<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Grammar and praxis: investigating a grammatics for twenty-first century school English</th>
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<td>Overview</td>
<td>In a complex communicational environment and at the dawn of an Australian curriculum, English teachers and students need new kinds of knowledge about language (KAL). Our project will investigate new demands on KAL through ‘grammatics’ – a metalanguage informed by grammar but taken in new directions. In a series of classroom trials at four year levels and in diverse classrooms, we will examine the effect of grammatics on teachers’ and students’ knowledge and know-how. In particular, we will explore the effect of grammatics on students’ written and multimodal compositions. The project will provide crucial evidence about what kinds of praxis yield what kinds of KAL and how this can transform the knowledge base of school English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding bodies and amount</td>
<td>ARC Discovery - $449951 (administered by University of New England)</td>
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<td>Research partners</td>
<td>Associate Professor M. Macken-Horarik (Lead – University of New England), Professor Len Unsworth (ACU), Professor Kristina Love (ACU)</td>
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<td>Timeline/Duration</td>
<td>2011 - 2013</td>
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| Research Problem | The project aims to:  
1. Investigate the kinds of tools relevant to coherent knowledge about language as a meaning potential (system) and as text (instance);  
2. Generate cumulative understandings about language for teachers and students Yrs 4-10;  
3. Improve students’ compositions through a rhetorically oriented toolkit;  
4. Investigate the contribution of grammatical reasoning to deep knowledge about both language and other semiotic resources;  
5. Create a practical, pedagogic grammatics for the profession based on our findings. |
| Findings, including emerging findings | A theoretical framework for the introduction of knowledge about language (KAL) was developed in 2011 and adapted over the next two years. In 2011, the team worked with NSW and Victorian primary and secondary English teachers on the grammatics of narrative; in 2012 we adapted the toolkit to focus on a grammatics of persuasion with an emphasis on multimodal persuasion; and in 2013 we introduced teachers to a grammatics of text response – exploring multimodal narratives with a special focus on images. We are currently analyzing readings by teachers and students of picturebooks and the implications for semiotic knowledge development. 

The school-based workshops included an average of fifteen primary and secondary teachers in Victoria and NSW (with a total of approximately thirty teachers each year). Although we aimed primarily to develop a grammatics for writing (of narrative, argument and text response), our 2013 work included a substantial component of visual analysis. All teachers responded to visual grammatics with enthusiasm and student data is very exciting in this arena as well. Most of the teachers in our project have remained in the project over three years and this has enabled us to collect some important longitudinal data from a core group of teachers in primary and secondary schools in both NSW and Victoria. Our teacher workshops,
classroom observations and interviews with teachers as they wrestled with and re-shaped the grammatics have resulted in a robust and multi-dimensions model of teacher semiotic knowledge. In 2014 after an extension to the project timeline (following an extended period of illness for Cl Macken-Horarik), the analysis of teacher and student data is nearly completed.

In the extended period of data collection in 2014, we have developed, disseminated and analyzed responses to a national survey of teachers from all stages of schooling. The quantitative data is currently being compared to qualitative responses from teachers. Cl Love is presenting this data at the national conference of Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics Association (ASFLA) in October. Macken-Horarik is presenting on survey data and its implications for knowledge about language in English at the annual conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) in December.

Research publications