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Contributions to the study of oral narrative frequently disregard or ignore German scholarship on the subject. This is particularly unfortunate, since results obtained from the analysis of German conversational narratives should be compared with those derived from English stories, and the models constructed on the basis of these two 'schools' should be made compatible with one another. The closeness of the English and German languages in particular should have alerted discourse analysts to the German explanation and models. As usual, language seems to have been a major barrier and in the absence of translations of German academic articles this is perhaps no wonder. The only English collection of German scholarship on the problem I know of is the special issue of *Poetics*, vol. 15 (1986), and German stories are there either rendered in (untranslated) German or only in English translation – an editorial misjudgment of the highest order. The stories quoted in German remain incomprehensible to the non-German speaker, and the translated stories (such as those in the Wodak paper) fail to provide syntactic or morphological (tense) information, rendering them entirely useless to an informed comparison.

I will therefore in the following discuss two models that seem to me to be highly relevant to current discourse analysis of conversational storytelling. The first was proposed by Uta M. Quasthoff in her 1980 book *Erzählen in Gesprächen*. Since this model is simpler and since its underlying macrostructure for conversational narrative partly overlaps with Harweg's, I will deal with it first. The second model was presented in 1975 by Roland Harweg, one of the leading German linguists, whose 1968 book *Pronomina und Textkonstitution* became highly influential with narrative theorists (Stanzel 1979/1984). To my knowledge, Harweg's 1975 model has not excited much debate even in German speaking scholarship. Harweg,

unfortunately, seems to have made up the stories he analyzes in the paper (judging from the hypothetical tone of some of his remarks), and I am not aware what kind of regional German standard (besides Harweg's own) they are supposed to reflect. There are very striking lexical and stylistic differences with Quasthoff's example narratives, which are parts of taped interviews of advice sessions conducted in a social service office in Northern Germany. Harweg's standard must be either Central or Southern German.

This paper is an abstract theoretical exercise in narrative dynamics, and it does not attempt close analyses or statistical evaluations of a corpus of oral narratives. My aim, on the contrary, is to alert scholars who have access to such data collections to some structural and narratological factors that future analyses may want to take into account.

Quasthoff presents a model for narrative that presupposes the 'schema of incidence' (*Inzidenzschema*) proposed by Pollak (and generally acknowledged) for the French correlation between the *imparfait* and the *passé simple*. This schema, well known likewise in English, can be exemplified by the type of situation in which an ongoing state or activity is interrupted or crossed by an event that occurs from the outside and affects the ongoing situation (hence the *incidère*). For example: 'As I was comfortable sitting in my chair, smoking a pipe and leafing through the recent issue of Dickens' *Little Dorrit*, there was a sharp knock on the door, followed by a heated debate and wrangle between my butler and the intruder. I got up and opened the door to find ...' The schema, well known to grammarians and literary scholars over the ages, is of course the classic case of the beginning of a tale or an episode of it, with the suddenly occurring events *breaking into* (*incidère*) a state or situation. Not only is this the classic case narratologically, it is also the classic case in terms of tense usage and foregrounding. In French, where this distinction is drawn morphologically, background is rendered in the imperfective aspect (the *imparfait*) – in English, in accordance with *Aktionsarten*, there may be a continuous form of the verb – and the foreground is taken up by the perfective *passé simple* (the narrative aorist). In novelistic discourse this results in a pattern in which the plot line, as is well known, becomes

foregrounded over the initial situation and various background states.

All this is commonplace for literary narrative. However, when analyzing conversational stories, Quasthoff infers some interesting deep-structural properties of oral storytelling that provide a new angle on narrative in general. Quasthoff distinguishes three structural storytelling modes. In the first, the *Inzidenzschema* occurs in its most elementary form: the storyteller recounts how he was following what Quasthoff calls a 'plan of action' and how this plan was interrupted by events from outside, or an occurrence that made it impossible to continue as envisaged. In the second type of story, the teller is not involved in the plot but merely *observes* events. Here, too, a state of affairs is broken into by events or "incidences" that are unexpected to the observer. The third type according to Quasthoff, however, cannot any longer be described as modelled on the *Inzidenzschema*. In this type of story the speaker recounts how his or her actions contravened somebody's expectations. There is again a structural *contrast*, but there is no broken plan of action, nor is the speaker's perception broken into by outside events. The contrast is, on the contrary, provided by the expectations of somebody either in the story or outside the story (the interlocutor).

I will now rephrase this to say that in type 1 the teller of the story is the actant, whose 'script' is interrupted by outside influences and requires a change of plan. The tellability or reportability of the story lies in the unexpected frustration of one's plans. (Quasthoff's concept of 'plan' derives from the 'frame' and 'script' approach initiated by Minsky (1975) and Schank/Abelson (1977) respectively.) In Type 2 the experiencing 'I' (to use the narratological term) *observes* unexpected incidences. The 'frame' which is interrupted in this case is not identical to the speaker's past action plan, but equivalent to his placid perception of his surroundings or other people's action plans. In type 3, finally, the 'frame' is a much vaguer concept and would coincide with something like the (re)constructed expectations of the perceiving consciousness within the current situation, which are then disappointed by the speaker's actions.

The most striking consequence of my redefinition of Quasthoff's types is their centering on a conscious perceiver in default of an agent. Or, to extend the implications, Quasthoff's story modes

portray the macrostructure of narrative to be based on a schema in which a human frame of consciousness (the agent or the perceiver's) is intruded upon by events that force a change on that frame. Since an agent involved in performing an action according to frame has by definition a consciousness framed by expectations related to the action in progress, type 1 narratives also have a basis in human perception and expectation. The basic condition for Quasthoff's three modes of narrative is therefore reducible to the unexpected incidence of an outside event on a frame of expectation by a (human) consciousness (of an agent or perceiver). Storytelling reports tellable events, and these events are reportable because they replicate our everyday experience, an experience which is structurally reducible to the confrontation with the unexpected, the materializing of an event on a placid background canvas of non-action or certain goal-oriented processes (whether initiated and performed by the protagonist who relates them, or by people the storyteller observed). The *perception of incidence*, which is the structural constant in all three of Quasthoff's modes, can therefore be transferred emphatically from the agent-teller to the observed agent and to any observer of the teller's (or others') agency.

Quasthoff's stories are all stories of personal experience. This is unfortunate because it does not easily allow one to draw inferences about narrative in general, a great percentage of which are narratives of vicarious experience. Quasthoff's examples are suspect for another reason, too. They frequently concentrate on very brief kernel narratives, which naturally highlight the incidence schema. From English conversational narratives it would appear that stories frequently serve to illustrate a person's character, or to explain a situation which seemed mysterious. The story is then about the acquisition of knowledge (understanding), and the 'point' may well be illustrated even in the description of a funny, odd or otherwise reportable 'scene.' It is possible to align such cases with Quasthoff's type 3 narratives, and one would then have to concede that plot is not a necessary trigger of reportability since the tellability of such stories seems to rest in the conjunction of incompatible elements, and this incompatibility is a factor not of the plot but of the interpreting consciousness, that of the teller-observer or of the intra-diegetically projected narratee. In spite of this alignment not all

stories seem to be reducible to a schema of incidence or expectation by a consciousness either. Take, for instance, Wolfson's story of the man told to research into bras who goes to a department store and is nearly arrested for his behaviour there (Wolfson 1982: 94). Now, from the perspective of Quasthoff's types, one would expect the story to center on the arrest: 'As he was standing there scrutinizing one bra after other, a policeman appeared out of nowhere and asked him to come away without creating a disturbance'. However, this is not what happens in the actual story, a story of vicarious narrative, it should be noted. As told, the story centers on the incongruous scene of a man standing at the bra counter and going over different sizes. This 'climax' is underlined by the use of direct speech to heighten the oddity of the events. The near-arrest is then tagged on to the scene as a kind of afterthought, the *result* of the 'point': '(he was so odd that) he was nearly arrested', implying that people who watched interpreted the behaviour as a sign of mental or sexual disturbance rather than as professional interest or as the academic research activity that it was. The story therefore concerns the supreme oddity of the incident (and the incident is that of the 'scene,' not of the near-arrest), and it is proffered as an illustration of the odd research projects a particular professor of sociology hands out to his students. Although there is a 'plot' in this tale, the structural significance does not lie in any action or event by itself but in the perception and interpretation of the scene. Quasthoff is therefore correct to outline type 3 in terms other than the schema of incidence, and her 'expectation' frame points up an excitingly new vantage point on the core of narrative experience.

By shifting the emphasis from the plot to an intuiting consciousness, tellability in stories of all three types – and I will class the bra analysis story with type 3 even though it is different from Quasthoff's example story – rests on the *effect on* the perceiving consciousness. This effect is mediatable to another consciousness (that of the listener) and therefore guarantees an interest in the story. Such an approach moreover allows one to integrate the anecdote and the joke with narrative forms, since the 'point' of these narratives typically consists in a witty exchange of words. The wit of an anecdote lies precisely in the perception of the unexpected turn of the phrase, a turn that is unexpected for the interpreter (listener,

reader) of this tale but whose wittiness may be entirely lost on the actual interlocutor.

Harweg's article presents an analysis of conversational narrative that is incomparably more complex than Quasthoff's on both the levels of narrative elements (of which he distinguishes six basic categories plus cognitive and perceptual variants of these) and of the different kinds of narrative he includes (personal experience, vicarious experience, narratives of remembered experience). Harweg's article therefore covers much more ground and, to a certain extent, allows us to integrate Quasthoff's findings within its frame. Doubts about the precise nature of Harweg's model derive not only from his use of invented example stories and their unspecified regional standard; strategies of presentation and the opacity of his style frequently interfere with a lucid exposition of his categories. (This is true also of his book *Pronomina and Textkonstitution* which, because of its opacity, seems to be one of the most frequently quoted and least often read, or understood, texts of expository linguistic prose in German.) If I have misinterpreted Harweg's categories, I therefore beg the reader's (and the author's) indulgence. Since most of the definitions provided in the article are nearly incomprehensible on account of the terminology employed, which is ill-defined or not defined at all, I have had to infer from the example texts and their discussion what these categories might perhaps refer to. There are some missing links in my picture, and I will note these question marks when I come to them. Nevertheless I trust that the example stories have allowed me to pick out the major outline of the argument and the basic concepts behind the most important of Harweg's categories.

Harweg (1975) starts with a threefold distinction between 'narrator-oriented' (*erzählertheoretische*), 'narratological' (*erzähltheoretische*), and 'factual' (*sachverhaltstheoretische*) dimensions of the narrative text (138). The narrator-oriented dimension distinguishes between two categories of narratives – those of personal experience, which subcategorize into narratives by (a) an *erlebender Erzähler* (experiencing narrator); and (b) an *Erinnerungserzähler* (memory narrator); and those of vicarious experience (narrated by a *Hörensagenerzähler*). Narratives of personal experience can either

narrate recent events (subcategory (a)) or those long in the past which are resurrected from memory (subcategory (b)). In German – according to Harweg's example texts – there is a surprising consistency of temporal distinctions between texts of these two subcategories, whence the necessity of their differentiation.

The second dimension, the narratological one, rests on deictic properties of the narrative text. Harweg distinguishes between foreground and background deictics. The first category includes temporal terms such as *yesterday*, *recently*, *just (now)*, or *three years ago* (p. 138).¹ These deictics quite definitely take as their departure point the speaker's current deictic center in the speech act of narration. Background deictics, contrary to (at least my) expectations, are not the backshifted equivalents of foreground deictics (*the day before*, *a few weeks previously* etc.), but *indefinite* temporal terms which also deictically relate to the narrator's temporal coordinates. Background deictics, for instance, include *years ago*, *in the twenties*, *in my youth*, *in the course of history*.

Such background deictics create a frame which is then narrowed down to a precise point at the beginning of the 'real story'. This narrowing down is handled by the use of what Harweg calls *adeictic* expressions such as *one day*, *one time*. Needless to say, the background deictic/adeictic formula is the typical storytelling schema:

Once upon a time when men still lived in caves and fed on berries gathered in the woods, there lived a family of four in a big cavity in the northeastern part of the Grimming mountain in the Eastern Alps.
... *One day* in early June when the sun had been out for only a brief hour or so, Niogert went into the woods to check on his traps. ...

As we can see from this made-up Märchen, the temporal frame is narrowed down progressively from a long-span period to that of the protagonists' lifespan and then further to the specific day and hour on which action starts. There may be a comparable narrowing for the geographic area from the earth or a continent (in Africa, in the lower hemisphere) to a specific country and then area within it, to a valley and then a specific town and house. Such panoramic views slowly approaching the specific setting of the story are well-known from Sir Walter Scott to Honoré de Balzac. It should be noted here that, in a *historical* frame, *one day* can be replaced by a specific

date. Harweg does not discuss the question whether in personal narratives of memory such precise temporal specifications are allowed or not. It is unusual for people to remember dates precisely, but with expressions such as *On Christmas Eve, on the first of April*, where the date has a special semantic significance, definite temporal reference may be made. If I understand the term *adeictic* correctly as referring to a temporal expression that does not depend for its interpretation on the construction of a speaker's *hic et nunc* (rather than being *indefinite* and *specific* only, as Harweg's presentation implies), then dates can be said to have precisely the same narrative function as the nonspecific 'one day'.

Harweg's third dimension is the factual one, which touches on the cognitive and perceptual reflection of story events through actants' minds. Harweg here discovers that when story events are said to be *perceived by* or *cognized by* story participants (rather than presented as 'facts' by the *narrator*) tense shifts can be observed. Thus, in a narrative of vicarious experience, the preterite is used for the rendering of story participants' past cognitions (he knew [perfect] that the cinema always *closed* [preterite] at eleven.), whereas past perceptions of story participants can be rendered by either a preterite or a perfect (He saw [perfect] how Susie went [perfect/preterite] to the ticket counter). (Compare Harweg 1975: 179.) In narratives of (remembered and recent) personal experience, however, *only* the preterite is applicable in all these cases. I would like to note here that I am not particularly convinced by Harweg's examples, or explanations. It seems to me that the preterite in his 'cognitive reflection' category is reducible to simple subordinate clause coterminality with the preceding narrative clause verb. In the following exchange the preterite corresponds precisely to the English 'shifted' past as in 'I knew he *was* in town,' whereas a perfect tense would imply that Johann no longer was there when B came to town.

- A: Hast du gewusst, dasz Johann in der Stadt war?
 B: a. Ja, ich habe gewusst, dasz Johann in der Stadt war.
 [preterite]
 b. *Ja, ich habe gewusst, dasz Johann in der Stadt gewesen ist.
 [perfect]
 c. Ich habe gewusst, dasz Johann in der Stadt gewesen ist,
 (aber dasz er noch da war habe ich nicht gewusst).

In (c) the *that* clause complement signals *anteriority* (since the pluperfect is not used in the spoken language – compare the perfect in *ich habe gewusst*.²

In the examples of perceptual reflecting, I find that the choice between preterite and perfect implies a difference in *meaning*.

Und dann hat er gesehen, wie Gertie zum Kartenschalter

a. gegangen ist (perfect)

b. ging (preterite)

And then he saw how Gertie went to the ticket booth.

Ging, the preterite, concentrates on the protagonist's perception. Gertie's actions are 'backgrounded' in relation to plot. It is important that the 'he' *saw* her do them, but not that she *did* them. Such a sentence would more frequently give rise to a description of Gertie's gait, the speaker's emotions with regard to her. Using the perfect, however, Gertie's actions become important for the story line, and the protagonist's perception constitutes one punctual event in the series. The backgrounding function of the preterite in both types of construction is, however, noteworthy and I will come back to it later.

I have held back from the main contribution of Harweg in his (1975) article, which concerns the distribution of tenses in the framework of narrative 'elements.' Harweg, who does not seem to be aware of Labov/Waletzky's (1967) analysis of natural storytelling, comes up with a narrative schema that endorses Labov's categories but also decisively supplements them. Harweg presents his analysis as part of the subdivisions of the *un-reflected* presentation of story events (the reflected presentation, whether cognitively or perceptually, basically covers the same categories in reflected form). He proposes the following categories:

1. résumé (*resümierende Sachverhalte*)
2. abstract structuring (*abstrakte Gliederung*)
3. concrete structuring (*konkrete Gliederung*)

Résumés are parts of the story that summarize the main outline of the story. Judging from Harweg's examples, this includes Labov's *abstract* as well as the *final evaluation* (compare "Wenn ich so

zurückdenke, die Sache hat mir damals groszen Spasz gemacht" (168) – 'When I think back on it, now, the whole thing was great fun'). Although Harweg's examples for the résumé are all in the perfect tense (for *all* kinds of narrator categories) and are in the past tense for all English examples, it has to be noted that his one evaluative example can be reinterpreted as an overall result (in the past) and not as present-day evaluation. Other evaluative final statements that I can think of are all in the preterite: *Das war richtig schön* ('That was really nice'), *Das war mein schlimmster Streich* ('That was my worst prank'). I will come back to this when I present my own version below.

After the initial résumé Harweg posits the category of 'abstract structure' ("abstrakte Gliederung"). This takes care of utterances such as *Das war so* ('This is how it happened'). My feeling is that this category is less typical of natural narrative in English (where I do not remember a single example), and I also intuit this as a 'German German' narrative strategy since it does not at all ring familiar to my Austrian ears.

Harweg's third category then addresses the concrete structure of the story and proposes two major levels of the narrative which are again subdivided into two. Whereas discourse analysis in the United States (and the models of Gülich and Quasthoff [1986]) depart from a two-level frame, in which the main criterion is the plot line, resulting in plot-line and off-plot line strata – a division endorsed by intonational and pitch/volume distribution (compare my own forthcoming contributions) – Harweg's two levels *cut across* this familiar division. He divides the concrete structure into endogenic and exogenic facts (*Sachverhalte*) of the narrative, and subdivides both according to plot foreground and situational background. In his words, facts can be *progre dient* (propelling the plot forward) or *situativ* ('situational') on both the endogenic and the exogenic levels.

The endogenic/exogenic distinction is closely aligned to Quasthoff's schema of incidence and, I will argue, allows for theoretical conclusions of far-reaching significance. Harweg defines endogenic story facts as belonging to the sphere of the experiencing self of a personal narrator, whereas exogenic facts are those that belong to the sphere surrounding ("umgebenden") the experiencing self and

reach into or break into the personal narrator's enclosed space of past experience. (141-142)³

Whereas endogenic situative story parts are part of the experiencing person's situatedness, exogenic progredient events break into this sphere, break into the *consciousness* of the experiencing story individual. This type of event is characterized by 'suddenness' ("Den zuletzt genannten Sachverhaltstyp kennzeichnet in der Regel das Merkmal der Plötzlichkeit" p. 143). Endogenic progredient events and situations, on the other hand, although they surround the sphere of the past experiencer, are not experienced (or not described as experienced) as 'breaking into' this sphere, and in fact comprise actions by the experiencer. Exogenic situative story parts provide the surrounding background for the events. Endogenic and exogenic story parts follow one another, and there is a clear pattern of 'endogenic situational followed by exogenic progredient' the pattern which I have termed "background situation – 'turn' of the plot – result" (Fludernik 1991).

We were standing [endogenic situational] in front of the window display and looking at the jewels, when somebody suddenly put [exogenic progredient] his hands over my eyes from behind. I turned around [endogenic progredient] and saw Uncle George.

There is no need to point out that this is an instance of the famous schema of incidence (Pollak, Quasthoff). Examples of the exogenic situational category are:

- (a) When the film was over and we came out of the cinema [endogenic situational], it was already getting dark [exogenic situational]. (cp. Harweg 147)
- (b) Uncle Paul kindly took us to the tram [exogenic progredient]. He had a business contact waiting for him somewhere and wanted to get to his hotel and get a bite to eat before the meeting [exogenic situational]. (p. 148)
- (c) And then Uncle Paul asked us out for ice cream [exogenic progredient]. Of course we accepted immediately [exogenic progredient]. It was very hot, as you know, and the film did not start for another half hour [exogenic situational]. (ibid., 147)
- (d) When I arrived at home [endogenic situational], my sister alone was at home [exogenic situational]. (142)

I find this category ill-conceived and lacking unity [I will argue the same for the endogenic progredient category below]. Whereas in the (a) and (d) sentences the situational element is something the agent perceives, something that enters into his sphere, in examples (b) and (c) the category describes truly backgrounded material off the plotline, which *cannot* be said to intrude itself on the experiencer's consciousness, but functions as the teller's explanatory aside. I am also bothered by the 'active' endogenic situational in a subsidiary clause in (a) and (d). The schema of incidence would prescribe an ongoing state or activity for the endogenic situational, which is then interrupted by the exogenic progredient. The endogenic situational is therefore, by definition, durative or imperfective. In examples (a) and (d), however, the actions in the subsidiary clause are perfective, in fact it is the experiencer-agent who intrudes upon a stationary situation or activity, even though he then experiences this situation/activity as a perception. My reaction to this is to say that the so-called endogenic situative elements in (a) and (d) are *backgrounded* progredients (endogenic), backgrounded syntactically and hence obeying temporal sequence in subordinate clauses. These can be *foregrounded* simply by substituting the perfect for the preterite:

Und als wir nach Hause gekommen sind, haben wir nur meine Schwester vorgefunden.
And when we got home, we found that only my sister was there.

The preterite therefore seems to be a backgrounding tense as well as an indicator of perception.

Harweg presents three example stories. The first of these is the immediate personal narrative on how the speaker and her brother met Uncle Paul the previous day, and it is therefore a foreground-deictical narrative. In this category the endogenic situational is rendered in the preterite, and so is the exogenic progredient; the endogenic progredient (reaction to the exogenic influence) comes in the perfect. Backgrounded exogenic situationals use the preterite. The pattern is differentiated most clearly in this category. All other types make fewer temporal distinctions. Thus, narratives of vicarious experience, whether foreground or background deictic, replace *all* these categories by the perfect (see table 1), and narratives of

remembered personal experience (background deictic) replace all but the frame category (résumé) with the preterite tense.

The result of this investigation is truly stunning. *Only* personal narrative uses the preterite for the main story parts, and more recent events require a perfect tense for the endogenic progredient. I am not clear on Harweg's tables 1 and 2 on pp. 144-145, which stipulate the existence of a foreground deictic narrative of personal memory as well as making a distinction between background deictic narratives of personal experience and of (personal) memory. Where else except in memory would a narrator of past experience locate the story? Indeed, the 'memory' category seems to connote something else entirely, namely the refusal to *narrate* (witness the empty spots on Harweg's tables 1 and 2). The incidents of a story can be *discussed* between speech participants and there is no real narrator, only the main events are mentioned in answer to promptings by the interlocutor. I take it that the dialogue presented by Harweg (pp. 171-172) represents such a memory 'narrative', although he calls it "Wechselgespräch". It is noteworthy that in this example the preterite is used for the exogenic and endogenic situations, but that the exogenic progredient (as well as the endogenic progredient) are related in the perfect. The situational preterite would thus appear to be a first signal of true narrative, and with increasing involvement in the personal experience the exogenic progredient would also shift into the preterite, until – in stories of experiences long past – the preterite then takes over entirely. It is obvious that the scale between only haphazard narrative over full narrative of recent events to full narrative of past experience reflects a gradual increase of personal involvement in the narration to the exclusion of liabilities towards the current conversation in progress. Situational background seems to be affected first since it is the setting on which the tellable events are going to occur, and this grammatical backgrounding may be connected with the obvious durative or imperfective aspect of verbs occurring in descriptions of this kind. The situational preterite of narration also seems to be the most resistant to the Southern German loss of the preterite, where *war(en)* forms have survived in spite of a general tendency to replace the preterite by perfects.⁴

Harweg's findings indeed require a reanalysis of the Southern German situation, since it is now necessary to distinguish very

carefully between the evidence of his three major types (vicarious narrative, personal narrative in the fore/background deictic modes). Evidence about the loss of preterites can only be adduced from narratives of personal experience, and I expect that some of the pronouncements on the lack even of *war(en)* derive from the source of vicarious narratives. Lindgren's deserving (1957) study of the Southern German loss of the preterite throws some interesting light on the question by suggesting that the lost preterite has for the most part been replaced, not by the perfect, but by the present tense – a result that should not be entirely surprising. The main impression of an overwhelming number of perfects in the Southern German texts Lindgren analyzes derives from the kind of examples used, which are on the whole mainly *literary* narratives (obviously so, since no tape recordings or shorthand notations are available). This fact leads me to another – obvious – point, namely that Harweg's narrative types for oral narrative can be supplemented with *literary* vicarious narrative, which uses the preterite throughout *in the same manner* as personal narrative of past experience.

In literary narrative, that is, even the narrator of vicarious experience has no responsibility towards the present world and can jump into the past experience just as Harweg's personal narrator of past adventure. The pattern is entirely the same, since the authorial narrator can frame the story with a comment on the present moment:

Vor einigen Jahren hat sich im Distrikt Götheburg ein Ereignis zugetragen, von dem die Bewohner dieser Gegend heute noch schauernd berichten. Man schrieb das Jahr 1836. Die Felder standen hoch mit erntereifem Weizen ...

A few years ago an event occurred [perfect] in the district of Götheburg, of which inhabitants of the region still speak [present] with awe. The year was [preterite] 1836. The wheat fields stood [preterite] high with ready harvest ...

The pattern corresponds to the French narrative tense pattern. One would have *s'est produit* (passé composé), *était l'année 1836* (imparfait), *étaient prêts pour la récolte* (imparfait). Literary narrative can thus be said to generalize the use of the preterite from its oral origin in narratives of personal experience. Alternatively one could surmise that the influence worked the other way round, with the preterite moving into oral language from the literary examples. First

person narrative of past experience, after all, is the only real-life situation in which an 'oral' narrator can allow him/herself immersion in the past experience, which comes close to the historical and fictional mode. Since our only evidence for the early periods of all languages is purely literary, there is no way to test the question. As regards the famous Southern German loss of the preterite, it now makes good sense to hypothesize that the oral pattern of accounts of past actions (the Harweg type of dialogue narrative) and, more importantly, the pattern of the oral narrative of immediate experience took over in southern German texts. This is a convincing solution because the texts Lindgren quotes are either translations aimed at popularizing the classics (see her translation of the *Iliad* – it is really a kind of *Lamb's Tales of Shakespeare* recreation of Homer in prose – by the Austrian Johannes Rexius (1584), pp. 82-83), or they are fables and other popular tales, which again address a popular audience.

I have just noted that the preterite is frequently replaced by the present tense in these sixteenth century German texts, and I will now turn to the interesting inferences that one may draw from Harweg's and Quasthoff's research. It appears from Quasthoff's example texts that the (historical) present tense occurs in two positions, primarily in the position of the exogenic progredient, i.e. the action (unexpectedly) rupturing the setting or plan or expectations of the narrative consciousness, and, secondarily, in the situational component before the incipient exogenic progredient, highlighting, as Quasthoff (1980: 228) says, in advance the area where the unexpected is going to occur, which is as much as to say in the endogenic situational segment. However, *all* of Quasthoff's examples have a perfect in the endogenic progredient, the resultative, conforming to the pattern of recent personal experience that Harweg outlines.

The present tense replaces the preterite first of all in the exogenic progredient position, since, we all know, the historical present substitutes for punctual actions. Secondly, a descriptive present tense can occur to highlight the onset of tellable action, and this affects the endogenic situational slot. The prevalence of such a substitution is restricted to situational background activity imme-

diately prior to the onset of the plot, if you will, but it does *not* include general background description.

A third step is to extend the use of the present tense to include the whole narrative, but this is quite equivalent to a narrative completely in the preterite and may be regarded as the result of an analogy. Since the preterite in the endogenic-situational/exogenic progredient conjunction has been replaced by a present tense, all further presents analogously replace preterites in the storytelling mode where preterites predominate. Present tense narration can therefore be interpreted as an extension of present tense substitution in accordance with a pattern of preterite usage that does not correspond to the original source of the substitutive pattern.

Harweg's typology allows us to pinpoint the precise functional slot in which the historical present tense can occur, and – in correlation with Quasthoff's schema of incidence – it can be observed that the present tense substitutes for the action falling in on ongoing activity, and that it can also be extended to cover its immediate background setting. However, Harweg's categories require further refinement before the analogy is quite convincing.

I have, in a previous paper, analyzed the historical present tense in present-day English narrative (Fludernik, 1991). At that point I noted the functional importance of the shift *out of* the present tense – the resultative (Harweg's endogenic progredient) –, and I have noted the difference between the initial preterites in the story beginning and those of embedded orientation. Moreover, I will now append, there are further preterites on the plot-line *before* and *after* the onset of the present tense that require explanation. I originally attempted an interpretation by assuming all events on the plot-line (except for resultatives) to be of the same status and by dividing narratives into episodes, assuming that episode beginnings were always in the past tense and that highlighted 'turns' of events triggered the use of the present tense. I will now revise this pattern by improving on Harweg's structural outline.

Let me return to Harweg's first example story and quote again the relevant passage.

We were standing [preterite] in front of the shop display and looking at the jewelry [preterite] when suddenly somebody covered [preterite] my eyes from behind. I first started [perfect] to puzzle

over who this might be, but as I was still trying to figure it out [preterite], the person took [preterite] away his hands. So I turned [perfect] curiously and saw [preterite] Jim. He was standing there [preterite], and was laughing [preterite]. (And I now add:)

I was so taken aback [preterite], I stared at him [perfect] and then I slapped his face [perfect]. And then I had to laugh with relief it wasn't a mugger! [perfect]

The resultative positions are determinable by their inability to accommodate the present tense (in English as well as German):

- * I start to puzzle about who this might be
- ? He is (just) standing there, laughing
- * I am so taken aback
- * I stare at him
- * and then I give him a slap in the face.
- * And then I have to laugh with relief.

If the present is used in these positions, the narrative is read as a story in the narrative present tense.

In the full passage as given above, to which I have added a different ending, there are two phases of the schema of incidence (endogenic situational followed by exogenic progredient): 'When we were looking/standing, somebody suddenly ...' and 'As I was still trying to figure it out, he took his hands ...' The resultative category, which in Harweg's and Quasthoff's example texts always comes in the perfect, cannot be put into the historical present in any of these example sentences. This is why the resultative is the crucial test for the true historical perfect, setting it apart from protracted narrative tense passages as in Goethe and Dickens. The resultative needs to be distinguished, moreover, from other perfect tenses following it, and there is a need (which Harweg's examples do not show) to analyze series of exogenic progredient verbs that cluster before the resultative. There is also the further consideration of the initial sequence in tales of past experience – so very close to literary storytelling – which is, I claim, different from the endogenic situational proper.

The (initial) background. One needs to postulate a specific category for the preliminary background situation which defines long-term existential propositions. This, in accordance with Labov, I will

call orientation. The endogenic situational, on the other hand, since it is reducible to the frame of activity or state pertaining at the time that the crucial 'turn' of events takes place, is a category of restricted, if indefinite, extension. It is also a category that, together with other lexico-syntactic signals, has a well-known trigger function. In German the endogenic situational is frequently (at least in natural narrative) emphasized by the addition of *gerade* or *eben* (the latter is ambiguous since it co-occurs with just perfected activity), and in English the category is frequently highlighted by a *just*, and of course by the progressive aspect. The syntactic structure also signals an expectation of further developments, with *als*-clauses (*as* or *when* clauses in English):⁵

Wir standen (*gerade*) vor der Türe, *als plötzlich* aus einem Fenster über uns ein Blumentopf herunterfiel.

Just as we were standing on the front doorstep, a flower pot came down on us from one of the windows above.

We *were talking* about Jim's divorce, *when suddenly* the door flew open and Jim broke into the room hollering and cursing. He had obviously had a few drinks too many.

Compare, on the other hand, some general background description, which can also be added to Harweg's example story.

A: We met [perfect; *haben getroffen*] Uncle Paul yesterday.

B: Oh, did you? How did this happen? [preterite]

A: Well it was [preterite] like this. We were [waren, preterite] in town (yesterday) because Karl needed [brauchte/braucht; preterite or general present] some books for his chemistry course. So we went to several bookstores [sind gewesen; perfect] until we finally got [perfect] them all, and then we went [perfect] window shopping for a little bit. It was in the late afternoon [preterite], and the shops were [preterite] open for another hour. So I dragged [perfect] Karl to Bühler's because I knew [preterite] that they are having some really nice new rings on display. We were just standing there, scrutinizing the engagement rings, when suddenly ...

In this elaborated beginning some general background facts about the time of day and the purpose of the visit to town are related which have a wider temporal frame than the activity intruded upon by the arrival of Uncle Paul. In narratives of past experience (back-

ground deictic tales according to Harweg) the general background tends to be more general still, covering the period in the narrator's past life, and this is usually put at the very beginning of the tale (after the abstract) and can run over several sentences (as in Harweg's example story of the narrator's prank, pp. 167-168). Although it is odd to have such a long introductory section (always in the preterite, the past tense) in narratives of recent experience, some initial background may be provided as in the story beginning above. However, because the emphasis is on how the narrator met Uncle Paul, there is a severe time constraint on the speaker, and background material will therefore be embedded according to relevance at later points to motivate or explain actions. Since most of the English narratives I have seen are memory narratives, they all include a general background frame and then also fill in on missing information by means of embedded orientation. I will abide with the Labovian terminology to call such initial *en bloc* or dispersed (embedded) background material "orientation". The orientation frames the plot, and orientational material therefore observes the conditions of general tense markedness, that is to say it contrasts with the present tense to uphold the normal past vs. non-past opposition.

Reinstituting the plot-line and off-plotline distinction now also enables us to have a second look at Harweg's contradictory exogenic-situational category. It can now be agreed that this should be reanalyzed to contain (a) embedded orientation: 'Uncle Paul suggested [perfect] we go to the cinema. But *we had no idea* [preterite] what was playing [preterite] that week, so we told Uncle Paul we would prefer to go to an ice parlour instead'; as well as (b), truly exogenic situationals, such as ('When we came out of the cinema, night *was falling*'), in which a perception of the protagonists is involved. Note that this distinction is corroborated by intonational patterns, since the 'we had no idea' clause would definitely be off-plotline (separated from the preceding and following clauses by pauses, and a drop in pitch and volume), Whereas 'night was falling' is right *on* the plot-line – a fact additionally underlined by its main clause position, with the plot event of exiting from the cinema in the backgrounded subsidiary clause.

As an aside let me append one insight on subsidiary clauses at this point. This is a subject much discussed in the debate about

foregrounding (Hopper/Thompson 1980). Subsidiary clauses occur very rarely in natural narratives, but they are of course quite common in literary texts. It seems to me that in the two cases just quoted the subsidiary clause 'When we got out of the cinema' and the (possible) substitution 'But since we didn't know what was on this week' allow an emphasis on the following occurrence or state of affairs. In the first case, 'When we got out of the cinema' specifies a point in time – the verb in the subsidiary clause carries no 'narrative' deixis but is merely deictically subordinate to the main clause verb. In English *when* clauses always mark a point in time and a deep structure plot verb, as can be seen from the inacceptability of the combination of a *when* clause and an obligatorily 'progressive' endogenic situational:

As/*when we were coming out of the cinema, a policeman suddenly stepped up to Paul ...

In a motivational since/as clause, as in our second example, however, the subsidiary clause substitutes for background information, a move that allows the speaker to remain on the intonationally foregrounded plot line. Since written texts have no means of signalling background information intonationally, the increased reliance on subsidiary clauses in written narrative as well as its increased use of background tenses to set off embedded orientation can now be understood as a shift from one device to another to signal the same textual function. 'Background tenses,' in this context, denotes particularly the pluperfect and the imperfective past tenses, especially the French *imparfait* (and its equivalents in other Romance languages). One might speculate at this point whether the rarity of the *imparfait* in Old French might be due to a still dominant oral paradigm in which embedded orientation could be signalled intonationally and therefore did not need a separate tense to set it off from the main plot line. In Old French the *passé simple* is also the tense that ushers in the initial orientation section of stories where *fut* rather than *était* (as in present-day French) is used in the opening formula 'once upon a time there was a king.' The development of *imparfait* to signal orientation might thus be a direct consequence of the loss of intonational clues – a speculation to be substantiated by Romance scholars.

I have attempted to suggest that there are two separate categories (or slots) in the narrative syntax for what Harweg calls the exogenic situational. One of these is embedded orientation, the other the true exogenic situational. I have demonstrated the distinction between these on the basis of intonation as well as on the basis of the exogenic situational's continuation with a (in this case suppressed) plot event. An exogenic situational, moreover, cannot combine with an imperfective, whether orientational: 'We came out of the cinema. ?It was spring. Night was falling.?' or whether endogenic situational: 'We were walking down the steps to the sea front. ?Night was falling.' (The latter is possible only if both phrases are endogenic situational, for instance if followed by: 'Suddenly we perceived a group of three men bending over something that was lying on the beach.') Harweg mentions similar structural incompatibilities in his remarks on the combinatory constraints between his categories. (See pp. 152-156)

A further important distinction can be made in terms of the quality of the verbal signifiers that go with (embedded) orientation on the one hand and the endogenic situational and exogenic situational on the other. Initial orientation as well as embedded orientation provides information on extended states of affairs, for instance on (a) the existence of certain entities, (b) the continuing quality or essence of such entities, and (c) the (habitual) states of affairs or activities *extending beyond* the temporal frame of the story. Examples of such are: 'there lived a poor miller and his wife' (a); 'since the King was a very wise man,' and 'the miller had three sons' (b); 'on this day the miller's wife was at/had gone to her mother's house,' 'on Sundays the miller always went to church,' 'Eileen was crocheting a curtain' (c).⁶ All these are not only 'imperfective' – the catchword for such background material –, but they specify as unbounded in relation to the core element of the endogenic situational/exogenic progredient cluster.

The endogenic situational, on the other hand, is bounded because it is the background material on which reaction will impinge. Both the endogenic situational and the exogenic progredient are *on* the plotline, foregrounded. This can be seen from their intonational position. As Harweg notes himself (p. 155), the endogenic situational can, however, be elided if the 'situation' on which exogenic action

impinges can be reconstituted from context: 'I had to queue for my coat. Suddenly somebody gave me a kick in the heel.' The endogenic situational is understood from context. The listener, pragmatically aware of the frame of queuing, knows that this involves standing in line, waiting, and reconstructs turbulence from behind the patient narrator's back.

The endogenic situational can accommodate another construction about which Harweg, since he deals with only two example stories, has nothing to say. This is the perfective endogenic situational. Rather than setting the ground for intervention by specifying an ongoing activity or state to be interrupted presently, the narrative can specify such a setting as the state of completion ensuing on previous activity, its aftermath, so to speak. Thus in the following: 'We had just finished dinner, when in came Judge Streckner, carrying a warrant to arrest Pop.' Note that a progressive does not do: *'We had just been eating dinner, when the telephone rang.' The present participle allows the narrator to fill in further foreground material than would otherwise have been cast in a separate clause of an exogenic situational.

This takes me to the third 'background' category. The exogenic situational is distinguished from embedded orientation in two ways. It, first of all, belongs *on* the plot-line, since it reflects the protagonist's perception of states of affairs. This can be corroborated again from intonational evidence: 'When we had finished dinner, in came Judge Streckner. He *was carrying* a warrant of arrest.' There is at this point no drop in volume or pitch, or a marked pause. The second distinction concerns the type of activities or states that can be mentioned in this category. Like the endogenic situational, the exogenic situational concerns a *bounded* activity, bounded that is within the perceiving consciousness of the protagonist, and this boundedness is contained within the storyline. The similarity to the endogenic situational can be measured by the acceptability of the perfective mode: '... in came Judge Streckner. He *had just crossed* the yard in front of our house, so his boots were covered with mud. As soon as she saw this, my mother got into a fit and ordered him off the carpet.' As with the endogenic situational, the crucial issue is that of the perception of the resultant state of affairs, not of an activity (invisible to those gathered round the dinner table).

So far we have analyzed the following categories: abstract, orientation, endogenic situational, exogenic progredient, exogenic situational. I now come to the endogenic progredient (which I have called the resultative) and to the plotline narrative clauses intervening *before* the endogenic situational and *after* the exogenic progredient. This requires some general reanalysis of the structure of narrative episodes. I have so far used the very useful distinction between plotline and off-plotline occurrences and states of affairs, and have argued that the off-plotline (embedded) orientation provides a frame larger than the story – the story being equivalent to the experiencing protagonist's time frame. Thus we have distinguished both endo- and exogenic situationals from embedded orientation, on the ground that they touch on activities and states in relation to the story-self, whereas embedded orientation sections backtrack on general conditions that hold during the time of the action. In fact the places at which the intonational line is broken to accommodate background material of the embedded orientation kind are precisely the same points at which the narrator's commentary may intervene. The constitutive narrator-oriented character of such interventions is further underlined by their matching commitment to the markedness distribution of ordinary conversation. As many theorists argue, the markedness of the past and future tenses in ordinary discourse is reversed in narrative, with the preterite becoming the unmarked background in relation to a foregrounded present tense (Chvany 1984, Fleischman 1990). This reliance on an unmarked present tense also ties in with the function of embedded orientation and commentary, which provide explicatory or commentatory guidelines to the listener.

In my earlier article on the historic present tense (Fludernik 1991) I distinguished between on-plot line and off-plot line levels of narrative. The on-plot line includes abstract-orientation-narrative clauses-evaluation-coda. Its central section comprises the narrative clauses and can span, optionally, several sequential narrative episodes. The off-plot line, on the other hand, provides additional embedded orientation and narratorial commentary. In this earlier schema, like Labov, Wolfson and Schiffrin, I relied on the concept of a series of narrative clauses, in which the change into the historic present had to be related to notions such as 'the climax' or 'tellable

incidents of emotional importance,' since all narrative clauses appeared to be equivalent. However, in contradistinction to the Labov school, I posited the switch *out of the present* tense as a separate category, introducing the "result" category (which, as I claimed above, is the equivalent to Harweg's endogenic progredient). Additionally, I attempted to deal with the occurrence of narrative clauses *after* this resultative juncture by a structural re-analysis, positing that the endogenic progredient constitutes an episode boundary and can initiate a new subepisode of the story. Each story could then be explained as a series of episodes, each with its (optional) kernel of the historic present tense, each with a series of past tense narrative clauses *before* this kernel and a resultative cluster after it, followed by either another episode, or by the final evaluation.

I had noticed in my earlier article that the stories I was dealing with had a marked onset of the plotline, at the point where, in written French, the orientational *imparfait* changes into the *passé simple*. This juncture is frequently marked by what Harweg calls an adeictic temporal specification: *one day, at one point, once, one time, on a beautiful Sunday morning*, etc. (Written narratives are always background-deictic, and hence require adeictic narrowing down to the specific temporal setting.) I have named this point of story-initial temporal marking the *incipit*. Now, as I have shown above, in personal narratives of recent events the specific temporal frame is given by *yesterday* or *a few days ago* an equivalent foreground-deictic temporal specification. Actions following this marker, in German, come in the perfect, but English of course has the past tense, in French the (oral) *passé composé*. The temporal make-up of these initial narrative clauses is therefore the same as for the endogenic progredient, but it has of course no intrinsic 'resultative' implication. (Compare the earlier 'So we went to several bookstores until we finally got them all, and then we went window shopping for a little bit. So I dragged Karl to Bühler's') Harweg, when dealing with the continuation of the story, in the episodes *following* the endogenic situational/exogenic progredient cluster, in fact classifies these verbs as also belonging to the endogenic progredient type. (152-155) I will maintain that there is a difference between these initial narrative clauses and the resultative because initial narrative

clauses can take over the present tense, but the resultative clauses cannot.⁷

Incipit clauses space out the initiation of the 'plan' or 'setting', which is then disrupted by the sudden incidence of the exogenic progredient. The protagonist's plans and intentions, as well as actions, are in the foreground. There is a series of clauses, the first of which, since it sets off the story from the orientation, receives special emphasis. In early English prose texts this incipit is frequently marked by a present tense. In my earlier paper I suggested that there is a 'turn' at the beginning of a new episode, just as the climax (the exogenic progredient) constitutes a 'turn' of events. The first incipit introducing the first story-episode, however, is usually marked by a past tense. Its structural similarity to the narrative 'turn' can be gauged by the frequent use of the verb *befall* and *happen* in such contexts:

Bifel that in that seson on a day ...
(*Canterbury Tales*, Gen. Prol.)

The beginning of the episode would thus alert the reader to important events to come, anticipate the later exogenic progredient so to speak. In English texts such a present tense incipit usually occurs only at the beginning of text-internal episodes, the original onset of the story is marked with an adeictic expression and requires a past tense to follow. In oral German storytelling of personal narratives, particularly of foreground-deictic stories, the temporal specification *yesterday*, *a few days ago* does not absolutely require a *perfect* and can be combined with a present tense:

Yesterday I go into town, and whom do I see but Birgit! She told me about Peter's new job.

This collapses the initial 'I went into town yesterday', the elided 'and when I was there' (the endogenic situational), and the exogenic progredient 'I suddenly met Birgit!'

This kind of pattern is very similar to the contracted joke pattern as it occurs in English as well as German.

She [Zoë] thought of the joke about the guy who visits his doctor and the doctor says, "Well, I'm sorry to say, you've got six weeks to live."
"I want a second opinion", says the guy. [...]

"You want a second opinion? O.K., "says the doctor, "You're ugly, too".
(Moore, "You're Ugly, Too;" 1990: 177)

We had noted above how jokes, like Quasthoff's third story schema, center around a tit-for-tat verbal exchange, in which the customary 'sequence of events' structure does not usually apply. Jokes, like anecdotes, are vignettes, and they dispense with superfluous trimming. Now it seems to me that jokes, which are always *vicarious* experience, so to speak, represent a series of highlighted elements in which no endogenic situational/exogenic progredient cluster occurs (nor can there be an exogenic situational) because there is no ruling consciousness to which things happen. On the contrary, one has a series of verbal exchanges, the gist of which is the punchline – or the incongruity between the frames of reference, between the punchline and the preceding part of the dialogue. Jokes of any length also tend to be cumulative in structure, repeating a basic setting and modifying it in significant ways that enhance the cumulative 'point'.

I would suggest that the present tense in jokes, which has, naturally, some affinities to the 'general' present and the present in plot summaries, is comparable to the use of the present tense in the incipit section of a narrative. So-called 'narration in the present tense,' in so far as it is oral, can then be split up into such a present-tense incipit, an initial present tense 'setting' that is 'marked' by way of anticipation – usually with speeded-up rhythm – and an episode core that consists of a series of exogenic progredients. In Harweg's schema there is only *one* exogenic progredient, followed by one resultative reaction by the perceiver. However, in most narratives, the exogenic progredient actions span several narrative clauses:

We were in this car [endogenic situational], and suddenly the buzzer sounds and all these guys come out.

(Schiffrin 1981: 48)

This is still a typical narrative of *personal* experience, and so we have true exogenic progredients – actions by others that the narrator *perceives*. Such cumulative events impinging on the narrator are quite common. Compare the following example, quoted in Lindgren

(1957), in which a series of exogenic presents follows the endogenic situational (which is here in the preterite):

In dem Ich in meiner Custodi zur Rechten hand neben der thür vff meiner ligerstatt Sass (Prät) vnd an einem plaw Seydin knopf Arbeitet (Prät), kompt (Prs) ein Zarts weibs bild, kurtz von person, mit vnuerdöcktem angesicht Zu mir Ins gewölß hinein, schlecht beklaiddt, griesst (prs) mich mitt dem wortt Sallamanico gantz freindlich, fangt (Prs) an, vor mir stehendt, In Arabischer sprach Zu fragen, wie Ich leb (Knj): ...

(Lindgren 1957: 91)

As I was sitting in my room [where the narrator was kept prisoner], working [preterite] on a blue silk button, a delicate short woman with uncovered face *comes* to me in the vault, poorly clad, and, coming to a halt in front of me, she *greet*s me in a friendly fashion and *begin*s to ask me in Arabic how I was [subjunctive of the present] [...]

So-called oral present tense narrative (in German) therefore combines a series of pre-climax presents that serve to initiate the crucial episode and then has another series of presents for the exogenic progredient. The reason why such present tense series are never interrupted by a perfect seems to be because no *reactions* by the experiencer are recorded, but *instead* a new episode is immediately tagged on.

I come into town and visit Joe Bergren. He says to me 'I've just seen Bill Hancock going out on the train with your wife. I run to the station and scramble past the crowd to the ticket office and shout: 'This is an emergency.' 'Don't seem like that to me, Mister,' says the ticket clerk. I give him a punch in the nose, he hits back, and a policeman arrives and arrests me. So I go with him and tell him what has happened and he says, 'Damn bad luck, fella.' So we get to the police station and I tell the chief I need to get after my lady, and he looks at me and he says, 'She probably knew why she was running away.' So they lock me up and the next day the chief comes to see me and lets me out.

In this very typical pattern the experiencing person *shows no reactions at all*, such as continuing after his friend's announcement of the elopement 'I was flabbergasted'/'I couldn't believe it' etc. The reaction (by way of plot) *coincides with* the onset of the following episode. The narrative concentrates on actions, and these continue in episodes of the narrator's encountering a series of obstacles, slights etc. There is no hindsight, no arrangement of the story to a

'conclusion,' a 'point.' Note the frequent *so* discourse particles, which mark the beginnings of sub-episodes.

We can now say that the endogenic progredient is indeed very different from the initial plot events because it correlates with the narrator's evaluation and intentional reaction to events. An extended use of the present tense, as above, implies a lack of distance – and, I suggested in my earlier piece, emphasized *tellability* rather than 'point.' As a result, the listener feels engulfed in the experience itself without getting an orderly view of it.

I will therefore conclude that there are three stages of increasing present tense usage in oral narratives. The first reserves the historical present tense for the exogenic progredient(s) – the action(s) that break(s) into the setting of the episode. The second anticipates this intrusion by providing a present tense also for the endogenic situational. At the third stage the beginning of the episode and (potentially) all events leading up to the exogenic progredient(s) can be rendered in the present tense.

It needs to be emphasized that this pattern and its explanation needs to be modified if the basic story structure is not that of an experiencer encountering whatever befalls him or her, but that of Quasthoff's third category, or that of the very balanced joke/anecdote pattern. It should also be remembered that vicarious narrative can mime the structure of personal storytelling but that this in no way makes this the default pattern for narratives of vicarious experience.

In order to help readers with the conceptualization of the episodic story structure discussed above, I will append an extract from "The Story of the Three Little Pigs" from the *English Fairy Tales*. I mark the exogenic progredient, the *incidence*, as (!), and endogenic progredients, i.e. resultatives, by (RES). Incipits will be signalled by (INC), and discourse markers that signal incipit and RES points are emphasized. Episodes are set apart typographically.

The third little pig met (INC+!) a man with a load of bricks, and said: (RES)

'Please, man, give me those bricks to build a house with.'

So (RES) the man gave him the bricks, and he built his house with them.

So the wolf came (INC+!), as he did to the other little pigs, and said: (!)

'Little pig, little pig, let me come in.'

'No, no, by the hair on my chiny chin chin.'

'Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in.'

(RES:) *Well*, he huffed, and he puffed, and he huffed and he puffed, and he puffed and huffed; but he could not get the house down.

When he found that he could not, with all his huffing and puffing, blow the house down (INC+endog. sit.), he said: (!)

'Little pig, I know where there is a nice field of turnips.'

'Where?' said the little pig.

'Oh, in Mr. Smith's Home-field, and if you will be ready tomorrow morning I will call for you, and we will go together, and get some for dinner.'

'Very well,' said (RES) the little pig, 'I will be ready. What time do you mean to go?'

'Oh, at six o'clock.'

Well, the little pig got up at five (INC), and got the turnips before the wolf came (!) (which he did about six), who said: (!)

'Little pig, are you ready?'

The little pig said (RES): 'Ready! I have been and come back again, and got a nice potful for dinner.'

The wolf felt (endog. sit.) very angry at this, but thought that he would be up to the little pig somehow or other, so he said: (!)

'Little pig, I know where there is a nice apple tree.'

'Where?' said the pig.

'Down at Merry-garden,' replied (RES) the wolf 'and if you will not deceive me I will come for you at five o'clock tomorrow and get some apples.'

Well (INC), the little pig bustled up the next morning at four o'clock, and went off for the apples, hoping to get back before the wolf came; but he had farther to go, and had to climb the tree, so that just as he was coming down (endog. sit.) from it, he saw (!) the wolf coming, which, as you may suppose, frightened (RES) him very much.

When the wolf came up he said: (!)

'Little pig, what! are you here before me? Are they nice apples?'

'Yes, very,' said the little pig. 'I will throw you down one.'

(RES:) And he threw it so far, that, while the wolf was gone to pick it up, the little pig jumped down and ran home.

The next day the wolf came again, and said (!) to the little pig:

'Little pig, there is a fair at Shanklin this afternoon, will you go?'

'Oh yes,' said the pig, 'I will go; what time shall you be ready?'

'At three,' said (RES) the wolf.

So (INC) the little pig went off before the time as usual, and got to the fair, and bought a butter-churn, which he was going home (endog. sit.) with, when he saw (!) the wolf coming. Then (RES) he could not tell what to do.

So (INC) he got into the churn to hide, and by so doing turned it round, and it rolled (!) down the hill with the pig in it, which frightened (RES) the wolf so much, that he ran home without going to the fair.

He went to the little pig's house, and told him how frightened he had been by a great round thing which came down the hill past him. Then the little pig said: (!)

'Hah, I frightened you, then. I had been to the fair and bought a butter-churn, and when I saw you, I got into it, and rolled down the hill.'

(RES) Then the wolf was very angry indeed, and declared he **would** eat up the little pig, and that he would get down the chimney after him.

When the little pig saw (endog. sit.) what he was about, he hung (!) on the pot full of water, and made up a blazing fire, and, just as the wolf was coming (endog. sit.) down, took off (!) the cover, and in fell (!) the wolf; so (RES) the little pig put on the cover again in an instant, boiled him up, and ate him for supper, and lived happy ever afterwards.

(Jacobs 1968: 41-43)

I now, finally, turn my attention to the most interesting facet of Harweg's schema, to the central importance of experiencer's perception. Although the 'exogenic' is not entirely defined as such, the story contexts have allowed us to equate the endogenic situational/exogenic progredient cluster with Quasthoff's personal experiencer and the disruption of his/her plans. Now it seems to be the case that the German preterite, which does not occur in vicarious narrative, is crucially linked to the narration of personal experience (both recent and earlier), since the category of the exogenic can be defined as such only on the basis of the past self's frame of reference and his or her perception of a rupture of that contained sphere of untouched selfhood. Such a contrast between internal and external in fact makes no sense at all for vicarious narrative, since, with 'natural' storytelling norms a third person's sphere of selfhood cannot be described in any case. However, with *empathy* transferral of narrator and narratee on a fictional protagonist, the contrast can be invoked in terms of 'shifting'. The deictic center has been shifted

from the first person (here only the narrator) to a third person subject whose situation provides a frame, on which external events can consequently come to impinge. The alignment of the preterite with an experiencer's consciousness additionally allows one to comprehend the use of the preterite for the abstract structure ('It was like this') and the final evaluation ('I had such fun!'). Although these narrative segments are situated outside the plot episode, they announce or summarize the *narrative* (emotional, experiential) *meaning* of the tale. (Note that in Harweg's vicarious experience examples, these categories are indeed replaced by the perfect.)

I will therefore hazard the hypothesis that fictional narrative can be described in terms of a creation of consciousness by the text. This consciousness, in a first person text, resides with the narrator, who has a past self and therefore a past consciousness as well. In 'authorial' narrative (Stanzel 1984), if there is a strong narrator persona, sense is vouchsafed by the narrational consciousness, who presents, analyzes and interprets the story. But to the extent that the story *qua* story comes to life in its own right, character's consciousness, the frame of experience of individual protagonists, usurps the narratorial mediation. In first person narrative, there is only one possible contender for the protagonist, but in third person narrative there are several. It is a typical sign of authorial narrative that it is free to move between many such experiential frames and therefore asserts its ordering powers in the discourse world. There are, however, many novels in which we follow the protagonist and take over their experiential frame for increasingly larger segments of the story. When this happens character's consciousness becomes the mediating factor of the story because the human experience, which is at the heart of storytelling, is expressed best from the inside. When the narrative begins to look at the world from the experiential frame of the protagonist, we are beginning to deal with true fiction. It is a question, also, of empathy, of the reader's ability to identify with a protagonist. Human experience basically seems to consist in one's exposure to events that befall the experiencing self.

One can take Quasthoff's and Harweg's pattern even further to enquire into the status of temporality in narrative. Natural narrative provides a happy hunting ground for the ascertainment of minimal narrative – usually constructed along the lines 'The king died. And

then the Queen died of grief.¹ Such minimal plots have always struck me as singularly unconvincing; and after the previous discussion one can easily see why. There is a lack of perceptive and experiential center, and the formula therefore fails to trigger narrative empathy. Harweg's central narrative cluster (endogenic situational/exogenic progredient/endogenic progredient) captures an even more basic level of narrative, the time-worn beginning-middle-end structure, in which the middle of course correlates with peak and crisis-point. Even more radically, perhaps, one can locate the temporality of narrative in the minimal occurrence of two tokens of incidence – the rupture of a static situation and the resultative reaction which brings about a new stable setting. Story temporality is configurative because the reactionary event is intrinsically linked to the incident of which it is the consequence. Atemporal deep structure accounts of narrativity concentrate on the antagonists locked in battle – the stage at which the incident has ruptured the previous situation, but they fail to explain the concluding shift towards resolution, which necessarily reshuffles and dynamically resolves the inherent contradictions and contrarities.⁸ If contradiction remains, it is that between the experiential core and the evaluative and distancing shift into the resolution – a shift marked meta-phorically by the temporal distinctions which we have here outlined.

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NOTES

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¹ *Heute vor drei Jahren* actually translates as 'today it is three years since ... [happened to me].'

² Compare Harweg (1976), where in 'Karl sagte [preterite] mir, er sei krank gewesen [perfect subjunctive]' – (Karl told me he *had been* sick) the perfect also marks anteriority. This constellation becomes possible because of the subjunctive which already signals subordination. In the absence of the subjunctive, there would have to be a tense shift to signal anteriority: 'Karl sagte mir er war

krank gewesen [pluperfect]. 'Karl sagte, er *war* krank,' on the other hand is not acceptable since Karl's utterance is a subjective statement for whose validity the report can vouch only at second hand. The report therefore needs to shift from the speaker's statement into distancing 'report mode,' employing either the subjunctive or the pluperfect. If Karl had made any *factual* statements, such distancing might not have been necessary if the reporter endorsed Karl's account: 'Karl sagte, die erste Mondlandung gelang den Amerikanern' ('Karl said it was the Americans who first landed on the moon'). Here the speaker fully endorses Karl's utterance, or does not care to question its factuality.

³ The precise wording of the incident events from the exogenic sphere is incomprehensible to me, but I conclude from the examples that exogenic events may be either events or actions of the experiencing agents or of other agents outside the past experiencer; or sudden events within the past experiencer's psyche and over which he has equally little control: 'suddenly it occurred to me.' The full definition provided by Harweg is as follows:

Unter *endogenen* Sachverhalten verstehe ich Sachverhalte, die der Sphäre des Ich-Erzählers einer Geschichte in seiner der erzählten Geschichte angehörenden, d.h. dieselbe erlebenden Phase entstammen, und unter exogenen Sachverhalten solche, die der diese Sphäre umgebenden Sphäre entstammen und von dort gleichsam in die erstere hineinragen, hineinragen entweder in dem Sinne, dass sie als in das Bewusstsein des erlebenden Allo-Icherzählers oder eines zu seiner Sphäre gehörenden, d.h. mit derselben Zielrichtung in denselben konkreten Geschehensfluss eingebetteten erlebenden Allo-Individuums einfallend oder eingefallen [sic!] beschreibbar sind – beschreibbar, wenngleich nicht als solche beschrieben; denn sonst würden wir sie ja nicht unter die ungespiegelten, sondern unter die gespiegelten Sachverhalte subsumieren –, oder aber hineinragen in dem Sinne, dass sie jenes Einfallen in das Bewusstsein des erlebenden Allo-Icherzählers oder eines erlebenden Allo-Individuums seiner Sphäre selber manifestieren und somit in die Kategorie der spiegelnden ungespiegelten Sachverhalte gehören – eine Charakterisierung, die übrigens rückwirkend zugleich auch noch eine *negative* Bestimmung der *endogenen* Sachverhalte erlaubt. Denn sie erlaubt endogene Sachverhalte zu bestimmen als Sachverhalte, die weder als in das Bewusstsein des erlebenden Allo-Icherzählers oder eines zu seiner Sphäre gehörenden erlebenden Allo-Individuums einfallend oder eingefallen beschreibbar sind noch ein solches Einfallen selber manifestieren. (141-142)

The term "erlebender Allo-Icherzähler," as far as I can see (compare Harweg's definition of allo-individuals earlier pp. 133-134), refers to the experiencing I, and the other allo-individuals are co-protagonists of the story's sphere.

⁴ Rowley (1983) maintains that the loss of the Southern German preterite can be explained as a generalization of the perfect tense, and he considers remaining preterites for instance in the Viennese dialect to be new acquisitions from standard German.

⁵ Emilia Denk (1948), in her dissertation on the historical present tense in early modern English quotes numerous examples of this typical context.

⁶ This is to say, not just that particular day or hour when the events of the story overtook her life but that she had been working at the curtain for some time. The sentence thus signifies 'it was the case that Eileen was engaged with crochet-work,' and *not* (at this point in the story) 'Eileen happened to be working on her curtain.'

⁷ There are some cases in which the resultative can be in the historical present tense, but these are contextually determined. The resultative can be in the present tense if the story ends on the climax – one can agree that there is then no true resultative at this point. (See my Flamborough fishermen's story in Fludernik, 1991) The resultative can be in the present tense if it coincides with

the incipit of the following episode. This can of course happen only text-internally.

⁸ Harweg's basic three-part core of narrative experience is, however, anticipated by Greimas in his A + F + C formula: "However, what confers to the free consecution of A + F the status of diachronic structure is the necessary consequence which results from that freedom of encounter. The consequence is indeed necessary: it presupposes the existence of A + F." (Greimas 1983: 237).

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