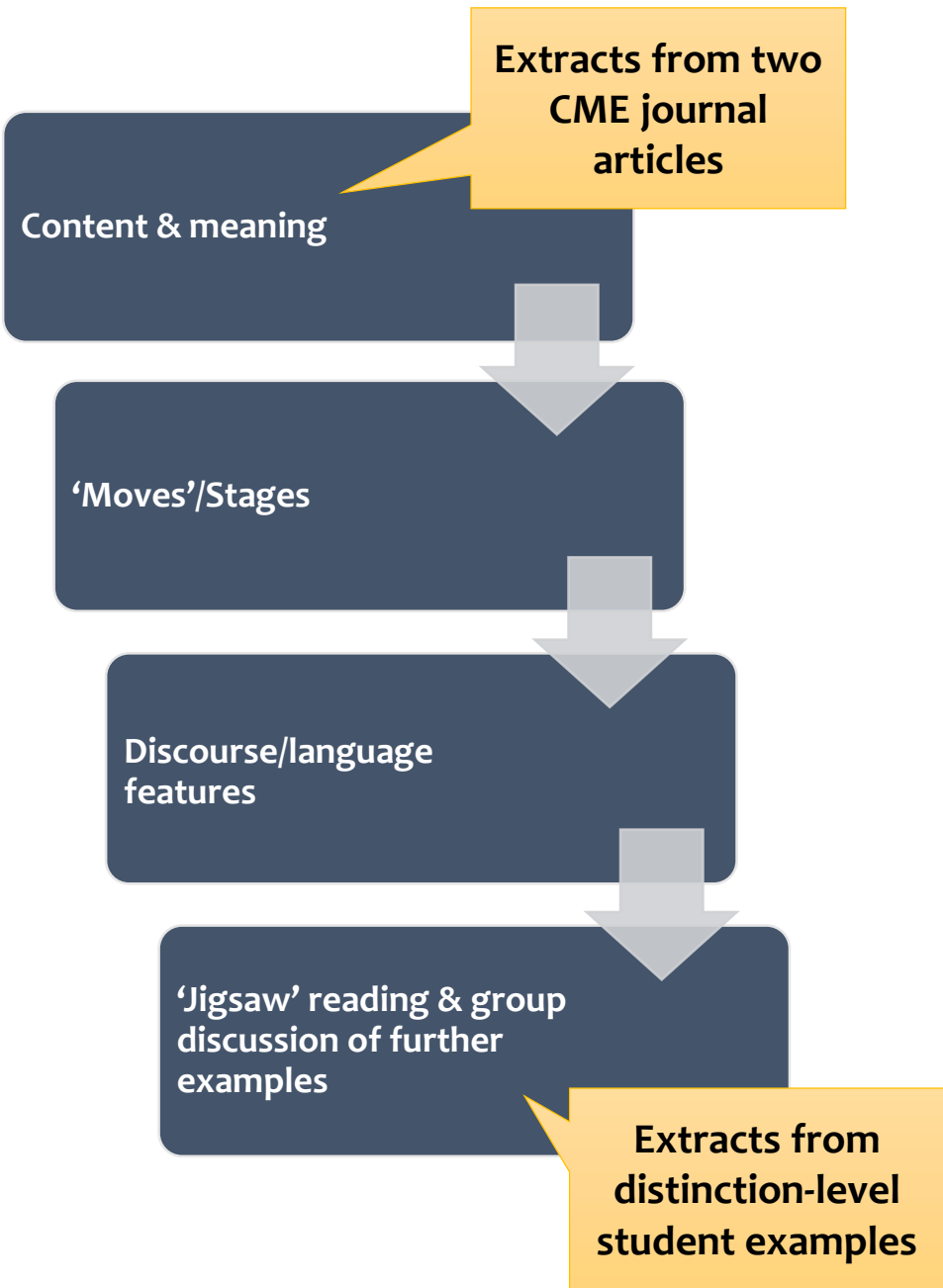
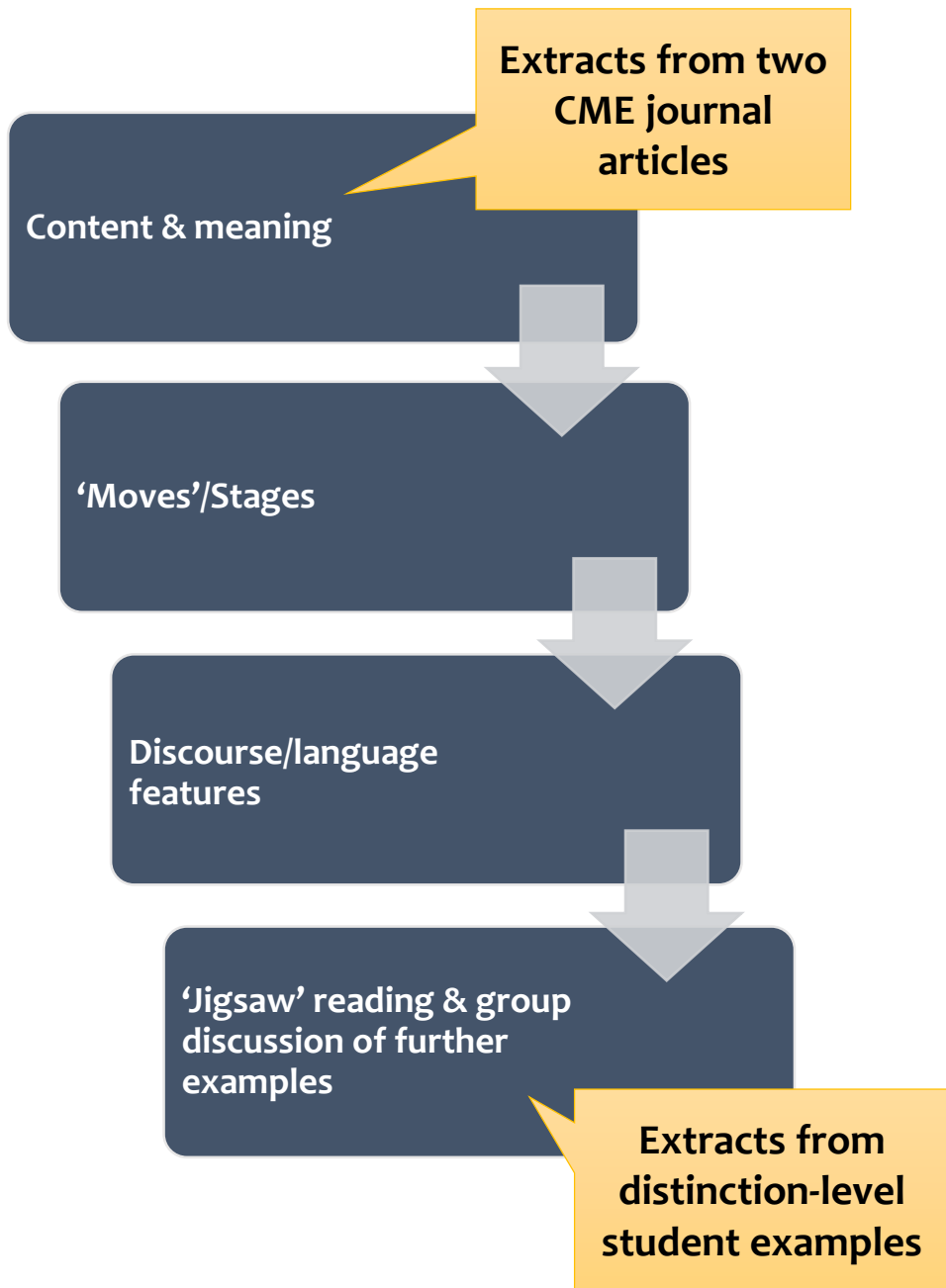


The Pedagogic Potential of the Appraisal Framework in teaching Dissertation Writing

Karin Whiteside

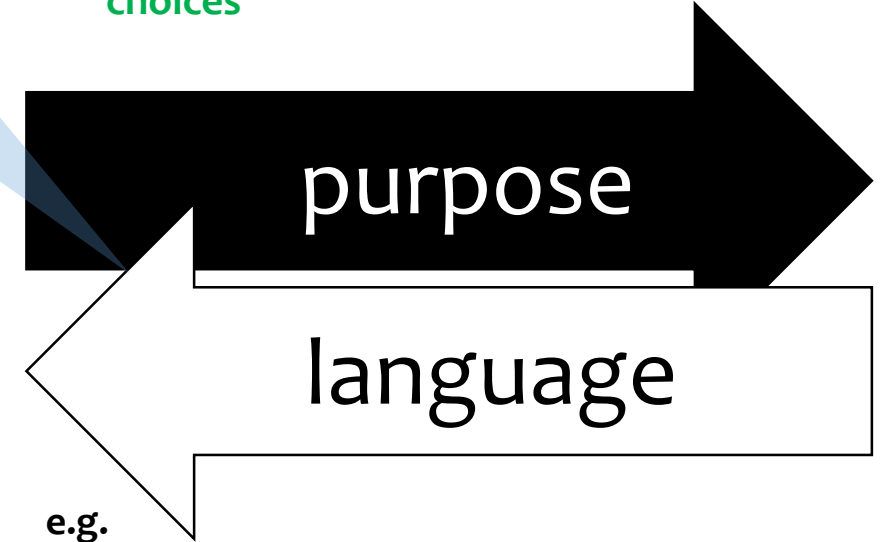




“Discourses are tools – they do things. That is why they have evolved and thus **their functionality determines their character**” (Martin, 1993, p221)

e.g. in the Methods section:

- a **precise, replicable** account of tools, participants, processes & sequences
- **justification of methodological choices**



e.g.

- “A questionnaire **was developed ...**”
- “The survey sample **was composed of** three groups ...”
- “**When ... , During ... , After ... , In the second stage ...**”
- “**In order to** obtain ...”
- “**Since ... It was important to ...**”
- “**Despite the fact that** two projects were added some years later, the ... situation in Sweden was similar during these years.”

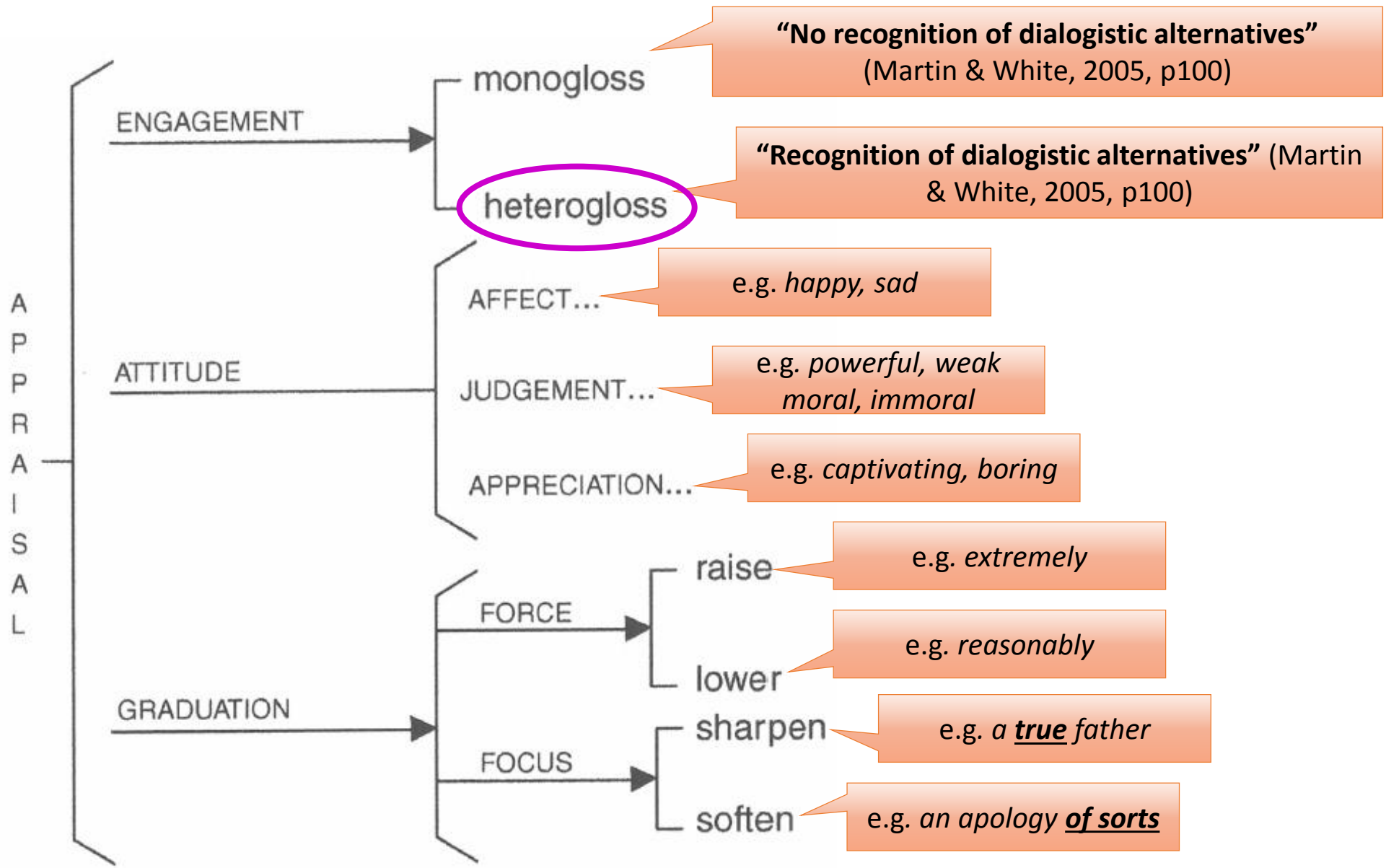


Figure 1.18 An overview of appraisal resources

Martin & White (2005, p38)

heterogloss

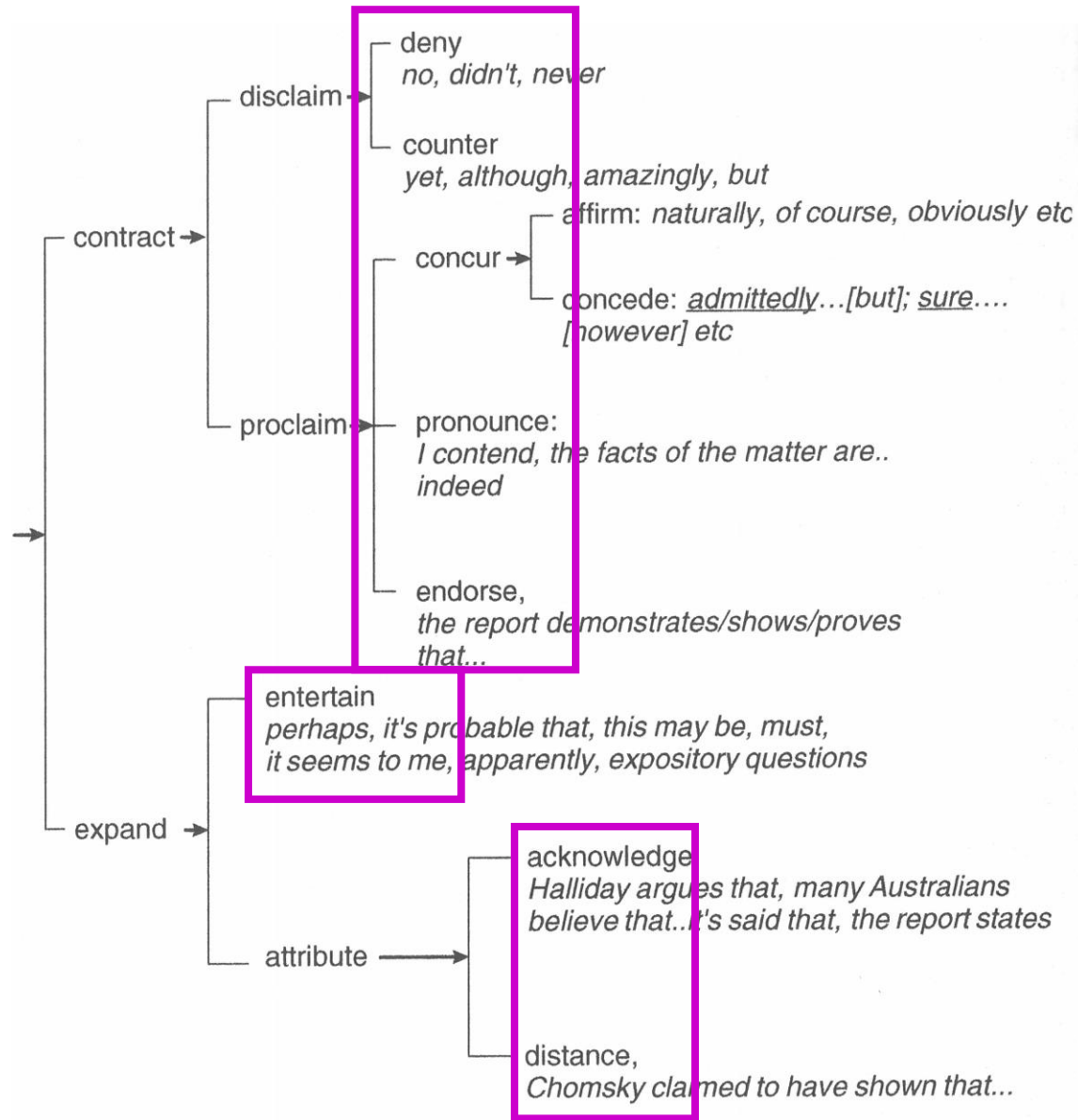


Figure 3.4 The engagement system

Martin & White (2005, p134)

N.B. “It is important to note that, in the genre examined, the identification of a span of text as one of the three options (**Distance**, **Acknowledge**, and **Endorse**) was not as easy and explicit as one can identify in Martin & White’s (2005) examples which seem to function mainly by reference to the reporting verbs.” (Geng, 2015, p120)

How procurement options influence risk management in construction projects

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Before proceeding with a project, a client has to choose an appropriate procurement option that facilitates an effective project organization in general and a thorough risk management process in particular. By identifying three procurement variables that have a major influence on risk management: project delivery method, form of payment, and use of collaboration or partnering arrangements, the effect of each variable is studied. An exploratory study and a series of interviews with clients, contractors and consultants involved in 11 Swedish construction projects, were performed in order to examine how risk management was carried out in each project. Irrespective of the procurement option, many projects suffered from variations in cost affecting one or more actors. Risk management was not carried out systematically throughout project phases. However, in the projects with early involvement of the actors, their participation throughout the project, and opportunities for open dialogue and collaboration, a more thorough risk management process was found. While project delivery methods define formal risk allocation, the use of incentives and collaboration or partnering arrangements help to establish a collaborative approach to risk management.

Keywords: Contract conditions, partnering, payment, procurement, risk management.

The production phase was where most interest and activity related to RM were found.

These results confirm the findings of two surveys (Uher and Toakley, 1999; Lyons and Skitmore, 2004), which show a higher degree of RM in the production phase than in the early phase.

Unfortunately, this can easily prove to be too late to manage some risks, including those design risks that might have been avoided in an earlier phase. The majority of respondents feel that RM should be more important in the early phases for several reasons. First, early risk identification makes the client aware of project risks and

RM activity
highest in
production
phase

Finding
supports
outcomes of
previous
research

The diagram consists of two rectangular boxes on the right side of the page. The top box contains the text 'RM activity highest in production phase'. The bottom box contains the text 'Finding supports outcomes of previous research'. Two lines with arrowheads point from the top box to the text 'These results confirm the findings of two surveys...' and 'which show a higher degree of RM in the production phase...'. Another two lines with arrowheads point from the bottom box to the text 'which show a higher degree of RM in the production phase...' and 'early phase'.

Finding
supports
outcomes of
previous
research

money than in the production phase. Procurement options that allow early involvement of the actors can therefore contribute to more thorough RM.

Most of the respondents see risk as a negative event that can affect the project and cause problems. Only a few people mentioned opportunity as the converse of risk. **This confirms the results of a study by Akintoye and MacLeod (1997), which show negative perception of risk among practitioners.** Furthermore, when describing their work on project risks, the actors often say 'contractor's risk management' and 'client's risk management'. 'Joint risk management' where all actors participate and perform identification, assessment and response together is a weakness in the current practice. This is probably a result of

Generally,
negative
perception of
risk

Finding
supports
outcomes of
previous
research

Competent clients may favour general contracts partly because the cost may be lower and partly because they want to have a higher degree of influence on the project. However, general contracts often result in a sequential construction process where many actors are involved in some project phases and focus on their own part of the work rather than on the whole project. In particular, a general contract without any collaboration arrangement gives no space for discussion about technical solutions between the client's design team and the contractor. Moreover, non-participation of the architect in the production phase brings additional design risks that the contractor must deal with. When a general contract with fixed price form of payment is used, a strong focus on financial aspects prevents actors from seeking collaboration. In the case where neither partnering or collaboration arrangements nor incentive schemes exist, the actors concentrate on formal risk allocation through the contract and shift risks to each other in an attempt to optimize their own profits. In order to strengthen contractors' contributions to technical solutions and RM in early project phases in GC, key contractors can become involved at that early stage. **This study also supports previous research that highlights the benefits of coupling early involvement with partnering arrangements and incentive-based payments (Bayliss et al., 2004; Alderman and Ivory, 2007) in order to further enhance a project environment based on trust and joint commitment on which a thorough RM can rely.**

Problematic RM implications when partnering or collaboration arrangements & incentive schemes not in place

Argument for early involvement of key contractors

Support for others' arguments about benefits of early involvement + partnering + incentives

Change management in practice: an ethnographic study of changes to contract requirements on a hospital project

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Changes to client requirements are inevitable during construction. Industry discourse is concerned with minimizing and controlling changes. However, accounts of practices involved in making changes are rare. In response to calls for more research into working practices, an ethnographic study of a live hospital project was undertaken to explore how changes are made. A vignette of a meeting exploring the investigation of changes illustrates the issues. This represents an example from the ethnographic fieldwork, which produced many observations. There was a strong emphasis on using change management procedures contained within the contract to investigate changes, even when it was known that the change was not required. For the practitioners, this was a way of demonstrating best practice, transparent and accountable decision-making regarding changes. Hence, concerns for following procedures sometimes overshadowed considerations about whether or not a change was required to improve the functionality of the building. However, the procedures acted as boundary objects between the communities of practice involved on the project by coordinating the work of managing changes. Insights suggest how contract procedures facilitate and impede the making of changes, which can inform policy guidance and contract drafting.

Keywords: Best practice, change management, ethnography, practice, project management.

Extract 1

... in the meeting the implications of the change in terms of potentially improving the functionality of the building are not discussed. Instead the focus of the discussions and actions to progress the potential changes is on demonstrating compliance and providing cost estimates. **In the existing change literature and guidance, cost is judged as one of the key factors in decision-making about changes (e.g. Zou and Lee, 2008).** By providing the client-side with the cost implications, the individuals in the contractor team are performing their role in advising the client of 'the implications' of the change. This information can then allow the client-side to reject and 'close out' the potential change and demonstrate that the decision has been informed by the cost implications and the fact that the current design is deemed to be compliant. By reproducing discourses concerned with minimizing and controlling changes, potential changes are being investigated in a way that emphasizes demonstrating best practice and accountability while the content and relevance of the potential change are often overlooked. ...

Focus on cost implications of change at expense of attention to impact of change on functionality

In existing literature cost prioritised

Cost-prioritising discourse from lit. reproduced in real-world scenario

This means the content & relevance of change not given adequate attention

Teacher's note: Negative stance towards Zou & Lee (2008) – we can tell this from the arguments in the first and last sentences of the extract where the authors point out the important things being overlooked in prioritising cost (and from the generally critical stance towards the existing change literature throughout this article).

Extract 2

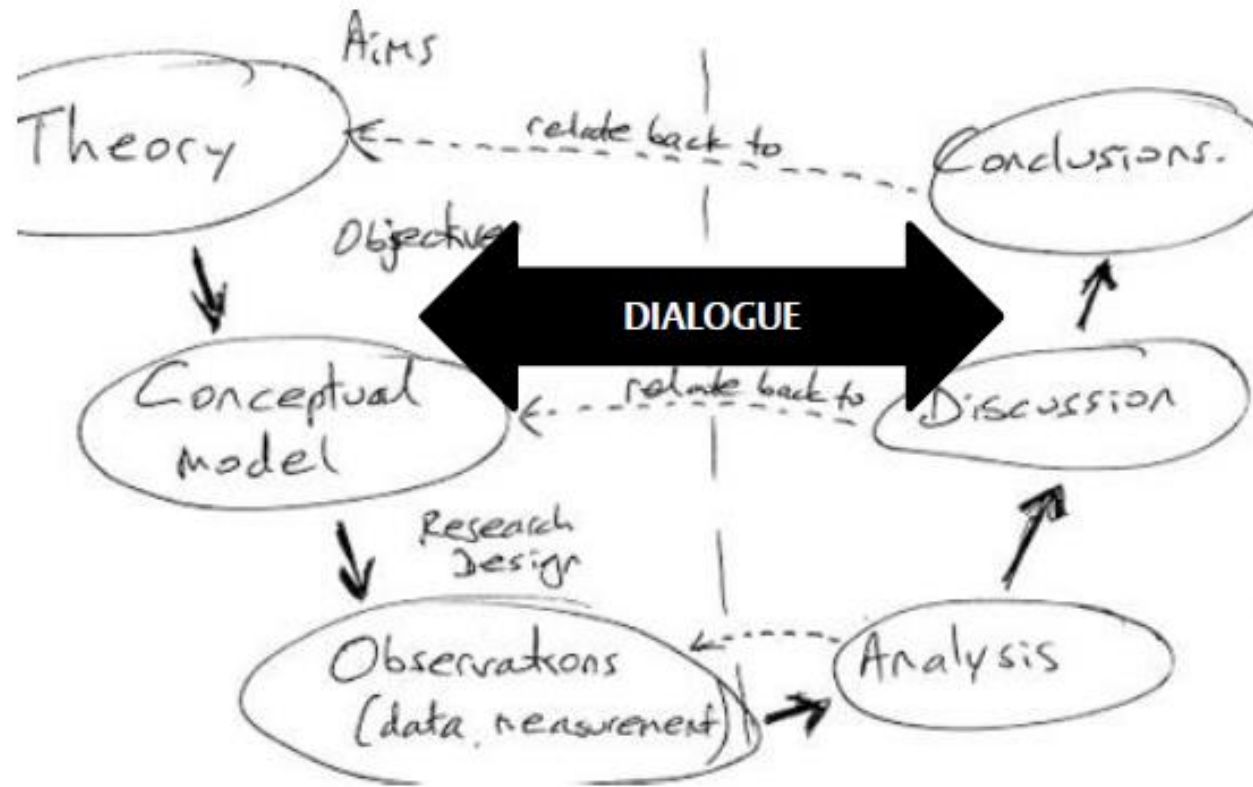
... The reality of projects and project management practice takes place 'within an array of social agenda, practices, stakeholder relations, politics and power' (Winter et al., 2006, p. 642). The existing change literature does not acknowledge the organizational context in which managing changes takes place as arguably no other study has looked close enough to see beneath the veneer of the everyday practices of using the contract procedures to understand the purposes that they sometimes fulfil. ...

Context is important

Existing change literature ignores context

Teacher's note: The authors neutrally report the argument of Winter et al. (2006) but are then negative about the body of change literature as a whole, and their particular criticism, that it 'does not acknowledge the organizational context', shows us they have a positive stance towards Winter et al.'s position.

Your Discussion section as a dialogue ...



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What you are doing in your Discussion can be thought of as joining a conversation: think of past scholarly contributions (research, theorising) as part of an ongoing, live debate about the issue in focus – you are now contributing by discussing your findings in relation to theirs.



These are some of the things you will be doing when you join this academic dialogue:

DISTANCING yourself from someone else's position.

DENYING someone else's position.

COUNTERING someone else's argument with an alternative position.

ACKNOWLEDGING someone else's position (N.B. neutral – neither positive or negative)

CONCURRING: acknowledging a shared position with members of your academic community.

ENDORISING the arguments of others with your own findings.

PRONOUNCING: presenting your own position strongly (i.e. as if there is no alternative possibility).

ENTERTAINING a position (as one possibility of many).

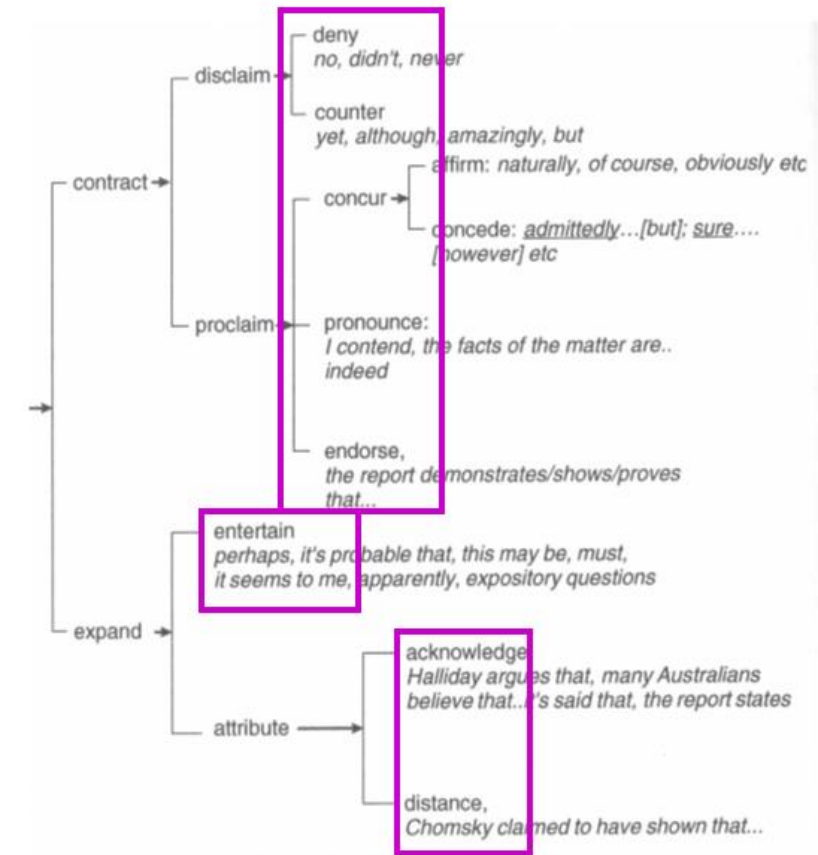


Figure 3.4 The engagement system

Martin & White (2005, p134)

Adapted from Geng (2015)

PRONOUNCE

The production phase was where most interest and activity related to RM were found. **These results confirm the findings of** two surveys (Uher and Toakley, 1999; Lyons and Skitmore, 2004), which show a higher degree of RM in the production phase than in the early phase.

PRONOUNCE

ENDORSE

Most of the respondents see risk as a negative event that can affect the project and cause problems. Only a few people mentioned opportunity as the converse of risk. **This confirms the results of** a study by Akintoye and MacLeod (1997), which show negative perception of risk among practitioners.

ENDORSE

PRONOUNCE

ENTERTAIN

... In the case where neither partnering or collaboration arrangements nor incentive schemes exist, the actors concentrate on formal risk allocation through the contract and shift risks to each other in an attempt to optimize their own profits. In order to strengthen contractors' contributions to technical solutions and RM in early project phases in GC, key contractors can become involved at that early stage. **This study also supports previous research that** highlights the benefits of coupling early involvement with partnering arrangements and incentive-based payments (Bayliss et al., 2004; Alderman and Ivory, 2007) in order to further enhance a project environment based on trust and joint commitment on which a thorough RM can rely.

ENDORSE

PRONOUNCE

‘Joint risk management’ where all actors participate and perform identification, assessment and response together is a weakness in the current practice. This is probably a result of traditional procurement options that distinctly separate responsibilities and risks in time and space. When working jointly with RM based on early involvement, incentives and partnering arrangements it will probably become more natural to search for positive opportunities and not to focus on avoiding negative consequences.

ENTERTAIN

ENTERTAIN

... in the meeting the implications of the change in terms of potentially improving the functionality of the building **are not** discussed. Instead the focus of the discussions and actions to progress the potential changes **is** on demonstrating compliance and providing cost estimates. **In the existing change literature and guidance, cost is judged as one of the key factors in decision-making about changes (e.g. Zou and Lee, 2008).** By providing the client-side with the cost implications, the individuals in the contractor team **are performing** their role in advising the client of ‘the implications’ of the change. This information can then allow the client-side to reject and ‘close out’ the potential change and demonstrate that the decision has been informed by the cost implications and the fact that the current design is deemed to be compliant. **By reproducing discourses concerned with minimizing and controlling changes, potential changes are being investigated in a way that emphasizes demonstrating best practice and accountability while the content and relevance of the potential change are often overlooked.**

PRONOUNCE

PRONOUNCE

DISTANCE

PRONOUNCE

DISTANCE

COUNTER

CONCUR

DENY (??)

... The **reality** of projects and project management practice takes place ‘within an array of social agenda, practices, stakeholder relations, politics and power’ (Winter et al., 2006, p. 642). The existing change literature **does not acknowledge** the organizational context in which managing changes takes place as **arguably** no other study has looked close enough to see beneath the veneer of the everyday practices of using the contract procedures to understand the purposes that they sometimes fulfil. ...

ENTERTAIN

1. Have the dissertation writing workshops helped you? If so, how? If not, why?

Yes it was, I was able to know the structure of the dissertation very clearly.

2. What has been most useful or most enjoyable?



discussion, research methodology.

3. Has anything not been useful?

Do you have any suggestions regarding how to improve the course for future delivery of it?

No. It was all useful.
Thank you very much for that.

Pedagogic potential of Engagement resources? (notes, thoughts)

- A very useful framework for decisions about lesson content & design
- A powerful and well-developed model for much of what happens in the Discussion section (*and* Introduction, Lit Review, Conclusion)
- but, in this experiment ...
 - a bit too 'adjunct' – introduced in Lesson 4 out of 5, just re: Discussion section
 - too many Appraisal options introduced all at once for students to fully digest
- Might be better to
 - introduce Appraisal options in an 'easy' form at the beginning of a dissertation-writing course
 - have a smaller cluster of Appraisal options as foci in any given lesson
- The metaphors of the framework (i.e. dialogue & expanding/contracting space for alternate viewpoints) could be usefully deployed across a research writing course
- Questions to explore re: how explicit or implicit to make the teaching of the various Appraisal options

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