

Over the last 20 years, there has been much fruitful research conducted in NSW on the subject of literacy in both primary and high schools. Much of this research has been carried out by systemic functional linguists eager to clarify understandings of the language demands of schooling with a view to making the teaching and learning of literacy in schools more productive and improve student levels of success in school. Many of the current facets of systemic functional linguistics as it stands today, such as genre theory and the Appraisal system have arisen out of the research conducted in schools and the attempts by linguists (often working together with teachers) to make the language demands of learning in school more explicit and visible.

Some of the issues confronting students learning to write in the humanities in particular are discussed in the report of the Writing Project conducted by Eggins, Martin and Wignell in Sydney in 1986. This report pointed to the lack of purposeful scaffolding for students learning to write in schools. The researchers found that when students write in class, it is usually to copy notes or use a textbook to answer short answer questions, and writing of any length is usually to be completed at home. In the junior school, such writing is usually made up of 'assignments' or 'projects', generally transitioning towards essays towards year 10 or so. Furthermore, much of class time is spent in discussion, often of answers to questions students have prepared at home. Although most of class time is devoted to discussion, students are nevertheless graded on their written responses, not their oral participation. In other words, students have access to good oral models in class, but few written ones (Wignell 1987). Wignell's conclusion is that students 'are taught a lot of "what" but they aren't taught a great deal of "how"' (Wignell 1987:18).

Studies of literacy in the United States seem to mirror these findings. In his national study of writing in the secondary school, Applebee (1984) found that only 3% of students' school time (including homework) was spent on writing texts of paragraph length or longer, and when students were asked to write at length the writing 'served merely as a vehicle to test knowledge of specific content' (Applebee 1984:2). This is reflected in his analysis of textbooks from across the curriculum which shows that roughly 90% of the tasks in textbooks assume the audience to be the 'teacher as examiner' (Applebee 1984). It seems, therefore, that students' writing is valued only as an assessment tool insofar as it provides an opportunity to communicate 'subject knowledge' and that the *form* of the writing is unimportant as very little time is dedicated to teaching students how to write.

Students themselves report that they do not receive much instruction in writing for their subjects, with much of the instruction they do receive limited to explanations of generic structure or required content. Students report a clear familiarity with the final form of their writing, but what they lack is an understanding of how to go about producing that form and the reasons for such a text structure (Marshall 1984). One explanation for why the literacy demands of some subjects may be unclear to students could be because although the intended curriculum seems obvious from the teacher's point of view, there is too little framing information available to the student (Reid 2001). In other words, what students appear to lack is an understanding of the interpersonal

nature of their writing and the way that structuring a text in a particular way affects the reader by establishing a clear argument and constructing a reading position for the responder of the text. Furthermore, teacher's comments on student writing also tended to concentrate on accuracy of content (Langer 1984), or on form, often at sentence and word level, without an explanation as to how or why a more appropriate structure was to be achieved (Marshall 1984).

Following this research, it has been suggested that there is 'a systematic and pervasive failure in the quality of instructional interaction between teacher and student' when it comes to teaching students how to write (Langer & Applebee 1984:169) with instruction for writing focusing mainly on the presentation of a topic, word length of the expected text, and a due date, with detailed instruction being provided only as feedback after the writing task had been marked, if at all (Langer & Applebee 1984). Anecdotal evidence from discussions with teachers in the senior high school in which this study is based would seem to support this, with many teachers insisting that there is so much subject 'content' to 'get through' that little time remains for teaching students how to write, which is often perceived as being largely the domain of the English subject teachers.

This view, however fails to appreciate the link between disciplinary learning and the literacy skills necessary to display such learning. Learning how to write for a particular subject is part of learning that subject, because language, as a semiotic system, is used differently in different disciplines to reflect the varied ways of thinking about the world represented by these subjects (Columbi & Schleppegrell 2002; Kress 2001). The assertion that 'language teaching cannot be separated from the teaching of content' (Merino & Hammond 2002:242) has been reinforced by many researchers studying literacy development both in Australia and internationally (Columbi & Schleppegrell 2002; Gee 2002; Kress 2001) and there is an ever-increasing assertion that this language teaching must be explicit if students are to achieve the types of 'advanced literacy' that is demanded in secondary and post-secondary schooling today (Columbi & Schleppegrell 2002; Scarcella 2002). There is a need to develop a plurality of 'curriculum literacies' (Cumming & Wyatt-Smith 2001) to elucidate how literacy interacts with the different subjects studied in the senior high school, because literacy 'is not one thing evenly spread across curriculum areas. It varies with the kinds of disciplinary practices and forms of knowledge that are at issue in a school subject' (Kress 2001:22).

This makes an understanding of how different subjects are presented important for students. If they are to write well for a particular subject, then they must understand what sort of knowledge is valued in this subject, and how that knowledge is expected (by examiners) to be expressed. Therefore, the questions of whether different subjects require students to write in fundamentally different ways and of whether different subjects value different interpersonal standpoints is an important one both for educators and for students who are seeking to excel in the HSC examination. This paper aims to add to the rich understandings of literacy in the school subject of History (Coffin 1996; Coffin 1997; Martin 2002, 2007) by comparing how the syllabus documents present Modern and Ancient History and by investigating which attitudes and values are foregrounded by the syllabus writers of these subjects.

3 Methodology

In order to answer the above questions with relation to the subjects of Modern and Ancient History, an examination of the syllabus documents for these two subjects was carried out with a view to determining the literacy requirements for each subject according to the syllabus outcomes. Each subject has a list of outcomes that students must achieve in order to do well, as well as key competencies which are included in every subject and which often contain statements specifically about language use. Discovering how each subject argues for its own value to students and how it sees itself contributing to their literacy development is an important first step in discovering what literacy strategies students require in order for success. One of the findings from this analysis was that students were expected to ‘communicate a knowledge and understanding of historical features and issues, using appropriate and well-structured oral and written forms’ (NSW Board of Studies 2004b:11). The word ‘appropriate’ occurred several times in both the outcomes and the key competencies of both syllabi, however the syllabi did not elaborate exactly what ‘appropriate’ was. In an effort to try to determine what ‘appropriate’ would be in the case of both Modern and Ancient History, I focussed my attention more narrowly on the syllabus rationale statements. Unless otherwise indicated, all extracts from the syllabi included in the analysis below are from the syllabus rationale for Ancient History (NSW Board of Studies 2004a:6) and Modern History (NSW Board of Studies 2004b:6) and for ease of reading will be labelled as AH1, AH2, MH1 etc.

3.1 *Syllabus Rationales*

An Appraisal analysis of the syllabus rationale for both modern and Ancient History reveals interesting details about how the subjects are presented in terms of both relevance to students and their perceived value in the curriculum. All Stage 6 syllabi have a rationale occurring at the very beginning of the syllabus after a statement about the purpose of the Higher Certificate program of study in general. Thus, the syllabus rationale sets the tone of the syllabus document and attempts to align the reader of the document into certain ways of thinking about the subject. The values and issues raised in the rationale could therefore be expected to reappear in the syllabus outcomes as important perspectives to be learnt and demonstrated by students. Furthermore, these syllabus rationales are often used by teachers to persuade possible future students and their parents of the importance of their subjects and the benefit that studying their subject will have for students’ academic development and future studies and careers. For this reason, knowledge of how each individual subject presents itself and the claims it makes about its own relevance should give an insight into what values students need to reflect in their own writing and therefore what would be deemed ‘appropriate’ writing by an HSC marker. An example of the first paragraph of the rationale from the Ancient History Syllabus is provided below.

The study of history is an inquiry into past experience that helps make the present more intelligible. A study of the past is invaluable, for to be unaware of history is to be ignorant of those forces that have shaped our social and physical worlds. Through the study of ancient history, students learn both about the interaction of societies and the impact of individuals and groups on ancient events and ways of life. The study of ancient history gives students an understanding of the possibilities and limitations of

comparing past to present and present to past by exposing them to a variety of perspectives on key events and issues. It also gives them opportunities to develop their own perspectives on the origins and influence of ideas, values and behaviours that are still relevant in the modern world. (NSW Board of Studies 2004a:6)

4 Analysis

One of the first things to note from an Appraisal analysis of the syllabus rationales of these two subjects is that a great deal of the appraisal occurs as *appreciation*, as the valuing of *things*. This is not surprising, given that the function of a syllabus rationale is to state why the study of a particular subject is beneficial and desirable in the context of a Higher School Certificate program of study. A clear example of the positive way in which the syllabus rationales value their subjects comes from the Modern History Syllabus:

MH1: Modern History Stage 6 is especially **relevant** [+valuation] to the lives of students

It is interesting to note, however, that it is very often not the subject itself that is appreciated, but more abstracted views, events, knowledges or skills that are seen as integral to the study of the subject. This gives us an insight into what is seen as important in each subject and the values and ideals that each subject upholds. The following instances of positive valuation from the Modern History Syllabus illustrate this point:

MH2: the events and issues that form its content are, in many cases, still **current** [+ valuation].

MH3: The study of Modern History Stage 6 also contributes to the development of skills that are of great **importance** [+ valuation] in today's workforce.

MH4: The fluent communication of thoughts and ideas gleaned from the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources is a **sought after** [+ valuation] skill.

MH5: the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes acquired through a study of Modern History Stage 6 are **essential** [+ valuation] ingredients in the promotion of a democratic, harmonious, progressive and tolerant society.

Accordingly, *events and issues, skills, the fluent communication of thoughts and ideas and knowledge, skills, values and attitudes* are all positively valued in the Modern History syllabus, and the fact that the syllabus spends more time positively evaluating these abstractions rather than the subject itself highlights how important these things are seen to be in the wider educational community.

Similarly in Ancient History, positive value is attributed to things such as *events and issues, ideas, values and behaviour, view of the past, and contemporary ethical issues*.

AH1 ...perspectives on **key** [+valuation] events and issues.

AH2: ...develop their own perspectives on the origins and **influence** [+ valuation] of ideas, values and behaviours that are still **relevant** [+ valuation] in the modern world.

AH3: ...enabling students to piece together an **informed** [+ valuation] and coherent view of the past.

AH4: The study of ancient history raises **significant** [+ valuation] contemporary ethical issues...

Thus, the study of both Modern and Ancient History are presented as being worthwhile because of the importance and value of the skills, values, attitudes and ideas necessary to and developed by the study of History.

What is further illustrated by an examination of what exactly is being appraised in these syllabus rationales is the importance given in both subjects to the understanding and evaluation of multiple contexts and points of view. Modern History is presented as 'a **contested** [- composition] dialogue between past and present' and the final statement in the rationale leaves the reader with a strong impression of the heteroglossic orientation of the subject:

MH6: This **broad** [+quantification, invoking + valuation] understanding encourages students to develop an **appreciation** [+ valuation] of different views and to be **aware** [+ capacity] of how such views contribute to individual and group actions in **various** [quantification] local, national and international contexts.

Ancient History highlights the heteroglossic orientation of the subject using very similar language, stating:

AH5: This **broad** [+quantification, invoking + valuation] knowledge encourages them to develop an **appreciation** [+valuation] and **understanding** of different views and makes them aware of how these views contribute to individual and group actions.

However, despite the similarities between the two types of history mentioned above, a comparison of the Appraisal analyses of the Modern and Ancient History Syllabi also reveals an interesting difference in the way that these subjects are presented in terms of their value to students. This is clear from the instances of Judgement in each rationale, as Judgement is the system in Appraisal which deals with attitudes towards people's behaviour and character. The Judgement in the Ancient History Syllabus is predominantly from the category of *capacity*, for example:

AH6: A study of the past is invaluable, for to be **unaware** [- capacity] of history is to be **ignorant** [- capacity] of those forces that have shaped our social and physical worlds

Thus, the study of Ancient History is presented as being important because it prevents students from being *ignorant* and *unaware*, which are negatively judged. Furthermore, the syllabus rationale later adds that

AH7: it allows students to study and analyse past societies with a **detachment** [+ capacity] conferred by the perspectives of at least two millennia

In other words, not only does the study of Ancient History prevent students from being *incapable* (being ignorant, unaware), it builds on their capabilities to make them more competent overall. *Detachment* is seen as positive, as the skills of writing in an objective and analytical fashion are highly valued in Stage 6 and in the tertiary context beyond school. The value of studying Ancient History in terms of building students' capacity is further reinforced as

AH8: It equips students to question **critically** [+ capacity] and interpret written and archaeological sources

and

AH9: It **empowers** [+ capacity] students with knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that are useful for their lifelong learning.

The study of Ancient History is therefore presented as valuable because of its capacity building properties. Studying Ancient History produces socially capable individuals who will not be *ignorant* but who are able to use their powers of reasoning in a *detached* and *critical* way and who will then be *empowered* to continue their learning beyond the school context.

On the other hand, the Judgement in the Modern History Syllabus is mainly concerned with *propriety*.

MH7: the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes acquired through a study of Modern History Stage 6 are essential ingredients in the promotion of a **democratic, harmonious, progressive and tolerant** [+ propriety] society.

and

MH8: Modern History Stage 6 helps empower students to become **responsible** [+ propriety] and active citizens

Thus, in contrast with Ancient History, the study of Modern History is valued because it produces not more capable students, but more *ethical* students. In other words, Ancient History appears to be concerned with issues of *social esteem*, while Modern History appears to be concerned with issues of *social sanction*. This difference is also visible when the sections of the syllabi dealing with values are explored.

The values which are held forth as important and are expected to be learned by students are set out explicitly in the 'objectives and outcomes' section of the syllabus. Page 12 of the Ancient History syllabus states that:

AH10: Values and attitudes are inherent in the subject matter of Ancient History and the skills that are developed. They result from learning experiences and reflection.

AH11: Students need to develop values and attitudes that promote an informed and just society.

This statement is followed by a table expanding on the values expected to be developed, and although these objectives are the only ones in the syllabus not to be translated into syllabus outcomes for testing, the prominence given them in the syllabus nevertheless indicates their importance.

Table 1: Values in Ancient History

Objectives A student develops values and attitudes about:	A student:
5 the diversity and complexity of ancient societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • values the complexity and variety of human experiences as reflected in the history of the ancient world • respects different viewpoints, ways of living, belief systems and languages
6 the influence of the ancient past on the present and the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appreciates the ways the past can inform the present and the future • appreciates the impact of the ancient world on current lifestyles, issues, beliefs and institutions • develops tolerant and informed attitudes about the contemporary world • is able to participate in society in an informed way as an individual or as a member of groups
7 the value of Ancient History for personal growth and lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops an interest in history for lifelong learning • enriches personal experiences in response to travel and leisure activities
8 the conservation of the past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops a sense of responsibility to conserve the past

(NSW Board of Studies 2004a, p. 12)

The syllabus for Modern History includes a similar section about values, with the interesting change from ‘Students need to develop values and attitudes that promote an informed and just society.’ (NSW Board of Studies 2004a:12) to ‘...promote a **democratic** and just society’ (NSW Board of Studies 2004b :12 emphasis mine). The objectives and values expressed therein are sufficiently different to warrant the inclusion of the table from the Modern History Syllabus as well.

Table 2: Values in Modern History

Objectives develops values and attitudes about:	A student:
5 informed and active citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates an appreciation of the nature of various democratic institutions • demonstrates an appreciation of the individual rights, freedoms and responsibilities of citizenship and democracy • demonstrates respect for different viewpoints, ways of living, belief systems and languages in the modern world
6 a just society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • articulates concern for the welfare, rights and dignity of all people • displays a readiness to counter disadvantage and change racist, sexist and other discriminatory practices • demonstrates respect for human life
7 the influence of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates an awareness of the ways the past can inform

past on the present and the future	and influence the present and the future • recognises the impact of contemporary national and global developments on countries and regions, lifestyles, issues, beliefs and institutions
8 the contribution of historical studies to lifelong learning	• demonstrates an awareness of the contributions of historical studies to lifelong learning

(NSW Board of Studies 2004b:12)

A comparison of the objectives included in each table above shows that the Ancient History syllabus appears to be mostly concerned with developing values related to learning about and appreciating difference, being informed and valuing lifelong learning. The main focus of the values explicitly stated in this syllabus seems to be on **knowledge** and **understanding** of the past and its impact on and relevance to the present, whereas the Modern History syllabus, in addition to these issues also appears to foreground more values to do with social **behaviour** in the present. This mirrors the differing focus on Ancient History as capacity building compared to Modern History as ethics building found through the Appraisal analysis of the rationale section of the syllabus and discussed above.

Table 3: Values in Modern and Ancient History compared

Modern History		Ancient History	
5 informed and active citizenship	social behaviour in the present	5 the diversity and complexity of ancient societies	knowledge and understanding
6 a just society	social behaviour in the present	6 the influence of the ancient past on the present and the future	knowledge and understanding
7 the influence of the past on the present and the future	knowledge and understanding	7 the value of Ancient History for personal growth and lifelong learning	knowledge and understanding
8 the contribution of historical studies to lifelong learning	knowledge and understanding	8 the conservation of the past	knowledge and understanding + social behaviour in the present

An Appraisal analysis of the values paragraphs proved to be a challenge, because of the multiple levels of evaluation contained within them. One level of evaluation is created when the objectives statements are ‘unpacked’ in the ‘outcomes’ column of the table. (Although these objectives are not translated into formal syllabus outcomes for testing, the values statements in the second column of the table are expressed as outcomes. Even though they are not formally labelled as such, for ease of discussion they will be referred to as “outcomes” henceforward). The values statements involve complex relationships between the students, the outcomes they are expected to achieve and the values expressed in these outcomes and much of the evaluative language can be understood from different vantage points. Furthermore, the language of the outcomes is full of abstractions and nominalisations which are then linked to other

abstractions. These abstractions carry attitudinal meaning of their own and also interact with the attitudinal prosody from the initiating objective and from the table as a whole. What the reader is presented with, then, is a series of statements containing a multi-layered meaning equivalent to ‘A student is valued as successful because they are capable of valuing certain values which are valuable.’ This picture is further complicated by the fact that the same items of vocabulary can be used to mean different things and in turn can therefore carry different attitudinal loading from one statement to the next. Consider the following outcomes linked to the first objective in the table from Modern History

A student:

- **demonstrates an appreciation** [+cap] of the nature of **various** [+quant] **democratic** [+prop] institutions
- **demonstrates an appreciation** [+prop] of the individual **rights** [+cap], **freedoms** [+cap] and **responsibilities** [+ten] of **citizenship** [+cap,+ten] and **democracy** [+cap,+ten,+prop]

(NSW Board of Studies 2004b:12)

In these two instances, the word *appreciation* is used to mean different things, and therefore also carries different attitudinal meaning. In the first statement, *appreciation* can be glossed as *understanding*, so the statement reads as “A student demonstrates an understanding of the nature of various democratic institutions”, while in the second statement *appreciation* can be glossed as *valuing*, so the statement reads “A student demonstrates a valuing of the individual rights, freedoms and responsibilities of citizenship and democracy.” The first statement, then, refers to the student’s capacity to understand, whereas the second statement refers to the student behaving in an ethical way.

These two outcomes statements also indicate the values which are considered important and which ethical stance students must adopt in order to succeed in this subject. It is significant that the first two values statements are dedicated to setting up an understanding of *democracy* as a vital concept. Students are not only to understand the nature of democratic institutions, they are also required to see democracy itself as valuable. Furthermore, the statement

- **demonstrates an appreciation** [+prop] of the individual **rights** [+cap], **freedoms** [+cap] and **responsibilities** [+ten] of **citizenship** [+cap,+ten] and **democracy** [+cap,+ten,+prop]

indicates how democracy is to be viewed and the sanctioned understanding of what democracy is. Democracy is set up as an institution involving *rights*, *freedoms* and *responsibilities*, in which one participates through *citizenship*, which is the result of the proper exercise of these rights, responsibilities and freedoms. The words ‘rights’ and ‘freedoms’ inscribe a value of positive capacity, that is, if one has the right and the freedom to do something, then they are able to do it. ‘Responsibility’ inscribes a value of positive tenacity, in other words if one has the responsibility to do something, then one should be able to be depended upon to do it. Thus, *citizenship* and *democracy* are set up as highly abstract fusions of capacity and tenacity.

Furthermore, *democracy* has been analysed as being a fusion of three sub-categories of judgement. Aside from the definition of democracy contained in the outcomes statement, the concept of democracy carries with it strong associations of

propriety or ethics. In the context of mainstream western culture democracy is the 'right' way to behave, and countries are quite prepared to go to war to defend or even impose this way of government in other countries. In fact, words defining alternate forms of government such as *dictatorship* or *socialist regime* carry strong negative values of social sanction. These are not the 'right' way to behave. Therefore, the term *democracy* can be understood to fuse both positive values of social esteem and social sanction in the one word, and has therefore been analysed as inscribing positive capacity, tenacity and propriety.

It is clear then, that a lot of work is being carried out in the first two outcomes statements in the values section of the syllabus. Democracy is set up to be an important value, which is to be 'appreciated' by students. If students do appreciate this particular value then they in turn will be valued as successful in their study of Modern History. Therefore, students are valued because they are capable of valuing democracy, which is valuable.

The values outcomes statements therefore also seem to fuse aspects of both judgement and appreciation, further adding to the complexity of undertaking an Appraisal analysis. It is not democracy itself that is being valued per se; it is the student's ability to appreciate the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of democracy. That is the student is being valued because of a particular valuation they have of democracy. This is clear from the way that most of the outcomes begin with a statement of student capacity:

- a student demonstrates an appreciation... (a student is able to show that they appreciate)
- a student demonstrates respect... (a student is able to show that they respect)
- a student articulates concern... (a student can express concern)
- a student displays a readiness... (a student can show that they are ready)
- a student demonstrates an awareness... (a student is able to show that they are aware)
- a student recognises the impact... (a student can understand the impact)
- a student demonstrates an awareness... (a student can show an understanding)

However, the term used to appraise in each case is a nominalisation, which removes the focus away from behaviour to a certain extent, and makes the statements appear somewhat like a case of appreciation of a concept or thing. When viewed without the framing reference to the student or the initial statement of capacity, "...an appreciation of the nature of various democratic institutions" seems like a case of appreciation:reaction:impact, in other words 'the nature of various democratic institutions is engaging'. Similarly 'an appreciation of the individual rights, freedoms and responsibilities of citizenship and democracy' seems right on the border between judgement and appreciation. On the one hand it could be understood to mean 'the individual rights, freedoms and responsibilities of citizenship and democracy are valuable' and thus be an instance of appreciation:valuation. On the other hand, the possession of this attitude in itself conveys a positive judgement of the person holding such an attitude. Thus, the statement taken as a whole appears to be a case of appreciation nested inside a greater context of judgement. Although it is essentially the student who is being valued, the values are also being valued, however they are presented in the context of student behaviours or attitudes which themselves are evaluated.

It is also important to note the interplay of judgement and appreciation which occurs between the objectives and the expansion of these objectives into their corresponding outcomes. This can be most clearly seen from the Ancient History values table below. The attitude present in the objectives is expressed in terms of appreciation (shown below in **bold**), that is, the subject matter of Ancient History is what is being appraised, however the attitude present in the outcomes provided as an explanation of what these objectives mean is expressed mainly as judgement (shown below in *italics*) and it is the student who is being appraised. This interplay of appreciation and judgement and the merging of appraisal directed at the subject matter itself and the student results in a complex and dense expression of values.

Table 4: Appreciation and Judgement in Ancient History

Objectives A student develops values and attitudes about:	A student:
5 the diversity and complexity of ancient societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>values</i> the complexity and variety of human experiences as reflected in the history of the ancient world • <i>respects</i> different viewpoints, ways of living, belief systems and languages
6 the influence of the ancient past on the present and the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>appreciates</i> the ways the past can inform the present and the future • <i>appreciates</i> the impact of the ancient world on current lifestyles, issues, beliefs and institutions • develops <i>tolerant</i> and <i>informed</i> attitudes about the contemporary world • is <i>able</i> to participate in society in an <i>informed</i> way as an individual or as a member of groups
7 the value of Ancient History for personal growth and lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>develops an interest</i> in history for lifelong learning • <i>enriches personal experiences</i> in response to travel and leisure activities
8 the conservation of the past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>develops a sense of responsibility</i> to conserve the past

(NSW Board of Studies 2004a:12)

Additionally, the values outcomes themselves are highly saturated with vocabulary inscribing attitude of some variety. This is especially the case for Modern History and can be illustrated by the excerpt below:

- **demonstrates an appreciation** [+cap] of the nature of **various** [+quant] **democratic** [+prop] institutions
- **demonstrates an appreciation** [+prop] of the individual **rights** [+cap], **freedoms** [+cap] and **responsibilities** [+ten] of **citizenship** [+cap, +ten] and **democracy** [+cap, +ten, +prop]
- **demonstrates respect** [+prop] for different viewpoints, ways of living, belief systems and languages in the modern world

(NSW Board of Studies 2004b:12)

In fact, the values in the outcomes section of the Modern History Syllabus contain a much higher concentration of evaluative language than the Ancient History syllabus. The other difference between the two, as already mentioned above, is that the Modern History syllabus is concerned with the development of *ethical* students, while the Ancient History syllabus seems more concerned on the development of *capable students*. This is evident from higher percentages of the use of lexis inscribing propriety in the Modern History syllabus (45% compared with 27% in the Ancient History Syllabus) and the greater percentage of lexis inscribing capacity in the Ancient History Syllabus (64% compared with 45% in the Modern History Syllabus). This is illustrated in the table below:

Table 5: Comparison of the expression of Attitude in the two Histories

		MH	AH
Appreciation		8%	15%
Judgement	total	92%	85%
	tenacity	18%	0
	capacity	45%	64%
	propriety	45%	27%
Appraised	student	55%	92%
	other	45%	8%

The above table also illustrates another difference between the two Histories. In the case of Ancient History, the thing that is most appraised in the values section of the syllabus is the student (92%). In other words, this section of the syllabus is primarily concerned with the evaluation of the student and the development of the correct values in the student. However only 55% of the evaluative language in the Modern History Syllabus is directed at the student or their behaviour, while 45 percent is directed at society or at abstractions such as *citizenship and democracy*, contemporary *national and global developments* or *the past*. It seems from this, that the value of the Ancient History syllabus, then, is constructed almost solely as an argument for the benefit it can have for the student (Ancient History as capacity building), while the Modern History syllabus argues for some kind of intrinsic value in addition to the skills it can develop in a student (Modern History as a study of ethics).

5 Conclusion

Although Modern and Ancient History can be perceived as having much in common, such as the focus in the syllabi on developing skills, values, attitudes and ideas, and the heteroglossic nature of the two subjects, there are also important differences in what sort of knowledges and values are foregrounded in each syllabus. In order for students to be able to write ‘appropriately’ for each subject, they need to understand how each syllabus presents itself, which values are deemed to be of importance in each subject and what each subject aims to achieve in terms of student development. The difference between a focus on student capacity on the one hand and student ethics on the other, could be expected to be reflected in the way that students write and the types of interpersonal resources which would be more valued by markers in the HSC examinations. Modern History’s focus on ethics would seem to allow for students to use more resources of propriety from the Appraisal system, while Ancient History’s focus on capacity-

building may allow for more use of the resources of capacity from the Appraisal system. It is hoped that continuing research will combine the results of an analysis of student texts with the results presented in this paper to describe the differing literacy needs of students studying Modern and Ancient History even more clearly. Once the differences in orientation and expectations for these subjects are made clear, teachers and students can work towards the development of 'advanced literacy' skills for all students so they can have the maximum chances for success at the HSC.

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