"I have often tried to write myself a pass"

A Systemic-Functional Analysis of Discourse in Selected African American Slave Narratives

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Conventions and abbreviations

Conventions:

Double quotation marks ("....") mark quotations from texts.

In the textual analyses single quotations marks ('....') mark hypothetical paraphrases of an actual linguistic choice in a text.

Italics are used whenever a given word or expression is used as an example that is not explicitly quoted.

Abbreviations:

b	behavioural
mat	material
men	mental
rel	relational
v	verbal

df	degrees of freedom
Of	observed frequency
Ef	expected frequency
rf	relative frequency
rf_I	relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun
rf_b	relative frequency of behavioural processes
rf_{mat}	relative frequency of material processes
rf_{men}	relative frequency of mental processes
rf_{rel}	relative frequency or relational processes
rf_{nom}	relative frequency of nominalizations
rf_p	relative frequency of passive voice

AASS	American Anti-Slavery Society
AAVE	African American Vernacular English
CDA	critical discourse analysis
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
SFG	systemic functional grammar
TODA	textually-oriented discourse analysis

Preface

This dissertation uses a functional systemic approach to language to examine the construction of the respective first-person narrators of nine African American slave narratives published between 1837 and 1862. This period was chosen because it represents the most productive phase in the development of this specific genre. The individual narratives are *A Narrative of the Adventures and Escape of Moses Roper, from American Slavery* (1838); *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy; Late a Slave in the United States of America* (1843); *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* (1845); *Narrative of William W. Brown, an American Slave* (1849); *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, An American Slave* (1849); *Twelve Years a Slave. Narrative of Solomon Northup,* (1853); *Fifty Years in Chains; or, The Life of an American Slave. Charles Ball.* (1837/1859); Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861); and Louisa Picquet's life as reported in *The Octoroon: or Inside Views of Southern Domestic Life. By H. Mattison* (1862). These particular narratives were selected because they comprise a number of the most popular, commercially successful and therefore influential slave narratives ever to be published. And yet, despite differences in gender, age, and geographic origin of the protagonists, the corpus cannot claim to be (and does not aim to be) representative of the entire genre, much less of slave life in general. Blassingame notes that from a number of states there exist hardly any slave accounts, that only about 12 percent of the slave narratives were written by women, and that less than five percent of slaves managed to escape, but often only the brightest and most gifted among them published their life accounts (1986: 83). Moreover, the texts chosen differ as to their methods of production. Some of them were written by the first-person narrators themselves, while others were either extensively edited, dictated to an amanuensis, or in some other way controlled.

What these texts share is a high degree of popularity. In their time the accounts ranked among the most successful forms of literature, if the term is applied loosely; thus, the slave narrative helped shape the public image of the African-American immensely. As a consequence, studying the linguistic features of the slave narrative to analyse how the first-person narrators present themselves appears to be a logical way to deal with the texts. However, in its approach and scope this dissertation represents a novelty in the field of research about the African-American slave narrative.

The selected narratives have been widely anthologized, most recently in Yuval Taylor's two-volume-collection "I was Born a Slave" published in 1999, which features the complete corpus of this study minus Moses Grandy and Louisa Picquet. The texts are also available in electronic form at the University of North Carolina's project "Documenting the American South." Taken together they establish a corpus of more than 410,000 words. For corpus linguists this is a comparatively small sample; the London-Lund corpus of spoken language comprises half a million words, the Longman-Lancaster corpus consists of 30 million words (Biber et al. 282). And yet, the present corpus is large enough to yield an enormous amount of data to be scanned for various linguistic features such as transitivity of verbs, nominalizations, and syntactic features. The processing was facilitated by two Macintosh concordancing packages: the Summer Institute of Linguistics' *conc 1.8* and Michael Barlow's *Monoconc*. Tagging and further calculations were conducted using *Microsoft Excel*. However, despite the immense aid that electronic data processing provides (cf. also Matthiessen

1999), the bulk of the work had to be carried out manually, so that progress was slow, bearing in mind that the aim was not simply to identify a number of patterns but to elucidate their meanings.

The process of conducting research for this dissertation – and putting the results together – was vitally accompanied by a number of people. First of all, thank you to Oliver Grannis, my doctoral superviser, for the freedom he gave me to choose my topic and my approach according to my own interests and my personal judgment. A few early readers of selected chapters, most notably Axel Finsterer and Eckhard Johanningmeier, provided valuable suggestions in terms of structure and content. Many heartfelt thanks are due to my fellow doctoral students and friends Beatrix Busse, Christian Drost, and Anke Schuckmann for their continued critical support, their probing questions about the "why" and "how" and, not least, many inspiring and productive breakfasts. Most of all, however, I would like to thank my parents and my dear wife Carla Maria for their patience and their confidence that this endeavor would eventually be completed.

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0.   Introduction: the slave narrative as an object of linguistic study

The antebellum slave narrative has been an object of scholarly study for more than fifty years. This was not always the case, however. Initally, historians were reluctant to recognize the reliability of the texts and their usefulness as historical sources, while literary critics were equally unwilling to deal with them as literature, and much less to include them in the American literary canon. Yet as the paradigms in both disciplines have changed over the recent decades, not least through the influence of gender and minority studies, this kind of general exclusion from disciplines is no longer an issue. The literary elite has accepted the fact that the African American slave narrative stands at the beginning of a black literary tradition and continues to influence African American letters up to the present. Likewise, the predominantly racially motivated rejection of black historical sources has been overcome. Since general exclusion from disciplines is no longer of concern, a variety of research areas have developed. While historians and literary critics have conducted research on a whole range of topics such as authorship, historical accuracy, or the interplay of narrative with appended recommendatory material, only few linguists have directed their attention to the slave narrative genre. Particularly the slave narratives published before the Civil War have never been considered worthy of linguistic investigation. While oral narratives gathered by the Federal Writers' Project in the 1930s have at least inspired a few studies about the language, even if predominantly concerned with African American Vernacular and the problems of authentic transcription of the oral accounts, the nineteenth century narrative has never attracted linguists' interest. The reasons for this relative indifference remain a matter of speculation, but apparently interdisciplinary work between linguistics and literary criticism still leaves something to be desired.

The majority of texts, with a few notable exceptions such as Frederick Douglass' *Narrative* (1845) and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), which have achieved membership in the American literary canon, are generally considered stylistically simple, unoriginal, and predominantly determined by propagandistic designs on the white readership. Indeed, particularly the narratives published between 1830 and 1865 were written in support of the North American abolition movement; many publications were sponsored by active abolitionist societies and had originally been held as speeches at abolitionist conventions. The texts were obviously and unabashedly produced to spawn compassion for the humiliated and oppressed slave, to win the reader for the abolitionists' cause, and to generate money. In the preface to his *Narrative*, Moses Roper admits the instrumentality of his text.

> May this little volume be the instrument of opening the eyes of the ignorant to this system; of convincing the wicked, cruel, and hardened slave holder; and of befriending generally the cause of oppressed humanity. (8)

As the slave narratives were mainly targeted at American white middle-class readers, they needed to appeal to their standards and conform to their expectations. With very few exceptions they were written in what is considered Standard English, featured well-known biblical tropes and occasionally used traditional rhetorical devices to make the first-person protagonist appear educated and (ac-)cultured. In terms of generic form, the slave narratives were far from experimental; in fact, they became increasingly formulaic during the second third of the nineteenth century. But stylistic and formal ingenuity with an eye on

literary merits was not the narrators' goal. The main purpose of the fugitive slave autobio-
graphies was a simple one. Through weaving the English language into a text about their
own life stories the narrators aimed to present themselves to their readership as human
beings, a status that had been denied to the chattel slaves for so long. The narrators' aims
were neither literary originality nor stylistic extravagance, but compassion, political sup-
port, and their own survival.

One of the most important strategies for the fugitive slave was to be accepted as a reli-
able narrator. The slightest doubts about the veracity of the story would not only harm the
image of the individual narrator, it would also publicly discredit the abolition movement
and its aims. The narrators' own claims to truth needed to be augmented by white sponsors
and appended documents in order to ensure that the texts were received as a truthful and
unadorned representation of the slaves' lives. The semblance of fictionality was to be
eliminated by all means. While the concept of truth and the distinction between fact and
fiction were unquestioned then, modern philosophy has exposed the pitfalls of this belief.
It has become a truism that language does not only represent the world, but that it is also
able to structure it. This applies to all forms of language use, but particularly propagandistic
discourse may be expected to utilize the creative potential of language, notwithstanding
the narrators' claims to objectivity and truthful representation of the facts. The dialectics
of creation and representation through language results in the leading question to be asked
in this study: **how do the first-person slave narrators identify and and create a
personality for themselves through their texts?** This means that this study is
concerned neither with historical truth nor with measuring the ex-slaves' stylistic
inventiveness by identifying and explicating a set of classical rhetorical devices in order to
refute many scholars' charges of stylistic monotony. The research focus of this dissertation
lies on the linguistic means by which the first-person slave narrator creates what Ivanic has
termed a "discoursal self." This concerns the presence or absence of the narrators in their
texts, the actions they present themselves as performing, and the particular ways in which
these activities are presented.

The focus on the creation of a narrator's discoursal self does not entail an ahistoric view
of the slave narrative. Like any autobiographical text, African American slave narratives
cannot be read and analyzed without due account of their sociohistorical context. Given
their propagandistic value, it is impossible to see them as mere texts, as autonomous verbal
artifacts devoid of social or political significance. Indeed, the question of how characters
and their activities are presented frequently involves the question why this particular pre-
sentation may have been considered favorable in a particular discursive context. Chapter 1
therefore introduces a sociohistorical account of slavery, resistance against slavery, aboli-
tion, and the development of the slave narrative. The chapter shows that the African Ame-
rican slave narrative was not and could not be a completely new and original genre but an
amalgamation of a variety of preexisting white and black literary forms. Oral storytelling,
criminals' confessions, pilgrim's tales, captivity narratives, and various other forms blended
into what became known as the slave narrative and developed into a distinct genre up to
1830 at the latest. Notwithstanding the fact that many narratives were self-authored, it is
noteworthy that the text form evolved mainly under white abolitionist supervision. The
slave narrative production peaked between 1830 and 1865, when the clashes between pro-
and antislavery activism became increasingly violent. As the texts selected for this study
originate from this period, these thirty-five years will be emphasized in the discussion of

the evolution of the fugitive slave autobiography, its significance for abolition, and its commercial success.

The second chapter is more theoretical in its orientation and deals with discourse, power, and ideology in the slave narrative. It comprises the production of disciplinary knowledge in general, the concomitant exclusion of certain kinds of knowledge and objects of study from discourses, and necessary definitions of the terms *truth*, *reality*, and *ideology*, as they will be understood here. While this dissertation aligns itself with applied linguistics, such theoretical considerations are indispensable in order to expose the elitist and racist mechanisms that excluded the slave narrative from the academic canon for such a long time. Chapter 2 is furthermore concerned with slave-narrative production and reception, that is, with the roles of writer and reader. It will become clear that the oftentimes complex collaboration between the fugitive slave, an editor, an abolitionist sponsor, and/or an amanuensis renders the term *writer* too simplistic. For the majority of texts it has become all but impossible to identify clearly who of the individuals involved was ultimately responsible for what. The acknowledgement of this complexity in text production does not at all question the value and validity of research that has identified Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents* as self-penned or Northup's ghostwritten narrative as basically historically true, it only helps to point out that a text in its entirety, with all of its characteristics, even seemingly slight editorial intrusions such as the ordering of a manuscript or the elimination of spelling mistakes, contributes to the positioning of the first-person narrator. As this position, rather than questions of authenticity, historical accuracy, and editorship, is focal in this study, Ivanic's concept of "discoursal self" is introduced at this point and distinguished from the narrator's "historical self." The reception side, on the other hand, deals with the way readers try to make sense of their reading material. This includes questions of shared knowledge, shared environment, and relevance.

Chapter 3 approaches the language of the slave narrative. It starts by reviewing the small corpus of scholarly texts that tackle language and style, and argues that most scholars become victims of what I have termed the "plain-style fallacy." They characterize the language of slave narratives almost invariably as simple, formulaic, and unimaginative, and therefore dismiss it as an object of further study. I would like to point out the dangers of such an *ad-hoc* approach. Based on a traditional, occasionally even old-fashioned view of style and stylistics, it can be – and has been – misused as an elitist ideological instrument in canon formation and the creation of disciplinary knowledge. It treats certain devices as typically stylistic, and interprets their absence as linguistic plainness, which in the worst cases of early twentieth century stylistics was directly associated with intellectual plainness. As an alternative, *critical discourse analysis* (CDA) is suggested. It eliminates the a priori categorization of specific linguistic features as stylistically significant, because it is based on a functional view of language that perceives linguistic expression as choice on various levels. Every choice is considered meaningful and, according to its presence, absence, or clustering in a given co-text, potentially stylistic. The work of CDA is to deconstruct the process of naturalization, which is reproduced through the systematic effacement of attention to the ways in which language is used for hegemonic processes (Martin 1992: 587). The remainder of Chapter 3 presents systemic grammar, which, for many scholars, has become the preferred tool for linguistic text analysis in citical discourse analysis. Systemic grammar distinguishes three independent but simultaneously present linguistic metafunctions and links them with discrete grammatical features that can be studied quantitatively as well as qual-

itatively within their respective co-texts. The present analyses will concentrate essentially on the experiential metafunction of language with its logical and ideational component.

Chapter 4 introduces the first quantitative observations about the density of the first-person singular pronoun in the narratives. This characteristic is then placed in relation to syntactic condensation in the forms of ellipsis, finiteness and nominalization, all of which are reviewed quantitatively. Finally, this chapter introduces the system of transitivity. It explains the distinction between the major and minor process types, and provides a quantitative overview of the individual transitivity profiles within each narrative.

Chapter 5 represents the main part of this dissertation. Each of the nine selected narratives is analyzed individually as to the presence of the *I*-pronoun in the text and the use and distribution of process types. In the narratives all instances of the first-person singular pronoun have been reviewed as to which participant roles they occupy for the activities the narrators present themselves as involved in. In the first part of each section of Chapter 5 the variations of the density of the *I*-pronoun is taken as a quantitative starting point to detect and examine further linguistic devices. These sections concentrate on the logical element expressed through coordination of processes, elliptical constructions, syntax with a special emphasis on nonfinite clauses, but also on nominalization as an instance of participant-process reconfiguration. The second part of each section is concerned with the experiential setup of the narratives. There is a marked difference in the distribution of process types between the narratives as well as within the texts. Thus patterns of foregrounded or favored usages against absences of others contribute to the overall picture that the individual narrators present of themselves. For instance, Moses Roper uses twice as many material verbs as mental verbs, whereas Louisa Picquet and Harriet Jacobs display a much more equal distribution with a slight predilection for mental verbs, which is absent from all other narratives. Solomon Northup, on the other hand, features a high percentage of relational processes, while Charles Ball and Henry Bibb lie below the average here. In these sections of Chapter 5 these preferred uses in general as well as in their local distributions are examined. Quantitative observations supply the basis for qualitative analyses, for which a large number of examples from the texts are provided. Thus it is possible to show that each of the narratives has a linguistic character of its own. The linguistic choices in the texts achieve a number of effects for the construction of the *I*-narrator, notwithstanding the near absence of traditional linguistic devices. The use of pronouns, process types and syntactic reconfigurations reveals how control over the activities as well as over the text is constructed, which is directly connected with issues of power.

The Summary (5.10) ties together the readings of the previous quantitative and qualitative analyses. The focus moves away from individual language functions towards an integration of the preceding results in order to arrive at an increasingly comprehensive picture of how the individual narrators construct their discoursal selves through strategic use of the linguistic devices analyzed. In this way we can provide a comparative outlook and associate the quantitative results with characteristics of written and oral texts. Thus it becomes possible to draw a few conclusions about the production of the texts as well as to pinpoint the power white editors and amanuenses exerted over the narrative as it was eventually published.

The conclusion in Chapter 6 finally combines the previous observations and arguments. Through the results of the individual analyses the individual discoursal selves of the respective *I*-narrators are characterized and placed into the changing sociohistorical context of

slavery and abolition. In sum, the present study shows that the language of the slave narrative cannot be dismissed as unimaginative and unworthy of study for other than ideological reasons. Notwithstanding formulaic elements, each of the narratives has its distinct profile and creates a unique narrator. The individual narrators used the linguistic means available to them in their personal and sociohistorical situation to construct and present themselves favorably for their white reading audience in order to achieve the aims they had set for themselves individually and collectively: freedom and a degree of self-determination, limited though it may have been. Moreover, the detailed linguistic analyses support Andrews' observation that there is a development towards increasingly independent and self-confident slave narrators in the thirty years before the American Civil War. Finally, the conclusion provides a short critique of the theory and methods used in this dissertation as well as a few suggestions as to how this line of research might be continued.

1.   Slavery, resistance and the slave narrative

1.1   Slavery and resistance

The history of American slavery is also a history of resistance against the institution. But unlike in Caribbean territories such as Haiti and Jamaica, armed insurrections were never able to threaten the system of slavery in the United States substantially. More effective in their long-term consequences were the nonphysical forms of political resistance, such as petitioning, campaigning, public lecturing, and the publication of antislavery propaganda. The most widespread and popularly successful form is represented by the fugitive slave narratives published during the thirty years before the Civil War. They combined forms of popular literature like adventure and romance novels with a political cause and so were able to affect public opinion tremendously. Before a corpus of such texts is analyzed linguistically, a sketch of their origins in the antislavery movement and their generic development is due.

Antislavery propaganda had its roots in the late seventeenth century and is strongly associated with Quakerism. One of the first actions against slavery as a system, taken by a group of Dutch and German Quaker settlers in Pennsylvania in 1688, became known as the "Germantown protest" (Zilversmit 55). Individuals such as Benjamin Lay and Ralph Sandiford lectured and published against slavery (cf. Sandiford's "A Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times" of 1729) (Zilversmit 67), but it was not until John Woolman became involved in 1743 and published his *Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* in 1754 that Quakers as a group began to change their position more drastically (70). When during the 1780s first the Philadelphia Quakers and then those of New York emancipated all their slaves, occasionally with compensation for their work, "northern Quakers had achieved the unique position of being the only major group that refused on grounds of conscience to hold slaves" (83). And they did not stop there, but strove to abolish slavery everywhere.

In the meantime, in 1700, Samuel Sewall, a Puritan judge involved in the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692, had published the first antislavery pamphlet in New England, called "The Selling of Joseph." As he was rather unorthodox for his times, he combined secular with religious arguments in attacking slavery for its inexpediency as well as for incompatibility with Christian belief (Zilversmit 59). Simultaneously, Quaker abolitionists, but also free blacks, who possessed limited civil rights in Massachusetts, petitioned against the slave trade and slavery in general (Zilversmit 101, Starling 3ff). During the late Colonial and early National period we also find the first texts with a black first-person narrator that qualify as slave narratives like those of Briton Hammon (1760), James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw (1770) and Venture Smith (1798). But despite their popularity they did not yet have the propagandistic impact that the slave narrative would develop after 1830.

Post-revolutionary zeal and a more enlightened atmosphere that spread from urban centers like Philadelphia to other regions also influenced resistance against slavery. The first antislavery society was founded in Philadelphia in 1775; in 1794 the first national society followed. However, women and blacks were not accepted as members. Despite its roots in the North, the antislavery movement of the era became strongest in the southern states with 130 societies in 1827 compared to only 24 in the free states (Quarles 10). These early abolitionists used what Benjamin Quarles calls an "olive-branch approach" (110). They were religiously oriented, moderate and pacific in tone, and propagated gradual abolition of slav-

ery with compensation for slaveholders (Quarles 9ff). The general outlook of most antislavery societies was colonizationist and did not aim at an integrated American society with equal black citizens. The American Colonization Society (ACS), founded in 1816, for instance, promoted the emigration of blacks to Africa. As colonization ultimately followed the racist aim that American society was to become a white one (Dillon 26), it did nothing to improve the situation of African Americans. Free blacks strongly opposed such plans, because they understood the underlying assumption that blacks were innately inferior and unable to become equal members of an integrated American society (Quarles 4ff). Arguably, colonization was no form of resistance against slavery at all, because it all but strengthened the system by attempting to remove free blacks from America, who were living proof of potential African American equality as well as of a white nation's guilt. Opposition by the second wave of abolitionism, both black and white, caused the Society's decline after 1840 (Yanak and Cornelison 15). Ultimately, according to Quarles, "the abolitionist movement of the federalist era must be accounted a failure," because it was unable to create "a general sentiment against slavery" (13).

The social system based on slavery in the southern United States proved to be more durable than the early antislavery activists had imagined. In the North, where slavery had never become as solidly established as in the South, a more enlightened spirit and relentless campaigning, mainly of Quaker activists, led to gradual abolition during the decades around the revolutionary years. By 1810 about 75% of the black population in the northern states were free, but in those states where slavery was firmly entrenched opposition was strong (Kolchin 78f). In the South it was argued that abolition would ruin the economy based on labor-consuming agriculture. Although during the final decade of the eighteenth century the intellectual climate in the United States suggested that time was ripe for "reason, reform, and progress" (80), and liberal-minded people hoped that slavery would simply fade away in the course of a few more decades after the termination of the African slave trade in 1807, the system survived for number of demographic, political, and economic reasons. First, unlike in the Caribbean, the US slave population grew all by itself and did not depend on further slave imports from Africa. Secondly, the northern revolutionary liberalism did not extend far enough into the South; in fact, as a backlash against revolutionary liberalism and its supposed excesses in the last decade of the eighteenth century the intellectual climate in the South became increasingly conservative. This rising surge of conservativism also took hold of southern Protestantism. While Protestantism spread further South, it lost its earlier abolitionist stance; instead, in later antebellum years the churches became ardent defenders of the slave system, leaving opposition to slavery again to the Quakers (89). Thirdly, the rising proslavery sentiment was bolstered by the fact that the South experienced an enormous economic expansion between 1790 and 1860, which was not helpful in bringing about the demise of a tremendously profitable system. The increase of the yearly cotton production from one thousand to one million tons demanded much cheap labor in a structurally backward region exactly at the time when the African slave trade was declared illegal, so that prices for slaves increased – and the lucrative business of importing slaves was more or less clandestinely continued (Kolchin 87, 179, Zinn 167f). In the 1820s the hopes that slavery would eventually die out after the African Slave Trade Act of 1807 proved to be illusory. The antislavery movement gradually faded away while tensions between the North and the South increased over political issues like the Missouri Com-

promise of 1820, and so the national parent organization eventually dissolved in 1838 after six years of inactivity (Quarles 14).

One of the most prominent figures of this pre-1830 phase of the antislavery movement was Benjamin Lundy, a Quaker from New Jersey. Having been involved in reform movements and publications for several years, in 1821 launched *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, which he edited until his death in 1839. The outspoken language in his publications would quite likely have met with more vigorous opposition if the slaveholding South had considered the antislavery movement of the 1820s a real threat rather than "vagaries of eccentrics" (Dillon 54). Whether his stance did anything to improve the lot of African American slaves may be debatable, but Lundy must be credited for converting William Lloyd Garrison to the antislavery cause and therefore for paving the way for one of the most influential leaders of the more radical abolition movement after 1830 (Dillon 15, 132ff).

After 1830 the strategies and orientation of the abolition movement changed drastically. The Second Great Awakening of the late 1820s had initiated reform activities such as temperance, a general concern for education, women's rights, and also religious reforms. Abolitionism was among the philanthropic concerns, too, but now of a different kind. Supported and "influenced by the tactics, the style – and the success – of British abolitionists," the movement had incorporated many new philosophical influences (Walvin 167). Instead of the previous century's theocentric world picture with its predeterministic Calvinist doctrine, the movement's sometimes utopian ideals were now increasingly influenced by the Age of Reason, in particular by the idea of human perfectibility and the conviction that Christian ideals must be put to social practice. Social and individual change, inspired by this new revivalist Christianity, however, were no longer considered gradual evolutionary processes. Merton L. Dillon characterizes the emerging philosophy in the following way:

> Therefore, within the heart of orthodox Christianity there lived a spirit friendly to radical change, a spirit that could understand revolutionary thought and action because it did not shrink from violence. It was itself a philosophy acquainted with sudden, irrational change and informed with the inevitability of retribution, death and destruction. (152f)

Many abolitionist leaders were church men and, less frequently, women, so that this change in Christian ideals and philosophy found its way into the movement, too. Abolitionism now became increasingly widespread and worked at a grass-roots level; between 1830 and 1836 the number of abolitionist societies rose from 100 to more than 500 (Raeithel I: 435f). 1833 saw the foundation of the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) as a parent organization, which by 1838 had grown to 100,000 members (Adams 89). While the AASS grew rapidly in size, it took some time until it also gained public recognition. Its acceptance resulted partly from southern attempts to silence the abolitionists, which many more liberal-minded Americans saw as a violation of the rights of freedom of speech (Kraditor 6f). Approval for abolitionism increased further when the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 brought the originally distant southern problem to the homes of so far unconcerned Northerners. Up to that point, slavery and its problems had been considered as confined to the South, but from now on, escaped slaves could be tracked down throughout the US and returned to their owners, so that the North was no longer a safe haven for fugitives. This development made many Americans realize for the first time that slavery was indeed a national issue and not restricted to the South of the Mason-Dixon line.

In contrast to their predecessors, the new abolitionists stood for uncompensated, immediate, and unconditional emancipation and did not shy away from direct confrontation, which these demands were certain to provoke. They had learned this lesson from recent failures as well as from the British abolitionists, who had been successful only after having given up their position of gradual emancipation. It was only then that the British parliament had started to act, so that slavery was eventually abolished in the British Empire in 1838. The changes in abolitionist attitude and tactics were reflected by changes in rhetoric, which in turn provoked slaveholders' reactions. According to Benjamin Quarles, the literary critic and eminent abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson claimed that "loud language was needed for those whose ears were stopped with southern cotton" (Quarles 15). Two publications in particular propagated this loud language. One of them was David Walker's *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* of 1829, a militant pamphlet calling blacks to action against their oppressors. The second publication was William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper *The Liberator*, launched in Boston on January 1, 1831 and subscribed to principally by northern free blacks (Kraditor 4, Conn 300). It is this date that many scholars consider the birth date of this new phase of abolitionism, in which gradualism, moderation and the aim of colonization would be abandoned (ibid.).

Through this publication and his relentless lecturing schedule Garrison quickly established himself as one of the movement's leaders. Although his uncompromising stance would later polarize the movement and lead to fractions, for the time being his radicalism was appropriate to produce the much-needed publicity for the cause. Garrison's *Liberator* as well as other abolitionist periodicals, such as *Freedom's Journal* or *The Colored People's Press*, which were run by black editors, provided some of the stages for antislavery propaganda by both black and white authors. Between 1830 and 1863 these journals published more than 400 slave narratives of varying length (Sekora 1987: 483). Many of them had been tested before on the pulpit as oral narrations and were also reprinted as stand-alone pieces or in collections. These texts were not only widely available, but also highly successful in commercial terms and thus an immensely powerful weapon for the aims of the abolitionist movement during the thirty years before the Civil War.

This new abolition movement was by no means a monolithic, homogeneous group of likeminded people. Former slaves and women intensified their activities, although the latter still frequently had to call separate meetings or even to found societies of their own. From 1840 onwards Garrison promoted women's rights and temperance besides abolition and thus was accused of creating internal disagreements that consumed up much of the energy. He also insisted that the American Constitution was inherently a proslavery document and that, consequently, abolitionists must not associate with American politics in any way. Frederick Douglass as the most prominent black leader, on the other hand, began to disagree after his stay in England in early 1847, because he endorsed political means of resistance against slavery, including the ballot, which clashed with Garrison's strict non-voting principle. Douglass found himself increasingly estranged with Garrison and dared to express his dissent publicly. Eventually, he launched his own abolitionist periodical *The North Star* in 1847. The final breakup occurred in 1851 when Douglass openly declared that he and therefore his publication would promote the view that the Constitution could be used to promote emancipation. As a result the American Anti-Slavery Society with Garrison as its president ended its funding for Douglass' paper (Andrews 1986: 214f).

These rifts might have been more damaging to the cause than they actually were, had not the completely exaggerated southern reactions to the radical challenges from the northern abolitionists betrayed southern fear and hypocrisy about the "contented slave" and thus promoted the movement to more importance and publicity than it might have achieved otherwise (Adams 93). In addition, Nat Turner's insurrection in Virginia in the summer of 1831, and a wave of antislavery publications sent to the South had scared some southern states into enacting various laws to ban the circulation of what they considered incendiary material (Conn 304, Kraditor 6f). These sanctions and the Postmaster General's collaboration in these restrictive efforts inspired many northerners, even if not particularly sympathetic to abolition, to send petitions against this supposed assault on free speech to Congress, which was forced by the South to reject them wholesale. Out of this "gag-rule" and John Quincy Adams' tireless campaign for the First Amendment and free speech developed "priceless propaganda for the abolitionist cause" in the 1830s (Conn 304).

After a short period of social reforms in early 1830s, which were not exploited to change the system fundamentally but rather to strengthen it, the situation of black slaves in the South improved in terms of material conditions, while legislation became increasingly restrictive (Genovese 49ff). Fear of slave revolts made the South develop what scholars have termed a "siege mentality" (Walvin 169, Kolchin 198, Conn 304). This feeling became even more fervent as, after the end of the British slave system in 1838, the South of the US stood isolated in the English speaking world. Virginia barred free blacks from its territory, some states banned antislavery literature, slaves were denied access to education in general and literacy in particular, and slave mobility without white permission and control was almost nonexistent. As in the light of these facts the abolitionists' hopes of slavery's eventual peaceful demise evaporated, the rhetoric between the camps became increasingly harsh.

It was only now that sophisticated ideological justifications for the enslavement of humans were being developed. Blackness had for a long time been associated with negative characteristics, but the more sophisticated attempts to justify slavery ideologically emerged only when the institution as a social and economic system came under massive attack during the nineteenth century (Kolchin 189f). According to Walvin, "the theories follow the facts. Whatever rationale was offered for distinguishing black and white – in law, in management, in social classification – it took the form of justification of what had already emerged" (84). Northern reform movements, spurred by the Second Great Awakening during the 1820s, extended to the South, but acquired a different orientation. Kolchin points out that the North advocated a spirit of perfectionism and concomitant social reforms in education, temperance, feminism, and abolitionism, whereas in the South the emphasis lay clearly on "individual piety rather than social regeneration," and that more radical reform movements were simply nonexistent (186). Instead, the defense of slavery began to dominate southern intellectual life (ibid.). A multitude of proslavery arguments developed during the antebellum period, "some of which were overlapping and mutually reinforcing and some of which worked at cross-purposes with each other" (191).

In order to defend their system, slaveholders used practical as well as racial arguments, bridged by religious ones. The practical arguments had the advantage that they did not necessarily rest on the assumption that slavery as a system was morally justified. Two of the most prominent arguments were that only slavery could secure southern prosperity and that emancipation was impossible, because blacks could not be permitted to live freely in the United States among whites (191). Neither was it feasible to deport the millions back to

Africa so that, notwithstanding the efforts of the American Colonization Society, slavery as a system needed to stay intact to keep blacks out of, apart from, and subjugated by the dominant white society. The religious justifications were based on the Biblical precedent that Hebrews kept slaves and that Noah's son Ham had been sentenced by God himself to eternal slavery. The outright racial and racist arguments were founded on the assumption that Africans were inherently inferior to whites. Blacks were ascribed certain characteristics such as docility, superstition, savagery, lack of intellectual capabilities and a general inability to take care of themselves. This widespread "low-level form of racism" (ibid.) was supported by a new scientific racism that appropriated the supposed findings of emerging sciences such as anthropology, anatomy, and its kin phrenology (Walvin 88). These never questioned the category of race itself; it was consensus that blacks with their alleged natural inferiorities occupied the lowest level of all humanity (ibid.). Taking for granted black inferiority, proslavery whites could easily take the moral high ground and declare that slavery as a civilizing force was the best alternative for the black savage from Africa. At that point, the paternalistic social system and a missionary spirit – genuine or not – collaborated to stabilize slavery.

1.2   The development of the slave narrative

The development of the African American slave narrative from 1700 onwards was a continual process, yet considerable changes in form and emphasis make it useful to sketch it in three distinctive phases determined by historical caesuras.

In the first phase a variety of forerunners mingled to form a new literary genre, whose characteristics had consolidated by the end of the period around 1807. During that time the focus of the narratives lay on the adventures of an individual and the inhumanity of the African slave trade. After the latter was officially terminated in 1807, the output of narratives flagged for a while. The second phase between 1830 and 1865 represents the peak in terms of productivity and literary as well as social significance, because the slave narrative came to be used as an effective means of propaganda to attack the institution of slavery and to help promote the capabilities of African Americans, individually as well as communally. As the corpus of this study comprises only texts from this vital phase, the slave narrative's development in the thirty years before the Civil War deserves particular attention. In the third phase after 1865 the emphasis of the narratives shifted towards a display of blacks' economic and social achievements in American society. Historically as well as formally distinct from these three phases is the collection of oral narratives and interviews conducted in the 1930s by the Federal Writers' Project.

1.2.1   The first phase

Sekora claims that "if the story of a black man or woman was to be told at all, that story would necessarily be shaped into a popular form" (1993: 94). The slave narrative with the African American as a speaking subject is an amalgamation of three genres from the Western literary tradition, which were immensely popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, and African American forms of orality. According to Foster (1994: 24ff), elements of the pilgrim's tale, the criminal narrative and the Indian captivity narrative blend to what Theodore Parker as early as 1846 considered the first truly American literary genre (qtd. in Davis and Gates xxi).

The criminal narrative originated as didactic and religious writing. In the seventeenth century Puritan ministers began to sell their printed sermons at public executions. To these texts were appended details of the crime and a first-person confession by the criminal (Slotkin 3). In the course of their evolution these writings began to distinguish black and white, so that they became the first texts to establish the black person as narrator (Foster 1994: 36f; Sekora 1987: 489). Racism and sensationalism accompanied the criminal as well as the slave narrative from the very beginning and contributed to their commercial success. Of 46 publications about black individuals between 1675 and 1800, two thirds concern criminals, and of those, 70% report murder committed to whites, preferably white women, thus frequently adding a sexual element (Slotkin 16). In addition to a hitherto unknown black first-person perspective, the confessions introduced another trait that was to recur in the Indian captivity tale and in the slave narrative. It is what Foster calls an "assertion of humanity," or "some degree of self determination" in the sense that the narrating subjects take responsibility for themselves and their actions (1994: 39). However, in no way did the black narrators have authority over their texts. With their own death imminent, they were unable to determine freely what they said, what was actually committed to paper, what was

printed by whom, and what sort of comments and embellishments would be made in order to frame the black confession for a suitably edifying Puritan message. Least of all did the narrators participate in the financial gain the texts generated. Eventually, the degree of self determination was small indeed, but it laid the foundation for other texts to come.

The later slave narratives' typological parallels with the pilgrim's tale, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* of 1678/94 in particular, provide the most apparent link to the European literary tradition (Diedrich 277). Bunyan's popularity during the 1840s and the audience's familiarity with religious myths affected the slave narrative specifically in the 1850s (Diedrich 279; Foster 1994: 83), but the influence had started much earlier. Sekora claims that three of the four most popular texts published between 1680 and 1720 were captivity tales, while the fourth was *Pilgrim's Progress* (1993: 94f). The basic structure is an echo of the Judeo-Christian myth of man's journey from Genesis to Apocalypse and comprises four characteristic phases: a moment of recognition, the resolve to be free, the lonesome and dangerous journey, and finally deliverance (Foster 1994: 84). This structure, though with differing emphases, can be found in numerous captivity narratives (Diedrich 279) as well as later in slave narratives (cf. Dixon; Foster 1994: 84ff). These elements mature and become redefined in the narrative's generic development. The process of recognition, in the initial myth the loss of innocence, is not yet present in Briton Hammon (1760). In the later narratives usually a moment of alienation through excessive violence, confrontation with free blacks, or a growing awareness of what it means to be a slave for life triggers off the desire to be free. Frequently, this phase includes the realization that slavery is sinful and thus echoes Bunyan's protagonist's original motivation to leave the City of Destruction. Recognition is followed by the second phase, the subject's resolution to attain liberty. Actual escape, the journey, is eventually succeeded by freedom, that is, deliverance.

The Indian captivity tale with its didactic origins and incorporation of sensationalism readily provided another matrix for the slave narrative. In *The Soveraignity and Goodness of God, Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed* (1682), as one of the oldest texts, Mary Rowlandson didactically and piously recounts her experiences in captivity among the Narragansett and "transforms [them] into a sustained allegory declaring the presence of God in human affairs" (Conn 30). The result is a combination of captivity and pilgrim's tale. Episodes of captivity among Native Americans as in Cotton Mather's *Decennium Luctuosum* (1699) or John Williams' *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion* (1706) reappear in various later black texts such as Briton Hammon's *Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings* (1760), John Marrant's *Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings* (1785), and even as late as 1849 in Henry Bibb's *Narrative*. According to Sekora, "Mather's formula of trial by captivity leading to physical and spiritual salvation would be transferred from the captivities directly to the slave narratives of the abolitionist period" (1993: 96).

The Indian captivity narrative went through three different phases, which foreshadow the development of the slave narrative to some extent. While initially, in the later part of the seventeenth century, it expressed religious faith and promoted Puritan ideology, it came to be utilized as a political means in the struggles between colonial Americans, British, French and Native Americans during the following century. The relationship between the narratives and their reception was a dialectical one. The development of the genre does not only reflect the shifting political alliances, but in turn the tales were used to influence public opinion – they became propaganda (Sekora 1993: 95). After the Revolution, at the end of the eighteenth century, the captivity narratives reverberated with "the irresistible

force of American nationalism" (Van der Beets 19) and anticipated the general hatred for Native Americans, which was to reach its climax in the ideology of manifest destiny and the supposed need to clean up the plains for what white America considered civilization (ix). The third phase saw a rapid stylization, sensationalization, and fictionalization of the originally authentic and unquestioned accounts, because, like the slave narratives later, the captivity tales sold extremely well. Distortions and exaggerations, especially of cruelties committed by Natives, which had already begun in the previous phase, now came to their full bloom. Therefore, the need for authenticating prefaces and appendices increased as it did for the slave narratives about a century later (Sekora 1993: 97). As Van der Beets observes, the step from "chauvinism to commercialism" was a short one for the Indian captivity tale, so that the development into the penny dreadful and a form of sentimental novel was not surprising (25).

Besides the features from the European tradition the slave narrative contains particularly African American characteristics as well. While the narrative structure of the texts was clearly European, the common experience of denied liberty is one of the unifying black factors of the earliest narratives (Gates 1988: 128). Sekora, too, argues that "the slave narrative is born into a world of confinement – designated by otherness, plainness, facticity, and dictated forms" (1987: 488). At a deeper ideological level, this confinement or denial of freedom is based on a denial of humanity, which could only be repealed through the production of what the dominant, European, culture considered formal literature, that is, by playing by the oppressor's rules. Therefore, open display of distinctly African forms of storytelling, which were based on oral traditions, would have undermined the intention of the earliest written black texts "to celebrate the acculturation of the black man [sic] into established categories of the white social and literary order" (Andrews 1982: 8). This is also the reason why instances of African American Vernacular are exceedingly rare in antebellum narratives. At that time, orality in written texts was outside the norms accepted by a white reading audience, and therefore outside the discursive framework of literary production.

And yet, Maria Diedrich claims that the slave narrative at the junction between anonymous African American spirituals, worksongs, folktales, and sermons, and individually authored written literature contains traces of an oral tradition (33f). These are not to be found in attempts to transcribe black vernacular, however. But other typical features, such as directly addressing the reader, parallelisms, repetitions, alliterations, and rhythmic arrangements, originate from a tradition of black preaching and exhorting, with which many of the slave narrators such as Frederick Douglass, Samuel Ward, Josiah Henson, James Pennington, and others were familiar (34).

Traces of African narrative traditions are to be found elsewhere, too, namely in specific forms of figurative language. In a variety of the earlier narratives Gates identifies Bakhtin's concept of double-voicedness, which makes formally white texts speak with a black voice (1988: 131). This particular instance of heteroglossia is most apparent in what is to become the "ur-trope of Anglo-American letters," the trope of the Talking Book (ibid.).[1] In recurring scenes the illiterate protagonists of the narratives hold a book up to their ears, expecting to hear it talk to them. This element unifies the African oral tradition with the Euro-

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[1] Holquist defines heteroglossia as "the larger polyphony of social and discursive forces," as "the situation of a subject surrounded by the myriad responses he or she might make at any particular point, but any of which must be framed in a specific discourse selected from the teeming thousands available" (69ff; cf. also Bakhtin 1935).

pean written form of storytelling and appears in the texts of James Albert Gronniosaw (1770), John Marrant (1785), Ottabah Cugoano (1787), Olaudah Equiano (1789), and John Jea (1811). Its reappearance in various forms in this series of texts represents the foundation of an African American narrative tradition, which has come to be known as *Signifyin(g)*, that is, according to Gates' definition, "repetition and difference" (1988: xxv; cf. also Mitchell-Kernan 1973).

Most scholars agree that the slave narrative began in 1760 with Briton Hammon's *Narrative* and developed into a genre of its own in the following 50 years (Andrews 1986: 18; Davis and Gates 1985: xix). Foster sums up the structural characteristics of the early narratives as follows (1994: 44ff). A chronological account of the events was intended to amuse the (white) readers and encourage them to become involved in the abolitionists' cause. The subject's life before captivity served as an exposition, optionally succeeded by a description of capture and the Middle Passage; then followed the period of slavery, from which the protagonist was eventually freed and spiritually as well as materially rewarded. Authenticating documents, such as letters of reference by whites, preceded the narrative proper to lend additional credibility to the story. The first protagonists, for instance Hammon, Marrant, and Equiano, were exotic but of high social status and well educated in terms of what Foster calls their "primitive culture" (1994: 46). Accounts of extensive journeys served two functions. Traveling provided the necessary Westernization for the protagonist to be accepted by a white middle-class readership; moreover, in terms of literary tradition, it linked the texts to the well-known formulae of pilgrim's tales and captivity narratives of the Western canon. The protagonist's loss of physical freedom was apparent, but, as the prime target of attack was the slave trade, the narratives did not focus on the slave's dehumanization by the slaveholder or on the institution of slavery in general. Eventually, the protagonist would regain his – female narratives were exceedingly rare in the first phase – freedom and then convert to Christianity. In sum, the "[s]lave narrators regularly adopted the current literary conventions and made little effort to create new forms or standards" (Foster 1994: 44).

This first period of the slave narrative ended in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Escaped slaves did not stop writing in 1807 with the official termination of the African slave trade, but the time up to the beginning of the second phase were years of relative dormancy, in which the hopes that the system would crumble by itself did not materialize and only few narratives were published (Foster 1994: 52). The second, vital phase of the slave narrative began around the year 1831, when William Lloyd Garrison launched *The Liberator* in Boston and abolitionism became more vocal, radical and widespread.

1.2.2 The second phase

The new abolitionists used the printed and spoken word extensively to distribute their radical antislavery message. Although they faced massive opposition in the South as well as in the North, where Douglass, Garrison, Walker and others were repeatedly attacked, they did not back down under pressure. Their radical stance eventually generated widespread publicity and the more general sentiment against slavery that their predecessors had failed to create.

The changes in the abolitionists' aims and methods were reflected by changes in the structure of the slave narrative. It became quickly stabilized and formulaic, hence Olney's

adequate pun of the "Master Plan for Slave Narratives" (1985: 152f). This outline, which is indeed common to the majority of antebellum narratives, typically consists of the following six items (ibid.):

1. an engraved portrait of the narrator,
2. a title page,
3. one or more introductions written by white abolitionist friends of the narrator or the amanuensis,
4. an epitaph,
5. the narrative,
6. authenticating documents.

The chronological order of the narrative remained intact, but as the majority of slaves were now born in America, kidnapping and the Middle Passage no longer featured.

The "new" narrative was intended to attack the institution of slavery and its dehumanizing consequences for slaves and slaveholders alike, so that a host of stock characteristics developed. The majority of narratives begin with the words "I was born" to position the narrator within certain coordinates of place and time, even if the ex-slaves' knowledge about their birthdates were often at best vague. The texts continue with an account of the slave's parentage and the nature of the protagonist's frequently cruel master or mistress. This is succeeded by a general description of work, food, clothing, housing, religion etc. under the conditions of slavery. Then the narrator elaborates on the violence of the institution by describing instances of disruption of black and white families through sale and adultery, frequent and severe whippings, preferably with a female victim, killings of slaves, perpetual tight controls, and the denial of education. The result is the black narrator's alienation from dominant society (Foster 1994: 59), and the subsequent resolve to run away. Chronicles of futile attempts to escape enhance the impression of injustice and cruelty as they provide opportunities to describe merciless manhunts and thus to emphasize the slaves' chattel-like subhuman status. Eventually, however, the slave's journey to liberty in the North is successful. Finally, after freedom is attained, the narrator usually acquires a new last name to signify his or her "new social identity" (Olney 1985: 153).

A shift in focus also took place, but it was potentially problematic. While the earlier narratives such as Hammon's or Equiano's had focused on the individual's journey, the new slave narrative was, according to Foster, more interested in depicting the typicalness of the protagonist's experience to point out that the fault lay within the system rather than with the individual (1994: 70). Therefore, talented and skilled slaves served as a welcome defense against the challenge that blacks were supposedly naturally inferior. Yet, emphasizing an individual's abilities simultaneously isolated this individual from the enslaved masses, because only a small percentage were literate or in any other way skilled, at least by the definitions of the dominant society. In consequence, the narrators were no longer considered typical ex-slaves and so faced the problem of having to reconcile group solidarity with individual success. Worse still, as Valerie Smith argues for the case of Douglass, the slave narrator's success story potentially "provides counterevidence for his platform of radical change" (27). Through the very fact that a slave could acquire a status that would "be valued by his [sic] northern middle-class reader – physical power, perseverance, literacy – he lends credence to the patriarchal structure responsible for his oppression" (ibid.). In order to appeal to the white northern middle-class readership, the narrators "defined [themselves] according to the values of the mainstream culture" (ibid.); yet at the same time the narrators were

forced to attack some of its very structures that made oppression possible. This dilemma illustrates how difficult it was for many slave narrators to place themselves ideologically between these two poles without sacrificing either their status as a human being, acquired through the production of a literary text, or their status as a member of an oppressed minority, whose situation they aimed to advance.

William Andrews perceives the dilemma of ideological positioning, too, but he sees the shift differently. For him, the quintessential difference between the eighteenth and nineteenth century slave narratives is that the former's portrayal of "anarchic careers of escaped slaves . . . proved the necessity of maintaining the status quo in the social hierarchy", whereas the latter "would be used to justify the slave's rejection of his society's moral code" (1986: 41). While the years up to 1800 had been dominated by the black narrator's desire to be accepted as "a man and a brother" and as a reliable narrator, in the second half of the evolution "[i]nstead of defining the self according to traditional cultural models, greater and greater attention came to rest on those aspects of the self outside the margins of the normal, the acceptable, and the definable as conceived by the predominant culture" (1986: 1f). This change placed the later slave narrator into a dilemma that Andrews describes as a "no-win choice between two alienating alternatives" (1986: 6). On the one hand, the slave narrators could, in order to appear most reliable, choose a purely mimetic mode, but the bare transcription of supposedly objective facts pushed the self towards the margin, so that the narrators were likely to alienate themselves from their stories and therefore from their past. Moses Roper's *Narrative* of 1838 is a specimen of this type. In the introduction to his narrative he points out that the "determination of laying this little narrative before the public did not arise from any desire to make myself conspicuous, but with the view of exposing the cruel system of slavery" (1838: 7). On the other hand, slave narrators could assume a more egocentric position within their narrative, but then they risked emphasizing their own selves so strongly that they alienated their white readers, who were not able or willing to identify with a voice promoting values alien to their own.

Andrews claims that "the most significant black autobiographies . . . set about changing the rules by which the game was played even as they played along with it" (1986: 6). In particular after 1840 he sees a different "handling" of what he identifies as "fictive and implied readers" (1986: 29). While earlier the narrator's identification with the values and norms of the reader had been of most concern, after 1840 "black autobiographers began to declare their independence from the characterized fictive reader as a model of moral judgment" (ibid.). Not only did narrators admit transgressions that would be considered morally questionable: Bibb stole a horse, Douglass fought his master, Pennington lied about his true identity, Jacobs chose a white lover and had two children with him. These narrators also refused to express regret for their breaches of Victorian morality and propriety. Instead, they claimed a right to prioritize truth to the self over what the white readership considered proper (1986: 103). The use of this strategy may imply that the narrators had gained more control over the representation of their own lives than their predecessors, who had largely adhered to contemporary conventions. At least the post-1840s narrators became increasingly able to position themselves more independently and to create their implied readers themselves (1986: 30). Consequently, during the 1840s slave narrators began to speak with distinctive voices of their own for the first time.

Andrews identifies Douglass' *Narrative* as "the great enabling text" for this development (1986: 138). While up to the 1840s slave narrators assumed a self-effacing position that de-

nied the possibility of self-reflection, Douglass, aided by the fact that white readers were becoming increasingly abolitionized, began to prepare them for blacks' transgression of propriety. He used a political consensus and contemporary Romantic ideals to shape his *Narrative* in such a way that the "rebellion of a fractious individual against authority is translated into a heroic act of self-reliance, a re-enactment of the national myth of regeneration and progress through revolution" (1986: 124). The structure, appropriated from white mainstream discourse, opened new possibilities for the slave narrative, but it was also limiting (1986: 130). Self-reflection as well as the appeal to the reader's imagination as a mediating rather than potentially distorting instance now became sanctioned, but the underlying values were still stereotypically American (1986: 137), so that the African American narrative remained boxed in by white cultural hegemony. Yet once the direction had been taken, ex-slaves like William Wells Brown, Henry Bibb, and James Pennington explored this newfound power and authority over the text and the reader further. They moved further towards the margins of propriety in that they assumed even more egocentric positions and fashioned themselves as trickster figures who use outright deception to achieve their aims. Yet, these narrators do not break their association with their white readers, either. They acknowledge their deeds but distance their transformed free selves from their former enslaved selves' morally deviant behavior and appeal for the reader's sympathy for transgressions committed in situations of dilemma (1986: 165).

The movement towards and beyond the limits of conventions for the black autobiographer continued during the 1850s, when African Americans began to express a "deepening sense of frustration and injustice" (1986: 179). Many slave narrators now saw themselves as outsiders and began to dare to "explore the uses of marginality rather than simply deplore the fate of the marginal black man or woman" (1986: 177). The most significant development here was a movement further away from restraint, that is, away from the strategic reduction of the horrors of slavery to appear more credible towards speaking the unspeakable. As exemplified by the narratives of Solomon Northup and John Brown,[2] the black autobiographer would no longer play by the rules of propriety but violate them on purpose and claim credibility for this very reason (1986: 183). Northup, Brown, and others now revealed atrocities committed by slaveholders that the majority of earlier narrators had deemed more politic to just allude to or to leave unmentioned altogether.

This development culminated in four slave narratives published between 1855 and 1864. These are Douglass' second autobiography *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), Hiram Mattison's *Louisa Picquet, The Octoroon: A Tale of Southern Slave Life*, (1861), Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), and Jacob D. Green's *Narrative of the Life of J. D. Green, A Runaway Slave From Kentucky* (1864). The latter expands the trickster figure as well as the outsider status into a character that "lives in an amoral universal ruled by reversals of fortune; he lacks allegiances and is seemingly immune to social sanction" (Taylor 684). His "unremorseful" attitude and the fact that he plays his cunning tricks also on black victims "weakened the code of solidarity" among blacks (Andrews 1986: 207) and thus rendered his narrative unfit to advance the cause of black liberation. Not surprisingly, his narrative was only published in Britain but never in the United States, and not reprinted until Taylor's

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[2] This John Brown and his chilling narrative *Slave Life in Georgia* (1855) are unrelated to the abolitionist John Brown, who raided Harper's Ferry in 1859. According to Taylor, the text was never published in the United States until the twentieth century (319).

anthology appeared in 1999. The two female narratives represent firsts insofar as they portray the victimization and sexual oppression of slave women for the first time from a female perspective. While Picquet's story is a transcription of an interview conducted by Reverend Hiram Mattison and therefore tightly controlled to elicit some of the more savory aspects of slave concubinage, Jacobs wrote *Incidents* herself with close counsel from two female abolitionists, Amy Post and Lydia Maria Child. In order to avoid the sexual advances of her cruel master Dr. Flint, at the age of fifteen Jacobs opts for an affair with a white man, with whom she has two children. Knowing that as a female slave she has little choice regarding her sexual freedom, at least she is able to undermine Flint's power over her. Though hesitatingly – her book was initially published under the pseudonym Linda Brent – Jacobs admits her "fallen" status in terms of Victorian standards of "true woman-hood" characterized by piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity (cf. Welter 1976), but she draws the veil over the more shocking details and appeals to the reader for sympathy in her dilemma. Andrews hypothesizes that it was the "sense of an empathetic female audience [as embodied by Post and Child], not an interrogating male one" as in Picquet's case (1986: 247), which made it possible for Jacobs to speak about her story of abuse. Her implied reader is an empathetic women-identified one, whom she tries to introduce to a "community of confidence and support" that will listen to her secrets without condemning her transgressive behavior (1986: 254).

A few years before Douglass published his second autobiography *My Bondage and My Freedom* in 1855, he had parted with the community of Garrisonian abolitionism, and therefore felt the need to revise the significance of his past (1986: 217). In *Bondage* he emphasizes his darker "satanic, destructive potential," which he does not "try to explain away as a temporary aberration brought on by the extreme pressures of slavery" as William Wells Brown or Josiah Henson did (1986: 229). Instead of trying to appeal to white readers' sensibilities and norms, Douglass revised his earlier story of individual ascent, which, according to Stepto, must lead either to solitude or to alienation (1991: 167), into one of immersion in order to "work[. . .] his way toward the center of a new [black] group identity from the margins of his Garrisonian past" (Andrews 1986: 239).

The years from 1850 onwards thus saw another level of the slave narrators' individual ideological positioning vis-à-vis the predominantly white readership. Neither did white cultural hegemony over the depiction of the black experience disappear, nor were the black narrators able to speak out completely independently from the language of institutionalized abolitionism, but the road towards greater independence in terms of values and hence in ideology had opened.

If Douglass' *Narrative* of 1845 embodies a turning point in the development of the fugitive slave narrative, the question remains what exactly makes it so. Obviously, all narratives involve a process of reconstruction of the narrator's slave past through language, in the course of which events and states are not merely objectively presented, as the majority of the earlier narrators claimed. In fact these elements are selected, ordered, and encoded in language. Andrews draws attention to the fact that all of these processes are meaningful, and that gaps and deviations bear special significance (1986: 8f). It should be added that each realization in terms of selection, ordering, and encoding represents a choice to which alternatives with a different significance exist. However, while this applies to all narratives, Douglass' text must stand out against its predecessors. Andrews tries to explain its landmark position by employing categories from pragmatics. Borrowing from Searle's terminol-

ogy, he considers slave narratives speech acts of different kinds that explore and play upon the direction of fit between the world and the word (1986: 82ff). Until Douglass' *Narrative,* slave autobiographies were primarily of the assertive kind. This means that the slave narrator worked in a purely mimetic orientation and tried to make his or her words conform to the world (1986: 83). The assertive mode is a way of "channeling and controlling the reader's response" (1986: 84). Objectivity and reliability were the predominant aims. In a few of the more polemical narratives Andrews discerns directive speech acts, where the world of the reader is called upon to adjust to the narrator's words (ibid.). However, both modes tie the narrator to an "alien ("distanciating") locus of reference and signification," that is, to cultural norms and values controlled by white discourse that also governs the "linkage of words to world in either direction" (1986: 83).

While Douglass' text is certainly not able to break this linkage, it paves the way for the slave narrative as a different kind of speech act that is not bound to questions of fitness. This expressive type of speech act focuses on psychological states. If it is used explicitly, it depends on the use of verbs that presuppose the truth of the projected proposition. Whenever a speaker states a proposition that depends on an expressive speech act, fitness of the proposition is assumed. Moreover, as the proposition depends grammatically on the presupposing verb, it also becomes "epistemologically relative to [the narrator's] psychological disposition" (Andrews 1986: 85). As a consequence "neither the assertion of the statement's validity nor the directing of the world's acceptance of that validity is at issue anymore" (1986: 85). What is at issue and becomes foregrounded is the narrator's act of perception and reflection on the proposition. The use of this kind of speech act signals "the beginning of more inwardly reflective than outwardly directed modes of speech action" (ibid.).

In addition to Searle's classification of speech acts, Andrews employs another term from pragmatics. He claims that for slave narrators different "appropriateness conditions" applied than to white autobiographers (1986: 26). The latter usually did not encounter doubts about the veracity of their narratives, because their readership considered them peers. For a slave narrative, however, to "become operative as a linguistic act" in the first place, the black narrator, who by definition was not a member of the reader's peer group, invariably needed authentication by white sponsors. Even the slightest doubts about the narrative's truth could not be tolerated and needed to be warded off, because fictionalization and outright forgery would discredit the entire abolitionist movement, whose protagonists always claimed to reveal the truth about the system's inhuman character. The allegedly fictional *Narrative of James Williams, An American Slave Who Was for Several Years a Driver on a Cotton Plantation in Alabama* (1839) is only the most prominent example of such suspicious texts, which were quickly withdrawn from sale when absolute authenticity could not be guaranteed and the text was thus considered fictional. Gates claims that Williams' text "established what our generation of readers think of as the repeated structure of the slave narrative. Had his narrative been true . . . Douglass would have found it necessary to share the great platform of fame with Williams, rather than appearing to come out of nowhere onto the stage of African-American letters" (1990: 53). Strangely though, Williams' text remains filed as a fraudulent autobiography instead of being honored as the first African American novel. Although the production of literature was considered a sign of reason and therefore of being human, a fictional text that purported to be true was not acceptable as it did not fit into the contemporary literary paradigms, nor did it suit the abolitionist strategies. Eventually, the appropriateness conditions – or discursive con-

straints – in operation at the time helped Douglass' *Narrative* acquire its position as a milestone in African American literature, as which it is still considered today.

When the white reading audience in the North had become prepared to accept increasingly distinctive and self-confident black writings, the amalgamation of white forms and the black experience to create propaganda proved extremely successful. Douglass' *Narrative* sold 13,000 copies in the first year after its publication (Conn 187), went through seven editions in four years (Foster 1994: 22), and sold 30,000 copies within five years (Quarles 64ff). William Wells Brown's *Narrative* went through four editions in only two years (ibid.). Moses Roper's and Henry Bibb's narratives sold equally well (Davis and Gates 1985: xvi). Ironically, the success of the original narratives was topped by a novel that capitalized on the black experience, namely Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which sold 150,000 copies within seven months of its publication in 1852 (Stowe 9). And yet, slave narrators in turn again profited from Stowe's accomplishment. Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* of 1853, ghostwritten by David Wilson, claimed to be "Another Key to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" and sold 27,000 copies within the first two years of its publication. Josiah Henson, too, claimed to be the original Uncle Tom and his second autobiography *Truth Stranger Than Fiction*, published in 1855 with a preface by Harriet Beecher Stowe, allegedly sold over 100,000 copies (Taylor 720). Critics have frequently compared the narratives' popularity to that of the Western or the detective novel (Davis and Gates 1985: xv; Bontemps 1969: xviii), so that it is safe to assume that many of them would have entered the bestseller lists of their time, if those had existed in the nineteenth century.

In the years between 1830 and 1865 the slave narrative established itself as a popular genre that had to bear a host of political implications. It was used by abolitionists, black and white, who had one great common aim, but their ideological positions were usually not congruent, if black ideology was in demand at all. Typically, white abolitionists demanded of slave narrators as John A. Collins allegedly did of Douglass: "Give us the facts, we will take care of the philosophy" (*Bondage* 281). The amalgamation of white forms with the black experience within a predominantly white middle-class movement made the ideological positioning of the black narrating subject against a white value system a matter of tension. The question of how slave narrators used language to situate themselves within the coordinates of this white system without sacrificing solidarity with still enslaved African Americans is one of the concerns of this study.

1.2.3 The slave narrative after 1865

With the end of the Civil War and the emancipation of the black population the most immediate aims of the abolitionist movement had been achieved. After the Civil War slave narratives did not cease to be written and published, but they never reached the same level of popularity as their antebellum precursors (Yetman 536). As the sociohistorical context changed, the narratives changed as well. While the pre-war narrative had focused on the dehumanizing effects of slavery on human beings, it now downplayed the horrors of slavery and instead emphasized blacks' achievements in terms of the socio-economic standards of white society. Elizabeth Keckley's *Behind the Scenes* (1868) is a case in point. She anticipates Booker T. Washington when she says that she "had been raised in a hardy school" (19). She adds that despite "all the wrongs that slavery heaped upon me, I can bless it for one thing – youth's important lesson of self-reliance" (19f). In Keckley's autobiography Andrews per-

ceives a shift from idealist discourse with internal standards of morality as in Jacobs, towards a materialist discourse (1993b: 483), where the protagonist adapts to the external standards of the marketplace (1993b: 480). In 1901 Booker T. Washington repeats the metaphor of the "school of American slavery" for the black population of the US (Washington 16) and claims that the blacks' progress and the possibility to exercise their political rights depend, among other parameters, on the accumulation of property (243ff).

Upward mobility was central to many of the postwar narratives. Some narratives' titles, such as Peter Randolph's *From Slave Cabin to the Pulpit* (1893), John Mercer Langston's *From the Virginia Plantation to the National Congress* (1894), Joseph Vance Lewis' *Out of the Ditch: A True Story of an Ex-Slave* (1910), or Robert Anderson's *From Slavery to Affluence* (1927), illustrate this development. This black adaptation to white middle-class materialist standards was logically extended in James Weldon Johnson's fictional *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1912), where the protagonist eventually rejects his African American heritage completely and passes for white, notwithstanding his qualms about the decision. Andrews claims that "[g]iven the changed sociopolitical circumstances, it is not surprising to find the postwar slave narrators treating slavery more as an economic proving ground than an existential battleground" (1993a: 83).

But the postwar slave narrative did more than just promote African American material achievements. Geographical and social mobility of ex-slaves generated two of the most outstanding themes in African American literature, or, according to Stepto, "pregeneric myths," and thus informed the production of black fiction (1991: xvff). The postwar narrative had inherited these themes from its predecessors and by continuing them, albeit with significant transformations, provided essential links to later black literature. Andrews argues that, while the antebellum narrative between 1840 and 1860 was written into a world of romantic conventions (1993a: 78), the perspective on slavery underwent a revision and became increasingly pragmatic. This process eventually enabled the rise of an African American literary realism, of which *Up From Slavery* is a major proponent. Fictional autobiographies such as Charles Chesnutt's *The Conjure Woman* (1899) and Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* "helped preserve Afro-American realism as a literary tradition, a bridge between the antebellum and modern eras, that [. . .] enables the transposing of the 'apparently incoherent' slave songs of Douglass's *Narrative* into the *Song of Solomon*" and thus into modern African American fiction (Andrews 1993a: 89).

This first chapter has provided a historical account of the African American slave narrative as a propagandistic means of resistance against slavery in the United States. After a sketch of the political and ideological climate the American antislavery movement was subject to, the historical development of the slave narrative with its origins in European literary traditions and African storytelling has been retraced from the beginnings in the seventeenth century to its significance for early African American fiction in the twentieth century. The African American slave narrative thus has been embedded into its historical as well as in its literary context.

2. Discourse, power, and ideology in the slave narrative

In its most vital and productive phase the slave narrative was used as a means of propaganda against the social system in the South of the United States. And yet, although these texts originate from a distinctive historical period and represent the origins of African American literature, neither scholars of history nor of literature were initially particularly eager to accept them as objects of study in their respective disciplines. The controversies over authenticity, historical usefulness and literary quality of the slave narratives reflect ongoing struggles over power, control, truth, and ideology that also concern the pre-Civil War narratives of the corpus of the present study. These issues of power, control, truth, and ideology largely determine to which discourses the narratives were admitted at what time and what kind of questions can be asked about the texts. As a preliminary to an analysis of the language of slave narratives it is indispensable to define how some of these often intuitively used terms are to be understood.

2.1   The production of disciplinary knowledge

The fact that slave narratives were for a long time excluded from the literary as well as the historical canon implies more about the predominant paradigms in terms of authority and authenticity in the particular disciplines than about the quality of the sources themselves. Historiography about slavery was for a long time dominated by white scholars, who, at least up to the 1950s, hardly ever took the allegedly subjective first-person accounts by African Americans into consideration. This applied to the WPA narratives, which were mostly unpublished then, as well as to the narratives of the pre-Civil War period. Blassingame asserts that of the sixteen state studies about plantation slavery published between 1902 and 1972 only three "drew even moderately on slave testimony" (1985: 79). What Du Bois wrote in 1935 about the Reconstruction era also applied to early historiography about slavery: when writers gathered evidence "the chief witness . . . the emancipated slave himself has been almost barred from the court" (1935: 721). Until the 1970s, almost exclusively the planters' views were accepted as useable sources on slavery and therefore dominated the discourse around this field of knowledge, while slave sources were considered subjective, unreliable and not representative (Vann Woodward 1985: 48ff). The reasons for this exclusion of slave sources from the discourses of history lie in the white scholars' intuition about the power of the texts and a fair bit of fear for their authority in their disciplines. Alternative sources would have resulted in different systematic structures of knowledge, values, and belief, that is, ideologies, which determine access to and power over institutions (cf. Carter and Nash 1990: 21). As these were not to be shared with the African American population, their perspective needed to be excluded.

For a long time the dominant historical discourse considered African Americans as childlike and happy "Sambos." Drawing only from slaveholders' sources, Ulrich Bonnell Phillips characterized African American slaves in 1919 in the following way.

> [S]laves were negroes, who for the most part were by racial quality submissive rather than defiant, light-hearted instead of gloomy, amiable and ingratiating instead of sullen, and whose very defects invited paternalism rather than repression. (341f)

He continues his racist depiction of the idyllic antebellum South by setting whites apart as the role model to be followed.

> Each white family served very much the function of a modern social settlement, setting patterns of orderly, well bred conduct which the negroes were encouraged to emulate; . . . On the whole the plantations were the best schools yet invented for the mass training of that sort of inert and backward people which the bulk of the American negroes represented. (343)

Consequently, African Americans were treated as if they were still "in a backward state of civilization" (Phillips 342). While they supposedly needed training in the form of benevolent parental guidance to help them through "their slow process of transition from barbarism to civilization" (ibid.), they could easily be denied access to all kinds of institutions. As long as slaves and ex-slaves were not allowed to speak for themselves as subjects, but were treated as objects – made by the Southern system, to be sure, they could not endanger the prevailing ideological models and therefore could not threaten the power structures of the societal status quo. The logic behind this is cynically flexible: those who have power over institutions define the qualities of those who do not, as well as the conditions of access. Due to this white assessment of the ex-slaves, African Americans were nominally free after 1865, but not considered fit for "civilization." Therefore, as long as they needed training, they could be systematically excluded from power positions from which they would have been able to change the rules that had defined civilization in the first place. Although the more blatantly racist assumptions became unfashionable during the 1930s and 40s, later historians like Kenneth Stampp and Stanley Elkins still examined slavery from the master's perspective and saw the slave as a victim and object (cf. Kolchin 133ff). Elkins' now infamous thesis that slaves uncritically internalized their masters' ideals and became emasculated and psychologically damaged "Sambos" was one of the results (Elkins: 86ff).[3]

Western historiography was dominated by examination. This technique "to extract and constitute knowledge" tends to objectify (Foucault 1979: 185), that is, (i) to make objects or cases of the individuals or groups it speaks about (Fairclough 1992: 52ff) and (ii) to claim to be objective, that is, neutral, truthful, and empirically reliable. Despite more balanced contributions to African American history such as Myrdal (1944) and Franklin (1947) as well as Starling's important doctoral dissertation *The Slave Narrative* (1946), objectification remained the dominant mode and possibly reached its peak in Fogel's and Engerman's detailed cliometric account of slave economy in *Time on the Cross* in 1976. For the slave to emerge as subject, it needed the recognition of confessional discourse, under which rubric the slave narrative as a first-person account falls. As late as in the beginning 1970s the paradigm began to shift towards that mode, so that oral as well as written slave sources were increasingly used to rectify an image of the slave system that had been almost exclusively constructed from the slaveholders' perspective. Eugene Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (1972) is a prominent specimen. Its subtitle *The World the Slaves Made* adequately illustrates this changed perspective: slaves become – grammatically as well as epistemologically – subjects and creative. Further strong examples for this shift are, among others, Blassingame's *The Slave Community* (1972) and Rawick's *From Sundown to Sunup: The Making of the Black Community* (1972) as an introduction to his enormous 19-volume work

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[3] Cf. Blassingame for a discussion of the resilience of the "Sambo"-stereotype in white literature and historiography (1972: 134ff).

The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography (1972-76). Blassingame's "Critical Essay on Sources" in the revised and enlarged edition of *The Slave Community* (1979) provides an excellent overview of the historiographical sources up to that point, while Littlefield (1993) critically revisits the development of historiography about slavery between Phillips and Fogel and Engerman.

Exclusion from specific disciplines is by no means accidental; it is systematic and a manifestation of ideology. By excluding slave narratives because of their allegedly slanted views on slavery, white historiographers like Phillips implicitly admitted that language has the power to create a world. This world, created from slave sources, would stand as an alternative interpretation of slavery and challenge white authority over history, which then could no longer claim to provide an objective – meaning: the only – representation of reality. Authority and power, subject to struggle in any case, would need to be shared. As early as 1933 Carter Woodson noted that history textbooks tended to neglect African achievements (Andrews, Foster, and Harris eds. 360). Black historiography, on the other hand, did exist but it took place almost in total isolation from the mainstream (ibid.). Mills claims, in more abstract terms, that it is characteristic of "[d]isciplines [to] allow people to speak in the true, that is, within the realm of what is considered true within that discipline, but they also exclude from consideration other knowledges which might have been possible" (1997: 69). This technique of exclusion has been analyzed in a colonial context in what Said and Spivak (1985) have defined as "othering," a process by which "imperial discourse creates its others," frequently "in order to confirm its own reality" (Ashcroft et al. 1998: 171ff). Through this systematic exclusion boundaries, which do not have corresponding categories in nature, are socially constructed. Thus, for instance, ethnicity, or rather race as a "binary distinction between 'civilized' and 'primitive'" is discursively created (198). The same applies in principle to the admission of particular texts to the literary canon while others remain barred. The common denominator of exclusion is a constant struggle over power. The theoretical and ideological implications of this process are stunning and have been explored to a great extent in feminist and post-colonial studies, but for obvious reasons of focus, only those that have an immediate bearing on this study should be alluded to here.

Based on Foucault, Norman Fairclough claims that the use of language is a social as well as a discursive practice.[4] It is social because linguistic interaction is one of the predominant factors in establishing and negotiating human relationships. At the same time, the code, that is, a particular language, provides options, such as genres or registers, from which speakers choose according to their situational needs and individual linguistic abilities. These options have developed over time in social interaction, so that their application in a given situation is socially controlled and sanctioned. Therefore, language use according to situation becomes also a discursive practice. Register and discourse are by no means identical, however. While register is language use according to situation, discourse has a bearing on registers, yet it incorporates more than just language. Hodge and Kress argue that "discourse refers to the process of semiosis [i.e. text production among other forms of semiosis] rather than its product (i.e. text)" (1988: 264).

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[4] Fairclough uses several sources from Foucault for the elaboration of his analytical concept. One of the most influential texts is Foucault's lecture *L'ordre du discours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), variously translated into English and published as *The Order of Discourse* as well as *The Discourse on Language*.

Discourse can be considered in its entirety as well as in distinctiveness (Mills 1997: 62; Ivanic 1998: 17). Discourse in its entirety can be defined as a "set of rules and procedures for the production of particular discourses" (Mills 1997: 62).

> A [particular] discourse is a set of sanctioned statements which have some institu-
> tionalised force, which means that they have a profound influence on the way that
> individuals act and think. What constitutes the boundaries of a discourse is very un-
> clear. However, we can say that discourses are those groupings of statements which
> have similar force – that is, they are grouped together because of some institutional
> pressure, because of a similar provenance or context, or because they act in a similar
> way. (ibid.)

A variety of procedures regulates the production of discourse. These include constraints on who can say what on which occasion, oppositions between discourses, such as those of truth and untruth, the attribution of authorship, boundaries between disciplines, the attribution of canonical status, and constraints on access to specific discursive practices (Fairclough 1992: 51).

Any text as a discursive practice is controlled and constrained by these mechanisms. A few examples from the discourse on slavery may illustrate these regulatory procedures. Louisa Picquet's slave narrative demonstrates that it was not possible to spell out publicly particular incidents that involved potentially problematic or taboo issues, such as aspects concerning the female body. When Picquet describes a whipping she received, her interlocutor, Reverend Mattison, is not loath to raise the readers' curiosity by asking: "How were you dressed – with thin clothes or how?" (12). Picquet affirms and adds "with low-neck'd dress." Mattison poses further questions pertaining to the abuse of the female body ("Did he whip you hard, so as to raise marks?"), to all of which Picquet complies to answer; in fact, she is so compliant that at times she even provides information that Mattison does not specifically ask for (cf. "naked" below).

> "Then he came to me in the ironin'-room, down stairs, where I was, and whip me
> with the cowhide, *naked*, so I'spect I'll take some of the marks with me to the grave.
> One of them I know I will." [Here Mrs. P. declines explaining further how he
> whipped her, though she had told our hostess where this was written; but it is too
> horrible and indelicate to be read in a civilized country.] Mrs. P. then proceeds, "He
> was very mad, and whipped me awfully. That was the worst whippin' I ever had."
>
> Q. –"Did he cut through your skin?"
>
> A. –"Oh yes; in a good many places. . . ."   (14f, italics added)

The repeated allusions to the female body, to skin, to dress, and to injury create a sexual subtext to these incidents, which, for Victorian times, touched upon the borders of impropriety for a public discourse. Robin Winks' characterization of the slave narrative as the "pious pornography of their day" does not seem very wide off the mark (vi). The point here is, however, that Picquet is presented as apparently deeming the unveiling of her injuries fit for private female discourse. It is not the case that the subject can never be spoken about at all, but it is an issue of who can say what to whom where and when. Arguably, by intruding into Picquet's narrative flow, Mattison foregrounds this gap in her story so much that it becomes a stumbling block, which is even typographically set apart from the narrative by squared brackets. The question remains whether he or Picquet or both do not deliberately play with restrictions and expectations in order to tease the readers' fantasies – and to raise the sales. After all, Picquet's narrative was abolitionist propaganda, but also an attempt to

raise money in order to buy her enslaved mother. Less obvious but still telling absences about sexual transgressions against propriety can be found in Jacobs' *Incidents* as well, to which several scholars have drawn special attention (Andrews 1986: 243ff). Jacobs repeatedly alludes to the "vile language" and the "foul words" Dr. Flint whispers in her ears, but the words themselves are never quoted. Yet, in private, Amy Post confides to the reader, Jacobs "said, 'You know a woman can whisper her cruel wrongs in the ear of a dear friend much easier than she can record them for the world to read'"(305).

Disciplinary boundaries create and regulate particular discourses as well. The problem of boundaries is illustrated by the (mis-)treatment of slave narratives by literary as well as historiographical discourse. Originally, neither of the disciplines felt responsible for the texts. A discipline being, according to the *OED*, "the system of order and strict obedience to rules enforced among pupils, soldiers or others under authority," this disregard for slave narratives is characteristic. Slave narratives lacked this strict sense of obedience to one particular set of rules. For the literary camp the texts were lacking in quality, because the majority did not use traditional devices and structures that the authorities considered literary, while the historiographical camp judged the texts as not representative and subjective. Both disciplines excluded them for a long time and produced their respective disciplinary knowledges without them. The regulatory procedure at work in the shaping of a discourse, literary of historiographical, is the denial of canonical status to these particular texts.

In how far access to discursive practices is a also technique of control can be seen in the denial of education for slaves. Slaveholders understood very well that education meant power, so they aimed to keep their slaves ignorant and thus subjugated. Slave literacy was considered dangerous for the system and was therefore feared and suppressed. On a day-to-day level slaveholders worried that reading the "wrong" kind of books, among them incendiary texts such as David Walker's *Appeal* or Douglass' *The Heroic Slave*, but also newspapers, and even sections from the Bible would cause discontent among the slaves. Moreover, literate slaves could and did use their writing skills to forge liberating documents such as passes and free papers (Duitsman Cornelius 3ff). In the middle of the eighteenth century these fears motivated South Carolina and Georgia to enact the first repressive laws and local ordinances against black literacy. Other states followed, and after Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831, the laws in the Lower as well as Upper South became even more restrictive while public opinion hardened, too (Genovese 561ff). Only Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee resisted the pressure to establish legal restrictions. Du Bois estimates that, nevertheless, about five percent of the slave population were literate; Duitsman Cornelius even suggests ten percent, because, as she claims, the restrictions were never as complete as the majority of historians have made them appear (Genovese 563; Du Bois 638; Duitsman Cornelius 8f, 33ff).

Related to the practical reasons for denying slaves education in general and literacy in particular are concepts from the European Enlightenment that equated literacy, as the outward manifestation of reason, with full humanity. Unlike European societies, the organization of most African societies did not rely on the written word. In Western terms, they were considered illiterate and consequently incapable of producing formal literature, which served as "one of the most important signs of the status of Africans and African Americans as lesser human beings" (Andrews et al., eds. 1997: 443). As early as 1620 Francis Bacon claimed that the difference between civilized Europe and "the most barbarous districts of New India . . . comes not from soil, from climate, not from race, but from the arts" (*The*

New Organon qtd. in Davis and Gates 1985: xxii). In 1753 David Hume explains the superiority of whites by what Gates calls a "fundamental identity of complexion, character and intellectual capacity" (Gates 1987: 18). Hume states that "there was never a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufacturers amongst them, no arts, no sciences" ("Of National Characters", qtd. in Gates 1987: 18). What resulted was a Catch-22-like situation in which Africans were denied membership in the human community, because the alleged absence of verbal art signified lacking intellectual capabilities, so that enslavement was entirely justifiable. Once enslaved, blacks were denied education, so that Western standards of human-ness could not be achieved, which in turn proved black inferiority. Against this background "it is obvious that the creation of formal literature could be no mean matter in the life of the slave, since sheer literacy of writing was the very commodity that separated animal from human being, slave from citizen, object from subject" (Gates 1987: 24f.). In other words, "the slave narrative represents the attempts of blacks to *write themselves into being*" (Davis and Gates 1985: xxiii; emphasis original).

What emerges is a complex system of denial, prohibition and exclusion that informs the various overlapping discourses around slavery. Access to certain practices is denied to a specific ethnic group, so that the required qualifications that could provide entry, and therefore a position of power, cannot be attained. Education was legally denied, so that the majority of slaves remained illiterate. Those five to ten percent that could write were of course not representative of the average plantation slave in the Deep South. Much less so was the even smaller percentage of those who succeeded in escaping to the North – according to Starling about 50.000 slaves (1988: 235) – and who, on top of these no mean achievements, were able to write their autobiographies and have it published. While the argument of lacking statistical representativeness was used by historians to ignore slave accounts, literary critics claimed lacking quality, but the mechanics of denying access were the same: exclusion from both orders of discourse was ultimately founded on the denial of education according to Western standards. As if these mechanisms had not sufficiently suppressed and discredited the voice of the slave and consequently vindicated its exclusion, further constraining procedures were at work as well, namely that of attribution of authorship, and, ultimately, truth.

The problematic issue of authorship and authenticity of slave narratives provided historians with an additional justification for their disregard of the texts. A slave narrative could only unfold its potential persuasive power if the events it related were accepted as true. The majority of slave narratives, however, were *not* accepted as true and authentic *per se*, their authorship and the authenticity of the events that were related invariably needed validation by white sponsors. Sekora claims that "[n]ot black storytelling but white authentication made for usable narratives" (1987: 497). Slave autobiographers who could not prove their identity and their part in the production of the narrative faced doubts and even exclusion until quite recently. Ongoing discussions about the authenticity of James Williams' *Narrative*, already referred to above, or about Lydia Maria Child's role in the production of Harriet Jacobs' text prove this point. Since members of an ethnic minority were defined as outsiders to the dominant discourse, they could not by themselves produce utterances that were counted as authentic within the discourses to which they aspired to belong. What a member of the marginalized group needed was a white seal of approval that certified the production of the text, no matter whether it was written by the slave himself or herself or if

it was an as-told-to experience. Both types of slave narrative could be accepted as true as long as they were accompanied by sufficient authenticating documents, preferably letters by whites who had known the slaves while they were still in captivity. Andrews' discussion of different appropriateness conditions for black and white autobiographers has shown that the latter did not face doubts about the veracity of their texts and were therefore admitted much more easily to their respective canon.

The concept of truth itself, however, was never questioned, as introductory or appended remarks by white sponsors show. In his introduction to Henry Bibb's *Narrative* Lucius C. Matlack writes that "[t]he fidelity of the narrative is sustained by the most satisfactory and ample testimony. Time has proved its claims to truth" (ii). Northup's ghostwriter David Wilson asserts "[t]hat he [Northup] has adhered strictly to the truth the editor, at least, who has had an opportunity of detecting any contradiction or discrepancy in his statements, is well satisfied" (xv). Moses Roper declares in the introduction to his *Narrative* that it is his "earnest wish to lay this narrative before my friends as an impartial statement of facts" (8). Thomas Prince as the writer of the introduction to the first edition seconds: "Of the narrative itself, it is not necessary that I should say much. It is his own production, and carries with it internal evidence of truth" (5). And Amy Post attests that Jacobs' *Incidents* represents "a truthful record of her eventful life" (Jacobs 305). The examples that could be quoted are legion but this handful may suffice to illustrate that the claim to objective truth was central for the rhetorical power of the narratives.

Both camps in the struggle over slavery were aware of the power of the slave narrative and the centrality of appropriating truth, as reactions of the proslavery front prove. As early as 1856 the *Southern Literary Messenger* understood that "literature has been the most powerful weapon which the enemies of African slavery have used in their attacks" (qtd. in Davis and Gates 1985: xvii). An additional indicator of the popularity and effectiveness of the slave narratives was provided indirectly by the multitude of proslavery Southern romances published as a corrective to the depiction of the slave South as a sink of iniquity (xvii). One example is David Brown's anti-abolitionist novel *The Planter* (1853), in which the author makes the following claim.

> This boasted [i.e. abolitionist] literature represents the condition of the Southern slave as enormously wretched; and the true facts appearing will be received as evidences of the enormous wickedness of abolition literature. The time is approaching for the reaction to commence. This truthful little work is designed to accelerate it, by showing that the world abounds with worse evils far, than Southern slavery, even as falsely represented by its calumniators. If it do a little to arrest the progress of error, and to induce the public mind to think soberly as it ought to think, the object of the writer will be attained. (4)

The quote illustrates how the proslavery camp tried to monopolize the concept of truth for its aims, too. In this sociohistorical context the characterization of a fictional work as "truthful" and abolitionist literature as "false" shows how contested this field of argument was – and what an important role semantics played in this contest .

It is not necessary to recapture further the arguments between those who criticized the narratives as "overdrawn, relying heavily upon the pathological – tales of miscegenation, sadistic masters, separation of families, harsh treatment, and cruel punishment" (Quarles 65) and those who saw them as authentic historical documents as well as legitimate "weapons in the warfare" against slavery (ibid.). The sources quoted above suggest two conclusions.

First, slave narratives, despite the limitations and constraints for their production and credibility, were considered (dangerously) powerful in terms of publicity and emotional impact by abolitionists and Southern proslavery advocates alike. Second, while the concept of truth was not questioned in itself, truth became the central battleground because both parties understood how crucial it was for the success of their respective campaigns.

2.2   Truth, reality, and ideology

The centrality of the claim to truth[5] for pro- as well as for antislavery discourse requires that the concept be discussed and defined for the present study, yet without foraging too deeply into philosophical areas about epistemological relativism. "Truthfulness" for slave narrators, abolitionists, and proslavery ideologues alike meant that language was able to render an objective representation of reality. While each party accused their respective opponents of arbitrarily distorting the truth, the possibility of a seamless fit between the world and language was never questioned. It is through post-structuralist theory that the assumption of a one-to-one relationship between signifier and signified, which Hodge and Kress describe as "naïve realism" (122), and with it terms such as *truth*, *reality* and *objectivity*, have rightly come to be problematized. Post-structuralist criticism and deconstructive practice have helped to question the "naïve belief in the transparency of the signifier and the instant accessibility of the signified," and thus have shown a way to expose what ideology tends to repress (Eagleton 1986a: 153). According to Eagleton, "[t]o 'deconstruct' . . . is, so to speak, to reverse the imposing tapestry in order to expose in all its unglamorously dishevelled tangle the threads constituting the well-healed image it presents to the world" (1986b: 80).

As the participants in the discourses around slavery did not dismiss truth as metaphysical, the concept must be taken into account. Yet, for the study of the language of slave narratives it is not necessary to tackle the philosophical question how the truth value of a given proposition may be ascertained and what constitutes a fact. It must be clear that truth is not unproblematic, transparent and intrinsic to an utterance but is a function of the discourse to which the utterance is being ascribed. Foucault elaborates on truth thus.

> Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraints. . . . Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Rabinow, ed. 72f.)

Truth and reality, according to Hodge and Kress, are categories present within any process of semiosis and "always subject to competing forces" (122). The authors define 'truth' as a situation in which the participants in a process of semiosis "accept the system of classifications of the mimetic plane" (ibid.). Through the term *reality* social interactants describe the part of the classificatory system that is momentarily "at play" and which is considered "secure" (ibid.). When the participants of the interaction accept something as true "there seems to them a perfect fit between the system of classification and the objects which that system describes: a relation which seems at once transparent, natural and inevitable" (ibid.). Hodge and Kress conclude in the following way.

> 'Truth' and 'reality' are therefore categories, from a semiotic point of view, which mark agreement over or challenge to the contemporary state of the semiotic system. (ibid.)

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[5] Assuming that it has become sufficiently clear that the terms *truth*, *reality*, *objectivity* and *fact* are considered problematic and contested rather than as self-evident categories, I have refrained from marking them typographically, as do other authors like Hodge and Kress.

To this definition needs to be added the social status of the interactants, which also has a bearing on whether something is accepted as true. This includes parameters such as ethnicity, age, class, and gender. That is, before (dis-)agreement can take place, a speaking party must be accepted as such; it must be legitimized to take part in that particular semiotic system in the first place. Truth and, by implication, falsehood therefore signify (dis)agreement over the semiotic system, to which given interactants have acquired access. Whenever the terms *truth* and *reality* are used from now on, these definitions apply. Neither of the terms will be understood as intrinsically objective, unproblematic and transparent, but they will always signify that they are part of a specific discourse in which the making of a given utterance is considered acceptable.

This relative view of truth has implications for the understanding of the term *ideology*, definitions of which are manifold and themselves subject to changing ideological positions. If truth depends on agreement over the semiotic system, the Marxist position that ideology is false consciousness cannot be maintained (cf. Hawkes 4). It also invalidates the position of the Frankfurt School, which defines ideology as "communicative structures systematically distorted by power relations" (Honderich 392). Carter and Nash's definition of ideology as the "politically dominant set of values and beliefs . . . constructed in all texts especially in and through language" is more useful, because it emphasizes the role of language and is not based on the claim that there exists an objectively recordable material reality (21). And yet it has catch of its own. Groups or individuals that are not politically dominant hold values and beliefs as well, and there are no intrinsic reasons why these beliefs should not be seen as ideologies, too. For the purpose of this study the relatively broad definition of ideology as "a collection of beliefs and values held by an individual or a group for other than purely epistemic reasons" applies best (Honderich 392). While it does not depend on a claim to absolute truth, it leaves space for oppositional ideologies, which is essential in a field concerned with minority discourse and resistance.

This interpretation of ideology comprises the two elements explanation and criticism Certain beliefs and values play a significant role for individuals or society in general; and the way in which their prevalence is explained to serve the satisfaction of certain group interests or the legitimization of a given state of affairs is ideological. Moreover, values and beliefs are criticized and disputed by applying the explanations based on interest or legitimization. The crucial point is that the believers themselves characteristically and uncritically do not see that these explanations serve specific interests, especially when these interests are their own (ibid.). In this way, ideology becomes second nature. Hawkes considers it "characteristic of ideology, . . . for this second nature to pass itself off as the 'first' nature, so that what has been constructed by human beings is fetishistically regarded as eternal and unchangeable" (150f). It is in this way, when ideologies are internalized and naturalized, that they are most effective because they appear as common sense, as just the way things are (cf. also Fairclough 1992: 87f).

Two questions follow from this: what is the locus of ideology and what is the role of language? Ideology manifests itself in the way societies use signs, including language. As early as 1929 Voloshinov wrote in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* that "the domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs" (qtd. in Morris 51). Carter and Nash specifically identify language, being one of the semiotic systems available, as the constructer of the values and beliefs (1991: 21). Texts bear traces of ideology no matter how neutral, "truthful" or close to reality they claim to be. These traces are present in the use of specific linguistic

features but they may also be created through their absence, through gaps, and omissions. In order to pin down the role of language, the concept of discourse in its general sense needs to be invoked again. Fairclough identifies three constructive effects of discourse, which he explicitly links to language functions (1992: 64f). Discourse constitutes subject positions, social relationships, and systems of knowledge and belief. The first aspect corresponds to what Fairclough calls the identity function of language, while the second corresponds to his relational function. The third aspect, the construction of systems of knowledge and belief, that is, ideologies, corresponds to the ideational function of language. Once again it must be emphasized, however, that the several possible relationships between discourse and the various aspects of social structure are dialectic. Discourse is socially determined as well as constructive, while at the same time subjects, social relationships, and ideologies determine and construct each other, too.

As Fairclough has pointed out, Voloshinov was also right in claiming that there is a material existence to ideology, too (Fairclough 1992: 87). Ideology manifests itself not only in and through language, it is "built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices" (ibid.), of which language production is only one. While language is the focus of this study, other manifestations of ideology should not remain unmentioned here. Ideology also exists in institutional and individual practices, for instance. The way a given institution carries out its affairs is by no means simply a matter of common sense. The enforcement of laws may serve as an example. In 1857 Chief Justice Roger Taney of the Supreme Court ruled that the slave Dred Scott from Missouri had to remain in bondage although his owner had taken him into the free states, after which Scott claimed to have acquired freedom. While uttering the verdict itself was a linguistic act, the ideology that explained it was that African Americans in the United States were supposedly not in a position to claim rights that whites were bound to respect. This also manifested itself materially in the reality that Scott was forced to remain in slavery, that is, physically in Missouri. However, the trustees of Scott's owner proved that enslaving African Americans itself was not a matter of common sense: when his owner had become insane, the trustees legally freed Scott, which illustrates that dominant as well as oppositional ideologies manifest themselves linguistically as well as materially.

The incident also illustrates another effect of ideology that could put slaves like Scott into a quandary and which is also reflected in Garrison's strict non-voting principle mentioned earlier. This effect of ideology, which Althusser has called "interpellation," supposedly forces the individual into "pre-allocated 'subject positions'" within an already existing system (Hawkes 122). By appealing to its institutions and thereby submitting to their rules, that is, by Scott's decision to sue as well as the trustees' decision to free him officially, each party accepted the terms of the dominant socio-political discourse. According to Althusser, this is exactly what an economic system is all about, namely its own reproduction through the making of individuals who participate in this system, that is, who accept the conditions because they appear to be a matter of common sense (ibid.). The question is whether there exist alternatives that might challenge the status quo and eventually the system. Notwithstanding the unknown particulars of this case, hypothetically Scott could have defied the ruling order and his allocated position altogether by escaping to Canada. Unlike the public court case, however, such an escape would have remained an individual and private act and could not have counted as an attempt to initiate social change. The example illustrates how difficult it is to challenge a system through its own institutions. To

put it simply, it appears that playing by a system's own rules will not change the rules, while defying the rules will either lead to repressive measures – or to emigration, insanity and even suicide, as a number of slave narratives prove.

Ideologies interpellate subjects so as to make them function within an existing social order; that is, it is one of the effects of ideology to contribute to the constitution of subjects. But this process is in fact an ever changing flexible equilibrium and not a static state of affairs as described by Althusser, in which subjects can only exist as functions of the dominant discourse and therefore logically are no longer subjects at all but objects, as Hawkes has aptly pointed out (125). Yet Althusser's concept is still useful for drawing attention to the ways "the 'subject' is located and constructed by specific ideological and discursive operations" (Ashcroft el al. 1998: 221). While Althusser's theory emphasizes domination through what he has termed ideological and repressive state apparatuses such as education, media, the law, church, the courts, police, etc., Fairclough admits that ideologies "contribute to the production, reproduction or *transformation* of relations of domination" (1992: 87; italics added) and thus they do leave space for social change. This interpretation is more in accord with the assumption that underlies this study, namely that all possible relations between discourse, ideology, language, reality, and the subject, or rather specific subject positions, are dialectic. The individual is not only constituted by ideologies, the individual also must be attributed the power to initiate change, albeit typically gradual and limited, as Fairclough and Ivanic have argued (Fairclough 1992: 43ff; Ivanic 1998: 28f). The same applies to the relation between subject positions and reality. Material reality constitutes positions, but simultaneously it is created and transformed by them through linguistic and practical acts. If this were not the case, individual or collective acts of resistance (and slave narratives, for that matter) would not be possible, because, in the extreme interpretation, every subject would exist only as a function of its statement, which in turn would only be conditioned by the dominant discourse. Not only could resistance and change not be accounted for, creativity in the arts would not be possible, either.

This theoretical background applies to all socially committed forms of discourse and therefore to the focus of the study, the language of slave narratives, too. The theory explains the observations made earlier about the importance and prevalence of white narrative forms, white authentication and the exclusion of texts which were likely not to be accepted as true. The dominant discourse of political, public resistance was a white one, because a black speaking subject was not *per se* accepted as speaking the truth about something that would undermine the dominant discourse and thus the political system itself. Therefore, the most popular medium of abolitionism, the slave narrative, could not help but use a white envelope for their black message (Sekora 1987).

2.3 "The writer" and "the reader" of slave narratives

The dialectic scenario described above also applied to the production of slave narratives. While slave narrators, editors, amanuenses, and ghostwriters were all subject to discursive and therefore ideological constraints, within certain margins they also created new, oppositional positions. As the production of each slave narrative was also subject to individual conditions, sweeping generalizations about *the* production process must be avoided. Each narrative has a history of its own, which ideally should be taken into account in discourse analysis as far as possible, too. Especially narratives with extensive editorial intrusion pose problems in a discussion of ideological positions created in a text. Several preliminary observations about the production and the reception processes apply to all texts of the corpus and need to be addressed here.

2.3.1 Slave narrative production: "the writer"

The following section is concerned with issues of slave narrative production that involve the concepts of writer and subject. From the discussion of truth and reality follows the conclusion that even autobiographical texts must not be seen as simple reflections of their narrators' reality. A one-to-one mapping of reality onto linguistic choices is not possible; variability on the expression plane and polysemy are the rule rather than an exception. By encoding a given event in language, meaning is created through choices of wording and structure, to which alternatives are always possible. Yet, not only the slave narrative's linguistic features themselves position the protagonist of the narrative.

While the multitude of linguistic characteristics in their entirety contribute to the constitution of something which we will tentatively call a subject position in the text, this position is not necessarily that of the text's historical subject, the fugitive slave. Intrusions, such as those by Mattison, as well as introductions and appended documents position the subject for the reader, too. A quote from Lydia Maria Child's introduction to *Incidents* will illustrate this point.

> At her [Linda Brent's] request I have revised her manuscript; but such changes as I have made have been mainly for purposes of condensation and orderly arrangement. I have not added any thing to the incidents, or changed the import of her very pertinent remarks. With trifling exceptions both the ideas and the language are her own. I pruned excrescences a little, but otherwise I had no reason for changing her lively and dramatic way of telling her own story. (Jacobs 7)

Child attempts to downplay her role as editor, but she does not deny that she made changes. These, be they alterations in wording or in structure, are not devoid of meaning, in fact, they create meaning. For Lydia Maria Child to put the manuscript into an "orderly arrangement" and to "prune excrescences" are acts that affect the text and the position of the narrator in several ways. First, Harriet Jacobs, a.k.a. Linda Brent, gave up control over her own narrative and thus on how she and her life were going to be presented, namely orderly and without excrescences. This waiver of control did not only just *happen*; the reader is explicitly *informed* that it has taken place at Jacobs' request, so that she, as the speaking subject of the narrative, has been positioned before she has been able to utter even one single word in the first person herself. The reader is made aware that for some reason – by implication: she is an ex-slave lacking literary training – Jacobs was considered unable to

"order" the manuscript herself, at least according to contemporary conventions. Second, what kind of "order" is considered acceptable is a literary convention and therefore ideologically invested. Sequential ordering of the text impinges on the processibility by readers, but it is a mere realist convention that a plot presented in a chronologically straight sequence should be regarded as the norm to which slave narratives needed to adhere. Third, Child does not elucidate the criteria according to which she weeded out what she deemed superfluous; what she does make clear, though, is that it was her decision and not Jacobs' what was trimmed and what was left standing. The point is that slight as editorial changes may be made to appear, they create alternative meanings through wording and structure, and they demonstrate the editor's power to determine what can be said and in which way it can be presented. This power also affects how conventions and discursive practices are either perpetuated or eventually changed. Harriet Jacobs' consent does not diminish Child's power over the text and consequently over the discoursal self the text creates; rather, it illustrates the workings of hegemonic structures that recreate conventions.

As many narratives were collaborative efforts rather than the work of a singular identifiable individual, it is necessary to discuss the several possible positions that can be involved in text production in general and in slave narrative production in particular. This discussion will also provide some essential terminological clarification for the concept of "writer identity." It has become clear that an analytical tool is needed which (i) takes into account the fact that responsibility for the wording does not automatically include the physical creation of a text and which (ii) does not take for granted that a text invariably represents the ideological position of the individual whose name is cited as the author.

Roz Ivanic's suggestion, adapted from a concept by Goffman (1959), to split "writer identity" provides a useful starting point, because it takes into account dialectics, a "multi-faceted" interpretation of the subject, and the central role of the text (Ivanic 23ff). According to Ivanic, writer identity comprises four aspects. The "autobiographical self" is almost self-explanatory. Ivanic points out that the autobiographical self as the social and discoursal identity writers bring with them is socially constructed as well as perpetually changing through the act of writing and other forms of social interaction (ibid.). Through a text writers portray and construct themselves for their readers. It is this impression that is "tied to the text" and "constructed through the discourse characteristics of a text" that Ivanic calls "discoursal self" (25). The "self as author" is an aspect of the autobiographical as well as the discoursal self and concerns in what way and to what extent writers claim authority for and over their own text. Ivanic concludes that "[t]hese three 'selves' are all socially constructed and socially constructing in that they are shaped by and shape the more abstract 'possibilities of self-hood' which exist in the writer's socio-cultural context," and which represent the fourth element of writer identity (24).

A brief summary of Ivanic's succinct presentation of the four aspects of a writer's identity will illustrate in how far they apply to the slave narrative. The autobiographical self as the historical and social identity of a writer is not necessarily accessible for readers, because any text has gone through the processes of selection and ordering. Thus, as the real person behind the text, the autobiographical self is more than any given text can ever portray. It comprises all components of a writer's personal history, some aspects of which may not even be consciously accessible to the writers themselves, but which may still find their way into a text. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to deduct from a given text characteristics of the writer's autobiographical self without the aid of historical research techniques;

but as even these are often based on text, the ever-present limitations concerning truth and reality apply here as well. Since this study does not focus upon slave narrators as historical characters nor upon attempts to map discoursal and autobiographical selves onto each other, this aspect of writer identity remains peripheral here.

What concerns us here is the discoursal self as the image that the slave narrative creates of and for its subject. It is only for this aspect that texts provide evidence, so that the discoursal self is typically the only part of writer identity to which readers have access (29). Ivanic ties investigations in the writer's discoursal self to the following four questions.

> a. What are the discourse characteristics of particular pieces of writing?
>
> b. What are the social and ideological consequences of these characteristics for the writers' identities?
>
> c. What characteristics of the social interaction surrounding these texts led the writers to position themselves in these ways?
>
> d. More generally, what processes are involved in the construction of a discoursal self, and what influences shape discoursal identities?

(Ivanic 1998: 25f)

These four questions represent a useful heuristic system as they move from the central role of the text to increasingly larger circles around the text. This approach reflects my own attempt to attribute the slave narratives as texts a central role in this study without neglecting the socio-historical contexts that shaped them and that they have come to shape since then. Yet, while the order of the questions from center, i.e. text, to context, implies the direction Ivanic's analysis takes, this study so far has progressed from context to text in order to illustrate the immense social forces and pressures that the slave narrators and their accounts were subject to. Nevertheless, the position of the text remains central, whichever direction is taken. Question (a), according to Ivanic, involves linguistic and intertextual analyses as suggested by Fairclough (1992). While the linguistic analysis is to be introduced shortly, the generic development of the slave narrative as illustrated in Chapter 1.2 above also illuminated some of the intertextual qualities of the narratives, to which there are admittedly more dimensions, as indicated by Smith Foster (1994), Diedrich, Gates (1988) and others. Question (b) links the linguistic and (inter-) textual analyses to the "socially available possibilities for self-hood" (Ivanic 26) and asks how the characteristics of the text shape the writer's identity. Questions (c) and (d) focus on the specific socio-historical context of a given piece of writing and thus justify the introductory chapters of this study. For our present purposes questions (a) and (b) will be emphasized henceforth.

The self as author has been addressed in the discussion of authentication for slave narratives. African American narrators were not able to produce texts that would considered authentic *per se*; their role as authors in their own right was severely limited, which many earlier studies such as Andrews (1986a), Sekora (1987), and Stepto (1991) have pointed out. The self as author is derived partly from the autobiographical self, because ethnic, sexual, generational, and gender identities all affect in what way writers can claim authority over their texts. As these aspects "discoursally" construct authoritativeness (Ivanic 26), the self as author is directly related to the discoursal self.

The possibilities for self-hood, as the fourth aspect of a writer's identity, are more abstract. These are the social identities available to individuals in any social and institutional context. There are always more and less privileged roles that individuals can take; and it is

this attribution of status that influences the way writers produce a text due to their alignment with a certain role (27). Ivanic rejects the term *subject position* for the same concept, because she feels that it implies the existence of a coherent, monolithic social identity instead of a more "multi-faceted" and situationally optional model (ibid.). The possibilities for self-hood are by no means unlimited, however. When writers construct a discoursal self, they select from the socially, culturally, and institutionally supported context in which the text is being produced (28). At the same time, the possibilities for self-hood have a bearing on the self as an author, which is obvious for many slave narratives. Slave narrators were not accepted as authors in the sense that they could utter something authoritatively as truth without white authentication; self-hood as author was on the margins of the available possibilities for an African American autobiographer. And yet, selection of and alignment with specific possibilities may make social change possible. Writers who select less privileged positions can challenge the status quo, because their selections, once chosen, redefine the available positions for future writers (ibid.). When these less privileged selections become more than singular and individual acts, they may eventually lead to social change. Over the decades the position of authoritative autobiographer became increasingly available for African Americans. It is no longer contested today and helped develop access to fictional genres as well. How long and difficult this struggle was, was illustrated above in the discussion of disciplinary alignment and acceptance.

The term *writer* has become increasingly problematic and requires further definition. Henceforth, it will be used to denote the person who is responsible for the initial physical act of writing, that is, it is synonymous to what Goffman in his discussion of the "'production format' of an utterance" has identified as "animator" (1981: 144f). So, according to this terminology, Frederick Douglass is indeed writer and discoursal self of all of his autobiographies, while the writer of Northup's narrative is David Wilson; the discoursal self, however, is the public image of Solomon Northup as created by the text. In how far this is congruent with Northup's autobiographical self cannot be deducted from the text alone, even if Eakin and Logsdon attest that the narrative represents an "accurate transcription of Northup's reminiscences" (xiv). The term *slave narrator* will be used synonymously with *discoursal self*, because it is the voice that speaks from the text and creates itself through the text. It is not the same as the autobiographical self, which comprises more ingredients than just those portrayed by the slave narrative.

Several consequences follow from the problems around the concept of the writer. In order to avoid speculation about possible writers' identities, ideologies, and intentions that may or may not be deducted from the linguistic features of a text, the person of the ex-slave as an individual, as an historically real person with an identity independent from text, is becoming increasingly marginal in this study as the texts acquire a more central position. I am aware of this fact and the dangers that a reduction of struggling individuals to text entails. It appears that the narrators, from an ethnic group that produced these text in order to liberate themselves from oppression, are, in the textual analysis, again relegated to a marginal position, or worse, not seen as struggling individuals of flesh and blood at all. However, there are several answers in reply to this partially valid charge. The introductory first chapter and the beginning of the present chapter demonstrate that the view of this study is by no means ahistorical in the sense that it disregards the extraordinary importance of the socio-historical context for the entire genre while concentrating entirely on text. Therefore, it is essential that the linguistic analyses be seen in relation to research from

other disciplines such as historiography and literary criticism, which Fairclough tries to take into account in his approach that he calls "textually-oriented discourse analysis" (1992: 37ff).

2.3.2 Slave narrative reception: "the reader"

The relation between a text and its reader is an asymmetrical one. Carter and Nash assert that texts try to subject their readers "to a particular way of seeing (and believing)" (1990: 21). Language "actualizes" the fugitive slave's experience for the reader (Cranshaw 279), so that the linguistic choices out of which the text is constructed convey "meanings . . . [that] prove difficult to resist" (Carter/Nash 1990: 21). In this way, slave narratives not only reflect power relations that pertained to, existed and changed during their production, they also create power relations between themselves and the reader. The cognitive processes in a reader's mind, however, are difficult to measure. And in how far readers were actually aware that they were reading "fiction of factual representation" can only be a matter of speculation (Andrews 1986: 16). Therefore, the reception side of the slave narrative will be addressed only in a sketchy way.

In order to affect the reader effectively, slave narratives needed some point of entry, some kind of appeal that eased the reception of and identification with a culturally alien experience. Sperber and Wilson express this in the more abstract terms of relevance. They assume that mutual knowledge of writer and reader is impossible, because there is usually no shared physical environment (21). The awareness of this lack "has a corresponding effect on the ways in which [writers] construct their texts so as to maintain a 'text world' which can be subsequently situated in the phenomenal world of the reader" (Bex 118). For Blakemore this is a question of costs and rewards. A new piece of information is processed in such a way that it "yields a maximal contextual effect for a minimum cost in processing. This means that someone who is searching for relevance will extend the context only if the costs this entails seem more likely to be offset by contextual effects" (Blakemore 32). Or, conversely, the more readers assume themselves to be familiar with the context of a concept, the less likely they are to extend or to redefine it.

Since the slaves' cultural experience was in many respects distinct and different from those of the northern or British reader, they needed to be encoded in such a way that the reader was able and willing to read them in the first place and as a consequence support the cause of abolition. Therefore, as a first preliminary the slave narrators needed to publish their narratives in a language variety the target audience was familiar with and which held a certain prestige for them, too. This observation is not as banal as it may appear. The use of what is generally considered Standard English in the slave narratives reflects the discursive fact that African American Vernacular English as an alternative was and often still is considered defective and associated with low social status and therefore not recommended for written publication or public use in general. Moreover, the choice of a language variety, like the choice of a familiar generic form, is one element in the construction of the discoursal self with which the slave narrators tried to appeal to the values and beliefs of their audience and, possibly, a sense of community.

This entails questions about mutual knowledge and community membership. Since physical co-presence of slave narrator and reader was typically unattainable, both parties had to rely on linguistic co-presence, which is less direct, as it is not based on a shared environ-

ment but on shared code, or at least the reader's assumption of a shared code, which in turn affects assumptions about community membership. Blakemore claims that "community membership may provide evidence for mutual knowledge in the sense that if speaker and hearer can establish that they belong to the same community, then, given certain other assumptions, they can assume mutual knowledge of all the proposals known by its members" (20). But given that there exists a dialectical relationship between language use and community membership, a speaker's use of a certain code, or language variety, not only signifies membership, it may establish it in the first place as well (cf. Halliday 1978: 164ff on antilanguages and countercultures, also Bell 1984, 2001, Irvine). Although Sperber and Wilson reject the mutual knowledge hypothesis altogether and work with a system of gradations of a shared cognitive environment instead, their conclusions are similar. They claim that while the total cognitive environment is never identical for two individuals, participants in a communication can temporarily and situationally share a cognitive environment. Part of this shared cognitive environment is the participants' assumption that they indeed share the same cognitive environment. Sperber and Wilson provide the following example.

> For instance, every Freemason has access to a number of secret assumptions which include the assumption that all Freemasons have access to these same secret assumptions. In other words, all Freemasons share a cognitive environment which contains the assumption that all Freemasons share this environment. (41)

For the slave narrative this means that possibly the use of Standard English, generic forms, and ideologies that the reading audience was familiar with were supposed to establish the assumption of a shared cognitive environment in the reader, even if the respective social and cultural experience and therefore the individual cognitive environments differed immensely.

Instead of a reader's cognition and psychological mechanisms, I will use the semantics of the text as a starting point to trace the cues a text provides for a reader's interpretation. By writing about the slave world in a particular way, the slave narrator makes that experience present to the reader. According to relevance theory, readers activate certain parts of their background knowledge, either individual assumptions or frames/schemata, to interpret utterances in a meaningful way. This process presupposes the presence of assumptions of what a lexical item, a given structure or genre, or the entire text may signify. This involves, for instance, issues of categorization. By talking or writing about a given item, activity, or event a writer categorizes it and therefore preselects the assumptions the reader is likely to activate, notwithstanding the fact that reading against the grain is always possible. As a particular wording is typically only one of several alternatives, the concomitant linguistic categorization of the event and its participants is only one of several alternatives, too. An example will illustrate this point. When Douglass writes in his *Narrative* that he "gave [his breaker Covey] a heavy kick close under the ribs," this particular choice of words and syntactic structure presents Douglass' action of kicking in the form of a nominalization and therefore as a seeming participant in the action. What Douglass might have presented more congruently as a verb to denote action, he presents as a noun that appears more static, maybe durable. A further example may appear less sophisticated. When Henry Bibb speaks about his "wife" Malinda, he invokes a category of family relationships that is easily recognizable for the reader. And yet, as slaveholders in the South never considered "marriages" among slaves as legally binding, these relationships were not of the same status as what northern Christian readers would identify as marriage in their own social context.

It is the choice of the words "wife" and "marriage" that predefines the relationship between Bibb and his wife for the reader. To read this against the grain, readers would have to resist their conventional way of interpreting this choice of words and redefine it according to slave conventions, to which they usually did not have access other than via the text they were currently reading. It may be assumed that for the majority of readers resistance against the familiar way of categorizing a common phenomenon was low indeed. Consequently, a slave narrator like Bibb, who portrayed himself as "married," positioned himself within a framework of Christian ideology with its values such as morality, monogamy, and faithfulness, and so contributed to the construction of a specific discoursal self that would appeal to the majority of the readership.

It is essential to analyze the linguistic structures of slave narratives to understand what sort of cues are given for the interpretation process, so that the text creates meanings that, as Carter and Nash claim, are difficult to resist. As autobiographies are subject to a poetic process, to which belong the selection of material, the ordering of it and the selection of linguistic expressions, we cannot be concerned with questions of fact and fiction; what we are concerned with, ultimately, are questions of realization and categorization through language and the resulting construction of the ex-slaves' discoursal selves.

This chapter has been concerned with the dialectic relation between language and reality in a theoretical way. It has illustrated the fact that the initial systematic exclusion of the African American slave narrative from the discourses of literature and historiography was ideologically motivated and indicative of an ongoing struggle over power. Moreover, terms such as *truth*, *reality* and *ideology*, monopolized by both camps in the struggle over slavery, have been defined and embedded into a theoretical framework that explains the production of and access to discourses and their relation to power and resistance. It has become clear that language use is one essential factor in the (re-) production of ideologies. The problems and strategies of slave narrators, who tried to gain access to public discourses from which they were barred, have been illustrated and linked to the use of language and generic forms. This included an analysis of the concept of writer identity, which needed to be split into four separate elements. The narratives themselves provide access only to the slave narrators' discoursal selves. The role of language for this kind of ideological positioning has been exposed and will remain the focal point for the following analysis of the texts.

3.   The language of slave narratives as an object of study

3.1   Investigations in the language of the slave narrative

Although the slave narrative has attracted scholarly attention from a variety of disciplines, not least because of its influences on modern African American literature (cf. Ensslen, Cooke), the majority of the studies have been concerned with literary, historical, or sociological aspects. Never has the antebellum slave narrative been in the focus of systematic linguistic investigation. This may be a result of the assumption that the style of slave narratives is not worth a detailed analysis, as many comments seem to imply. If scholarly texts address questions of style or language at all, epithets such as "plain" (Diedrich 32), "stylized, formal" (36, my transl.), or "simple, direct" (Smith Foster 3) are ubiquitous, yet they are usually applied in an intuitive ad-hoc manner and never based on systematic, empirical research. A handful of scholars have published articles and dissertations that deal with specific rhetorical aspects, such as performance (Miller), deceit (Byerman), the creation of self (Bodziock), but none of them uses a linguistic approach to account for their findings. Only Butterfield (1974), Olney (1985), and Andrews (1986) draw moderately on linguistic categories in their sporadic analyses of style. I will deal with them in turn here.

Stephen Butterfield's *Black Autobiography in America* (1974) takes into account various slave narratives. His selection of texts, however, is problematic because he claims to have chosen the autobiographies chiefly by the principle of "literary merit" (5). Although he fails to expose the criteria for his evaluative stance, by discussing the texts in their respective socio-political contexts, Butterfield hopes to have "reexamined the question of 'literary merit'" (ibid.). He explicitly devotes one chapter to the "Language and the Slave Experience" and a second one specifically to "Language as a Weapon" in Douglass, where he discusses anticlimax, rhetorical questions, idioms, syntax, oral influences, concrete diction, understatement, irony, and parody. This assortment of rhetorical and stylistic terms alone indicates that he is not so much interested in systematic linguistic analysis of the language, but in identifying a number of devices and explicating them, which he does mainly by quoting at length from the respective narratives. His boldest claim is that the "language of more typical slave narratives, though far from idiomatic and colloquial, is close to the material facts of experience" (34). However, this assertion remains unsubstantiated. Butterfield simply states that the political aims of the slave narrators required the use of "description, detail, and concrete language," which he supports by amply quoting Grandy, Northup, Thompson, and Pennington about agriculture and torture (34ff). Butterfield fails to notice that, by describing work on the tobacco plantation in the present simple tense, Thompson renders the activities more immediate and also implies general validity, or that the monotony of Grandy's account of slave nutrition appears monotonous, because of the predominance of relational and existential processes with the copula *be*. More fundamentally, Butterfield fails to see that his claim that language is close to the "material facts" is untenable because it ignores the underlying dialectic between language and reality. Particular lexicogrammatical choices lend presence to the events for the reader, who does not have access to the slave's material existence; it is the language that creates it for the reader. So, when Grandy's account appears monotonous through repetitive structures, this must not

be seen as a deficiency in literary value; it is with equal validity a linguistic illustration of the monotony and repetitiveness of the slave's diet. Butterfield's conclusion that only "the best writers" could "share the same political involvement of the mediocre ones without being noticeably crippled by a monotonous style and a one-dimensional outlook" while for the lesser ones the language turned into "a vehicle for reporting data" neglects some of the most fundamental issues about language, representation, and creation (37). In essence, his account of language remains superficial and limited to quoting a number of incidents of rhetorical devices supposedly influenced by abolitionist oratory (cf. also Andrews 1990 for a critique of Butterfield).

In the article "'I Was Born': Slave Narratives, Their Status as Autobiography and as Literature" (1985) James Olney is more mindful of linguistic features. Yet, although his account, too, is marred by the conclusion that the slave narratives "except the great one by Douglass" qualify neither as autobiography nor as literature, he is willing to take into account some of the fundamentals on which the production of autobiography depends (168). He points out the creative and active role of the memory. It creates and allocates significance to certain events while denying it to others and is therefore responsible for the construction of "significant wholes out of scattered events" (150). But important as this process of "emplotment" was, the writers of slave narratives were forced to keep it out of their readers' sight because the narration must by all means appear to be portraying nothing but the plain facts. Olney addresses to a limited degree syntactic structure, lexical choice, and the use of pronouns when he examines Stearns' "overheated and foolish prose" in Henry "Box" Brown's narrative, the "stylistic extravagances" of Wilson in Northup's narrative, or Matlack's "mighty poetic vein" in his introduction to Bibb's (161f). Yet, the labels Olney attaches to the narratives remain hazy as he provides a large number of quotes from the texts and trusts that the reader will intuitively grasp what the foolish, extravagant, and poetic qualities of the passages presented are. Olney's claims that none of the self-authored narratives, except the one by Douglass, "has any genuine appeal in itself . . . or any real claim to literary merit" may be a valid conclusion for a literary critic of the traditionalist vein (167), but as long as such assertions are not backed by systematic examination with transparent criteria, such labels, which imply value judgments, remain unjustified.

Smith Foster, too, perceives the creative potential of the slave narrative (1994). In a discussion of racial stereotypes she asserts that slave narrators, by trying to appeal to their white middle-class reading audience, often reinforced a number of racist ideas (74, 127). But as her analysis is more concerned with the generic development of the narrative in terms of plot and social as well as literary influences, she does not include linguistic features at all.

The same applies to Bodziock's dissertation "What I Am About: Creating the Self in Ante-bellum Slave Narratives" (1988). His account of a large number of texts deals with mythic images of the South (plantation life, order, sentimentality, brutality), links to Christian faith (edenic images), the romantic ideal, and its connection with the heroic self. In order to explicate these aspects Bodziock resorts to close reading of the texts themselves. He is neither insensitive to the ideological clash between the narrators' need to appeal to white worldview and maintaining black solidarity nor to the importance of a claim to authenticity; however, potential theoretical underpinnings and the fundamental question of the role language plays in the creation of the images are completely lacking. What limits the usefulness of the work further is the absence of a thorough definition of "self" – and its

semantic as well as epistemological kin, the "other" – and, again, how language contributes to the constitution of both.

William Andrews (1986) is the major exception to the long line of scholars who neglect language in their discussion of the slave narrative. He discusses slave narratives within a loosely pragmatic framework and treats the texts as speech acts, for which specific appropriateness conditions are in force. Andrews points out the relevance of linguistic analysis.

> Speech act theory can aid in the close reading of autobiography by calling our attention to the linguistic markers – pronoun usage, tense changes, modality, mood, use of direct and indirect discourse, to name a few – which help us define the context of the autobiographical act, particularly the relationship between writer and audience. (1986: 25)

Instead of embarking on such an analysis, however, Andrews attends to the particulars of the communicative situation that pertain to "literary language" and fictional texts and in how far they disrupt the rules of the prevalent literary discourse (25f). Andrews' classification of narratives according to different types of speech acts is a valuable tool; and yet, he only alludes to the linguistic factors that contribute to making a given text a particular speech act. Assertive, directive, expressive, and inductive speech acts are explained in a lucid way, but linguistic evidence that would link a given narrative to one particular speech act remains scarce. Andrews' classification should therefore be seen as a metaphorical application of pragmatic terminology in a context of literary criticism. As long as this transfer of labels is clear, it is valid enough, given the fact that his analysis never claims to be a purely sociolinguistic or pragmatic one.

Only the narratives collected by the WPA in the 1930's have attracted wider linguistic attention. Even a cursory glance at the comprehensive bibliography provided by Bailey, Maynor, and Cukor-Avila, eds., (1991) reveals that WPA narratives served as a corpus for a variety of studies. They range from very specific issues such as double negation, the use and non-use of the copula, Gullah dialect, emphatic -z, hypercorrection, to the reliability of written records of spoken language in general (331-349). The uses to which the narratives have been put are enormous for historiography as well as for sociolinguistics and especially the destigmatization of AAVE. Yet the studies hardly ever lead to an assessment of the narrators' discoursal selves constructed through the texts, although scholars who have worked with these narratives are aware of the issue of self and its construction. In the context of "inhibiting interactive effects" in interview situations with someone outside the peer group Blassingame quotes the ex-slave Martin Jackson: "Lot of old slaves close the door before they tell the truth about their days of slavery. When the door is open they tell you how kind their masters were and how rosy it all was" (Blassingame 1979: 375). But apparently, this question has not been pursued any further in a systematic way with linguistic methods to describe speech patterns and variations.

The majority of scholars concerned with the antebellum slave narrative have (dis-)qualified the style as plain, simple, unimaginative, and monotonous. The only exception to this rule is Andrews (1986), who, though not aligning his work with applied linguistics, addresses questions of language and its role in the construction of an image of self, which has been identified as the discoursal self above. Andrews' commentary made in 1990 that "we still lack a body of theoretical criticism that offers a means of thinking systematically about the rhetoric of selfhood in black autobiography" still holds true today (1990: 84).

3.2   The "plain-style"-fallacy

Frances Smith Foster attests the narrators a "simple, direct style with a realistic eye upon the needs and expectations of a variety of readers" (1994: 3). Many critics have confirmed this view, and the discussion of relevance in Chapter 2 has illustrated the likelihood that the texts should indeed be linguistically, structurally, and in substance easily accessible. Maria Diedrich points out that the puritan concept of "plain style" is based on biblical precedent (32), and Bodziock asserts that "the hard facts of slavery replaced style with substance" (5). The problem with these statements is the use of the concept of style, or rather the lack of a concept. The literary critics quoted here apply the term *style* without making explicit what they consider it to be. They treat the issue as if style were a fixed, universally agreed-upon concept, while indeed the reverse is true. Disagreement and subjectivity about what constitutes style, and what the use of stylistics might be, are the rule rather than the exception (Thornborrow and Wareing 3ff; Fludernik 1998 passim). The fuzziness of the concept has consequences for the analytical tools to be used in the present study and therefore needs to be addressed.

The critics who address style in the slave narrative invariably do not spell out what they consider style to be. The concept remains implicit, intuitive, and thus, I would argue, elusive. It stands to reason that style for many critics means the presence or absence of devices that classical rhetorics has for a long time identified as stylistic. The admission of Douglass to the literary canon and his narrative being exempted from charges of simplicity and monotony would support such a claim; his mastery of figurative language and classical rhetorical devices has been well attested. Such a conception of style, however, borders on an old-fashioned literary elitism, especially when the simplifying and sometimes disparaging epithets about a text's style are apparently used as a yardstick for literary value, as in Butterfield's work. This shortcut between an assumed lack of style, which is merely a lack of traditional devices, and a resulting lack of literariness only helps to illustrate the point that "no analysis can be anything other but ideologically committed" (Carter/Simpson 8); the questions is only how openly this commitment is admitted.

In addition to implying literary imperfection and thus providing further arguments for those who would like to see such "unliterary" texts excluded from reading lists, the verdicts have deeper ideological relevance. The quote from Butterfield above suggests that he sees style and substance as two separate levels of language. This dualist view of style as the "dress of thought" (Leech and Short 15) or as transformations of the same mental deep structure is not tenable. The view of style as mere form not only ignores the creative potential of language in the production of meaning at different levels, such as semantics and pragmatics. It also links the functional dimensions language only to the "substance" level. The separation of form and content often entails that the issues of language and linguistic representation and creation are dropped from the critical agenda completely, for the seeming benefit of a thorough analysis of a given text's "substance." Martin, in a critique of professional alignments within the field of linguistics, exposes the hegemonic and conservative character of this often supposedly liberal humanist position as an instance of naturalization: "effacing language is critical to the naturalisation process whereby uneven distribution of meaning potential is legitimised" (1992: 584). Although the authors discussed above may quite safely be exempted from the charge of occupying exclusivist or elitist positions

towards African American texts, the exclusion of language from their analyses – based on a seemingly common-sense, that is, ideological, conception of style – completely ignores one productive component of the meaning making process, including the socio-historical context. Although many slave narratives may not feature devices that have been traditionally considered stylistic, even this absence contributes to the positioning of the respective narrator, rather than rendering a text analysis superfluous. While this gap may be seen as an illustration of the narrators' claims to present nothing but "an impartial statement of facts" (Roper 8), it is also points to the narrators' lack of formal education. At this point the traditional view of stylistics becomes hegemonic. The social situation denied formal education to the African American slave, so that the majority of slave narrators could not be familiar with writing that an elite considered (and still considers) literary.[6] But through this socio-political background the absence of rhetorical devices in itself becomes a crucial component in the semiotic process. Linguistic "plainness" – undefined as the term remains – does not entail the absence of semiotic potential from a text; it is the critic's task to look for devices other than the traditional ones in the construal of meaning. The dismissal of the language of slave narratives as plain and simple, and therefore not worthy as an object of study in its own right is premature and poses an ideological trap. Although William Andrews invokes the concept of "rhetorical art," for which one would be hard pressed to find explicit criteria, he appears to be one of the few scholars who are aware of the importance of sociolinguistic investigation independent from debatable opaque criteria of stylistic and literary value, especially in the field of marginalized literatures (cf. also Gates 1988: xxvii).

> Nevertheless, even the most natural of narratives can and ought to be analyzed for its rhetorical art, whether acknowledged or not. The structuring of one's experience in story form requires that one judge certain facts of one's life to be reportable, that is, significant beyond their merely factual content, worthy of display in a pattern that inevitably invites the reader's contemplation as well as his belief of disbelief. Even in the least apparently sophisticated first-person narratives, sociolinguists point out, there is enough "embedded evaluation" in various lexical, semantic, and syntactic features of the narrative to indicate the bases on which the narrator judged its reportability. If we can learn to find these evaluators in even the barest recitations of biographical facts, we should be able to speak more appropriately of the coding mechanisms and the art of the supposedly nonliterary black autobiographer. (Andrews 1986: 10)

As an alternative to traditional conceptions of style, and as a complement to existing literary criticism, in this study a critical method of analysis based on a functional model of language will be applied. It does not restrict its view to devices that have been a priori categorized as stylistic, but instead it tries to be more comprehensive, on occasion even eclectic. It is based on a linguistic theory that sees language as social semiotic (cf. Halliday 1978, Hodge and Kress 1988, Fairclough 1992, 1995). By connecting social theory with linguistics, the proponents of this approach try to take into account socio-political circumstances of text production as well as the different communicative functions of language. In order to dissociate the theory and its methods from literary stylistics and to indicate comprehensiveness and social commitment, terms such as "critical linguistics" (Fowler 1981, 1986) and

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[6] Cf. in this context the success of Harold Bloom's discussion of masterpieces of human literature: *The Western Canon: The Books and the Schools of the Ages.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1994.

"critical discourse analysis" (Fairclough 1985, 1989, 1992, 1995, Wodak, Van Dijk 1993, 1997) have been coined. These critical linguists see linguistic analysis of text neither as an end in itself, nor are they concerned with aesthetic or literary value. They perceive the linguistic analysis as a means of unveiling structures of inequality and oppression, which are frequently expressed through language. In its most comprehensive orientation, as suggested by Fairclough (1992), the linguistic analysis of text is only one component within the study of the entire meaning making process, which includes the socio-historical circumstances of text production and reception, too. While I have tried to take as many of these factors into account as possible by presenting the history of slavery and the slave narrative, the focus will be clearly on the text, as is recommended by Cranshaw. He claims that the "proper task of a socially responsible stylistics is to expose [the institutional mechanisms that control and direct modes of representation] by working backwards from the text" (280).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is mindful of the fact that language is not only used for the transmission of content. In addition to this function of language, which is frequently considered privileged over other aspects, there are further levels of meaning to which language contributes. For instance, language is also a critical component in the construction and negotiation of human relationships. Here, meaning is not a matter of encoding experience but of presenting a speaker's attitude towards what is being said, or towards the recipient, and also of influencing attitudes and behavior, which is crucial for social change. Moreover, language provides the means necessary for the construction of text, for any stretch of language to be recognized as being cohesive and coherent. In order to take this multifunctionality of language into account, CDA works with linguistic analytical tools derived from a functional theory of language, and which can be applied to any kind of text. Thus in CDA, texts under investigation stand as texts in their own right. Their language provides the basis for analysis, regardless of genre or assumed literary status. The following section will sketch this functional model briefly.

3.3   Linguistic expression as functional choice

Leech and Short state that "language performs a number of different functions, and any piece of language is likely to be the result of choices made on different functional levels" (30). A given wording generates meaning not only through the choice of particular lexical items, but also through the way they are put together, which is exactly what *wording* implies, and through its connectedness with its co-text. Alternatives to a particular wording may exist, but, as Halliday and others have repeatedly pointed out, each choice, be it syntagmatic or paradigmatic, is meaningful and may have multiple functional implications.

Several different functional models of language exist, but they neither agree on the number of functions nor on their definitions. Some of the best-known concepts are Bühler (1934), Jakobson (1961), Popper (1963, 1967), and Halliday (1969, 1994). While each of the models has its own intrinsic logic and its own appeal to the study of linguistic communication, Halliday's concept based on three linguistic metafunctions lends itself best to the present purposes, that is, the detailed analysis of text. This is not least so because multifunctionality of any constituent in a linguistic construction, irrespective of its class, is a fundamental tenet of what has become known as systemic functional grammar (Halliday 1994: 26, 30). What makes Halliday's approach in practice superior to other functional models is the fact that the theory of language as a social semiotic has been developed into a delicate model of grammar as a "theory of human experience," "an enactment of interpersonal relationships," and a constructer of discourse, and that each metafunction corresponds to a relatively independent and discrete field of grammatical organization (Halliday 1998: 185f). The result is a grammar that connects theoretical underpinnings about communicative functions of language with detailed analytical tools which are not merely formal. Other functional models work with a more delicate set of functions, but these functions are rarely explicitly connected with particular grammatical features so as to make a detailed textual analysis possible.

Halliday's three linguistic metafunctions are always simultaneously present in any stretch of verbal expression (Halliday 1998: 185f). This means language at the same time (i) constructs a model of experience including logical relations, (ii) enacts social relationships, and (iii) creates relevance to the context. These kinds of meanings respectively define the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions (Halliday 1994: 36). Other than in Jakobson's model, there is no explicit expressive function; systemic functional grammar (henceforth: SFG) does not distinguish a particular function that is concerned exclusively with style or form. It is a fundamental assumption in SFG that form is not an addition to the content, or the subject matter, of any given item or structure, but that it is an integral part of all three metafunctions and as such contributes to the meaning. This means that while style traditionally often suggests that it is an extra effect of the language used – we often speak of "stylistic effects" as if they were an additional level – style in fact *is* the language. As this functional model of language applies to all kinds of natural language use, every text, spoken as well as written, can be said to have stylistic features (Leech and Short 18f), if *stylistic features* means patterns of presence or absence of a given item or structure.

Halliday's position that all linguistic choices contribute to the meanings of a text is not equivalent to declaring everything a stylistic device, although, in fact, no item or structure can be barred from becoming one. "Stylistic-ness" is, in a way, a function of co-text and

context alike. A device that is used very frequently may be said to be stylistic; but then again, one single occurrence in a particular co-text from which it is otherwise absent may also be called stylistic. From a functional point of view we are simply concerned with the meaning the presence or absence of particular items creates within specific linguistic situations. These situations may be short stretches of text as well as registers or genres, in which a given expression may or may not be expected. The SFG approach is more holistic and asks what an item, a structure, or a text means in its particular co-text and context, and how these meanings are arrived at, or, in Eggins' words, "how is language organized to make meanings?" (2). Asking whether a specific choice is stylistic or not, or speaking of stylistic choices at all implies that there exist choices which are not stylistic, as if they were only dictated by subject matter. From a systemic perspective, however, the relation between subject matter and language is not one of simply naming the things and activities out there and describing their relationships, but it is a constructive one, as Eggins points out: "[r]eality is constructed through the oppositions encoded in the semiotic systems of the language we use" (19). It is this fundamental assumption that links SFG so usefully to the more theoretical considerations about language and reality presented in the previous chapter.

SFG as a functional model is not concerned with describing language in merely formal terms. It uses familiar formal class labels such as verb, adjective or noun, but it maps them onto functional, semantic labels. These functional labels do not correspond in a fixed way to formal classes. Nominal groups, for instance, can function as subjects or as objects. A nominal group can realize the semantic role of Actor, but the formal term *nominal group* only expresses what the item is or looks like in terms of part of speech. Semantic labels, on the other hand, involve an interpretation of what a particular item is doing, they "indicate the part that the item is playing in the particular structure under consideration" (Halliday 1994: 27). There is, therefore, not one single meaning attached to a given linguistic element, the meaning is always a function of the element within its co-text.

> The relation between the semantics and the grammar is one of realization: the wording 'realizes', or encodes, the meaning. The wording, in turn, is 'realized by' sound or writing. There is no sense in asking which determines which: the relation is a symbolic one. It is not possible to point to each symbol as an isolate and ask what it means; the meaning is encoded in the wording as an integrated whole. The choice of a particular item may mean one thing, its place in the syntagm another, its combination with something else another, and its internal organization yet another. What the grammar does is to sort out all these possible variables and assign them to their specific semantic functions. (Halliday 1994: xx)

What Halliday describes as assigning is not formal in the sense of being predetermined by a fixed set of rules, where meaning, wording, and writing can only be mapped onto each other in one way. In addition to its functional, semantic orientation, SFG is based on paradigmatic relations, that is, on semiotic systems, with "sets of options for making meaning," which is the point where choice comes in (15). While text is organized syntagmatically, as *structure* in systemic terminology, the making of a text involves a large number of interrelated paradigmatic choices, called *systems*, on different levels. Lexical choice is only one of the most obvious of such paradigms, other ones being choices of participants, of processes, of circumstances, of modality, of voice, and of different ways of combining them. Deirdre Burton as well as others have pointed out that for a socially and politically responsible

stylistics it cannot suffice to identify and describe the choices made in a supposedly neutral and objective way (Burton 198ff). In order not to lose sight of the fact that all language use encodes positions instead of being a "natural, inevitable representation[. . .] of reality" the choices must be read and interpreted against a background of possible alternatives and the meanings such alternatives create instead (Eggins 11).

SFG, as a model of grammar that is based on human experience, takes into account the qualities of language as message, as interaction, and as constructer of discourse. It is this inclusiveness, its descriptive rather than prescriptive character, and its general social and contextual orientation that make the model such an appealing tool for the socially and politically committed texts under investigation here (cf. Bradford 1997 on textual and contextual approaches to style). It is not by coincidence that many practitioners of a socially committed stylistics, critical linguistics, and critical discourse analysis base their work on at least some principles of systemic grammar (cf. Burton 1982, Carter 1997, Fowler et al. 1979, Fowler 1981, 1986, Fairclough 1995, Hodge and Kress 1988, Ivanic 1998, Lemke 1993, 1995, Mills 1994, Threadgold 1997, Toolan 1988, 1990, 1998, van Dijk ed. 1997, Wareing 1994, etc). The most comprehensive attempt at fusing linguistic analysis with social theories by Althusser, Gramsci and Foucault to gain a critical view on language use is Fairclough's *Discourse and Social Change* (1992). In order to be able to read texts against their ideological grain he explicitly recommends the use of SFG in a context of critical discourse analysis (1992: 75ff). He develops his own form of textually-oriented discourse analysis ("TODA"), which is social, linguistic, and critical. This means it is aligned with social theorists as mentioned above and linguistic theories and methods according to Halliday, in order to unveil the workings of naturalized ideologies within texts. The following section will examine in how far this approach is useful for the aim of the present study, the construction of a self and the self's experience through linguistic choices.

3.4   The construal of experience and identity

In slave narratives, as in any form of autobiography, the narrators reconstruct and interpret their past through language. They assign special significance to particular events and include them in their text, while other incidents are omitted. The present section will illustrate in which way discrete areas of lexicogrammar are related to the construal of experience and subject positionings. The positionings, that is, the discoursal selves are, in addition to the presentation through the recommendatory material, a function of the events the narrators are prepared to expose in their narratives. This entails at least the following questions about the text of the narrative proper:

1   Where are the narrators present, and what do they do, that is, in what kind of actions do they participate and how?
2   Who else does what in which roles, and how is the narrator affected by it?
3   To what extent are these activities presented as related or dependent on each other?
4   How do the narrators associate themselves with or distance themselves from specific actions and events?

These questions point to the three linguistic metafunctions: questions one and two refer to participants and the processes they are involved in and therefore to the system of transitivity and the experiential component of the ideational metafunction. The third question concerns logical relations and points to the logical component of the ideational metafunction but also touches upon textual aspects. Question four relates to the interpersonal function and is realized by choices of modality to express the speaker's assessment of probability, usuality, obligation and inclination. Cross-linked with these features are specific lexical choices, the use of pronouns, reconfigurations of process/participant-relations such as nominalizations, and relationships between clauses.

Neither the construction of a self nor the construction of a social reality is mapped onto one isolated language function, much less to isolated grammatical features. Fairclough points this out when he says that there is considerable "overlap" between the interpersonal and the ideational functions and the construction of self and reality respectively (1992: 169). This overlap also becomes implicitly clear in Fairclough's own textual analyses, in which he does not strictly separate the grammatical features according to their respective metafunctional categories. What may be considered a weakness in the system in fact reflects the grammatically creative potential of language, which at times requires an eclectic approach rather than methodological purism, especially as an utterance unfolds its full meaning only in the sum of all three metafunctions. This will become particularly apparent in instances of grammatical metaphor. And yet, while Fairclough's practical analyses warrant the intermingling of disparate functions of language, at the moment it is more helpful to review the metafunctions separately in order to keep the analytical framework as lucid and retraceable as possible. It is clear that this separation of features is an artificial process in the light of the fact that meaning is a result of functional completeness, but for the sake of analytical transparency this procedure should be justifiable, even if it cannot always be strictly adhered to later. In the following three sections the major grammatical realizations of the linguistic metafunctions and their relation to the texts under scrutiny will be reviewed briefly. This will include the textual metafunction although it is only marginally addressed in the questions above.

3.4.1 The ideational metafunction

The ideational metafunction consists of two parts: the experiential function, which is concerned with the construal of experience, and the logical, which is concerned with establishing logical relations between units such as groups and clauses. Halliday explicitly points out that the ideational metafunction, although frequently prioritized, does not play a predominant role in relation to the other two metafunctions (1998: 186).

The experiential function is concerned with the clause as representation. Halliday says that through language human beings "build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them" (1994: 106). This creative process of *making sense* already includes an interpretation of the – mostly nonlinguistic – activities that surround us, which is taken account of in the semantic labeling in SFG and the assumption that a particular wording represents a number of paradigmatic choices at different levels. According to Halliday, the linguistic representation of reality is made up of processes, participants in these processes, and optionally associated circumstances, all of which are typically grouped together in a clause (1994: 107). The grammatical system that construes experience in terms of these components is that of transitivity. It distinguishes six main process types with distinct grammatical features. To each process type belongs a set of participant roles. These functional elements typically, but not necessarily, correspond to formal classes. Usually, processes are realized by verbal groups, participants by nominal groups and circumstances by adverbial groups or prepositional phrases (1994: 108), but there can be reconfigurations of this setup. The main distinction between processes lies between internal and external ones, that is, between mental and material processes. The third major process type is relational and expresses identification and classification. Furthermore, there are three minor processes located at the borderlines between the major types. They share some of the grammatical features of the adjoining main types but they also have features of their own that make them grammatically distinguishable. These minor types are behavioural processes (between mental and material), verbal processes (between mental and relational), and existential processes (between material and relational). This system of process types can be represented visually in a circular way (Figure 4.3.1 below).

The concept of transitivity is one of extension. It probes the processes as to whether they extend from one participant to a second (or possibly third) one. In an analysis of the use of transitivity in William Golding's novel *The Inheritors* Halliday has shown how the systematic choice of intransitive, that is, non-extending, verbs contributes to the creation of a main character with a very limited conception of the activities around him. And yet, extension is only part of the picture. In order to arrive at conclusions that can be related to power relationships, it is also useful to probe activities for their causation, that is, for the question whether a process is initiated from the inside or from the outside, which will yield an alternative interpretation of voice (1994: 162ff). This analysis of ergativity will complement examinations of transitivity at various points. Both concepts, transitivity as well as ergativity, will be examined more fully in Chapter 4.3 below.
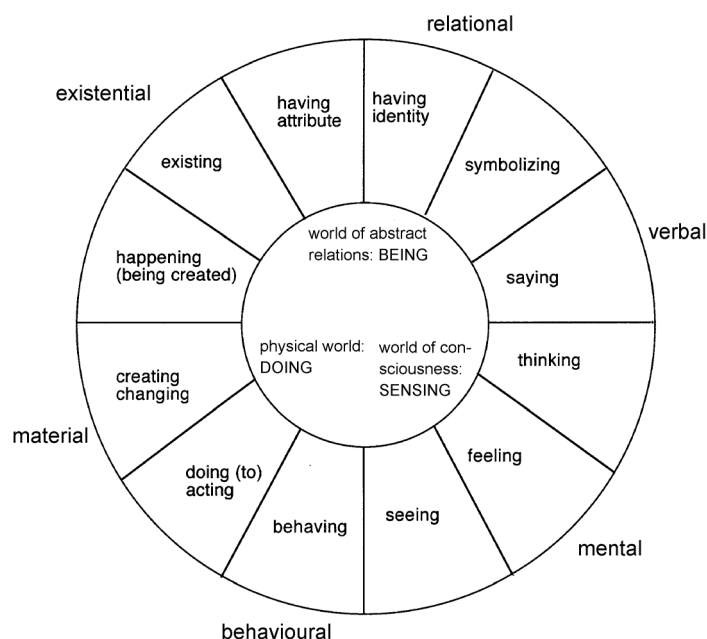
Figure 3.4.1: Process types in the English language (Halliday 1994: 108)

What does an analysis of the experiential structure of a text afford? The position adopted here that text is a product of the linguistic choices available to a speaker or writer implies also that there are always several equally valid alternatives of representing one and the same event. However, different representations lead to different meanings. The process of fearing, for instance, is expressed in a variety of ways. Experientially, the process involves someone who fears in the role of the Senser and something that causes the fear in the role of the Phenomenon. A typical realization is the following one from Jacobs when she speaks of her grandmother: "I feared her as well as loved her" (46). It is in the nature of the verb *fear* that it requires a second participant; without Phenomenon the clause would be incomplete. Alternatively, the process of fearing may also be expressed as Attribute in a relational clause as in "I was afraid of him" (Picquet 12). Here, the actual Senser is expressed as the Carrier of an Attribute while the Phenomenon appears in an optional prepositional group. Even without the cause for the fear the clause would be complete, but it would express a resulting state and possibly imply more permanence than the mental process.

In his *Narrative* Frederick Douglass describes his famous fight with the slave breaker Covey. There is one sequence that reads "[I] gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs. This kick fairly sickened Hughes so that he left me in the hands of Mr. Covey. This kick had the effect of not only weakening Hughes, but Covey also" (71). By using the verb *give* Douglass presents his act of kicking in a ditransitive structure with the "kick" as an additional participant which initially does little more than add semantic content to the otherwise empty verb. The original activity *kicking* thus becomes an entity endowed with qualities associated with nouns, such as stability. Moreover, it acquires the grammatical possibilities of nouns as well. In the second sentence, Douglass is no longer present as a participant in the action, "this kick" takes over the role of Actor, and so it is not Douglass but the "kick" which sickens Hughes. Douglass dissociates himself further from his activity by not

using a possessive determiner ('my kick'). Although the relationship between Douglass and the activity is established by "I gave," the nominalization offers the narrator the possibility to give up his participant role and retreat as the first person. In the following, Douglass himself does not appear any more as an Actor in the fight, it is the definite but depersonalized "kick" itself that has "effects" on Douglass' counterparts. This event could have been represented linguistically in a number of alternative ways, so there is no point in claiming that any one of them is closest to reality. If Douglass had written 'With a heavy kick close under the ribs I sickened Hughes,' or 'I kicked him heavily and so sickened him' he would have assigned himself to a different functional role in the process of sickening and, by presenting himself as Actor, would not have been so far dissociated from the action as he appears now. These variations would have to be seen as descriptions of the same event, to be sure, but a different wording would have "made sense" in a different way and would have yielded a different interpretation of the event.

Process/participant configurations can be realized in a variety of ways. The examples from Picquet, Jacobs, and Douglass served to illustrate the effects of alternative encodings. A reconfiguration of a process as an adjective or a noun provides powerful means of representing as well as creating reality. A nominalized verb can display characteristics of verbs as well as of nouns. Participants in a nominalized process need not be expressed explicitly so that ambiguity as to who is acting may arise; at the same time the nominalized verb may act as a participant in a process itself. In this way it becomes possible to pack information more densely as well as to mention acting parties or omit them as one sees fit as a speaker. Thus nominalization can be used to express complex topics through seemingly straightforward syntax (cf. also Martin (1993): "Life as a Noun: Arresting the Universe in Science and Humanities"). The important point is that each alternative results in different meaning, and it is this potential for making meanings that is focused upon in the following chapter.

The aim of studying the experiential set-up of a text is not first and foremost to isolate examples such as the ones mentioned above, but to find patterns, clusters or absences in the distribution of process types and participant roles. These empirical results serve as a basis for a qualitative analysis of selected topics and episodes, where the effects of a particular experiential configuration are studied more in detail in order to expose how the respective narrators position themselves in relation to the events in their own hi-/story.

The second component of the ideational metafunction, the logical function, is concerned with the functional relations between clauses (Halliday 1994: 216ff). Halliday identifies the two dimensions interdependency and logico-semantic relations. The former comprises hypotaxis and parataxis and pertains to all word, group, phrase, or clause complexes. The logico-semantic system consists of expansion and projection, both of which establish semantic and logical relationships between processes, typically realized as clauses. An example from Grandy may serve as illustration. He says "But I was not satisfied; I wanted liberty." The two independent clauses are paratactically related, the second clause expands and elaborates on the first one because there is a semantic relation between "not satisfied" and "want." Grandy does not make the relation explicit, however, as he could have done in an alternative hypotactic construction with *because*, which would turn the second clause into a causal circumstance of the first one. The logical component structures experience by creating logical and dependency relations between what otherwise would appear as an unrelated chain of events simply defined by sequence. In this way the logical function contri-

butes to the semiotic process because it provides an interpretation of how the narrator perceives processes as dependent upon one another.

3.4.2 The interpersonal metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction focuses on language use as exchange. It realizes grammatically the basic speech functions statement, question, offer, and command. For an investigation of a narrator's position it is especially fruitful to examine modality as the intermediate area between positive and negative polarity. Halliday distinguishes between modalization and modulation, both of which express the speaker's attitude towards what is being said. The former pertains to the speaker's assessment of the probability and usuality of propositions, while the latter refers to degrees of obligation and inclination in relation to proposals. Grammatically, these features can be realized by modal operators, modal adjuncts, and adjective or passive verb predicators (1994: 88ff, 357ff).

When Henry Bibb says "I was not allowed to plead my own cause" (129), he expresses the modulation of the command ('do not plead your own cause') in terms of obligation with a passive verb predicator, which implies the existence of an unmentioned further participant with the power to disallow him certain activities. An alternative with the modal operator *could* does not express exactly the same meaning, because it is ambiguous as to whether there is obligation or disinclination on the speaker's side involved. Consequently, the hypothetical utterance could be interpreted functionally as both a negated proposition and a command. The difference is clearly one of power over the speaker's actions and is therefore of basic interest to the present study.

3.4.3 The textual metafunction

The textual metafunction deals with the way a stretch of language fits in with its co-text and how text unfolds in such a way that is recognized as text at all, that is, the various ways in which textual cohesion is produced. One parameter is the thematic structure of clauses. The Theme as the point of departure of a clause signifies what the message is about, while the accompanying Rheme predicates something about the Theme. In unmarked clauses the Theme occupies initial position and is followed by the Rheme. Interlocked with thematic structure is the distribution of given and new information in the clause; however, given and new do not necessarily correspond with Theme and Rheme. Further devices that contribute to textual cohesion are reference, repetition, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction (cf. Halliday/Hasan 1976).

In choosing specific pieces of information as starting point of the message, speakers assign significance to the information; they point out what they want to speak about. In an analysis of various accounts of a series of murders committed by the Australian aborigine Jimmy Governor in 1900, Terry Threadgold has shown how patterns of thematic choice help create the respective writers' position. She argues in her specific case how the assignment of particular pieces of information to Theme and Rheme respectively is patterned and so creates and perpetrates gender stereotypes about masculine activity versus feminine passivity (1997: 154ff).

3.5   Applying systemic grammar

This review of the linguistic metafunctions in systemic grammar has demonstrated that the creation of a writer's or speaker's position, a discoursal self, through text does not depend on one singular language function, much less of one isolated linguistic feature. Meaning is created through a particular configuration of all three metafunctions combined and the numerous paradigmatic choices through which they are realized. Consequently, a complete form of discourse analysis would have to take all language functions as well as contextual circumstances into account. Two practical problems arise from this demand for greatest possible inclusiveness. The first one derives from fundamental problems of semantic categorization and impinges on the second one, the amount of data to be collected.

A few remarks about semantic categorization are necessary to illustrate some of the inherent difficulties involved in a semantic and functional model of grammar. Anna Wierzbicka (1992), in her quest for universal cognitive concepts, claims that "meanings cannot be rigorously described and compared without some kind of culture-free semantic metalanguage" (17). It follows that a set of "presumed indefinables" is required (ibid.). Notwithstanding the lack of an ultimate proof for her claim, she assumes, that there exists a set of categories that can be derived from nature (ibid.). Otherwise, semantic research would have to construct such a set of "maximally clear, maximally simple and maximally universal" words (18). However, this points to a problem of all such attempts at natural semantic categorization: do natural categories exist, and if they do, what would count as a culture-free metalanguage to describe them when the descriptions of natural language must be expressed through some semiotic system, usually natural language? Ultimately, it is natural language that must be used to gloss itself, so that either meaning is eternally deferred or definitions become circular: a category then means what its content, by which it has been defined in the first place, means, as Halliday has pointed out in an article on the "ineffability of grammatical categories" (cf. Halliday 1988).

Whether the issues of metalanguage and categorization pose a problem depends on the aim of a particular study and is ultimately a question of disciplinary alignment and therefore ideological. If linguistic analysis is seen as a kin to natural sciences concerned with strict formalization and universalization of linguistic phenomena, culture-free metalanguage and (seemingly) natural categories may appear necessary. However, if the outlook is a sociolinguistic one and the corpus consists of real discourse, vagueness, polysemy, ambiguity and other forms of indefiniteness that may arise on almost all levels of language, must be taken into account. According to Halliday, "it is an illusion to think that any [category] can be exhaustively defined" because language has "the power of distilling the entire collective experience of the culture into a single manageable, and learnable, code" (1988: 45). Along with Ellis (1994), Halliday contradicts Wierzbicka as he considers categories not simply given in the natural material world.

> In fact there are no such natural classes; or (what amounts to the same thing) there are indefinitely many of them . . . . What the grammar [i.e. lexicogrammar] does is to impose a categorization: it treats a certain cluster of phenomena as alike in certain respects, and hence sets the cluster apart from others which it treats as being different. (1998: 187)

Categorizations depend on criteria of sameness and otherness, which may shift according to the uses to which one would like to put the categories. While this is a problem for formal semanticists who like their categories pure or "self-illuminating like globes on a Christmas tree" (Fodor 1975: 121), it is not necessarily one for systemic grammar, which works with a probabilistic conception of categories and core meanings. These core meanings represent the majority of occurrences of a linguistic feature, but they also tolerate borderline cases, which may carry attributes of two (or more) adjoining categories at the same time. This probabilistic and utilitarian view of grammar and semantics may be inadequate for strict formalization and universalization, but it has the advantage of permitting multiple meanings that exist simultaneously. The actual issue of categorizing linguistic events, therefore, is one of finding adequate tools for the particular object of examination. The categories in the system of transitivity are cases in point. The three major process types, material, mental, and relational, would have been sufficient to categorize the majority of actions, events, and states, but as there are verbs which realize linguistically events that are semantically situated between these three categories and which behave distinctly, it makes sense to establish the three additional process types, existential, verbal and behavioural, although, by extending the existing definitions, these minor process types could equally well have been accommodated within the major ones. It is always possible to add further levels of delicacy to existing systems, which is exactly what Halliday suggests whenever instances of seeming free variation occur (1978: 44). Mental verbs, for instance, may be divided into verbs of affection, perception and cognition; yet there is good reason to distinguish between desiderative and emotive verbs within the group of affection. At the same time a different, independent system divides mental verbs into *please-* and *like*-types. Moreover, the six basic process types and the participant roles afford only one kind of perspective on a particular configuration, yet they do not provide the complete picture. Transitivity explains the structure of clauses only in the categories of "doer" and "done-to," yet in order to illuminate issues of causativity, the additional system of ergativity needs to be applied. These examples illustrate that grammatical categories represent one way of interpreting language, but typically not the only way. The point is that categorizations are tools. While the categories are not completely arbitrary, new linguistic evidence or the need for different tools may suggest that definitions be reconsidered. The tools may be used or modified when the need arises, but they must not be taken as the only way of explaining a given linguistic feature.

This fact has consequences for the practical collection of data in the present study. Proponents of critical linguistics or CDA have repeatedly shown how powerful text analysis based on systemic grammar can be. And yet, it is not a coincidence that the majority of applications focus on relatively short texts such as newspaper articles, speeches, student papers, brochures, and forms. Longer texts such as novels, (auto-) biographies, or dramas, however, have largely been excluded from systematic study, with the exception of Halliday's analysis of Golding's *The Inheritors* (1971) and Adejare's investigation of Wole Soyinka's literary idiolect (1992). One of the principal reasons for this neglect is the sheer amount of material that would have to be collected for an analysis as comprehensive as the one Fairclough (1992) suggests. Both, extralinguistic factors, that is, the influence of sociohistorical context on the creation of text, and linguistic factors yield an unmanageable amount of data, so that even Halliday and Adejare concentrate on isolated linguistic features. Examples from the corpus of the present study may illustrate this point. For nine

slave narratives the finite verbal groups that depend on the first-person singular pronoun have been reviewed in order to examine the processes in which the narrators present themselves as subjects. In Jacobs' text there are almost 2,800, in Bibb 1,500, and in Douglass about 1,000 occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun. The entire corpus contains more than 10,000 instances. While it is possible to retrieve the first-person pronoun from electronic versions of the texts with the aid of concordance programs, the dependent verbal groups cannot be tagged automatically. It is necessary to review each occurrence individually and manually to be able to categorize the corresponding finite verbal groups according to voice, process type, modality, and possible metaphoricity. Aspects of textual cohesion and thematic choice are also difficult to grasp electronically and yield an even larger amount of data, because they create networks throughout the text (Vater 1992: 41ff). For every additional level of delicacy the quantity of data increases, so that eventually the research becomes inefficent. These practical considerations dictate that the focus of research be narrowed down in order to keep the amount of data controllable. Therefore, the present study of the nine selected texts focuses on the presentation of the first-person narrators' activities and most prominently on the two components of the ideational metafunction. Additional systems will be introduced whenever an occurrence in the text requires further delicacy.

The first part of this chapter illustrated that only a few studies so far have been concerned with the language of the slave narrative, none of them, however from a linguistic point of view. The second part pointed out that this disregard is ideologically motivated because typically the neglect of linguistic analysis is a direct consequence of a traditionalist view of style, stylistics, and literary value. As an alternative to a traditional stylistic analysis, which scans texts for specific preselected devices that have come to be regarded as stylistic, I suggested that linguistic expression be seen as functional choice on various linguistic levels. The advantage of this approach is that any linguistic item, irrespective of its rank, is meaningful and potentially worthy of investigation. For the present study, a systemic functional perspective on language according to Halliday has been chosen, because it suits best the purpose of this work, that is, to investigate how the slave narrators construct themselves and their world through their linguistic expression. The final two parts of the chapter presented the metafunctional differentiation of language in systemic grammar and its application in textual analysis.

4.   Presence, representation, and creation

This chapter introduces the particular linguistic constructions on which the main part of this study focuses. The analyses in Chapter 5 fall into two main parts; part one takes the quantitative distribution of the *I*-pronoun as the point of departure to detect instances of syntactic compression that have a bearing on the way the narrators present themselves. The second part emphasizes more specifically the use of transitivity in the individual narratives. This split is reflected in this chapter. After a brief introduction to general quantitative observations, the fields of syntactic compression and of transitivity will be introduced.

4.1   General quantitative observations

Prior to a detailed analysis of the narrators' presence in the texts, a few general quantitative calculations need to be presented to render the nine narratives comparable and thus enable us to arrive at empirically solid interpretations. These first observations concern the length of each text and how strongly the narrator features in terms of the presence of the first-person singular pronoun (Table 4.1 below). This frequency of the *I*-pronoun will be referred to as the *narrator's presence*. In order to provide a basis for comparison, the frequency of linguistic features will be measured in the number of occurrences of a particular construction per 1000 words, which is referred to as *relative frequency*. The relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun will be abbreviated as rf_I. Direct speech has been omitted from all calculations because it frequently represents words from characters other than the narrators, most of which are only marginally interesting for this study. The passive voice will be analyzed separately; therefore, it appears useful to present the calculations here with and without the instances of passive voice at this point.

Table 4.1: Length of the narratives and occurrences of *I*

	year of publication	number of words	including passive voice		without passive voice	
			absolute occurrences of *I*	occurrences of *I* in 1000 words	absolute occurrences of *I*	occurrences of *I* in 1000 words (rf_I)
Roper	1838	17111	671	39.215	632	36.935
Grandy	1842	13098	330	25.195	314	23.973
Douglass	1845	36281	988	27.232	928	25.578
Brown	1847 (49)	22900	651	28.428	612	26.725
Bibb	1849	48187	1495	31.025	1379	28.618
Northup	1853	77744	1233	15.860	1162	14.946
Ball	1859 (37)	105665	2566	24.284	2463	23.310
Jacobs	1861	81495	2249	27.597	2140	26.259
Picquet	1861	9205	435	47.257	425	46.171
all		411686	10618	25.792	10055	24.424

The narratives selected for the corpus differ in a number of ways. Their length ranges from Grandy's relatively short pamphlet of about 13,000 words to Ball's volume, which well exceeds 100,000. The brevity of Picquet's text (9,205 words) results from the fact that her

interlocutor's words have been excluded from the calculations. While Grandy's and Ball's texts represent opposite poles in terms of length as well as in number of occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun, both of them represent the average in terms of the narrator's presence. Both of the narrators occur explicitly in the form of *I* about 24 times in 1000 words. Here Roper and Picquet occupy the upper end of the scale, whereas Northup is found at the lower end. Northup's narrative is the third longest, yet it features less than 16 instances of the first-person pronoun per 1000 words. Roper's text, on the other hand, is the second shortest but with an rf_I of 39 it exceeds almost all of the other texts by far, second only to Picquet's interview with an rf_I of over 47. All of the other narratives, with the possible exception of Bibb's (31,025), remain close to the arithmetic mean of 25,792 (10,618 instances in 411,686 words). Interestingly, two narratives that were not self-penned, i.e. Northup's and Picquet's, occupy the opposite ends of the scale. The relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun and the variations in the narrators' presence in their respective texts will be analyzed more fully below.

4.2   The first-person pronoun and syntactic condensation

4.2.1 Introduction

The narratives of the corpus differ a great deal as to their relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun (Table 4.1). The two foremost questions to be asked at this point are: how do these strong differences come about and what are their effects in the texts?

The differences in the rf_I can be attributed to two factors, one of them narratological, the other one linguistic. The narratological feature that influences the rf_I considerably is the presence and length of descriptive and generalizing episodes without the intrusion of the *I*-narrator. In this feature the narratives differ widely. Some narrators, such as Douglass and Ball, describe plantation life, their master's characters, or the living conditions in slavery in great detail while the narrators themselves do not appear. Others, such as Picquet, strictly adhere to a chronological account of their own lives without any deviations, and do not offer abstractions or generalizations about slavery at all. Here the narrators themselves remain in the focus at all times. Instances and characteristics of these descriptive passages will be examined for each narrative individually in Chapter 5.

In addition to these aspects of narrative structure, there are several grammatical characteristics that interact with the presence of the first-person singular pronoun. The most prominent ones, ellipsis, nonfinite verb forms and nominalization, will be introduced in this chapter and reviewed as to their effects on the construction on the narrators' discoursal selves. Unlike *you*, the *I*-pronoun always signifies subjective case and acts almost exclusively as the subject in a clause. Occurrences as subject complement ('It was I') are very rare and considered formal. Consequently, the presence the *I*-pronoun usually indicates the presence of a full finite clause. Yet, in some grammatical situations a subject need not be explicitly mentioned, so that the frequency of the pronoun decreases. For instance, nonfinite clauses are frequently subjectless (Quirk et al. 995). It is not only their lack of an overt subject that makes these nonfinite constructions interesting. As instances of syntactic subordination their overt or implied logical relationship with their superordinate clauses also deserve attention. Coordination is another potential trigger for subject elision. When two or more clauses of equal rank that share the same subject are coordinated, this kind of ellipsis is likely to occur. The same applies to the coordination of two or more predications with the same subject. A third factor that takes this process of "syntactic compression" even further is nominalization (ibid.). As it recasts the process-participant relationship into the form of a noun, it may eliminate overt participant roles and thus acts upon the quantitative presence of the *I*-narrator as well.

The three areas to be analyzed jointly are not as randomly selected as it may appear. First of all, they share an indicating device in the presence of the first-person singular pronoun. Moreover, ellipsis, implied subjects of a nonfinite clause, and implied subjects of a nominalized process are based on reference and presupposition for the recovery of the omitted participant. They all entail a loss of overtly present information, which is hidden, but normally not irretrievable. The concomitant syntactic restructurings, however, have consequences on the logical, experiential, and psychological levels and so carry semiotic potential in their own right.

Therefore, the analysis of syntactic compression and its interaction with variations in the rf_I is not an end in itself. The rf_I is initially a purely quantitative feature of the text, but arguably it has a psychological dimension, too. The first-person singular pronoun occurs solely in subject position and so it is also associated with control. Grammatically, it controls the finite verb forms in terms of person and number. In the unmarked clause the (grammatical) subject is to be found in initial, that is, thematic position. Psychologically, it is accordingly interpreted as the starting point of the message. The *I*-pronoun as subject in initial position thus includes also the textual meaning that the following message is a predication about the narrating subject. Consequently, clusters of the *I*-pronoun indicate psychological presence and focalization of the narrative on the first-person narrator, occasionally even when the events described do not concern him or her at all, while gaps may signify the reverse, sometimes even when the narrator is involved nevertheless.

4.2.2 Ellipsis

One of the most common grammatical phenomena affecting the overt presence of an item in a text is the occurrence or non-occurrence of elliptical constructions. Although they come in different shapes and sizes, they all share several characteristics (cf. Halliday/ Hasan 1976: 144ff). First and foremost, every instance of ellipsis is based on presupposition, the source of which is in the majority of cases the preceding co-text. The presupposed item can be a word or a structure. If the presupposed item is inserted in the slot left open by ellipsis, it preserves its original form and function; pronouns, for instance, preserve class and their syntactic function. If the presupposed item and the ellipsis straddle sentence boundaries, they are cohesive. Therefore, ellipsis is an element of the textual metafunction of language.

For the quantitative investigation of the distribution of the *I*-pronoun, which can be affected by ellipsis, several specifications to this general description need to be made. Subject ellipsis as a cohesive device is rare. Constructions such as 'I packed all my bags. And then left the town' do not occur in the corpus. The first-person singular pronoun occurs only as a grammatical subject, and it is usually omitted only in the coordination of clauses and the coordination of processes.

4.2.1   I carefully examined every part of our chain, but found no place where it could be separated. (Ball 34)

4.2.2   I rose and looked for a more secure retreat, ... (Ball 328)

While the first example is a typical instance of ellipsis, the second one is best interpreted as coordination of processes within a single clause with only one subject. Yet, frequently, the two cannot be easily distinguished. The quantitative effect of both constructions is similar: one instance of the *I*-pronoun is responsible for two (or more) processes. As both types of coordination eliminate an occurrence of the pronoun, the relative frequency of the item is affected in either case. Harriet Jacobs provides a useful example where coordination of verbal groups and coordination of clauses shade into each other.

4.2.3   I thought and thought, till I became desperate, and made a plunge into the abyss. (Jacobs 83)

There are two instances of coordination between processes in this excerpt. The process "thought" is repeated without the reiteration of the *I*-pronoun; moreover, the temporal subclause features one subject but two processes as well, a relational one ("became") and a

material one ("made"). While the matrix clause "I thought and thought" is unproblematic, the subclause lends itself to various interpretations. It may be seen as one clause consisting of two coordinated processes, but punctuation suggests that the second process ("made") represents a clause in its own right with the elision of the *I*-pronoun. A third – hypothetical – alternative is that the temporal subclause is enclosed within one matrix clause with three coordinated processes "thought"/"thought"/"made". Whether the second instance of the conjunction *and* coordinates two clauses or two (or three) processes is not made explicit and so the logico-semantic relation between the narrator's desperation and her plunge remains speculative. The conjunction only signifies addition. The sequence of the processes suggests a temporal relation, but it appears highly likely that result is implied, too. A subordinate clause of result introduced by *so that*, on the other hand, would have required an overt subject. Quirk *et al*. suggest that an interpretation of instances such as the one above as elliptical coordinated clauses or as coordinated predications need not be seen as in competition with each other but as complementary, depending on the focus (942f; 948f). The issue here is not so much that a clear distinction between clausal or verbal coordination might be necessary, but the fact that the paratactic coordinator *and* does not explicitly express a logical relationship besides that of addition. The point for such an analysis is that this seemingly economical use of the first-person singular pronoun may serve as an indicator of paratactic coordination, which at times can result in a weakened or at least ambiguous representation of the logico-semantic relations between processes. This applies more to *and* than to *but* or *or*, yet in all of the texts *and* outnumbers the other two coordinating conjunctions by far, as well as all the subordinating conjunctions combined (Table A.1.5 in Appendix 1, p. 279). Table 4.2 below presents the frequency of such elliptical coordinated constructions with *and*. Column one represents the relative frequencies, column two the percentage of coordinations in relation to the total of occurrence of the *I*-pronoun.

Table 4.2: Coordination of clauses and processes with *and* in first-person singular clauses

	relative frequency	in percent of all verbal groups associated with *I*
Roper	2.396	6.11
Grandy	2.519	10.00
Douglass	1.295	4.76
Brown	2.227	7.83
Bibb	1.868	6.02
Northup	0.875	5.52
Ball	1.836	7.56
Jacobs	1.239	4.49
Picquet	3.368	7.13
all	1.593	6.18

It is apparent that the narratives that occupy the opposite ends of the rf_I-scale remain in their positions here as well. Apart from that, the correspondences between the figures in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 are not particularly high. Grandy's narrative is remarkable for its high relative frequency of coordinate constructions with ellipsis, which also reflects the fact that

10 percent of the verbal groups associated with the *I*-pronoun feature two or more processes. Brown's high relative frequency of coordination is equally remarkable, considering that the rf_I in his narrative is only average. Bibb's low score is noteworthy, too. The high rf_I in his narrative does not carry over to the relative frequency of coordination. In terms of relative frequency as well as percentage Northup, Douglass, and Jacobs lie at the low end of the scale. This quantitative account is supposed to provide a first general orientation; as the linguistic feature may deeply affect the logical component and thus has a bearing on the way the causal, temporal, or adversative interdependencies of the events related in a narrative are presented and understood, the more qualitatively oriented analyses in the section about the individual narratives will be concerned with more particular effects.

The same principle applies to juxtaposed clauses as a different realization of parataxis (cf. Chapter 4.2.3 below), but with the reverse effect on the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. Juxtaposed clauses are paratactic, but they do not include or even imply coordination, (Greenbaum 1996: 321). As there is no subject ellipsis involved, this leads to a clustering of first-person singular pronouns, as in the following example from Douglass.

4.2.4   Is there any God? Why am I a slave? I will run away. I will not stand it. Get caught, or get clear, I'll try it. I had as well die with ague as the fever. I have only one life to lose. (65)

In this situation the absence of logico-semantic devices between the individual processes contributes to the impression of emotional tension and illustrates that Douglass does not perceive any reasonable logic behind his situation as a slave. Again, the lack of conjunctive devices in this paratactic series leaves the logical relation between the individual processes open and thus contributes to the way the narrator presents himself.

4.2.3 Finiteness

The previous section was concerned with clauses with subject ellipsis, but it left the question of finiteness untouched. Finiteness and ellipsis are independent of each other, not least because they belong to different metafunctional levels. Ellipsis itself is a textual component, whereas the choice between finite and nonfinite belongs to the field of clausal interdependency and thus is part of the logical component, which describes the relations between clauses (Halliday 1994: 216).

According to Halliday, there are two dimensions to clausal relationships: taxis and logico-semantic relations (1994: 218). Taxis splits into parataxis, being the relationship between elements of equal status, and hypotaxis as a modifying relationship between an independent modified component and a dependent modifying one. While these relationships can obtain between any two or more linguistic elements of equal rank (clause, phrase, group, word), the focus here is on the clause as the rank of the grammatical structure in which subjects occur. Logico-semantic relations are restricted to clauses, or rather processes, and fall into two basic types, too: expansion and projection. While in the first type a secondary clause expands the meaning of the primary one, in the second type the secondary clause is projected through the primary one, usually a verbal or mental process (219). The two dimensions taxis and logico-semantic relationship are freely combinable, so that one clause can expand and project another one by parataxis as well as by hypotaxis (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Clause complex relations: taxis and logico-semantic relations

	parataxis	hypotaxis	
		finite:	nonfinite:
expansion	He ran away and she stayed at home.	He ran away, whereas she stayed at home.	Being hungry, I stole a loaf of bread.
projection	He said: "I'm running away."	He said he would be running away.	He imagined running away.

Systemic grammar distinguishes further subtypes of expansion and projection, but for the present purposes, not all of the possible relationships need to be examined in detail. Frequently, parataxis and hypotaxis are used synonymously with coordination and subordination respectively. However, it should be noted that the latter two terms are special cases of the former. Parataxis on a clausal level can take various forms such as syndetic as well as asyndetic coordination, juxtaposition, parenthetic clauses, tag questions, and the relationship between reporting and reported clause in direct speech (Greenbaum 1996: 320). Hypotaxis on a clausal level indeed means subordination, which is the level where subjectless clauses come into play.

Nonfinite clauses always stand in a hypotactic relation to a modified matrix clause. They come in four types: *to*-infinitive, bare infinitive, *-ing* participle, and *-ed* participle, of which the first and the third category are the most common ones (Quirk *et al*. 993ff). While nonfinite clauses may or may not have a subject, Quirk *et al*. claim that they frequently do not (ibid.), which is supported by the overwhelming majority of instances in the present corpus.

Nonfinite clauses realize the semantic relations of expansion and projection. In the latter case there is considerable indistinctness between clause complexes and verbal group complexes (Halliday 1994: 287). In a simple verbal group ('I'm working') as well as in a verbal group complex of the expansion type ('I started to work') there is only one process, and therefore only one clause. This is not the case in projections ('I wanted to work'), which realize relations between processes (290). As a consequence, a projected process may have a subject of its own as in 'she wanted me to go.' This is the point where the focus on the clause, with which this section is primarily concerned, becomes blurred. At this stage, only instances of hypotactic expansion at the clausal level will be taken into account, because hypotaxis at the verbal group level does not directly affect the presence of the first-person singular pronoun. It eliminates the *I*-pronoun only if the first-person narrator is the subject of the secondary verbal group, as was the case in the previous example ('me'). Instances of projection are numerous in the corpus and must not be neglected, but since they depend on the semantics of verbal and mental processes, they require a separate discussion later.

The nonfinite clauses examined here are hypotactic expansions, the majority of which function as adverbial modifications to a matrix clause. In the example in Table 4.3 above 'being hungry' adds a circumstantial element of reason to the matrix clause. As mentioned before, the nonfinite clause is frequently subjectless. The absent subject must be inferred from the finite matrix clause by way of the attachment rule (Quirk *et al*. 1120f), which demands that the subject of the independent matrix clause and the subject of the nonfinite clause be identical, as in the following example.

4.2.5   Lying close upon the deck, I could see what was going on around me, while wholly
            unperceived myself. (Northup 70)

Only very formal or idiomatic absolute clauses are exempt from this rule (ibid.). And yet, depending on the recoverability of the implied subject from the co-text, even nonfinite or verbless clauses whose implied subject does not correspond to the subject in the independent clause can be acceptable. There are gradations of acceptability for these unattached clauses. Quirk *et al.* consider most of these unattached participles or infinitives as at least "frowned upon" (1122), whereas Halliday simply notes their "prevalence" (1994: 213). Quirk *et al.* classify those instances as totally unacceptable in which "the sentence provides no means for identifying the implied subject" (1122). However, regardless of acceptability, the violation of the attachment rule is indeed prevalent within the corpus and may lead to sometimes rather absurd interpretations, as will be seen in a variety of examples from Northup and other narrators.

Nonfinite clauses are dealt with in the context of the narrator's presence, because the dependency of their very form on presupposition makes the appearance of an overt subject superfluous, so that they can decrease the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun. More than ellipsis, but less than nominalization, nonfinite clauses "deprive" the narrator of an explicit appearance as a participant in a process. Moreover, as the majority of nonfinite clauses lack a conjunction, they affect logical relations between clauses and so contribute to the way the narrators present the events and themselves. As with ellipsis, the quantitative approach via the presence of the first-person singular pronoun is not an end in itself but provides a handle with which another phenomenon that contributes to the creation of the narrator's discoursal position can be detected and analyzed.

As the roughly 9,500 instances of the present participle in the corpus would have to be reviewed manually, the majority of the analyses in this field are not based on comprehensive quantitative computations. Nevertheless, for an approximate quantitative basis, random excerpts from all texts have been analyzed for sentence length, the ratio of finite to nonfinite clauses, and the number of clauses per sentence. The first complete sentence at the top of every or, for very long texts, every other page of a print version was chosen for analysis. These results together with a large number of qualitative observations may suffice to validate the claims made about the effects of nonfinite clauses (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Distribution of finite and nonfinite clauses

	words in excerpts	percent of narrative	words per sentence	clauses per sentence	finite clauses (in %)	nonfinite clauses (in %)
Roper	558	3.26	37.20	4.93	82.43	17.57
Grandy	678	5.18	23.38	3.14	92.31	7.69
Douglass	655	1.81	21.13	2.61	80.25	19.75
Brown	901	3.93	24.35	3.49	75.97	23.26
Bibb	1010	2.10	22.95	2.89	78.74	21.26
Northup	1252	1.61	19.87	2.60	76.22	23.78
Ball	2464	2.33	36.78	4.15	85.97	14.03
Jacobs	1498	1.84	18.96	2.90	84.72	16.59
Picquet	406	4.41	20.30	3.25	92.31	7.69
all	9422	2.29	24.47	3.22	82.88	17.29

Two definitions need to be made for the analysis. The first one concerns the concept of *sentence*. Crystal's claim that there are more than 200 attempts at a definition on record illustrates how elusive the concept is (94). I have adopted the systemic point of view that the sentence is primarily an orthographic unit (Halliday 1994: 216). It is a useful term to describe any stretch of written language between two full stops, but it does not figure on the rank scale of functional linguistics, because it can typically be accounted for by the clause complex (Eggins 129, Thompson 21, Halliday and Hasan 1976: 244). Unlike morpheme, word, group, and clause, where the lower level unit constitutes the higher level one, the relationship between clauses in a clause complex is not one of constituency but one of logic (Eggins 129). Clause complexes are potentially recursive and therefore theoretically endless. It is therefore a writer's choice to put clauses or clause complexes between full stops to indicate that a sentence is considered complete. But there is no intrinsic criterion that could define an accumulation of clauses as a sentence and exclude other clusters.

The second definition concerns the distinction between the coordination of clauses and that of processes as mentioned above. Generally, only in those instances where two or more processes are directly coordinated without the presence of other clausal elements that depend on the processes, has a coordination of processes been assumed. In practice, however, these instances are quite rare; constructions such as the one from Jacobs quoted above (ex. 4.2.3) are more frequent, so that the majority of such occurrences are categorized as coordinated clauses with subject ellipsis.

4.2.4 Nominalization

Grammar, including the lexicon, imposes categories on the way language constructs experience. The existence of lexical categories such as *noun*, *verb*, and *adjective* illustrates that grammar sets up a theory about happenings in the real world (Halliday 1998: 189ff). By creating these categories and assigning them different syntactic functions, grammar distinguishes between entities, processes, and states. The stratification of grammar and the fact that the semantic and the lexicogrammatical strata are not mapped onto each other in a fixed, one-to-one way permit various remappings of meanings onto forms (ibid.). One way of doing this is transcategorization. A process, typically encoded as verb, may be transformed into an entity, typically encoded as noun. As the respective parts of speech occupy different and distinct syntactic positions and select for distinct linguistic categories, a deverbal noun will behave differently than the original verb. While finite verbal groups select for mood, tense, aspect, and voice, none of these distinctions is carried over morphologically to the derived noun (Comrie and Thomson 360ff). Moreover, while processes have a transitivity structure that defines number and configuration of obligatory participants, derived nouns do not, at least not in the same strict sense. Therefore, nominalization takes even further the process of condensing information as seen in the use of subjectless nonfinite clauses. The result is greater lexical density, which is is defined as the ratio of content carrying words to non-content carrying words such as preositions, auxiliary verb, conjunctions, and pronouns. It is commonly associated with written rather than spoken language and frequently also with higher prestige, power, and control (Eggins 56ff, Halliday 1998: 228, Leckie-Tarry 95ff, 102). Figures for lexical density in the corpus are provided in Table A.1.4 (p. 278).

There are different types and realizations of nominalization as well as different definitions of the term. The most useful one is provided by Quirk *et al.*, who define nominalization as "a noun phrase . . . which has a systematic correspondence with a clause structure" where "[t]he noun head of such a phrase is normally related morphologically to a verb . . . or to an adjective" (1288). Depending on the modification of the derived nominal head, or the absence of such, there are gradations of explicitness in the relation of the nominalization with its corresponding clause, as will be seen below.

Formally, deverbal or deadjectival nouns are derived by suffixation. The most productive suffixes are *-ment*, *-(t)ion*, *-ity*, *-ness*, and *-ence/-ance* to generate action or state nominals such as *excitement* or *coolness*.[7] Nominalizations with these suffixes have a combined relative frequency of 12.335 in the corpus, but the spectrum is very wide (Table 4.5). In Northup's narrative the *rf* of nominalizations (rf_{nom}) even exceeds the rf_I.

Table 4.5: Proportion (%) and relative frequency of nominalizations

	-(t)ion	-nce	-ment	-ity	-ness	rf_{nom}
Roper	35.88	28.82	17.65	8.24	9.41	9.935
Grandy	23.40	35.11	26.60	8.51	6.38	7.177
Douglass	33.79	28.21	13.12	13.12	11.76	18.274
Brown	38.89	31.67	16.67	7.78	5.00	7.860
Bibb	45.60	20.88	16.12	10.99	6.41	11.331
Northup	37.31	28.48	12.01	13.21	8.99	16.168
Ball	33.09	34.61	12.84	12.68	6.78	11.868
Jacobs	33.97	25.78	16.03	11.10	13.12	10.945
Picquet	45.45	13.64	18.18	13.64	9.09	2.390
all	35.90	28.85	14.16	12.01	9.08	12.335

According to Biber et al., the *-(t)ion*-suffix, which accounts in most narratives for the majority of nominalizations, converts an action into a noun, typically a "generalized process or state" (63). The suffix *-ment*, too, usually converts actions into nouns. Count nouns of this category describe "processes of making or doing something," as in *movement*, whereas noncount nouns express mental states such as *excitement* (64). According to Quirk et al., the suffix describes the result of some action (1551). The suffixes *-ness* and *-ity* produce deadjectival nouns, which are abstract and normally noncount (ibid.). Neither Biber et al. nor Quirk et al. account for the quite productive suffix *-nce*, which occurs in abstract nominals such as *abundance*, *assistance* or *benevolence*. Due to the fact that the spelling occasionally underwent changes over the time between *-ance* and *-ence*, the suffix typically partly produces a quality (*-ence*) and partly actions or processes (*-ance*); however, according to the *OED*, the distinction is far from consistently applied. Biber et al. have examined the distribution of these suffixes in academic writing, fiction, and speech. If the suffix *-nce* is not taken into account, the data for the slave narrative corpus match quite closely those of fiction. (Tables A.1.13 and 14, p. 283).

Nouns derived through zero-suffixation, often referred to as conversions, such as *escape*, *plunge*, *kick*, or *plan* are frequent as well, but they have not been accounted for quantitative-

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[7] For the validity and practicability of this morphological approach cf. Biber et al. 1998: 59 ff.

ly. Agentive nominalizations as a further large group of nominalization have been exempted from a quantitative consideration, too. These are typically derived with the suffix *-er*, or, less frequently, with *-ar*, and *-or*. *Owner*, *liar*, and *actor* belong to this category. The last relevant and extremely productive group concerns verbal nouns formed with the suffix *-ing*. They combine nominal and verbal characteristics with a gradation from pure present participle via the gerund to deverbal noun (Quirk *et al.* 1290f). For this kind of nominalization it is hard to draw a clear dividing line between the verbal and the nominal end of the scale. Many items have entered the lexicon as nouns, such as *building*, *clothing*, or *feeling*, which can hardly relate back to their clausal origin any more. Criteria by which such verbal nouns can be distinguished from participles in a finite verbal group are plural formation, the use of definite articles, the acceptance of a genitive construction and adjective instead of adverbial premodification. Yet with over 9500 *-ing*-forms in the corpus, a comprehensive quantitative approach is impracticable here. However, as there exist a number of telling instances, this area will be taken into account at least qualitatively. Instances such as the following one from Bibb illustrate how nonfiniteness and nominalization shade into each other with the same effect, the elimination of the overt presence of the *I*-pronoun.

4.2.6   This we thought was the best plan for her escape, as there had been so much excitement caused by my running away. (Bibb 89)

Bibb's "running away" is seemingly synonymous with his wife's planned "escape," but as the *-ing*-form shares verbal and nominal features, it is more versatile. The original material activity has been transformed into an entity, which takes a possessive determiner and functions as *by*-agent. It occupies a syntactic slot reserved for a nominal group. Yet it has preserved verbal characteristics as well, as a hypothetical adverbial postmodification with 'so quickly' proves. The information in the sentence is further condensed through the use of "plan" and "excitement" for actions and states that in a clausal paraphrase would require additional human participants. Through the nominalization the verbs *plan* and *excite* both lose participant roles; those who plan and those who are excited remain unmentioned. The possessive determiners "her" and "my" illustrate the shared characteristics of nonfinite verb forms and nominalization, so that the break of what is a continuum rather than two completely distinct categories appears quite arbitrary. Comrie and Thomson indeed perceive a cline in the expressibility of verbal categories such as tense, aspect, mood, and voice from finite verbs to nonfinite verbs to action nominals to other nominal groups (361).

We need not account for all of these different shadings of nominalization; only a few of the central characteristics will be introduced here in order to point out how the use of this linguistic device contributes to the construction of the narrator's discoursal self. For the present purposes, that is, for the experiential perspective, it is helpful to examine the effects of nominalization on the expression of transitivity. In the English language subjects and objects of a verb assimilate to the syntax of the nominal group. Comrie and Thomson postulate that there is a "close correspondence" between the subject of a verb and a Saxon prenominal genitive on the one hand, and between a direct object and a Norman postnominal genitive on the other (370ff). They claim that this correspondence is absolute for transitive verbs. The following example from Douglass serves as an illustration.

4.2.7   I have observed this in my experience of slavery . . . (99)

The possessive determiner is the transformed subject, while the *of*-genitive represents the object of the original verb. The nominal group thus corresponds to the clause 'I experience

slavery,' albeit with indicators of tense, aspect, mood, and voice missing. Instances like this one with two explicit participants, however, are relatively rare in the corpus. In cases where the direct object is obligatory for the verb, but the Norman genitive is absent, the Saxon genitive must be interpreted as the object. Thus 'my enslavement' always corresponds to '(someone) enslaves me.' For transitive verbs this nominalization reconfigures a passive voice construction in which the narrator would have to feature as the affected participant. These nominal groups are more frequent, and for the corpus collocations with *my* have been examined quantitatively. The postnominal genitive alone has at best a tendency to be interpreted as object (Comrie and Thompson 372), but the subject-role cannot be ruled out completely, as Bibb's "the temptation of money" illustrates (Bibb 104). For intransitive verbs both the Saxon as well as the Norman genitive can function as subject. Table 4.6 shows the relative frequencies of collocations of the first-person possessive determiner with nominalizations including *-ing*-forms. Bibb's narrative stands out here; collocations of *my* + nominalization occur 2.096 times per thousand words while the average is 1.222.

Table 4.6: Selected nominalizations collocating with *my*

	rf_{my+nom}	share of *my*+nom-collocations in percent of the total of nominalizations	rf_{my+ing}	sum of the relative frequencies
Roper	0.818	8.24	0.994	1.812
Grandy	0.458	6.38	0.305	0.763
Douglass	1.103	6.03	0.331	1.433
Brown	0.524	6.67	0.306	0.830
Bibb	1.121	9.89	0.975	2.096
Northup	0.875	5.41	0.154	1.029
Ball	0.795	6.70	0.256	1.050
Jacobs	0.871	7.96	0.344	1.215
Picquet	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000
all	0.848	6.87	0.374	1.222

The prehead genitive in nominal groups stands in complementary distribution to the definite article (Comrie and Thompson 371). From an experiential perspective, the Saxon genitive as well as the definite article belong to the group of deictic elements within the nominal group, which act logically as premodifiers (Halliday 1994: 181ff). The Deictic within the nominal group may be specific (demonstrative or possessive) or non-specific. The point here is that the introduction of non-possessive deictics is clearly possible and very common, but entails a loss of explicitness as to which participants are involved. Most explicit are constructions that mention the involved participant, such as "Eldret's announcement" (Northup 156). Possessive determiners have explicit, usually anaphoric, reference so that the participant of the action or state nominal can easily retrieved from the co-text. The following example is concerned with the carpenter Bass, who eventually helps Northup gain his freedom. The name has been mentioned before, so the reference in "his instrumentality" is anaphoric and unmistakable. The first-person possessive determiner, on the other hand, does not require anaphoric reference; the genre being an autobiographical one, the reference is also extratextual, but in any case distinct.

4.2.7   He gathered up his effects and departed quietly from Marksville the day before I did, the suspicions of his instrumentality in procuring my liberation rendering such a step necessary. (Northup 256)

Determinative Deictics offer some point of orientation for the reader concerning proximity (*this*, *that*), or at least presuppose that the reference can be retrieved from somewhere (*the*). Presupposition, however, does not mean that there *is* in fact a recoverable referent, it only means that the text is constructed as if there were one. This applies to "the suspicions" above, to which there exists no antecedent, so that it is only the definite article itself that constructs the impression that the presence of suspicions is a given and uncontested fact. The lowest end of explicitness is represented by bare abstract or agential nouns, as in the chapter heading "Licentiousness a prop of slavery" in Bibb.[8]

The corpus shows that the non-selective determiner *the* collocates much more frequently with nominalizations than does the possessive determiner *my*. In Northup's narrative, for instance, collocations with *my* have a relative frequency of 0.193, whereas those with *the* reach 3.203. And yet, in a large number of instances the nominalization involves the narrator as participant, but in which way exactly is not made explicit and has to be inferred from the co-text. One of the most striking examples is provided by Bibb's account of how he met his wife-to-be.

4.2.8   I only visited Malinda because I liked her company, as a highly interesting girl. But in spite of myself, before I was aware of it, I was deeply in love; and what made this passion so effectual and almost irresistable [sic], I became satisfied that it was reciprocal. There was a union of feeling, and every visit made the impression stronger and stronger. (Bibb 75)

The item in question is "the impression." Although Bibb's "impression" is devoid of all explicit participants, it has a definite article and therefore the group is constructed as if a recoverable referent existed. As there are no morphologically related items present, the antecedent for "impression" can be assumed to be semantically related. There are several possibilities, for all of which "impression" represents a superordinate term. The item might act as a hypernym to "passion," which in turn is superordinate to "in love." Alternatively, the (unspecified!) "union of feeling" as a near paraphrase of "reciprocal" acts as a hyponym to "impression." Finally, maybe most likely, the impression can also refer back to Bibb's becoming satisfied. In any case, it is implausible that the person who has this impression is someone other than the narrator himself, although it cannot be ruled out that Malinda is included as well. Yet the narrator does not figure at all as a participant in the clause, much less in the nominal group. It appears as if Bibb needed to balance the highly personal nature of this episode with the most impersonal and ambiguous ways of expression. He presents himself as if he were not responsible for his feelings towards Malinda; in fact, it appears as if these emotions were not even part of him. This is supported by relational or existential processes in essential positions ("There was a union of feeling," "it was reciprocal") and the fact that the entire episode features a number of nominalizations of a similar kind. The eventual failure of this slave marriage renders this interpretation even more plausible. Much later Bibb, having fled to the North alone, unsuccessfully tries to recover his wife several times and is eventually informed that she is living with someone else. Given that Bibb tries to appeal to his audience's sensibilities about morals and decency, he needs

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[8] Cf. also Quirk *et al*. 1289f about degrees of explicitness.

to present himself as not in control and not responsible here. After all, he is the one who deserts his family. The relationship, which Bibb needs to characterize as marriage, fails when he goes North and is unable to rescue her, but it is never officially dissolved. Bibb is confronted with the dilemma that, in order to appeal to his audience, he cannot present himself as living with a woman and having a child with her without being married; on the other hand, the relationship cannot be depicted as a real marriage, either, because at the end of Chapter XIX Bibb concedes that he is married again: "it was not until after living alone in the world for more than eight years without a companion known in law or morals, that I changed my condition" (165). It appears plausible that, when he describes the beginning of his relationship with Malinda in the terms quoted above, he tries to create this impression of distance and lack of control and responsibility from the very beginning onwards in order to ease the justification of his solitary escape and later remarriage.

Although there are many different types and uses of nominalization, they all share a common pattern, which is the reconfiguration of process-participant relations. This reconfiguration as consequence of a grammatical transcategorization from adjective or verb to noun frequently entails a loss in explicit information. Halliday claims that the rewording of a clause as a nominal group does not result in "a loss of semantic distinction but ambiguity: the different possible meanings are still discrete" (1998: 227). While they may indeed be discrete, the example from Bibb has illustrated this ambiguity and the extent to which the nominalization provides means of making meaning itself. The use of nominalizations enables narrators to play with the presence of participants much more than is possible with a verb, which has an obligatory argument structure, whereas the modifications of a noun are invariably optional.

Nominalization is one particular case of what Halliday calls grammatical metaphor. In contrast to traditional conceptions of metaphor, where lexical transformation takes place, grammatical metaphor involves grammatical transformation. In this process the signified remains the same while the signifier is chosen from a different grammatical category (1998: 191). Processes are typically realized as verbs, qualities as adjectives, and entities and things as nouns. This is what Halliday calls "congruent" realization (1998: 208). Whenever a semantic function is realized by a different grammatical class, a grammatical metaphor is formed. As has been illustrated for the process of nominalization, this may result in a condensation of information. Halliday claims there is an ideological dimension to grammatical metaphor (1998: 228). The process of "regrammaticising" is also a "resemanticising;" in experiential terms nominalization "creates a universe of things, bounded, stable, and determinate; and (in place of processes) relations between things" (ibid.). It is this ideological dimension that makes this common linguistic process worth studying in our context of the narrator's participation in particular processes.

4.3   Representing the world: transitivity

The previous sections focused on the narrators' presence and a number of linguistic devices that impinge on the *rf$_I$*. The following section will concentrate on the kinds of activities in which the respective narrators present themselves as participating as first-person parties. In order to arrive at a comprehensive and differentiated picture, the narratives in the corpus were scanned for the finite verbal groups associated with the first-person singular pronoun. Initially, the first-person singular pronouns and the associated verbs were isolated with the aid of the concordancing program *MonoConc*. The second part of the empirical investigation, that is, the actual tagging of the verbs according to the respective process types had to be conducted manually.[9] This part of the present chapter introduces the grammatical concept used as a basis for the analyses of the narrators' doings as well as a number of quantitative observations.

4.3.1 The system of transitivity

The system of transitivity as part of the experiential metafunction of language was briefly introduced in Chapter 3.4.1. Before we turn to further quantitative results and their interpretations, a closer look at the systemic perspective of this particular area of language is necessary. Form a systemic point of view transitivity is "a lexicogrammatical resource for construing our experience of the flow of events" (Matthiessen 1999: 2). In contrast to some traditional grammars, systemic grammar interprets transitivity not so much as a set of structures but as a paradigmatic resource where a number of selections are possible at different points of entry into a system network (5). The following synopsis is based on Matthiessen's account of transitivity, which is rooted in the Hallidayan model but emphasizes the observation that transitivity is a "system of systems" more than Halliday does (Matthiessen 1999: 5). Matthiessen stresses that transitivity is "a network of interconnected systems ordered relative to one another as simultaneous . . . or as dependent in delicacy" (ibid.).

 Transitivity is not simply concerned with the verb but with the clause (Halliday 1994: 106, Matthiessen 1999: 2). This includes the verb but also involves nominals as well as circumstantial elements (ibid.). Matthiessen characterizes transitivity as "not homogeneous" and distinguishes between "nuclear transitivity", which comprises the systems of Agency and Process Type, and "circumstantial transitivity", which comprises Location, Extent, Manner, Cause, Accompaniment, Role, Angle, and Matter (1999: 5). Any major clause selects for both nuclear and circumstantial transitivity, yet while the former is obligatory, circumstantial elements are optional (cf. Figure 4.3.1 below). In the following we will concentrate on nuclear transitivity, that is, on the systems of Agency and Process Type, while circumstantial functions will be examined in a less systematic way and only when the need arises. The system of Process Type distinguishes material, mental, behavioural, verbal, relational, and existential processes at the next level of delicacy. These lead to further dependent systems, such as the distinction between perceptive (*see*), cognitive (*know*), emotive (*regret*), and desiderative (*want*) verbs within the system of mental verbs. The individual process types and their further distinctions levels will be considered below.

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[9] About the need for manual analysis in the field of transitivity cf. Matthiessen 1999: 12.

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                                             ┌ material
                                             ├ mental
                          Process Type ──────┤ relational
                                             ├→verbal
                                             ├ behavioural
                                             └ existential


clause ──────→          Agency ─────────────┌ middle
                                             └ effective


                                             ┌ Location
                                             │ Extent
                                             │ Manner
                          Circumstance ─────→│ Cause
                                             │ Accompaniment
                                             │ Role
                                             │ Matter
                                             └ Angle
```
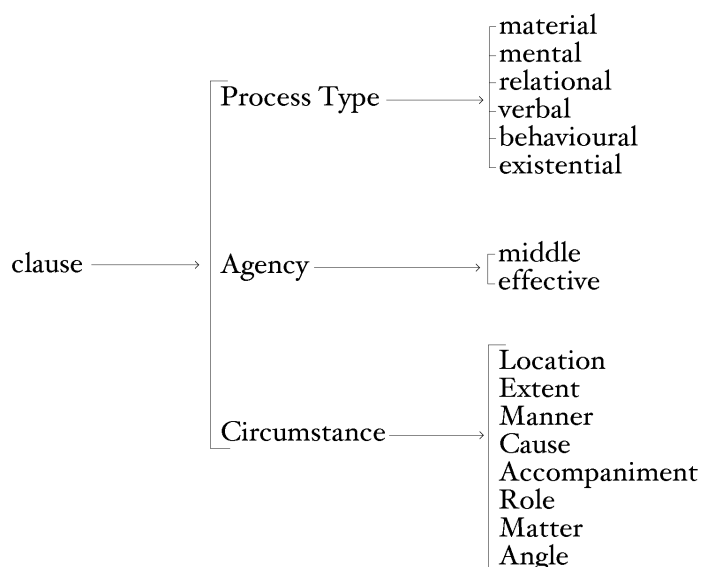
Figure 4.3.1: Nuclear and circumstantial transitivity (based on Matthiessen 1999: 6f)

Selections from the system of Process Type condition selections from the system of Agency (Matthiessen 1999: 5). Therefore, both of them need to be examined jointly so that a short introduction to the concept of ergativity, which lies behind this system, is required. Agency indicates whether an Agent is involved in a process as an external cause, or whether a process is represented as self-engendered as in the following example.

4.3.1   I ran on till I came to the house of the friend who was to conceal me. (Jacobs 147)

The processes *run* and *come* do not have an external Agent and are classified as *middle*. Alternatively, a process can be seen as brought about from the outside.

4.3.2   I had been chased during half my life, and it seemed as if the chase was never to end. (Jacobs 298)

The process *chase* is initiated by an (unmentioned) external Agent, so it is *effective*. An analysis according to a transitive/intransitive distinction does not afford the same as it only takes into account whether a process extends from one participant to another but it does not probe an expression for causativity, as further examples provided in Table 4.7 below illustrate (Halliday 1994: 162ff). In an ergative interpretation of a process there is only one obligatory participant through which the action is actualized: the *Medium*. Its central character is underlined by the fact that this participant cannot be omitted in any linguistic representation of the process, nor can it be introduced into the clause by a preposition. Without this crucial participant there would be no process at all; it always participates directly and thus, together with the process, forms the nucleus of the clause (Halliday 1994: 164). In a middle clause the Medium corresponds to the Actor in a material process; in an effective clause to the Goal. This correspondence serves to illustrate, for instance, the semantic relationship between running and being chased above. In cases where an external cause for a process is mentioned, it occupies the role of the Agent. The Agent, the causal power, is the participant in a process that sets it in motion but it is not central to the representation of the process. It can be omitted linguistically, as the passive voice in example 4.3.2 above illustrates, or it can be introduced by a preposition, which makes it semantically

a circumstance to the process. This also applies to the two further ergative participant functions: *Beneficiary* and *Range*. The former is the one "that stands to gain" as in 'I give you a dollar,' while the latter refers to the scope of a process (Halliday 1994: 167). Similar to the Agent they are participant-like because they can be involved directly in a process, but they are also circumstance-like, because they can also be introduced by a preposition (ibid.). The concept of Range will be discussed more in detail in the context of material verbs.

Michael Toolan (1998) attempts to amalgamate the systems of Process Type ("transitivity" in his account) and Agency. He applies the labels Medium and Agent only to material processes and introduces a further distinction between human/non-human and intentional/non-intentional. Toolan suggests that the category of Agent proper can only be filled by humans, and therefore labels nonhuman causers *Instrument*, which is "wielded by an implied or declared human Agent" or *Force* being an inanimate natural beyond human control (1998: 80). This level of delicacy has the advantage that it affords an experiential distinction between otherwise similar processes as Table 4.7 illustrates.

Table 4.7: Transitive and ergative interpretations of experientially similar clauses

(i)	the window	broke
Process Type	Actor	process: material[10]
Agency	Medium	process: middle
transitivity (Toolan)	Medium	process: material

(ii)	the stone	broke	the window
Process Type	Actor	process: material	Goal
Agency	Agent	process: effective	Medium
transitivity (Toolan)	Instrument	process: material	Medium

(iii)	she	broke	the window	with a stone
Process Type	Actor	process: material	Goal	Circumstance: Manner: Means
Agency	Agent	process: effective	Medium	
transitivity (Toolan)	Agent	process: material	Medium	Instrument

Examples (ii) and (iii) show that the distinction human/non-human offered by Toolan provides a further useful analytical level. In terms of Agency both clauses would appear to have the same structure; Toolan's terminology exposes the differences while it also reveals the experiential role of the stone as similar in (ii) and (iii). The terminology, however, would require a revision of the circumstance system, because neither Halliday nor Matthiessen provides for an explicit Instrument role (Halliday 1994: 154, Matthiessen 1999: 33). For the present purposes the advantages that the additional labels provide supercede the problems for the circumstantial system, the details of which are only of marginal interest at this point. It appears that there is no reason why the role of Instrument could not be intro-

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[10] The notation *x: y* means that *y* is a category within the class of *x*. *Range: process* thus denotes a Range that signifies a process.

duced within the system of Manner instead of or in addition to Means. However, whether there is enough grammatical evidence for an additional level of delicacy must remain open.

Yet for analytical reasons it is more feasible not to conflate the systems of Agency and Process Type. While the former is able to highlight similarities in the processes in terms of cause and effect, the latter elucidates semantic differences which otherwise may remain undetected. Toolan's amalgamation of the two concepts reduces analytical potential because the categories Agent and Medium are no longer applied to processes other than material ones. This means that the similarities between process types can no longer be pointed out. For instance, the restriction of Agent to material processes leaves out of account Agency in mental processes, as in "[t]his strange movement frightened me off again" (Bibb 103). Moreover, Halliday's separate systems appear to be more suitable for an analysis of recursive causative constructions, where higher-order Agents are introduced to the system as well as additional transitive functions such as Initiator, Assigner and Attributor, respectively. Therefore, the two systems of Agency and Process Type will be kept separate with the additional distinction between human and non-human Agents as suggested by Toolan.

Toolan's introduction of intentionality entails even more serious problems. Having dispensed with the Actor/Goal roles, he applies intention to the Medium participant in order to be able to distinguish a "volitional human initiator of a process" from a "human target of a process" (88). This is supposed to highlight differences between intransitive processes such as 'I ran' with the first-person singular pronoun as Medium-i (initiator) and 'I stumbled' with *I* as Medium-t (target) or transitive processes such as 'I was beaten' with *I* as Medium-t as well. The need for this subclassification is a direct consequence of the lacking distinction between Process Type and Agency and therefore it is superfluous for the present purposes, where the separation will be retained. Intentionality is moreover difficult to apply in a rigorous and consequent manner, as is often not a semantic feature of the verb itself. Rather frequently it is represented as circumstantial to the process such as in *accidentally* or *by chance*, or it may be expressed in a hypotactic verbal group as 'happen to do something.' The problem becomes clear in clauses such as Ball's "I was oftener traveling on the wrong route than on the right one" (259), where the supposed intentionality of the process *traveling* clashes with the unintended result.[11]

Prior to a discussion of the individual process types and finally the individual texts, a terminological definition is due because of considerable terminological inconsistency in this field of grammar. Halliday's *ergativity* appears to be equivalent to Matthiessen's system of *Agency*, while Matthiessen's *Process Type* corresponds to Halliday's *transitivity*. Henceforth *transitivity* will signify nuclear transitivity, that is Matthiessen's *Process Type* in capitalized form. The term *process type* in small letters indicates that we are talking about instantiations or specific selections from the system. *Ergativity* will occasionally be used interchangeably with *Agency*; in capitalized form both terms refer to the system.

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[11] The discussion of intentionality and humanness touches upon the concepts of power and control, which are directly related to agency in linguistic as well as philosophical terms. Klaiman claims "that the attribution of control is a fundamental and universal behavior in certain natural species, including humans. Given this, there seems no reason in principle to discount the possibility that attribution of control may be reflected in the mental structures which underlie grammatical behavior" (117). According to Comrie, however, control is not necessarily connected with animacy and thus not with consciousness (62). The same applies to Halliday's Agent-role in his discussion of ergativity (1994: 164ff), whereas in other functional approaches, as opposed to SFG, control does involve animacy (Foley and Van Valin 32; Siewierska 48), while agentivity is usually in no such way restricted (Fillmore 42; Chafe 109).

4.3.2 The major process types: material, mental, relational

The three major process types can be distinguished by a number of criteria (cf. also Table 4.11 below). The first major distinction is that between inner and outer processes, between mental and material. Material processes are processes of acting, doing, creating, changing, and happening. Although prototypically physical and concrete, they may very well be abstract (Halliday 1994: 111). Mental processes, on the other hand, are processes of sensing, thinking, and understanding.

As prototypical material processes have more or less distinct beginnings and endings, the unmarked tense for the present is the progressive, or "present in present" in systemic terminology, while the unmarked present tense for mental as well as for relational processes is simple (116). In material processes all participants are "things" in the sense of entities, as opposed to embedded facts or metaphenomena in mental or relational processes. Mental processes necessarily feature at least one conscious participant that can act as a Senser. Finally, unlike mental processes, prototypical material processes can be probed by questions formed with *do* or *do to/with* (111ff). For some of the more peripheral material verbs, however, questions such as "What happened?" or "What was the result?" may appear more appropriate, as Thompson points out (80f).

Material processes have one obligatory participant, which is the Actor. It corresponds to the logical subject or the doer of a certain activity, but it need not be present in the linguistic representation of the action, as in the case of passive voice clauses. The second, optional, participant in a material process is the Goal. To this participant a process is extended and it typically becomes grammatical subject in a passive voice clause. It is the "done-to" or "done-with" participant and can be probed as such. A further participant, sometimes difficult to distinguish from the Goal, is the Range. It is not inherent in the process itself. The Range is either a restatement of the process as in 'make a reply' or the extent of the process as in 'play a game' (Halliday 1994: 146ff; Eggins 232ff). This latter participant, qualified by Halliday as Range: entity (as opposed to Range: process), is frequently found in travel accounts, where the narrators 'cross streams,' 'climb hills' or 'follow the road.' It is not as directly affected by the process as the Goal so that it usually cannot be sensibly probed with *do to* or *do with*. It is also more likely to occur in a prepositional phrase than the more central Goal. Though sometimes difficult to ascertain, the distinction between the two participant roles is not a matter of splitting hairs. There is a semantic difference between a highly affected participant as the Goal in "I broke a switch from some boughs above my head" (Roper 40) and a non-participant in "I caught a glimpse" (Roper 29), although both "switch" as well as "glimpse" are traditionally identified as direct objects. However, ergatively the second clause is middle because there is only an Actor but no Goal (Halliday 1994: 148). The difference, in terms of what the *I*-narrators do, is that they may present themselves as if they were acting upon an object, which in an experiential sense is not affected by the process at all. At this point the traditional dichotomy between transitive and intransitive does not yield experientially meaningful results for an analysis.

Halliday lists a number of criteria according to which a Goal may be distinguished from a Range, yet they do not always pass the test of real text analysis. Three criteria are sufficiently clear: (i) a Range cannot be represented by the personal pronouns *him* or *her*, (ii) it is normally not modified by a possessive, and (iii) a Range that signifies a process, typically in the form of a nominalization, and a dummy-verb can be conflated into one single process.

This type of construction as in 'make an attempt' or 'make a reply' is relatively frequent. But the main test, that is, the probe with *do to* or *do with* is occasionally open to linguistic intuition. One such example is the verb *leave*. When a narrator leaves a person, the probe may well work. The abandoned person is affected and being so even takes an attribute of result as in 'I left her alone.' When the narrator says that he leaves the city, the question 'what did you do with the city?' is decidedly odd if the expected answer is 'I left it.' Here the object of the process must be seen as a Range. Other objects such as a horse or a boat may be left as well, but in how far they can plausibly be considered as affected by this action remains debatable. Accordingly, Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter point out that Goal and Range should be perceived as "points on a cline between highly affected material participant (i.e. Goal) and non-affected material participant (i.e. Range)" (120). Therefore, although the majority of cases are indisputable, there will remain a gray area with examples such as the ones above. Nevertheless, the quantitative review of material processes reveals that each narrative features an individual profile as to how intransitive, ranged, and effective material clauses are selected.

Table 4.8: Proportion of subtypes of material processes (in percent of the total of material processes)

	reflexive	effective	ranged	intransitive
Roper	2.97	17.47	24.54	55.02
Grandy	5.65	31.45	17.74	42.74
Douglass	3.22	27.78	27.49	41.52
Brown	0.99	24.63	25.12	49.26
Bibb	4.50	20.07	27.51	47.23
Northup	1.53	19.59	31.30	47.58
Ball	2.29	22.56	35.34	39.81
Jacobs	2.90	27.09	30.15	39.86
Picquet	0.83	20.83	20.83	57.50
sum	2.79	23.06	29.54	44.41

Material processes can be subdivided along various lines. Halliday distinguishes between dispositive and creative types of material processes. Dispositive processes are processes of doing something to some other entity, while creative processes bring something about (1994: 111). Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter differentiate between actions and events, which is basically congruent with the difference between effective and middle clauses (102). For our purposes this distinction is sufficient and will be applied in the analyses below.

As prototypical material processes describe physical activity, their presence oftentimes makes a text appear dynamic. Things and persons move and do observable things, or entities are being created. The process type also produces an impression of outwardness as opposed to the interior world of mental processes. Presenting actions and events as material processes conditions the configuration of the possible participants as Actor, Goal, and Range, which is especially telling in metaphorical ways of expression. A narrator who 'makes no reply' styles himself as Actor, although experientially nothing has happened, not even a verbal process, which is incorporated as a nominalized Range: process in this con-

struction. But it is also possible for a narrator to express a material event materially and yet make an experiential difference. While Bibb does not do much more than run away regularly (middle process), he presents himself as an Actor in the seemingly creative process *make a business* in the following example.

4.3.3   Among other good trades I learned the art of running away to perfection. I made a regular business of it, and never gave it up, until I had broken the bands of slavery, and landed myself safely in Canada, where I was regarded as a man, and not as a thing. (65)

The same applies to the effective process *break*, where Bibb fashions himself as an effective Actor although he could have simply 'escaped from slavery' in a middle clause. Note also the reflexive use of *land* with the effect of transforming an intransitive verb into a seemingly transitive one with an affected Goal ("myself"). A few sentences later, Bibb, still speaking of running away, says that he "would make calculation to avoid detection" (66). Here he presents himself as an Actor of a dummy process in what is experientially a cognitive mental process. As these examples suggest, the effect is frequently an impression of activity or creation where there is none, and where a different process type would lead to a more congruent interpretation.

Mental processes are processes of sensing, thinking, and wanting and are therefore capable of presenting a narrator's inner life. They always have two inherent participants, the Senser and the Phenomenon, except in instances of projection, where only a Senser is required. While the Senser as the active participant is endowed with consciousness, the Phenomenon as the nonactive part is not restricted in this respect. The sensed participant may be a thing, realized as a simple nominal group, as well as a hyperphenomenon (Matthiessen 1995: 256). This is "indirect or reported discourse" which is "constructed as a participant" (Halliday 1994: 115). The dependent clauses in sentences such as "I thought I must die beneath the lashes of the accursed brute" (Northup 45) is such a case of reported discourse. Yet not all mental verbs behave in the same manner, so that subtypes emerge. According to Halliday, there are perceptive (4.3.4), cognitive (4.3.5), and emotive (4.3.6) processes. All of these subtypes, though not every verb, can occur with a simple Phenomenon.

4.3.4   I saw a canoe, with its head drawn high on the beach. (Ball 332)

4.3.5   I knew her when she lived at Mr. English's, in Mobile. (Picquet 39)

4.3.6   I loved Mrs. Bruce's babe. (Jacobs 257)

Hyperphenomena come in two versions: macro- and metaphenomena. Macrophenomena are nonfinite clauses as in the following example.

4.3.7   I saw an old gentleman walking in the grounds, near the gate. (Ball 392)

Metaphenomena are finite clauses. In perceptive clauses these are responses to a fact, not projections.

4.3.8   I perceived that the very best of us were kept back for the last. (Ball 98)

Cognitive processes have the ability to project a thought into existence; in this case the projected clause is usually a proposition (Halliday 1994: 259).

4.3.9   I thought he had got it that night playin' cards. (Picquet 12)

Verbs of affection that signify desire, on the other hand, project proposals (ibid.).

4.3.10   I hope this law will soon be altered again. (Grandy 70)

And yet, as affective verbs can enter into a variety of constructions, occasionally conflicting interpretations of one and the same instance are possible. As Halliday admits, "the exact limits are fuzzy; they merge with causatives and various aspectual categories" (1994: 259), so a few of these instances require a short descriptive, but hardly conclusive discussion.

According to Halliday, affective processes can project proposals (ibid.). This certainly applies to a number of verbs, but it is not a general feature. First of all, it is obvious that those processes of affection with a simple nominal group as Phenomenon do not project. But also clauses as Phenomena are not necessarily projected.

4.3.11   I did not like to move thus blindfolded, but I had no choice. (Jacobs 153)

The affective processes here respond emotionally to embedded facts that are not brought into existence through a mental act of the Senser. More frequent in all narratives, however, are affective verbs that indeed project ideas into existence such as 4.3.10 above. Here, the metaphenomenon does not correspond to a state of affairs in reality. Very frequent in the corpus are constructions that Halliday preferably interprets as verbal group complexes like 4.3.11 above, but with projecting qualities.

4.3.12   I refused to go. (Grandy 32)

At first sight Halliday's interpretation as verbal group complex may suggest that there is only one process involved in the clause similar to truly hypotactic verbal group complexes such as *try to do*, in which the trying does not represent a separate activity, but a conative expansion of *do* (1994: 280). Although for some specific processes such as *intend to do* the difference may be almost inconceivable, truly mental processes must be seen as separate from the projected process. Otherwise, the *I*-pronoun would act as Carrier of an Attribute in a clause like "I wanted to keep myself pure" (Jacobs 84) and not as a Senser, which is at the very least counterintuitive. The separateness becomes obvious in the possibility of "distinct time references" for the two processes as in 'she wanted to arrive today' (Halliday 1994: 288). While the interpretation as verbal group complex is by no means unreasonable, the two different processes and thus the different participant roles for the *I*-pronoun should be made explicit. In the example from Jacobs the narrator appears as Senser as well as projected Carrier (1994: 288ff). Constructions like 4.3.12 may be interpreted as verbal group complex, but more distinctly than in Halliday, the acting participant should primarily be seen as a Senser in a mental process of affection rather than an Actor. In the quantitative analyses the projected participant roles have not been taken into account.

For affective processes that project such as *want*, *hope*, *long*, *wish* etc. and thus produce ideas, Matthiessen has created the subcategory of desiderative verbs and contrasts them with emotive verbs such as *fear*, *resent*, *despise*, which respond to facts (1995: 265ff). He claims that there are "strong correlations" between desiderative verbs and the ability to project ideas as proposals, and between emotive verbs and their capacity of responding to fact propositions. For many of the intuitively recognizable desiderative verbs this correlation holds, but a few emotive verbs, predominantly *fear* and *dread*, pose problems as they may be interpreted as negative desideratives and therefore capable of projecting proposals.

4.3.13   I dreaded to enter this hiding-place. (Jacobs 171)

The process *dread* in this instance implies 'did not wish' and may therefore be seen as a projection of an idea as proposal. Here, the categories indeed are not delicate enough to ex-

plain this phenomenon. In contrast to Matthiessen, Halliday takes into account the possible interpretation of emotive verbs as desiderative ones with negative polarity. In a classification of the projections in hypotactic verbal groups he suggests the subsystems *desideration*, *intention*, *expectation*, *need*, and *fear* (1994: 291) instead of the distinction between emotive and desiderative. Due to these conflicting systems, fuzzy boundaries, and the frequency of verbs like *fear* and *dread*, no quantitative subcategorization of affective verbs has been attempted here. Matthiessen's distinction between emotive responses to facts and desiderative projections of ideas will be used occasionally, with the proviso that a few instances cannot be classified precisely. Table 4.9 represents a simplified summary of the different mental process types; Table 4.10 provides the distribution among the different types relative to the total of mental verbs in the individual narratives.

Table 4.9: Different types of mental verbs (Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter 122)

process type	possibility of projection	type of projected idea
perception	no	
cognition	yes	proposition
affection: desire	yes	proposal
affection: emotion	no	

Table 4.10: Proportion of subtypes of mental verbs (in percent of the total of mental verbs)

	affection	cognition	perception
Roper	19.53	47.66	32.81
Grandy	26.39	50.00	23.61
Douglass	18.06	59.53	22.41
Brown	18.23	53.04	28.73
Bibb	12.63	59.74	27.63
Northup	10.20	62.83	26.97
Ball	5.56	53.64	40.79
Jacobs	19.37	52.91	27.72
Picquet	10.94	73.44	15.63
sum	13.57	56.31	30.12

Unlike other process types, many mental processes are bidirectional. In pairs such as 'he likes flowers' versus 'flowers please him' the two participants semantically remain Senser and Phenomenon respectively while the syntactic roles switch and the clause remains in the active voice. The *like*-type is classified as middle because, according to Halliday, the Phenomenon displays similarities with properties of the Range described above for material processes (1994: 148). The Phenomenon as Range is, for instance, rather unlikely to take over the subject position in a hypothetical passive voice clause: ?'flowers are liked by him.' In clauses of the *please*-type, on the other hand, the Phenomenon resembles a Goal, as the probe 'what do the flowers do to him?' is possible. A clause like this is therefore effective and can be construed as passive.

Mental processes present a narrator's inner world. Whether they project or respond to facts, in any case they present facts and ideas as syntactically and therefore also experientially dependent on the narrator's point of view. Being finite clauses, macrophenomena could stand on their own syntactically; the added matrix clause through which they are projected, however, makes this dependency explicit.

Relational processes, as the third major process type, set up relations between two distinct entities. Systemic grammar distinguishes three types of relationship: intensive, circumstantial, and possessive. This means that relational processes describe relations of being something as in 'I was afraid,' being somewhere as in 'I remained at home,' and possessing something as in 'I had no shoes.' Each of these three can be expressed as grammatically distinct identifying or attributive processes. In an identifying clause the two participants are Identifier and Identified, which stand in a defining relationship to each other. The two related nominal groups are typically definite as in 'I was his slave.' Attributive clauses are concerned with classifying and ascribing. The two participant functions are Carrier and Attribute, of which the former is typically definite while the latter is either an adjective or an indefinite nominal as in 'I was a slave for life.' The Attribute is a grammatical participant function that is used to describe or classify the Carrier, yet according to Martin, it does not realize a participant itself (130).

If the Attribute is derived from a participle, the borderline between attributive clauses and passive forms may become blurred. Northup's statement "I was deprived of pen, ink, and paper" is an example of this kind (230). The Agent in what might originally be considered an effective process in absent. It is the result that is of importance rather than the activity of depriving, which, nevertheless, is alluded to as well. Generally, clauses that Quirk *et al.* classify as central passives have been excluded from the category of relational processes and counted as samples of passive voice (166ff). Semi-passives and pseudo-passives, on the other hand, are included here. Semi-passives clearly combine verbal and adjectival properties as the following example illustrates.

4.3.14   I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. (Douglass 63)

Constructions like these can have active analogues, but they can also feature coordination of the participle with an adjective, modification of the participle with *quite, rather, more*, and may be replaced by *feel* or *seem*: 'I felt quite broken and desolate in body, soul, and spirit.' Pseudo-passives lack active transforms as well as the possibility of agent addition altogether. They are either statal in meaning, where oftentimes the state is the result of a previous action, or they are clearly adjectival, so that the *be*-form must be seen as copular verb.

4.3.15   I thought it best not to attempt to cross this water until I was better informed of the
         country through which it flowed. (Ball 344)

The adjective "informed" expresses a state, so that the clause counts as a relational process. If the participle can be clearly interpreted as adjective, it should be able to appear in prenominal position. Thus 'the customer was satisfied' becomes 'the satisfied customer.'

Identifying clauses with the *I*-pronoun are rare in the corpus. Hardly ever do the slave narrators identify themselves before their audience like Northup: "I was the wealthiest "nigger" on Bayou Boeuf" (196). It is more typical that narrators ascribe some quality to themselves in attributive clauses. *Be* and *have* are the most frequently used verbs in relational processes, yet there is a number of further verbs such as *seem, feel, remain*, and *appear* in this category. In addition to using this process type in presentations and expositions,

many narrators use attributive clauses as a way to represent mental states. Instances of 'I was afraid' or 'I was determined' with a projected clause following the adjective are frequent. As relational processes present identities and qualities rather than actions and events, clauses with this process type tend to appear static and often imply general or at least more than momentary validity.

The following table (4.11) presents a summary of the main criteria that distinguish the major process types as they have been discussed so far.

Table 4.11: Criteria for distinguishing the major process types (Halliday 1994: 173)

	material	mental	relational	
			attributive	identifying
meaning	doing (doing, happening, doing to/with)	sensing (seeing, feeling, thinking)	being: attribute	being: identity
number of inherent participants	1 or 2	2	1	2
first participant	thing	conscious thing	thing or fact	thing or fact
second participant	thing	thing or fact		(same as first)
directionality	one way	two way: *please*-type / *like*-type	one way	one way
voice	middle or effective	effective / middle	middle	effective
unmarked present tense	present in present	simple present	simple present	simple present

4.3.3 Minor process types: verbal, behavioural

Of the three minor process types existential, verbal, and behavioural only the latter two are relevant in the present context. Existential processes do not co-occur with the first-person singular pronoun in the corpus. Verbal processes are processes of saying and signifying, that is, they represent "any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning" (Halliday 1994: 140). Their doing participant is the Sayer; the participant to whom the words are directed is the Receiver. A recurrent abstract participant in this kind of process type is the Verbiage, which corresponds to the Range in a material process. It is the content or the name of what is said (141) such as "sensations" in the following example.

4.3.16   And how shall I describe my sensations when we were fairly sailing on Chesapeake Bay? (Jacobs 240)

Some verbs accept also a Target as participant, but examples of this kind are rare here. The Sayer uses these particular verbs to act "verbally on another party" as in *blame* or *insult*, where the Receiver need not be identical with the one who is being blamed or insulted.

Unlike all other types of processes discussed so far, behavioural processes do not form a category with distinct grammatical characteristics of their own. These verbs typically combine features of mental and material processes. The doing participant is usually a conscious being and therefore similar to a Senser, while the process itself is often one of doing, which is reflected by the preferred choice of the progressive present tense (Halliday 1994: 139). In some accounts of systemic grammar these verbs are therefore included in the material cate-

gory (Matthiessen 1995: 211). Many of the verbs are of a physiological or psychological nature and do not extend to a second participant. Some represent states of consciousness and are close to mental verbs (*look, worry, listen*), others resemble verbal processes (*talk, speak*), while still others are close to material (*sit, fall, tremble*). Behavioural processes are limited to the Behaver and therefore middle; if the doing is oriented towards somebody or something, this will appear as a circumstantial element. This is apparent in many of the near mental verbs such as *look at*, *listen to*, *cry about* etc. Occasionally, they appear with a second participant that corresponds to a Range: process, but this is rare in the corpus.

Table 4.12: Summary of transitivity functions and their participants (Halliday 1994: 166)

typical preposition	ergative function	transitive function					
		material	mental	attributive	identifying	verbal	behavioural
-	Medium	Actor (middle), Goal effective)	Senser	Carrier	Identified	Sayer (middle), Target (effective)	Behaver
by	Agent	Actor (eff.), Initiator	Phenomenon (*please*-type)	Attributor	Identifier/ Token Assigner	Sayer (eff.)	
to, for	Beneficiary	Recipient, Client		Beneficiary		Receiver	
at, on, etc.	Range	Range	Phenomenon (*like*-type)	Attribute	Identifier/ Value	Verbiage	Behaviour

4.3.4 The quantitative distribution of process types

Table 4.13 displays the absolute observed frequencies of the processes that co-occur with the first-person singular pronoun. Except where noted, passive voice and direct speech are omitted from all calculations from this point onwards.

Table 4.13: Absolute observed frequencies of process types

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal	sum
Roper	21	270	128	147	66	632
Grandy	17	124	73	65	35	314
Douglass	40	342	300	187	59	928
Brown	33	203	182	140	54	612
Bibb	38	577	394	259	111	1379
Northup	67	393	309	297	96	1162
Ball	166	963	756	460	118	2463
Jacobs	159	587	673	442	279	2140
Picquet	19	120	128	99	59	425
all	560	3579	2943	2096	877	10055

Before these results are described and evaluated in more detail, the issue of statistical relevance needs to be addressed briefly. In order to be able to estimate whether a particular distribution of process types in the individual texts is significant, rather than merely coinci-

dental, chi-square (v^2) tests have been conducted.[12] This test can be applied whenever actually observed frequencies of independent variables are to be compared with an expected hypothetical result. The chi-square value provides a good orientation as to how likely it is that the observed results differ *significantly* from the hypothesis. For the selection of process types in the texts three different hypotheses have been tested.[13] The first hypothesis states that process types should be completely evenly distributed, so that all five categories feature 20%. It can be rejected with a likelihood of 99.9% for all narratives. The second hypothesis states that the process types in each narrative should be distributed according to the average distribution of the process type across the corpus (bottom row of Table 4.14 below). Thus the fact that each text contributes a different number of incidents to the corpus is taken into account. For all texts except for Brown's and Grandy's it is possible say to that with a likelihood of 95% the distribution of the process types is significantly different from the average, for all other narratives except Douglass' the likelihood is even as high as 99%. A third hypothesis ignores the differences in text length, which means that in the calculation each narrative has a weight of one ninth of the corpus, but this does not lead to a different result.

These tests serve to justify the claim that the differences between the distributions of process types in the individual slave narratives are significant rather than coincidental, but they can in no way supercede detailed textual analysis. In a critical textual study the significance of an item is not necessarily a direct function of statistical validity. Individual occurrences, clusters, as well as absences contribute to the meaning as a whole with equal, if not sometimes more, cogency. The individual profiles may be seen as further proof that, notwithstanding many critics' claims about the allegedly formulaic character of slave narratives, each text is individual, stylistically distinct, and thus presents and creates its protagonist in a distinct way. The quantitative observations serve to render the texts comparable and provide a basis for the detection of clusters or absences of a specific device within a certain specified co-text, which may be the entire corpus, a narrative, a chapter, or any other stretch of text that is in any way linguistically distinct from its textual environment. These clusters or gaps in turn serve as starting points and pieces of evidence for a more qualitatively oriented analysis.

A few additional calculations help facilitate different ways of comparing the results. In a first step the absolute frequencies, or, according to Matthiessen (1999: 14), "frequencies of selection," presented in Table 4.13 above have been converted into percentages. Table 4.14 below shows the proportional distributions of the individual process types that depend on the first-person singular pronoun in the individual narratives. This means that, for instance, 42.72% of the *I*-clauses in Roper's narrative feature material verbs, while only 3.32% are behavioural.

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[12] Cf. Hatch and Lazaraton for a detailed introduction into statistical methods in applied linguistics.

[13] The exact calculations and the individual results can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 4.14: Proportional distribution of process types (in percent)

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal
Roper	3.32	42.72	20.25	23.26	10.44
Grandy	5.41	39.49	23.25	20.70	11.15
Douglass	4.31	36.85	32.33	20.15	6.36
Brown	5.39	33.17	29.74	22.88	8.82
Bibb	2.76	41.84	28.57	18.78	8.05
Northup	5.77	33.82	26.59	25.56	8.26
Ball	6.74	39.10	30.69	18.68	4.79
Jacobs	7.43	27.43	31.45	20.65	13.04
Picquet	4.47	28.24	30.12	23.29	13.88
all	5.57	35.59	29.27	20.85	8.72

Material and mental verbs are the most frequently selected process types in all texts except Roper's, where relational processes are more frequent than mental ones. Verbal and especially behavioural processes, on the other hand, are invariably more marginal in terms of quantity. The conversion in percentages shows that, notwithstanding these general tendencies, the narratives differ a great deal as to their individual selection of process types. Most narratives, for instance, are dominated by material verbs; however, there is considerable spread between Roper's 42%, Northup's 33%, and Jacobs' 27%. Incidentally, the two narratives with female *I*-narrators feature mental verbs as the most frequently selected process type. And yet, they do not have the largest share of mental verbs, which is to be found in Douglass' narrative, although he still selects material verbs more frequently. Probably the most even selection among the major process types can be found in Northup, whereas Roper, Grandy, Bibb, and Ball display much higher discrepancies. The profile of the distributions is visualized in Figure 4.3.2 below.

The concept of relative frequency provides a further, complementary way of comparing the texts. It presents the density of process types that depend on the first-person singular pronoun. Table 4.15 displays the relative frequency (*rf*) of the individual process types.

From percentages or relative frequencies alone it is impossible to determine which process type is selected most frequently. It is only in combination that the two ways of calculating reveal a complete picture of the individual texts and thus provide a basis for comparison. The narratives of Roper (42.7%), Bibb (41.8%) and Grandy (39.5%) seem to differ only slightly in terms of the selection of material verbs seen from a proportional point of view. The relative frequencies reveal that there is a more marked difference. Roper's text (15.779) lies far ahead of Bibb's (11.974) and Grandy's (9.467) in terms of relative frequency. Here it is the extremely high rf_I that propels Picquet's narrative into the second position with a rf_{mat} of 13.04. In all other categories Picquet's narrative occupies the top position due to the high frequency of the *I*-pronoun, whereas Northup, as may have been expected, is not only far below the average but features the lowest relative frequencies in all three major categories. Douglass' and Roper's texts occupy the opposite ends of the scale in terms of their respective shares of mental verbs. While Douglass' amounts to 32.2%, Roper's is only 20.2%. And yet, in terms of density, Roper's text is still slightly above the average due to the high rf_I. Also Northup's 25.5%-share of relational verbs – the largest of

all texts – must be seen in the light of his extremely low density of the *I*-pronoun and the resulting low relative frequencies of the individual process types. The rf_{rel} in Northup's text is only 3.820 and therefore occupies the low end of the scale. Although Roper's share of relational verbs is smaller than Northup's (23.2%), the rf_{rel} in his text is more than twice as high (8.59). These examples illustrate that the proportional distribution and the relative frequency of the process types should be seen as complementary tools.

Table 4.15: Relative frequency of process types (without passive voice and direct speech)

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal	sum $(=rf_I)$
Roper	1.227	15.779	7.481	8.591	3.857	36.935
Grandy	1.298	9.467	5.573	4.963	2.672	23.973
Douglass	1.103	9.426	8.269	5.154	1.626	25.578
Brown	1.441	8.865	7.948	6.114	1.441	25.808
Bibb	0.789	11.974	8.176	5.375	2.304	28.618
Northup	0.862	5.055	3.975	3.820	1.235	14.946
Ball	1.571	9.114	7.155	4.353	1.117	23.310
Jacobs	1.951	7.203	8.258	5.424	3.424	26.259
Picquet	2.064	13.036	13.905	10.755	6.410	46.171
average	1.360	8.694	7.149	5.091	2.130	24.424

The material process type is the one that occurs most frequently in all narratives but two, which are incidentally the ones with female narrators. The average share in the corpus is 35.59%; the average relative frequency of material processes is 8.694. Mental processes are the second most frequent process type with 29.27% and a relative frequency of 7.149. More than half of the mental verbs are processes of cognition; verbs of perception contribute about a quarter of the mental processes in most narratives, while about 14% are verbs of affection. Relational processes amount to approximately 20%, which corresponds to an relative frequency of 5.091. The overwhelming majority of them are of the attributive kind. Additional results are presented in detail in Appendix 1.
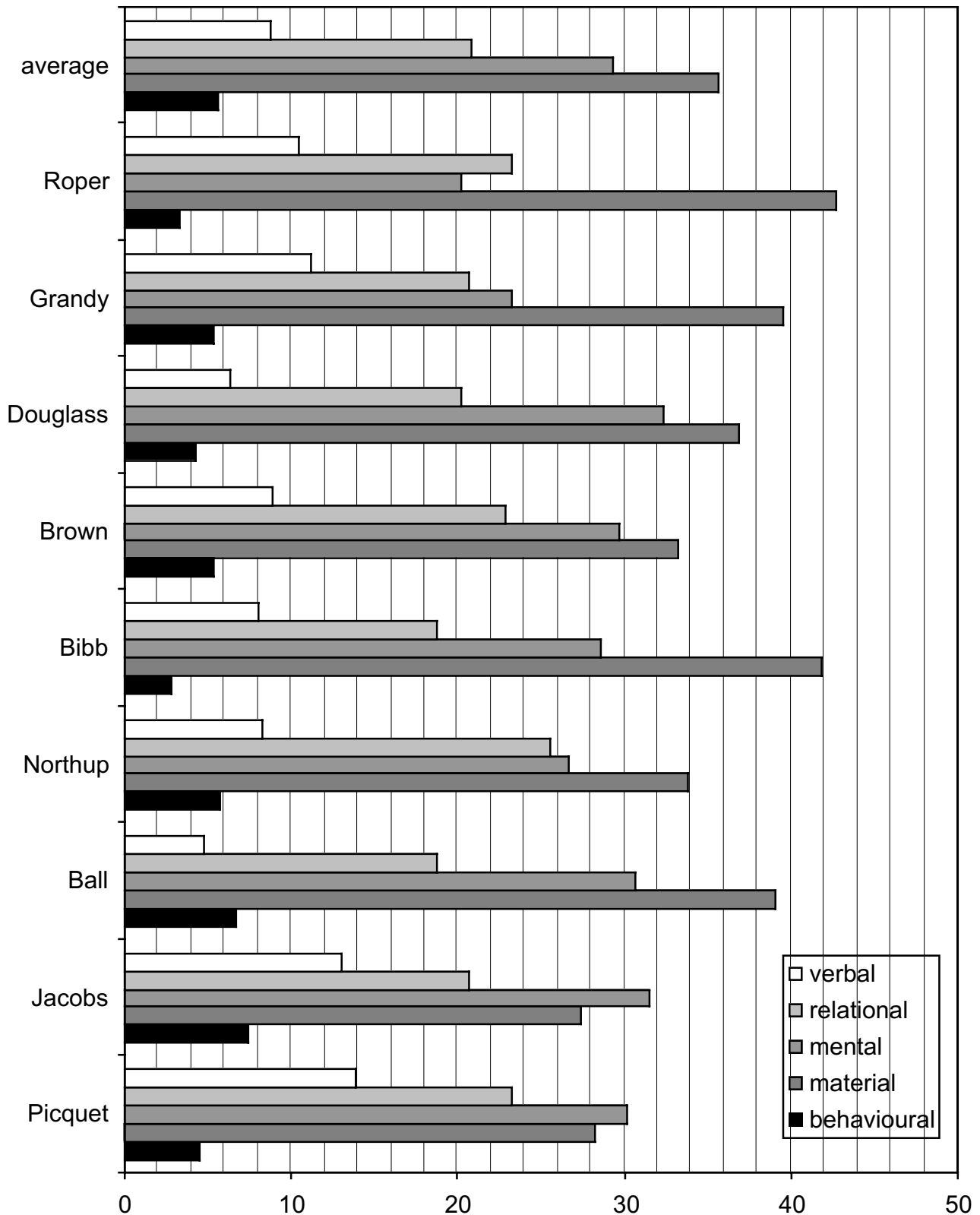
Figure 4.3.2: Distribution of process types associated with the first-person singular pronoun in the individual narratives

4.3.5 Voice

The discussion of voice presents first of all a theoretical problem because the traditional distinction between active and passive voice does not belong to the ideational metafunction of language, with which the foregoing introduction of process types was concerned. It is part of the textual metafunction, which is, strictly speaking, not a part of the present study. An analysis of the complete context of thematic organization within the clause, as well the distribution of new and given information is beyond the present aims, although the development of text and texture admittedly also affects the position of the narrator.[14] And yet, as voice is also a function of the verbal group, upon which the present chapter focuses, a glance sideways may be justified.

Table 4.16: Selection of passive voice in the corpus

	instances of passive voice in percent of the total of occurrences of the *I*-pronoun	relative frequency of passive voice occurrences
Roper	5.81	2.279
Grandy	2.38	1.222
Douglass	6.07	1.654
Brown	5.99	1.703
Bibb	7.76	2.407
Northup	5.76	0.913
Ball	4.01	0.975
Jacobs	4.85	1.338
Picquet	2.30	1.086
sum	5.30	1.368

In most narratives the share of passive voice constructions is rather small; it ranges between 2.3% and 7.76% of all instances of the *I*-pronoun. The average lies at 5.3% (Table 4.16 above). Although the occurrences are scattered over the texts, clusters and absences in a few narratives suggest that the passive voice is used strategically and thus contributes to the construction of the respective narrator's discursive position. The use of passive forms enables the narrators to present themselves in subject position and therefore usually as thematic even in processes that are directed at them. The narrators focus on themselves in a particular clause although they are not acting. The experiential Agent or Initiator of the process need not be part of the linguistic realization. The option of omitting or mentioning these roles leaves room for making additional meaning as the example from Bibb illustrates.

4.3.17   During my life in slavery I have been sold by professors of religion several times. (Bibb 172)

The Agent and Actor of the material process need not be mentioned, and frequently they are not, but as Bibb wants to expose the role of church men here, he makes their function explicit. When the *by*-agent is absent, the linguistic representation resembles a relational

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[14] For a comprehensive account of voice from a systemic point of view cf. Halliday's "Notes on Transitivity and Theme" (1967/68). For a critical analysis from a textual perspective cf. Threadgold 1997.

process, so that often a result or a state instead of the process are foregrounded, as a number of the examples from the previous discussion of relational processes has shown. The quantitative analysis only takes into account central passives. And yet, as the difficulties arising from the large number of borderline cases must not be withheld from view, there is a considerable margin of error.

Slightly more than 5% of all verbal groups that co-occur with the *I*-pronoun are passive. This corresponds to a relative frequency of 1.368. Picquet's and Grandy's narratives are the ones with the smallest percentage, while Bibb's occupies the other end of the scale in terms of percentage as well as relative frequency and therefore deserves special attention.

Three quarters of all passive constructions involve material verbs, slightly above 12% are verbal processes and about 9% are mental verbs. The two remaining process types contribute only marginally. The quantitative results, however, are very global and only help to point out clusters or gaps. More important than absolute or relative frequencies taken by themselves are the following three aspects: the contrast between high and low values in chapters and within chapters, secondly, the choice of passive constructions as alternatives to seemingly equivalent non-passive forms, and thirdly, the effects of the choice of passive in a strictly local sense. Especially the latter two points are difficult to capture quantitatively and require a qualitative approach. Individual instances of passive forms will therefore be discussed in the following chapters about the narratives .

Chapter 4 introduced the concrete analytical tools to be used in the textual analysis in the following chapter. These tools were presented as embedded in systemic functional grammar and the respective linguistic metafunctions, of which the ideational function will be in the center of attention. The relative frequency and local distribution of the first-person singular pronoun, which was introduced in its quantitative dispersal in all narratives, will serve as a starting point for the analyses of syntactic condensation and the potential for making meaning connected with it. This comprises the concepts finiteness, ellipsis, and nominalization. Moreover, the systems of transitivity and ergativity were introduced along with the individual process types. The process types were also presented as to their quantitative selection in each of the texts. Finally, the concept of voice was briefly considered although it is a component of the textual metafunction.

5. The first-person narrator in individual narratives

The following chapter focuses on the presence of the individual *I*-narrators in their respective texts. The distribution of the *I*-pronoun serves as a starting point for syntactic and semantic analyses based on coordination, subordination, finiteness, and nominalization and their effects on the respective narrator's positioning. In a second step the narrator's use of transitivity is discussed in detail. For each narrative the initial quantitative approach precedes an analysis of the grammatical characteristics introduced above as used by the narrator and the way they help shape the narrators' discoursal selves.

5.1 *A Narrative of the Adventures and Escape of Moses Roper, from American Slavery*

5.1.1 Moses Roper's presence in the text

In my corpus Roper's narrative features the second highest relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun, yet it is in many respects different from Picquet's, which has by far the highest rf_I. Unlike Picquet, Roper uses the chronological account of his own life as a framework for a wide range of general observations about slaveholders' cruelty (24ff), the mistreatment of female slaves (26), methods of torturing slaves (24, 47, 51), and the role of Christianity (36, 51). However, as these examples usually derive from Roper's own experience, the *I*-narrator never disappears from the text. The longest stretch nearly without the narrator recounts various instances of slaveholders' cruelty towards their slaves and comprises about 500 words. Other than that, the *I*-narrator is present throughout the entire narrative, thus partly accounting for the high rf_I.

The first-person singular pronoun is not distributed evenly over the text. Although the narrative is not divided into chapters, three parts are distinguishable which differ greatly as to the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun, as Table 5.1.1 illustrates.

Table 5.1.1: Development of the rf_I in Roper's narrative

	instances of *I*	words	rf_I (including passive voice)
part 1	290	9646	30.064
part 2	195	4596	42.428
part 3	186	2869	64.831
sum	671	17111	39.215

One reason for this development is the fact that general observations about slavery become continually fewer as the text progresses and Roper concentrates on his own life. However, more directly, the distribution is a consequence of Roper's manner of representing his life story linguistically. The three parts will be examined in turn.

The first part of the narrative presents Roper's life as a youth until he is sold by his excessively cruel master Gooch. Roper's time with Gooch occupies the largest part of the text and is narrated as a succession of attempted escapes, recaptures and severe punishments. Ten attempts to escape are related, and every single time Roper is recaptured and

punished. Eventually, his bondage to Gooch does not end through flight but through his sale, which also marks the end of the first part of Roper's narrative.

Whenever Roper escapes, he reports the events in the first person. Yet when he is captured and punished for running away, it is not he who acts but Gooch, Gooch's sons, and various of their helpers. In addition to repeated severe floggings, Gooch ties Roper to a cotton screw and swings him around, smears tar on his face and sets it on fire, and beats his finger- and toenails off. And this is also the way in which the events are presented. In all of these instances of unspeakable cruelty the victim Roper appears only extremely rarely as a grammatical subject in a clause.

5.1.1   When I failed in my task, he commenced flogging me, and set me to work without any shirt in the cotton field, in a very hot sun, in the month of July. (14)

The general simplified pattern is as follows: the one who acts takes over the subject role in an active voice clause. So Roper appears as subject whenever he runs away, then he is recaptured, and Gooch and his overseers become subjects when they mistreat him in retaliation. The following quote illustrates this repeated formula.

5.1.2   On this I procured a small Indian canoe, which was tied to a tree, and ultimately got across the river in it. I then wandered through the wilderness for several days without any food, and [drink; sic] but a drop of water to allay my thirst, till I became so starved, that I was obliged to go to a house to beg for something to eat, when I was captured, and again imprisoned (16).

Roper as grammatical subject disappears whenever he loses control; "became so starved" introduces the end of being active. The text continues thus with Gooch as acting participant.

5.1.3   Mr. Gooch, having heard of me through an advertisement, sent his son after me; he tied me up, and took me back to his father. Mr. Gooch then obtained the assistance of another slave-holder, and tied me up in his blacksmith's shop, and gave me fifty lashes with a cow-hide. He then put a long chain, weighing twenty-five pounds, round my neck, and sent me into a field, into which he followed me with the cow-hide, intending to set his slaves to flog me again. Knowing this, and dreading to suffer again in this way, I gave him the slip, and got out of his sight, he having stopped to speak with the other slave-holder. (16f)

Obviously, the passive voice is not completely absent from the text, but it is remarkable that it is absent from the descriptions of cruelty towards the narrator. It is only once that Roper mentions flogging in the passive voice, yet this is not a particular incident but rather a repeated confrontation: ". . . it was quite impossible for me to keep up with him, and, therefore, I was repeatedly flogged during the day" (19). Other incidents of cruelty are invariably committed by Gooch, are presented in the active voice, and therefore feature Roper as object. This manner of presenting the events is highly congruent, possibly iconic, in terms of their directionality. When Roper escapes, he is the subject; when he is recaptured, the direction of activity is reversed, so that he takes over the object role. Indeed, at least five of his futile attempts to flee end in a passive voice clause such as in the example above or as in "I was caught, and again carried back" (50) or similar wordings to indicate that this reversal of activity is about to take place.

This manner of presentation has a textual aspect, too, because one consequence of this formula is that the reversal of activity entails also a reversal of theme. Whoever acts takes over the subject role, which usually occupies the thematic position in an unmarked clause. So by relinquishing the subject position Roper also relinquishes the thematic position of

the clause. This means that when Roper is tortured, Gooch is, from a textual point of view, in thematic position and thus the starting point of the message. Therefore, Roper no longer speaks about himself but about Gooch. Every finite, non-elliptical clause in the second paragraph of quote 5.1.3 above illustrates this point. Roper presents the cruelties committed to him from the acting party's perspective, from the outside. This outside view is enhanced by the relative scarcity of internal, that is, mental and behavioural verbs in the first part. It is not by coincidence that Roper's narrative is the one that features by far the smallest share of mental verbs; only 20% of the verbs associated with the first-person singular pronoun are of the mental type, while the average of the corpus is 29%. In the first section of the text there are only two instances of "I felt" used mentally (32, 38), but the situational context of these instances does not relate to his sufferings. From an experiential point of view, the reader is therefore excluded from Roper's presumably immense agony in the first part of the narrative.

During the second part of the narrative Roper is several times exchanged between various masters until, at last, he manages to escape with a forged pass. Hence descriptions of physical abuse and punishments cease to exist. As a large part of this section describes Roper's final escape, the rf_I is comparatively high. Other characters appear, but they do not act upon Roper and so do not take over subject positions. The lower rf_I in comparison with the final part of the text is mainly a consequence of general observations about slavery such as the fate of attractive female slaves (53), the use of domestic slaves, and his fate with different owners after Gooch. The final part, after his successful flight, presents Roper's journeys to New York, to Albany, and to England as well as his antislavery activities there. The high relative frequency of the I-pronoun reflects the fact that, apart from the narrator himself, other characters hardly enter the story as acting parties any more. Especially in England Roper meets several antislavery activists, but they remain in the background as they are not presented as acting. The following quote from the final part of the narrative illustrates the rather circumstantial role of characters besides the narrator towards the end.

5.1.4   At this time I attended the ministry of Dr. Cox. which I enjoyed very much, and to which I ascribe the attainment of clearer views of divine grace than I had before. I had attended here several months, when I expressed my wish to Dr. Cox to become a member of his church; I was proposed, and after stating my experience was admitted, March 31st, 1836. (86)

It is very clear that the I-narrator has taken complete control over the text. Even the use of passive forms no longer marks loss of control and reversal of activity. Roper has taken control over his own life by now, which is expressed in his linguistic choices.

In addition to the narrative structure of the text, a number of grammatical characteristics contribute to the presence of the narrator and the construction of his discoursal self. Such characteristics may affect the frequency of the first-person singular pronoun directly, yet often the examination of the distribution of the I-pronoun just helps to point out the significance of such characteristics, although there is no statistical relation. For instance, a high rf_I indicates that a large number of clauses can be expected to be finite. However, there is no simple relation between the occurrences of the I-pronoun and the ratio of finite to nonfinite clauses. In this respect Roper's narrative is average: in the randomly chosen excerpts 82.43% of the clauses are finite (entire corpus: 82.88%; cf. Table 4.4).

Roper's narrative is remarkable in a different respect. On average Roper constructs the longest sentences. They contain 4.93 clauses and 37.2 words between two full stops. The

clauses in Roper's narrative are connected paratactically as well as hypotactically. Yet, irrespective of taxis, the logical structure usually remains simple, as a few examples will illustrate. Although it does not feature the *I*-pronoun, the following sentence represents the syntactic and thus logical simplicity of the narrative well.

5.1.5   We stayed in Lancaster a week, because it was court week, and there were a great many people there, and it was a good opportunity for selling the slaves, and there he was enabled to sell me to a gentleman, Dr. Jones, who was both a doctor and a cotton planter. (12)

Experientially, the predominance of relational processes is symptomatic of Roper's use of process types and renders the stretch static. Logically, the matrix clause "we stayed . . ." is superordinate to four coordinated subclauses. Their paratactic arrangement with *and* provides only weak logical links between the clauses, so that the reader needs to infer that they all contribute to the justification for the stay in Lancaster. The reason for the stay is not court week itself but the presence of many people who might be potential buyers of slaves, but Roper does not make this connection explicit. Leckie-Tarry as well as other authors identify this loose structure as a feature of spoken language, where "relationships between clauses are not overtly marked, but connections are made by juxtaposition or coordination, that is, sequence is used to represent relationships" (99, Tannen 1982: 18ff).

And yet, Roper is not at all sparse in his use of connecting devices between clauses (Table A.1.5, p. 279). In fact, his narrative features the second highest relative frequency of subordinating conjunctions (18.994). Therefore, he is also able to construct more complex sentences, as the following example illustrates.

5.1.6   When she was gone, I drew the chain through the ring, escaped under the flooring of the log-house, and went on under his house, till I came out at the other side, and ran on; but being sore and weak, I had not got a mile before I was caught, and again carried back. (50)

This clause complex consists of ten clauses, nine of which are finite. There are two coordinated matrix clauses ("I drew the chain through the ring" and "I had not got a mile"), on which a variety of coordinated clauses and subclauses depend. But Roper's way of connecting clauses and thus making logical relations explicit is not very sophisticated beyond temporal sequence. It is the main ordering principle, made explicit by *when*, *till*, *before*, and the enumeration of processes with *and*. This feature is characteristic of the entire narrative; the relative frequencies of temporal subjunctions (*as soon as*, *before*, *after*, *till/until*, *when*, *while/whilst*) lie invariably above the average of the corpus and are supported by a high relative frequency of *then*, whereas causal, conditional, or adversative subjunctions are comparatively infrequent. In the above example nine of the processes depend on the *I*-pronoun, which occurs four times. As all of the processes, except the nonfinite one, are material, Roper presents himself as not only as the focus of the narrative but also as active doer; he is Actor in six material processes. He does not relinquish control over the syntax even in the two final passive clauses, where he remains in subject and thematic position despite his being Goal of the processes. The actual Actors of the material processes "caught" and "carried" remain unmentioned, but they announce the imminent reversal of activity. A severe whipping follows , characterized as the "the worst flogging I ever had," (50).

The next example with complex syntax illustrates why Roper's rf_I is higher than the average of the corpus even in the first section of the narrative, although he is forced to relinquish control quite often.

5.1.7   After several months my master came to know how I got on with the trade; I am not able to tell Mr. Bryant's answer, but it was either that I could not learn, or that his journeymen were not willing that I should sit in the shop with them. (12)

The eight clauses actually fall into two separate complexes divided, but also joined, by the semicolon. The first part features three processes, two of which are finite. The infinitive construction with "to know" represents a clause of purpose, which projects the reported question. The second complex consists of two coordinated matrix clauses connected with *but*. The first part is a simple finite clause, while the second part of the second sentence is complex. It is a relational process, into which two coordinated clauses are embedded ("that I could not learn, or that his journey men were not willing"). Furthermore, an additional clause is projected by "willing." All of the clauses have subjects, seven of them are explicit, while that of the nonfinite clause can easily be inferred from the main clause. The *I*-pronoun occurs four times so that the narrator appears to be present and involved in the narrative, yet a closer look at the processes reveals that Roper does not act at all. All of the clauses with the *I*-pronoun are projected. Two are projected by mental processes (*know*, *willing*), the two embedded clauses are projected by the nominalization of the verbal process *answer*. The other process that depends on the narrator is negated. The example shows that, when Roper is not explicitly acted upon, as in the torturings, he is very well able to lend himself presence in the text without actually acting.

Roper also uses nonfinite clauses. The most frequent type is a participle construction for which the subject can be inferred from the main clause by the attachment rule. Roper uses past as well as present participle constructions.

5.1.8   After this, though still determined in my own mind to escape, I stayed with him several months, during which he frequently flogged me, but not so severely as before related. (22)

5.1.9   The first night I slept in a barn upon Mr. Crawford's estate, and, having overslept myself, was awoke by Mr. Crawford's overseer, upon which I was dreadfully frightened. (27)

This form of subordination can occur with or without overt conjunction to make the logical relationship between the processes clear. What is more interesting for the overt presence of the narrator, however, is the fact that the nonfinite construction has an easily identifiable implied subject. Yet even here, where the subject of the process can be quickly inferred from the matrix clause, Roper lends himself presence through possessive and reflexive pronouns ("my mind," "myself"). It seems as if, although the reader knows who is determined and who overslept, Roper wants to call attention to himself in a particular, if tautological, way. At the same time, he does not want to dispense with the nonfinite syntactic structures that are frequently considered stylistically elegant.

The final aspect to be analysed here that interacts with the rf_I is nominalization. In Roper's narrative the frequency of the morphologically distinguishable nominalizations lies at 9.935 and therefore below the average of 12.335 (Table 4.5). While the low rf_{nom} does not relate directly to the high relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun, a few telling incidents are to be found nevertheless. As nominalizations do not explicitly carry the participant roles of

the related verb, frequently the acting party must be inferred from the co-text. Although this is usually easy, the omission of the doer creates meaning itself, for instance it may imply detachment from the activity. In 5.1.10 Roper tries to justify an obvious lie.

5.1.10   This statement may appear to some to be a direct lie, but as I understood the word bound, I considered it to apply to my case . . . (28)

While in many instances of nominalization the narrators at least indicate their subject role through a possessive determiner, Roper dissociates himself from the dubious remark with which he has tried to deceive a white overseer. Both, the fact that "statement" is a neutral hypernym to "lie" and the modal operator that implies irrealis in the relational clause aid in the dissociation of the original process of lying from its doer. At a later point in the narrative he repeats this pattern.

5.1.11   By this hasty and wicked deception I saved myself from going to Bainbridge prison, which was close by, and to which I should surely have been taken had it been known that I was making my escape. (68)

Here, the lie has acquired the status of an instrument. It is not the case that the co-text does not provide the means for recovering the reference of the deictic determiner *this*. But in both examples the grammatical metaphors remove the actual processes experientially from their subjects; they become impersonal, or rather depersonalized. The information is recoverable, but it is more remote than in an explicit clausal representation as 'I lied' or 'I deceived,' which do not appear in the narrative at all.

But not all nominalizations are used to avoid or ameliorate negative associations with the narrator. There is a recurrent pattern in which the nominalization does not replace a verb but only calls for a different, often semantically empty one. In Roper's text several occurrences of the noun *employment* collocate with verbs such as *get*, *obtain*, and *procure*, *opportunity* with *have* and one instance of *attachment* with *feel*. Here the nominalization does not eliminate the clausal structure of the process; in "feel an attachment" the narrator may still remain in the subject position (86). In addition to a general drift towards creating entities and thus stability where none exists in a concrete, tangible sense, instances like these imply a higher level of abstraction and generalization than more congruent wordings, yet in situations where abstraction or generalization are not the primary issue of the text. 'I was employed' or even the active 'he employed me' would be an equally possible and valid description of the event, while opportunities can often be expressed through 'I was able' or 'I could.' Nominalizations of this kind are abundant in the corpus, except in Picquet's text. While these particular instances with a semantically empty verb do not contribute to greater informational density, their recurrence at least implies that the respective speakers aim to present themselves as intellectually capable of abstraction and generalization. Moreover, these occurrences imply a higher level of formality, possibly associated with prestige and a drift towards written discourse as suggested by Leckie-Tarry and others (116ff).

Through the high relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun Roper dominates his narrative. He is clearly the main character of his own text. Even though he has to relinquish his subject position frequently when still enslaved, the development of the rf_I illustrates his movement towards ever greater autonomy. His variable sentence structure with the longest clause complexes to be found in the corpus features parataxis as well as hypotaxis. Temporal sequence is the predominant ordering principle. These characteristics, together with the repeated use of nonfinite clauses as well as the recurrence of nominalization, albeit be-

low the average of the corpus, make his narrative far from stylistically simple or boring. Yet as he circumnavigates all allusions to the physical and psychological sufferings he has experienced, his narrative becomes impersonal and unemotional. Despite the omnipresence of the first-person narrator, his display of intellectual and linguistic capabilities, and the descriptions of excessive cruelty he is subject to, the text fails to create the discoursal self as an emotional being with whom the reader may identify. The scarcity of mental processes, their nominalizations as well as nominalizations of modalization and the reversal of activity described above eliminate the interior, emotional voice of the narrator in situations where it would have been effective to establish an emotional bond with the reader. This thread will be taken up in the discussion of transitivity below; at this point it stands to reason that this concentration on what are seemingly material facts of the *I*-narrator's life represent what he and his contemporary readers would understand as strict adherence to truth.

5.1.2 Moses Roper's use of transitivity

Roper's narrative has the largest share of material verbs in the entire corpus (42.72%). In combination with a high rf_I this leads to the highest relative frequency of material processes. His rf_{mat} of 15.779 is unsurpassed even by Picquet's text. The three parts of the text identified above are also distinct as to their profiles in the selection of process types. The share of material verbs rises from 39% to almost 48% in the second part and drops to 43% in the final section again. As the presence of the *I*-pronoun more than doubles from beginning to end, the relative frequency of this process type also rises, from 10.885 to 27.187.

Table 5.1.2: Selection of process types in Roper's *Narrative* (in percent)

	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
part 1	3.35	39.03	18.96	25.28	13.38	27.887
part 2	3.30	47.80	21.98	17.58	9.34	39.600
part 3	3.31	43.09	20.44	25.97	7.18	63.088
all	3.32	42.65	20.22	23.22	10.43	36.935

About 55% of Roper's material verbs are intransitive (Table 4.8, p. 78). This is the second highest value in the corpus and does not significantly develop over the narrative. Only about 17% are effective while another 25% are ranged processes. In the first part, about 23% of the material verbs are effective and thus followed by a Goal as in "I slipped the chain through my ring and got it off my own neck" (43). Slightly fewer (20%) are middle, but followed by a Range, as in "I made another attempt at running away" (16). In the final part the proportions are reversed; Goals are to be found for only a little more than 10% of the material verbs whereas 32% feature a Range. Generally fewer of Roper's activities extend to another participant than in other narratives; towards the end of his narrative his role as an effecting participant becomes even weaker. This is mainly due to his preference for verbs of locomotion such as *go*, *proceed to*, and *return to*, which tend to cluster in travel accounts with typically many ranged and intransitive processes. Verbs that frequently co-occur with a Range: entity (*attend a meeting*, *reach a place*) are especially frequent in this last part. As a consequence, the effective narrator, who in his slavery days and in his flight is able to affect other participants with his doings, develops into a more intransitive being.

He is yet still active and does not at all restrict the presentation of his doings to mental and relational processes; however, his influence on, not to mention control over other, especially human, participants is presented as severely restricted.

The share of mental verbs, on the other hand, is the lowest in the corpus (20.25%). Owing to the high rf_I, the relative frequency of mental verbs is average (7.481), but material verbs are twice as frequent as mental verbs. More than 32% of the mental verbs are of the perceptive kind, which is, though only slightly above the average, the second highest portion within the corpus after Ball. Yet, unlike many other narrators, Roper uses a number of different verbs. While in Ball's text about half of the verbs of perception are forms of *see*, there is no such preference in Roper's text. His relatively large share of perceptive verbs, most of them of visual perception, supports the impression that Roper prefers to focus on visible, concrete material activity. "I saw," "I witnessed," and "I observed" are prevalent throughout the first two parts of the text. Verbs of perception, especially when the Phenomenon is an embedded clause, render an action or event grammatically and experientially dependent on the perceiver, that is, the narrator. These processes may have been presented independently, but by not doing so, the act of perceiving is made explicit. In the following excerpt, which is another typical example of Roper's sentence structure, mental activity even occurs in a rare cluster, though it is not exclusively expressed by mental verbs.

5.1.12   Going along I took my papers out of my pocket, and looking at them, although I could not read a word, I perceived that the boy's writing was very unlike other writing that I had seen, and was greatly blotted besides; consequently I was afraid that these documents would not answer my purpose, and began to consider what other plan I could pursue to obtain another pass. (71)

The narrator's doings are again presented in their natural temporal order. They progress from material ("going," "took") via behavioural ("looking") to mental ("perceive," "had seen") and back. The fact that the pass is blotted is presented as dependent on the narrator's perception and is thus the starting point for necessary further mental activity. The consequent cognitive act ("consider") is utilitarian; its purpose is of immediate concern for the success of the flight. Roper does not display mental activity that is detached from material activity, for instance, in order to present his philosophy about the institution of slavery in general. Incidentally, Roper's is the narrative with the smallest share of cognitive verbs in relation to the total of mental verbs (47.66%; cf. Table 4.10, p. 81).

After the narrator has reached freedom, his penchant for observation declines drastically although the frequency of mental processes remains stable. In freedom Roper's predominant mental mode is affection, which plays only a subordinate role in the first two parts in slavery. It is in freedom that he begins to hope, to wish, and to desire. Notwithstanding the fact that mental verbs are still used sparingly in the third part, outbursts of affection such as the following quote are absent from the first two parts of the narrative.

5.1.13   The appeal was read by Mr. Christopherson, a member of Dr. Morison's church, of which gentleman I express but little of my feelings and gratitude, when I say, that throughout he has been towards me a parent, and for whose tenderness and sympathy, I desire ever to feel that attachment which I do not know how to express. (85)

Expressions like this one stand in marked contrast to Roper's wordings the first two parts. Roper is forced to endure numerous atrocities while owned by Gooch; yet not once does he express his aversion or hatred for this man, who tortures him in the most cruel manner. The mental processes of affection in that part of the narrative are with only one exception

desiderative processes (*desire*, *want*, *hope*). This quote, taken from the third part, however, proves that Roper is very well able and willing to share his mental state with his readers, but apparently emotional comments about the cruelties experienced in his slavery days must remain unspoken.

The same break between slavery and freedom occurs in Roper's use of relational processes. They are almost invariably of the attributive kind. In the first two parts the Attributes frequently represent states of fear (*frightened*, *fearful*, *afraid*) but also other qualities such as *safe*, *white*, *weak* and *sore*. In the final part of the narrative these mental and physical qualities retreat for the benefit of circumstantial processes ("I stayed at his house several weeks"), while affection is now expressed in verbal form (*enjoy*, *love*, *fear*, and *regret*). So in the description of his life in slavery the narrator expresses his states of affection, usually fear, through relational processes, while mental processes that signify affection are rare. In freedom the formula is reversed. This way of expressing affection effectivly creates meaning. A mental process of affection: emotion grammatically requires two participants, so the expression of fear, love, and hatred always needs an object, that is, the Phenomenon towards which the emotion is directed. This is not so in attributive relational processes. They can be used to describe a state without making explicit the experiential Phenomenon, so that the actual representation of the experience is limited to the first-person perspective. The encapsulated emotion thus becomes more permanent but also less distinct, as it does not appear to be directed at or triggered off by a second participant. The source of fear may be exoressed in a clause with a relational process as well, but never as a direct participant. It can enter via a prepositional phrase and is often a rankshifted clause embedded in the Attribute as in "I was very much frightened at being discovered" (67) or "I was afraid they would take me up" (30). Unlike the Phenomenon of a mental process, it is therefore an optional element that can be omitted at will. The effect for the first part of the narrative is that fear is made to appear as a rather general feature of Roper's slave life, while at the same time, the narrator is eager not to present himself as embittered and revengeful towards the persons who mistreat him.

Generally, the analysis of the major process types suggests that Roper prefers processes that do not require a second direct participant. This applies most obviously to the use of his material processes, which are overwhelmingly middle. The frequency of processes such as *arrive at*, *come to*, *go to*, *meet with*, *proceed to* supports this hypothesis. The preference of relational processes with adjectives as Attributes over mental ones, which is unique in the corpus, confirms this observation. Verbs of perception grammatically extend; and yet, the Phenomenon is not affected by the narrator's visual or aural perception. In ergative terms, the Phenomenon of these processes is a Range, the clause is therefore middle. Roper's activities rarely reach out to other human participants, with the exception of his comparatively small share of effective material clauses. As a consequence of this use of transitivity Roper emerges as a narrator who, for the largest part of his narrative, rests in himself and acts for himself. This way of presenting his life not only often renders the account relatively devoid of interaction: the scarcity of mental verbs, particularly emotive ones, moreover fails to make the *I*-narrator emotionally accessible to the reader. Roper is determined to tell the truth, which for him apparently means excluding the presentation of his psyche. But it is exactly this obvious gap, the absence of anger or hatred expressed as directed processes instead of indistinct qualities, that prevents the discursive Roper from becoming a round and fully developed character in his own narrative.

This brief analysis of selected aspects of Roper's language supports Andrews' claim that "the facts of Roper's story distance the reader. They allow him or her to react as a spectator, to indulge in the voyeuristic pleasure of observing without being touched physically or emotionally" (1986: 96). The question whether the emotional gaps are intended by the narrator or not is irrelevant; neither do the gaps (dis)qualify the narrative as somehow deficient, because the story was apparently what the readership wanted. According to Davis and Gates (xvi), Roper's narrative was highly successful; ten editions of Roper's text were published between 1837 and 1856.

Moses Roper not only remains a distant and unemotional character within his own text. He also presents himself as being able to endure pain, mistreatment, and possibly emotional strain without the slightest desire for revenge. In that respect, Roper is a narrator who does not present his eventual access to freedom as a potential threat to his white readership. This narrator does not at all direct bitterness or hatred towards his former enslavers. His apparent ability to endure and persevere echoes and affirms a Puritan system of values, in which even physical pain was considered morally instructive, as a number of early Indian captivity tales suggest (Van der Beets 5). The high frequency of the *I*-pronoun positions Roper in the center of the narrative, yet, unlike a number of later narrators, he does not aim to fashion himself as a prototypical fugitive or in any way outstanding character. The linguistic realization of his life story is chronologically ordered, which is also reflected in the sentence structure, and which focuses on concrete material activity, epitomizing what the early slave narrators and their readership understood as factual truth.

5.2   *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy*

5.2.1 Moses Grandy's presence in the text

Moses Grandy's *Narrative* is the second shortest text in the corpus after Picquet's. Like Roper's text, Grandy's is not divided into chapters; yet it splits into two equally long parts. The first one presents Grandy's life as a slave until he is able to buy his own freedom, while the second part presents his life as a freeman. But unlike in Roper's narrative, the *rf*$_I$ decreases from 35.021 in part I to 15.226 in part II. Both parts provide general information about the nature of slavery, but these are more frequent in the second section, in which the narrator focuses less on himself but on his relatives whose freedom he intends to buy or who try to escape on their own. In a longer stretch towards the end of the narrative the *I*-narrator is not present at all.[15] The emphasis rests on topics such as slave religion and superstition, literacy, clearing land, slave testimony, whipping, and gambling. It is only in the very final pages that the *I*-narrator returns with thanks to sponsors and a few personal remarks. These extensive pieces of general information in the end have the effect that the average presence of the narrator does not exceed 25.195 in the entire text, which is slightly below the average of the corpus.

Although this structure is mainly responsible for the *rf*$_I$, finiteness, coordination, nominalization, and voice deserve a closer look in this narrative, too. The vast majority of clauses in Grandy's narrative are finite. In the randomly chosen sentences only 7.69% of all clauses are nonfinite, which lies ten points below the average and represents the low end within the corpus (Table 4.4, p. 66). The sentences the narrator constructs are average in length (3.14 clauses per sentence) and predominantly consist of paratactically arranged clauses. The following example is characteristic of the abundance of coordination with ellipsis of the subject, although in this case it does not concern the *I*-pronoun.

5.2.1   On Monday, in court week, I went to him; he was playing at billiards, and would not
        go with me, but told me to come again the next day: the next day he did the same,
        and so on daily. (17f)

This manner of presentation enumerates the processes but leaves logical relations between them open; except for *but* the arrangement is at best iconic for temporal sequence (cf. also example 5.2.12 below). Yet hypotactic constructions appear as well. They are frequently based on temporal relationships, too, and rely heavily on the subjunctions *after*, *till* and particularly *when*, which appear with more than average frequency (Table A.1.5, p.279). They are supported by a high relative frequency of *if*. Although temporal and conditional circumstances are distinct categories, the conditional conjunction *if* is frequently used as a near synonym of *when* or *whenever* and so implies temporal meaning: ". . . if the ditches were dry, water was brought to us by boys" (26). The distribution of tenses supports the interpretation that conditional meaning is not expressed here.

Grandy, too, presents activity from the doer's point of view. Although he does not relate so many instances of cruelty committed to himself, the pattern is similar to that found in Roper, as the following example shows.

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[15] The part lies between pp. 58 and 65 and comprises about 1,300 words, i.e. about 10 percent of the entire text.

5.2.2   I was standing in the corner of the room, nodding for want of sleep, when he took up the shovel, and beat me with it: he dislocated my shoulder, and sprained my wrist, and broke the shovel over me. I ran away, and got another person to hire me. (12f)

In this sequence of events the acting character is assigned the role of subject and as well as thematic position in the clause. In order for Grandy (or parts of his body) to remain in thematic position, thepassive voice or a different set of verbs would be necessary. Similar to Roper's text, the event and the result are described with the acting party as point of departure. Moreover, Grandy does not use lexical means to indicate relations of cause and effect. The physical effects of the beating are identified as such only by coming next in sequence. Not even running away as the – presumed – consequence of the violent incident is linked by cohesive devices with the preceding sentence. As the activity returns to the *I*-narrator, he takes over subject role and thematic position again. This manner of presenting events in what appears to be their natural temporal order without making explicit further logical connections between them and always focusing on the momentarily active character results in a style that is reminiscent of reporting genres with a focus upon concrete activity, rather than autobiography with an emphasis on mental activity and psychological development. In the above example this impression is supported by the fact that all processes are be-havioural (*stand*, *nod*) or material (*take, beat, dislocate, sprain, break, run, hire*) and more or less observable. The same pattern of activity applies to the only other incident of physical abuse towards Grandy, in which he is severely injured as a consequence of a whipping (10). In both cases it appears as if the events were recorded externally through a camera. An external third-person narrator without access to thoughts and feelings of the protagonist would have been able to present the events in nearly he same manner. Incidentally, Grandy's narrative is characterized by the second smallest share of mental verbs after Roper; also only 2.38% of the finite verbal groups associated with the *I*-pronoun are passive.

Grandy's narrative contains the second lowest relative frequency of nominalizations after Picquet's text (Table 4.5, p. 68). This scarcity renders the narrative concrete, and even of those instances of nominalization that are present some appear as a quite contrived attempt to sound elaborate.

5.2.3   He also killed a boy about twelve years old. He had no punishment, or even trial either. (28f)

5.2.4   However thirsty a slave may be, he is not allowed to leave his employment for a moment to get water. . . . (26f)

In these examples the abstract and generalizing connotations of the action nominals *punishment* and *employment* are misleading, because they do not describe abstract concepts or general rules. In the first example a passive voice clause with a material process ('he was not punished') would have achieved a more congruent description of the particular and concrete action than the possessive relational process with the abstract nominalization. The second example does describe a generally valid rule for slaves, but the general character is achieved through the use of present tense and the indefinite article ("a slave") rather than the nominalization. Instead of generalization, the use of *employment* may imply something else. According to the *OED*, the term denotes the "action of employing" or the "state of being employed." It is furthermore used in the sense of "professional occupation." It is

possible that this connotation of professionality is intended here, although it may appear slightly out of place as a reference to unskilled and unpaid slave work.

And yet, *employment* supports the creation of an image of a work ethic that is prevalent throughout the text. The language of the narrative brims with the vocabulary of the marketplace. *Pay*, *sell*, and *profit* with their various inflections and derivations have by far the highest relative frequency of all narratives; *dollar/dollars* has a *rf* of 3.436 in comparison with 0.508 for the entire corpus (Table A.1.8, p. 281). These high frequencies also reflect Grandy's own experiences. Before he is eventually able to buy his own freedom through the help of a benevolent white sponsor, he is defrauded of his freedom and his money twice and thus forced to earn the price for his own head again. He also freely admits that the profits from the narrative "will be faithfully employed in redeeming my remaining children and relatives from the dreadful condition of slavery" (72).

Although Roper and, to an even higher extent, Grandy deliver some general observations about the living conditions in slavery, the narrators remain ultimately concrete and rooted in their personal experience. Arguably, this does not render the texts deficient in any way, this trait rather supports the narrators in their attempt to appear trustworthy. The following example illustrates the point.

5.2.5   A woman who gives offence in the field, and is large in the family way, is compelled to lie down over a hole made to receive her, and is then flogged with the whip, or beaten with a paddle, which has holes in it; at every hole comes a blister. One of my sisters was so severely punished in this way, that labour was brought on, and the child was born in the field. (28)

Again, while the general nature is expressed by present tense and indefinite article, the connection with the narrator's experience is made clear at once. However, neither Roper nor Grandy provides abstractions from their own experiences on a larger scale in terms of textual quantity or theoretical quality. Grandy in particular does not even use nominalization first and foremost as a strategic device to be able to manipulate process-participant configurations, although by using it he does so, but many instances suggest that especially the morphologically derived abstract nouns are used for the sake of a more elaborated and formal diction. Constructions such as the one above ("gives offence") are to be found throughout the narrative: *gain residence*, *make reference*, *keep silence*, *make* or *complete payment*.

Collocations of nominalization and first-person possessive determiner are scarce, only Picquet's text has a lower density of this construction (Table 4.6, p. 70). One such instance occurs immediately after the narrator has acquired freedom.

5.2.6   My gait was so altered by my gladness, that people often stopped me, saying, "Grandy, what is the matter?" (40)

The nominalization of the quality *glad* here implies the typical characteristics associated with a noun such as permanence and stability. The impression is reinforced by the possessive determiner before the action nominal "gait." Yet again, instead of offering a general observation, both of the nouns serve to characterize the narrator at the moment of freedom.

The predominance of finite clauses and the relative scarcity of nominalization suggest that there is a quantitative demand for subjects. In the first part of the narrative many of these slots are filled with the first-person singular pronoun. Yet as the narrative focus shifts away from the narrator while the general style in terms of syntactic structure and use of nominalization remains the same, these positions are no longer occupied with the *I*-pronoun.

As a consequence, the presence of the *I*-narrator over the entire narrative is not higher than the average of the corpus, although those episodes that feature the narrator's experiences have the third highest rf_I after Picquet and Roper.

Stylistically, Grandy's narrative is certainly among the simplest in the corpus in several respects. The loose sentence structure dominated by simple sequential ordering either through subordinated temporal clauses or coordination with *and* makes the narrative sound like a report of observable events. More intricate logical connections between the clauses, which might express a narrator's interpretation of the causality of events, are not absent but scarce. The predominance of the active voice and the infrequency of mental verbs, especially of the emotive type, in connection with the *I*-pronoun leave no space for the sufferings of the slaves, although descriptions of violent incidents are abundant. Physical abuse is described sometimes in horrific detail, yet the emotional consequences are once again absent from the text, whereas the material consequences become foregrounded, as the description of flogging females above illustrates. While the narrator dominates at least the first part of the text, like Roper, he fails to create an emotional bond with his readers through the presentation of his inner life. The attempt to appeal to the audience is rather based on the display of diligence and truthfulness. The emotional level is mostly introduced by the prefatory remarks of Grandy's sponsor George Thompson, who quotes from a letter extolling the narrator's "benevolence, affection, kindness of heart, and elasticity of spirit" (iv). The story told by Grandy is indeed "touching" (vi) in terms of his truly unspeakable experience. Nearly everyone in his family including his wife is sold, he is defrauded of his entire earnings and thus of his freedom twice, and he witnesses terrible punishments of his fellow slaves, male and female alike, so that his own physical and emotional sufferings must have been immense. Yet, the reportorial style of the narrative creates gaps exactly at those places where other narrators try to accomplish the identification of their readers with the narrating self.

5.2.2 Moses Grandy's use of transitivity

The fact that Grandy's narrative consists of two parts manifests itself in the distribution of process types, too, as Table 5.2.1 illustrates.

Table 5.2.1: Selection of process types in Grandy's *Narrative* (in percent).

	b	mat	men	rel	v
part 1	6.42	40.37	21.10	19.72	12.39
part 2	3.13	37.50	28.13	22.92	8.33
sum	5.41	39.49	23.25	20.70	11.15

Similar to Roper's text, the use of process types in Grandy's narrative is characterized by a stark contrast between the high number of material verbs and a small share of mental ones. Grandy's text has the third largest share of material verbs (39.49%), while the proportion of mental verbs is smallest in the corpus after Roper (23.25%). The share of material verbs remains relatively stable in the narrative with a slight drop from the first to the second part, in which Grandy narrates about his life in freedom. Gaps in the use of material verbs are mainly due to the absence of the *I*-pronoun itself in sections where Grandy provides ge-

neral information. Whenever there are clusters of material processes associated with the narrator, he speaks about money. One such example occurs shortly after his first wife is sold (16ff). When she is taken away, Grandy significantly gives "her the little money I had in my pocket and bid her farewell" (16). Yet, unlike Roper, Grandy is capable of an emotional reaction: "I loved her as I loved my life" (ibid.). Soon after that he is advised to buy himself. Processes such as *get money*, *pay*, *make a payment* abound; the only other material verb in this episode is intransitive *go*.

In terms of agency, the distribution of the different types of material verbs in Grandy's narrative is markedly different from all other texts (Tables 4.8, p. 78 and 5.2.2 below). The share of intransitive material verbs is much smaller (42%) than in Roper's text, but only slightly below the average of the corpus. It rises from the first to the second part from 41% to about 47%. More than 31% of the material processes are effective, which is by far the largest number in the corpus, but like in Roper's narrative, the share drops from beginning to end, this time from 35% to 25% of the material verbs. Ranged material processes contribute only 17% to the material verbs, which is by far the smallest share of all texts. Ranged processes increase in frequency from 13% to 25% from the first to the second part of the narrative.

Table 5.2.2: Subtypes of material verbs in Grandy's *Narrative* in percent of the total of material processes

	reflexive	effective	ranged	intransitive
part 1	6.82	34.09	14.77	40.91
part 2	2.78	25.00	25.00	47.22
sum	5.65	31.45	17.74	42.74

In sum Grandy's material doings are to a higher extent effective than those of any other narrator. This is the case because many of them are concrete actions, such as "I took some canal boats on shares" (14) or "I have often ground the husks of Indian corn over again in a hand-mill" (11). In addition, those verbs that require a Range: entity, frequently used in extensive travel accounts, but also as replacements for verbal processes, are less recurrent here. Intransitive material verbs belong predominantly to the category of locomotion like *go*, *come*, *run* and their various inflections. Effective clauses are frequent, and yet human Goals are rather rare in Grandy's narrative. The majority of the Goals are inanimate things such as *money*, *boats*, *cargo*, etc. in processes that describe the exchange of goods between two participants. According to systemic terminology, in these ditransitive processes the Goal is the entity that is transferred, while the participant that receives the goods is the Recipient (Halliday 1994: 144f; Eggins 235ff). Depending on the verbs and the position in the clause the Recipient may be introduced by the preposition *to* as can be the case in constructions with *give*. Clauses with Recipient and nonhuman Goal such as the following ones are frequent in Grandy's text, especially with the verb *pay*.

5.2.7   I gave him one-half of all I received for freight: out of the other half, I had to victual and man the boats, and all over that expense was my own profit. (14)

5.2.8   I had paid him 230 dollars towards this third buying of my freedom. (30)

Despite the recurrence of the pattern that describes Grandy's exchange of goods & services, on the whole, human second participants of material processes, affected or benefiting, are much less numerous than inanimate Goals, Ranges or completely intransitive processes. The large portion of effective verbs suggests that Grandy's actions affect other participants. This is true, but due to the predominance of ditransitive verbs such as *give* and *pay*, the affected participant is the transferred inanimate object, but not a human being. The narrator is usually presented as being on the giving end. There are only two active instances of getting and receiving with Grandy in subject position. The narrator sees the exchange typically from the point of view of the giver, and in most cases it is indeed he who gives, which is possibly illustrative of the fact that Grandy is forced to give money three times before he eventually receives his freedom.

After Roper's narrative, Grandy's is the one with the second smallest share of mental verbs (23.25%). The distribution among the different types is in so far remarkable as his text features the second smallest share of verbs of cognition and of perception (restricted to forms of *see*, *feel* and *hear* only), but at the same time the largest share of processes of affection with more than a quarter of the mental verbs.

Of the cognitive verbs, most of which are forms of *know* and *think*, four instances of "I believe" stand out. They are metaphorical realizations of a modal element, otherwise often expressed by adverbs such as *probably*. It is this explicit introduction of a component that signifies a personal point of view and thus subjectivity that may be surprising for this narrative, which claims to accentuate truth to the maximum. One of the most outstanding examples occurs towards the close of the text, when the narrator presents a rather personal view on the evils of slavery.

5.2.9   So it must and will be with the masters, while slavery continues: when freedom is established, I believe they will begin to prosper greatly. (65)

Through presenting this opinion explicitly as such, the narrator not only ameliorates the absoluteness of *must* and *will*, he also sets himself up as a potential target. What is presented as subjective can more easily be attacked, also on a personal level, which does not apply to the narrator's personal observations of slavery.

There are further instances of cognitive verbs in the present tense ("I know," "I remember"), but they do not include subjective modality as does *believe*. These cognitive verbs introduce the active role of the memory into the narrative. Their use makes retrospection, which is involved in all first-person accounts, explicit. The events related are thus presented as experientially dependent on the narrator's recollection. Actually, this applies to the entire narrative, but it is only at certain points that the narrator introduces these explicit markers. One such instance occurs the very beginning of the text, where "I remember" is repeated three times in the course of three sentences.

5.2.10   I remember four sisters and four brothers; my mother had more children, but they were dead or sold away before I can remember. I was the youngest. I remember well my mother often hid us all in the woods, to prevent master selling us. (7f)

Here, the narrator relates childhood experiences; later, when he talks about his own adult life, the explicitness of remembering and forgetting becomes rarer.

The large quantity of verbs of affection in Grandy's may be misleading if taken as the sole indicator of the narrator's presentation of his consciousness. Despite the fact that Grandy's narrative is the one with the largest share of verbs of affection (26.39%), he does

not create an emotional bond with his readership. There are a few clusters of such verbs, but they hardly offer a glance into the narrator's psyche. Grandy tells his audience what he fears, which kind of work he can't stand, and what he wishes to do, but all of these instances relate to the immediate situational context of his activities.

5.2.11   The nine days had expired and I feared the mayor would find me on board and sell me. (44)

Hardly ever does the narrator present cognitive or affective acts that extend this pattern; above all his personal sufferings and possible consequences, his longings, and fears are not developed beyond general remarks such as "I was not satisfied, I wanted liberty" (31).

Unlike Roper, Grandy fears things instead of being afraid of them; mental states as Attributes that replace mental processes are rarer in Grandy. Some of those that do appear are to be found towards the close of the narrative, when the narrator expresses his thanks to various benefactors and explains the hardships of those slaves that escape to Canada. All of them feature present tense and the following formula: "I am delighted [happy/glad/sorry] to say that . . ." (65, 68ff). Yet, a few mental states expressed as relational processes from his life in slavery are present as well.

5.2.12   Some time before this, my brother Benjamin returned from the West Indies, where he had been two years with his master's vessel. I was very glad to hear of it, and got leave to go see him. While I was sitting with his wife and him, his wife's master came and asked him to fetch a can of water: he did so, and carried it into the store. While I was waiting for him and wondering at his being so long away, I heard the heavy blows of a hammer: after a little while I was alarmed, and went to see what was going on. I looked into the store, and saw my brother lying on his back on the floor, and Mr. Williams, who had bought him, driving staples over his wrists and ankles; an iron bar was afterwards put across his breast, which was also held down by staples. (14)

The two material processes associated with the narrator are middle (*get leave*, *go*); the rest of the processes with the exception of *hear* does not extend either. The narrator is obviously and understandably confined to remaining in the position of an observer. After Roper's brother is sold away as a settlement for his master's debts, the reader is not informed of the narrator's mental reaction, except that he "feared to tell [his mother] what had happened" (15). The combination of the mental states and processes with behavioural verbs thus illustrates the narrator's inability to influence the situation.

Emotional reactions are generally rare. Grandy buys his freedom three times over because two of his masters defraud him of his earnings. But he does not share the anger at this apparent injustice with his readers. In his typical staccato of mostly juxtaposed clauses he says thus after he is cheated out of his freedom for the second time.

5.2.13   My head seemed to turn round and round; I was quite out of my senses; I went away towards the woods; Mr. Mews sent his waiter after me, to persuade me to go back: at first I refused, but afterwards went. (24).

Grandy's mental state is presented metaphorically. After only two clauses, none of which directs the narrator's emotions towards his insincere master, the material mode regains control and no more is said about the affair. Like Roper, Grandy uses neither mental or behavioural verbs nor Attributes as an outlet for his psychological situation. Both narratives are characterized by this apparent gap; and it is not by coincidence that these texts are the ones with a large share of material verbs and the smallest portion of mental processes.

It appears plausible that this mode of presenting events corresponds to the respective narrator's idea of telling the truth. The discoursal selves created in these tales do not reveal the emotional and psychological damage that they are likely to have endured under slavery. The torture Roper was subject to as well as the emotional strain Grandy suffered through fraud and the tearing apart of his family must have been immense. And yet, the reader is kept at a distance and informed of barely more than what the narrators consider the material facts. By omitting their psyche from the account they run the risk of alienating their readers, as Andrews claims (1986: xx). At the same time, however, they avoid the risk of antagonizing their readership, whose support is critical for their aims. Thoughts, not to speak of deeds, of resistance, revenge, bitterness, or even hatred, which are possible for Jacobs to utter or for Douglass and Northup to perform, are completely absent from the accounts of these two narrators from this phase of the slave narrative. Even the harshest treatment and the most cruel forms of injustice and racism provoke only slight mental reactions from the narrators if any at all. Roper continues his documentation while Grandy, despite all setbacks, pursues almost stoically his one and only (material) aim, the acquisition of his own freedom through economic success.

By foregrounding their material doings so much while keeping the mental stratum mostly out of their readers' reach, both narrators are in a way conservative. They create themselves as being determined and able to succeed in a hostile society even on the society's terms. In this way they embody American ideals of self-made success rather than openly aiming at undermining the foundations on which the American society was built. Of course, they deplore slavery, but at the same time they emphasize values such as hard work, economic success, and emotional restraint. Especially the latter quality, which is manifest in the complete absence of revenge despite the most cruel forms of torture, must be reassuring for an audience that may have sympathized with the abolition of slavery but which was certainly not yet ready to hand over control to the oppressed minority. Indeed, as Louis Filler remarks, abolitionists and reformers were not automatically identical (27ff).

5.3 *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*

5.3.1 Frederick Douglass' presence in the text

Douglass' *Narrative* is divided into eleven chapters and an Appendix. The average rf_I over the entire narrative is 27.232 (including passive voice) and lies slightly above the average of the corpus. While the individual chapters differ greatly in length as well as their respective rf_I, on the whole, the narrator's presence increases from beginning to end. The narrative splits into three parts. The first part comprises the relatively short chapters 1 to 9 and introduces Douglass' life as a young and ignorant slave prior to his resolution to resist. In addition to his own life on the plantation and in Baltimore up to the age of sixteen, Douglass presents general aspects of rural and city life, the slaves' living conditions as well as their and their masters' habits. The rf_I in this part is 23.134. Part II consists of Chapter 10 and includes the climax and turning point of the narrative. It contains fewer descriptive passages and focuses on how Douglass is broken, his determination to resist, and the resulting fight with a slave breaker. The rf_I rises to 28.340. In part III (Chapter 11 and Appendix) it increases further to 34.637; in Chapter 11 alone the rf_I reaches 43.462. As it covers the flight and the first steps in freedom, the focus now lies on the narrator's own activities. Table 5.3.1. provides a qualitative and quantitative synopsis of all chapters.

Table 5.3.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Douglass' *Narrative*

Ch.	words	rf_I	content
1	2065	24.213	exposition, birth, family, master Anthony, first incidents of violence
2	2019	8.420	master's family, crops, food, housing, overseers, Lloyd's plantation
3	1459	4.798	Lloyd's wealth and slaves' identification, "contented slave"-myth
4	1581	6.958	killing of a slave, no investigation, examples of further killings
5	1659	46.414	conditions of children, leaves the plantation and arrives in Baltimore to live with Hugh Auld's family, is initially well received
6	1287	24.864	is taught the alphabet, soon forbidden, comparative freedom of city slaves,
7	2464	45.860	slaveholding changes mistress' character, learns from white playmates, understands what being a slave for life means, acquires Sheridan's *Columbian Orator* and understands moral aspects of slavery, learns to write
8	1810	20.994	after deaths, remarriages and family quarrels Douglass has to leave Baltimore and lives with Thomas Auld in St. Michael's
9	2039	17.165	cruelty and hypocrisy of new masters, after frequent quarrels Douglass is hired out to breaker Covey
10	12738	28.576	first severe whipping, Covey's mean character, Douglass broken, turning point: after breaking down from exhaustion Douglass is whipped, denied protection by Auld, Douglass resists Covey's next attack, fights back, and is not punished, Christmas holiday, time with new master, plan to escape is betrayed, return to Baltimore, hired out to learn calking trade, attacked by white apprentices, forced to deliver his wages to Hugh Auld
11	5269	43.462	points out need for secrecy for underground railroad, hires his own time, but Auld soon terminates the deal, escape and arrival in New York, aid by white abolitionists, sent to New Bedford, where he is joined by his future wife, description of new conditions, white racism, display of work ethic, first lecture at antislavery convention
A	1891	10.048	Christianity and slavery
S	36281	27.397	

The first chapter serves as an exposition. Douglass introduces himself as well as some of the conditions on the plantation, embedded in his own observations, so that the rf_I is relatively high. The chapter contains not only personal experiences including his initiation to violence committed to slaves, but also general remarks about the disruption of slave families. In the following three chapters (2 to 4) the narrator retreats from his text and describes Lloyd's plantation system, the slaves' characters and their living conditions, several overseers and their cruelty towards slaves. Chapter 4 culminates in four incidents of slave murders and the lack of criminal investigation. Especially the description of Lloyd's plantation is characterized by the almost complete absence of the *I*-narrator and a high density of nominalizations and relational processes. One particular paragraph in Chapter 3 is full of mainly deverbal nominalizations such as *establishment, care, work, employment, management, inattention, punishment, excuse, want of attention, supposition,* all of which can be found within a stretch of only 112 words. These characteristics combine to render the descriptions highly abstract, impersonal, and occasionally static. The paragraph is quoted here in full.

5.3.1 This establishment was under the care of two slaves – old Barney and young Barney – father and son. To attend to this establishment was their sole work. But it was by no means an easy employment; for in nothing was Colonel Lloyd more particular than in the management of his horses. The slightest inattention to these was unpardonable, and was visited upon those, under whose care they were placed, with the severest punishment; no excuse could shield them, if the colonel only suspected any want of attention to his horses – a supposition which he frequently indulged, and one which, of course, made the office of old and young Barney a very trying one. (16f)

The near absence of the *I*-narrator and the formal diction with relational processes, passive voice and syntactic inversion render this description of the conditions at Lloyd's plantation static. The linguistic features help to characterize the system as fixed, hierarchic, and not to be intruded upon by the narrator.

The low rf_I also serves a dramatic function. In a number of narratives chapters with strongly contrasting rf_I often lie close together. We find this pattern in Douglass, Jacobs, Northup, and Bibb. The contrast between focusing on the narrators and their activities in some episodes and focusing away in others renders the text generally more dynamic and varied. The variation also serves to illustrate that the respective narrators are able to realize and present more than their immediate environment within their limited sphere of activity. Moreover, static and descriptive episodes with a low rf_I provide a foil against which the narrators are able to set their activities apart from the surroundings. Unlike in the two narratives discussed previously, this is clearly the case in Douglass. Chapters 3 and 4 feature the lowest rf_I with 4.798 and 6.958, while Chapter 5, concerned with the narrator's lot again, has the highest rf_I with 46.414. After a short description of his clothing and food allowances as a child, Douglass, now aged eight, prepares for the journey to Baltimore. He leaves the hardships of the rural plantation to live in the big city with a relative of his master, whom he serves as a house slave. Through this move Douglass abandons the comparative anonymity of the plantation and becomes an individual for the first time. In Hugh and Sophia Auld's family he is the only slave and in the beginning chiefly a companion to their son Thomas. This episode presents the first major turning point in Douglass' life.

As the chapter is concerned with such a crucial period for the narrator, it deserves a closer look. By being so overwhelmingly present in the first person from the very begin-

ning, Douglass clearly positions himself in the focus of this episode. The second paragraph of the chapter may serve as an illustration. It consists of seven sentences, five of which start with *I*. There are two passive voice constructions ("I was seldom whipped by my old master . . ." and "I was kept almost naked . . ."), where the narrator remains theme and subject. Douglass is still on the plantation.

> 5.3.2 I was seldom whipped by my old master, and suffered little from any thing else than hunger and cold. I suffered much from hunger, but much more from cold. In hottest summer and coldest winter, I was kept almost naked – no shoes, no stockings, no jacket, no trousers, nothing on but a coarse tow linen shirt, reaching only to my knees. I had no bed. I must have perished with cold, but that, the coldest nights, I used to steal a bag which was used for carrying corn to the mill. I would crawl into this bag, and there sleep on the cold, damp, clay floor, with my head in and feet out. My feet have been so cracked with the frost, that the pen with which I am writing might be laid in the gashes. (26f)

The theme, syntactically and psychologically, is the *I*-narrator and no one besides him. But the chapter provides more than a further characterization of plantation life, this time through the eyes of the narrator. This presentation of one of the lowest points in his life, where he is even forced to steal, lays the foundation for what is to become the discursive self-made Douglass.

He is between seven and eight years old when he is sent to Baltimore. The narrator presents himself aware of the fact that this transit to the city is incisive for the rest of his life. He allows the reader a glance into his thoughts, desires, and sentiments, all of which were absent in the earlier narratives by Roper and Grandy. This look inside is facilitated by the large quantity of mental verbs in this particular chapter. Mental verbs have a relative frequency of 14.467, which is twice as high as that of the entire corpus. While Douglass' text is the narrative with the largest share of mental verbs (32.22%), with more than 34% Chapter 5 even exceeds this average slightly.

> 5.3.3 Going to live at Baltimore laid the foundation, and opened the gateway, to all my subsequent prosperity. I have ever regarded it as the first plain manifestation of that kind providence which has ever since attended me, and marked my life with so many favors. I regarded the selection of myself as being somewhat remarkable. (31)

The two instances of the mental verb *regard* here render two relational processes dependent on the narrator's cognitive process: 'going to live at Baltimore was the first plain manifestation of that kind providence' and 'the selection of myself was remarkable.' By way of this expression the narrator not only attributes significance to his journey for his future life, he also points out that, apparently, at the age of eight years he was aware of this significance. The selection of present perfect and simple past suggests that the mental process is not used in retrospect but contemporary to this event. He presents himself as chosen and he explicitly says so: "I was chosen from among them all, and was the first, last, and only choice" (31). The participle "chosen" may be interpreted as passive realization of a material process, but due to the ellipsis of the *I*-pronoun in the second part and the morphological relationship with "choice," it is more likely that Douglass intends to express two relations here. The Agent of the process remains unmentioned so that the *I*-narrator appears as the Carrier of the Attribute "chosen;" but he is not only that, he is also involved in an identifying relation as the only Token of the Value "first, last, and only choice." This means that Douglass does not present himself as *one* instance of all those that are chosen, but indeed as

the choice. Through an additional relational process that depends on his mental activity (*regard*), he presents himself as not too shy to interpret "this event as a special interposition of divine Providence in my favor" (31). The message is clear: at the age of eight the narrator is not only singled out as a special individual from the anonymous mass of slaves, but he is also aware of this fact.

Many mental processes in this chapter are of the emotive type with a positive connotation: *feel, enjoy, prefer, hope, wish, relish*. These are supported by a large number of nominalized mental verbs or adjectives: *hope, desire, happiness, knowledge, look, sight, enjoyment, abhorrence, recollection, entertainment, praise,* and *conviction*. Further nominalizations, as well as mostly positively charged abstract nouns such as *thought, ability, emotions, beauty, strength*, or *consolation* emphasize the mental mode of the episode. While the frequency of nouns here eliminates overt participant roles for Douglass, he still manages to remain in the focus through a large number of first-person singular pronouns. He substantiates his domination of the scene through recurrent use of possessive determiners representing transformed subjects ("my desire," "my recollection," "my abhorrence") and by remaining thematically present even when he is not acting. Seven instances of passive voice attest to this impression (cf. also example 5.3.2).

The chapter provides the first illustration of Douglass' potential for development. He presents personal and intellectual capacities at such an early stage in his life and in such an elaborated and self-confident manner that the exceptional character of this slave narrator – and his awareness of it – are presented as fixed points of orientation for the remainder of the text.

Chapter 6 has two parts, both of which remove the focus from the narrator slightly. The first one describes the initially kind character of his new mistress Sophia Auld and the way slaveholding changes it for the worse. Education plays an important role in this respect because Sophia Auld begins to teach Douglass the alphabet, but is soon forbidden to do so by her husband. At this point the Aulds unwittingly teach Douglass the importance of the denial of education for slavery. The second part is even less concerned with the narrator; he reports the generally better treatment of house slaves in comparison with plantation slaves but ends with a number of violent counter-examples gleaned from Douglass' neighbors. The drop of the rf_I to 24.864 mainly corresponds to the scarcity of material verbs; their relative frequency decreases from 18.083 in Chapter 5 to only 3.885 in Chapter 6. The still relatively high frequency of mental verbs (12.432) reflects the fact that Douglass does not accentuate his activities in the chapter but his perception and reflection of his new situation in the city. Instances of *observe, witness, see, acknowledge, learn,* and *understand* underscore that the narrator continues to present mental capacities and the potential for development.

The following chapter (7) refocuses on Douglass again; the *I*-pronoun is present 45.860 times per thousand words. The chapter presents a further decisive step in Douglass' way towards liberation: the acquisition of literacy. With all particulars Douglass describes the stratagems he uses to learn to read and write even after his mistress has stopped teaching him. Douglass presents himself as acting: while playing with white children he bribes them into teaching him letters of the alphabet (38); while working in the shipyard he picks up further letters and words (43); moreover, he claims to have devoured a book about rhetoric at the age of twelve (40). Douglass thinks, too. Chapter 7 has the highest *rf* of mental verbs, not only in the narrative but in the entire corpus (16.640). The majority of them are perceptive (*see, hear, learn, find out, read*) or cognitive verbs (*know, believe, remember, resolve*).

Douglass presents his growing awareness as a progression of perception and cognition, from which the desire for freedom results. He learns from his white playmates, he learns from the book, and later he learns from his work in the shipyard. Invariably these episodes of (self-) education lead to reflection about slavery and freedom. While learning letters from other children he discusses slavery with them; reading Sheridan's book he finds a "bold denunciation of slavery" (40). Douglass thus stresses that education and the will to freedom are inseparable. Upon his reading experience follows an episode of intense reflection and further perception, which is expressed through the use of mental processes. Douglass says of himself, "I envied," "I wished," "I preferred," "I saw," "I heard," "I felt," "I found myself," "I was eager," "I was a ready listener" (41). This way he eventually learns the meaning of the word *abolition*, and, while working in the shipyard, he is encouraged by two Irishmen to escape to the North. This prospect encourages him to learn to write, which he does by using stratagems similar to the ones he used to acquire his reading skills.

Douglass presents his acquisition of literacy also as a juxtaposition of material and mental activities in a very concrete way. Learning as a mental activity for him is always connected with material activities. This is indicated by the high *rf* of material verbs (11.769) in addition to the high number of mental processes. When he is sent on errands, he hurries in order to have time for a quick lesson from a street child (38). He does not accidentally find or receive Sheridan's book, he says he "got hold of" it, thus implying an active, material doing (39). As soon as he learns the name of a letter in a mental act, he copies it on the pavement with chalk or a stone in material act (43). He takes bread from home to bribe the children into teaching him, which illustrates most poignantly that literacy has become a commodity, exchangeable like material goods. At the same time the high rf_I illustrates that learning for him as a slave is an individual activity. Its success depends on himself and is eventually controlled and guided by himself.

The following two chapters are not centrally concerned with the development of the narrator's character. Instead they reveal how closely the fate of a slave is bound to the fortune of his master's family. Through deaths, remarriages, and quarrels between the Auld brothers Douglass is eventually forced to leave Baltimore to live with Thomas Auld and his second wife in St. Michael's. In Douglass' description of the division of the Anthony property including the slaves and his ensuing life with the Auld's, the rf_I lies at 20.994 and 17.165 in Chapters 8 and 9. Even if Douglass embeds the incidents in his personal history and thus is present in the majority of episodes here, he is not the focus. His main aim is to illustrate the slaves' status as chattel and the brutalizing effects of slaveholding on white people. As Thomas Auld is Douglass' prime example for the slaveholders' depraved and hypocritical character, he is portrayed in detail and without the intrusion of the *I*-narrator. Douglass skillfully chooses different methods of illustrating his master's character. When it appears effective to single out the fate of an individual slave, and thus to facilitate the reader's identification with the victim, he does so, as in the cases of Henny (56) and Douglass' grandmother (48), both of whom Auld expels from his property because they cannot work and have become a burden to his purse. In other instances, though, it is more effective to portray the slaves as a unity, all of whom have to suffer under the master's inhumanity. All of his slaves are starved and corrupted into begging and even stealing food from the neighbors (52). Here the *I*-narrator, who at other times strategically dissociates himself from the slave community, disappears as an individual and immerses in the group of slaves. By creating this peer group through the first-person plural pronoun, behavior that is re-

garded as morally questionable can no longer be attributed to one single flawed character, much less to the narrator individually, but is presented as induced by the slaveholder's harshness. In these descriptions of his master's cruelty in Chapter 9 the first-person plural form appears more frequently than anywhere else in the text (*rf* 8.337 vs. 4.796 in the narrative). Through this device Douglass characterizes himself as identifying with his fellow slaves and so provides a counterbalance to the strong presentation of individualization in the previous chapters. The same method of creating identification through the use of the *we*-pronoun is used in the description of an abortive attempt to escape with a number of fellow slaves. Chapter 9 ends as Thomas Auld hires the increasingly intractable adolescent Douglass to the slave breaker Covey.

Chapter 10 is the longest one and consists of four parts. The relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun rises again to 28.345, although Douglass provides various observations about his masters and fellow slaves. Due to the length of the chapter – it is only slightly shorter than Grandy's entire text – and its distinct episodes, the four parts need to be considered separately with an emphasis on the first one. It covers Douglass' year with Covey and contains the climax and turning point of the narrative. In the second part Douglass presents his first, relatively uneventful, year with his new master Freeland and elaborates on the hypocrisy of allegedly religious slaveholders. In the third part, Douglass' second term with Freeland, a planned escape is betrayed and, after a week in jail, the narrator returns to Baltimore. The last part focuses on Douglass' work in a Baltimore shipyard, his experience with individual and institutional racism, and his growing dissatisfaction with his status as Auld's slave.

Table 5.3.2: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in the four sections of Chapter 10 of Douglass' *Narrative*

		rf of individual process types (without passive)					total rf_I		
pt.	words	b	mat	men	rel	v	without passive	including passive	rf_{nom}
1	6008	2.164	15.146	5.826	6.991	2.330	32.457	34.621	14.148
2	1784	1.682	9.529	7.287	3.924	1.682	24.104	24.664	16.256
3	3055	0.655	3.928	5.892	4.583	1.309	16.367	18.331	18.658
4	1889	0.000	13.235	3.706	5.294	1.059	23.294	28.057	14.823
sum	12736	1.413	11.385	6.438	5.732	1.806	26.068	28.345	15.625

The first part of the chapter focuses on Douglass' reversal of fortunes as a slave. Within six months Covey manages to break Douglass' spirit through incessant work and regular whippings. Douglass presents himself as a diligent worker, but, being a city slave not used to field work, he fails to perform his chores to his master's satisfaction. As a consequence he is severely whipped and ultimately "tamed," as Douglass himself calls his broken state (63). Yet, he eventually regains his spirit and resolves to resist Covey. When Douglass breaks down from exhaustion and is severely beaten, he flees to seek Auld's protection. He is rejected and forced to return. When Covey attacks Douglass a few days later, the latter fights back for the first time. Henceforth, Covey never whips him again.

This first part of the chapter is structured in a sophisticated, almost dramatical way. The variations in linguistic expression are noteworthy because they reflect and accentuate

Douglass' dramatization of events and therefore help to create the narrative structure. The first section consists of five acts set apart from each other by the presence of the narrator. In the first act Douglass focuses upon himself (rf_I 38.414), before he retreats from the text to illustrate Covey's character (rf_I 3.704). Then follow the actual turning point where Douglass resolves to resist (rf_I 56.029) and the climactic confrontation with Covey (rf_I 45.386). The final act of this part, where the low presence of the narrator parallels that of the second act, focuses on the function of holidays for the slaves (rf_I 8.639). This structure suggests an exposition and rising tension, where Douglass' breaking and Covey's violence are foreshadowed through the narrator's accident with a team of oxen and the resulting whipping in act one. This is followed by act two as an episode that foregrounds Covey's ruthless character while the *I*-narrator retreats. The turning point, succinctly set in act three, is characterized by the highest rf_I in this first part of the chapter and foreshadows the actual reversal of action, which is detailed in act four. Parallel to the second act, in the final one the narrator retreats again and focuses on his fellow slaves during the Christmas holidays. The structural parallels within this part are underlined by two breaks in the chronological order of the narration. Douglass introduces the results before relating the details and causes of his first as well as of his last violent confrontation with Covey. In the beginning he presents his injuries before he describes the circumstances that lead to the whipping; after the turning point he mentions Covey's changed attitude before he presents his act of resistance that leads to the change. Thus the construction of the first part of Chapter 10 may be represented in the following way with the corresponding presence of the *I*-narrator:

act 1		act 2	act 3	act 4		act 5
(result →	cause) →	observation →	turning point →	(result →	cause) →	observation
38.414		3.704	56.029	45.386		8.639

This entire first section is 6008 words long and dominated by activity, especially whenever the narrator is present. This impression is mainly created by the dominance of material verbs. More than 46% of the verbs that depend on the *I*-narrator are material, about 21% relational, and only close to 18% are mental. These correspond to relative frequencies of 15.146 for material, 5.826 for mental, and 6.991 for relational verbs. In the first act, when Douglass describes his accident with the oxen and the whipping, the rf_{mat} is as high as 26.022. The majority of material verbs denote bodily movement, such as *run, crawl, proceed, move, rise up, swim, fly, travel, carry, fall, walk*, and many more. Douglass' initial lack of resistance does not diminish the predominance of material verbs. Even when Douglass is inactive or other process types would appear more congruent, material verbs dominate.

5.3.4 I made him no answer, but stood with my clothes on. He repeated his order. I still made him no answer, nor did I move to strip myself. (59)

The repeated verbal process *answer* is presented as material verb plus Range: process. As the negations are part of the nominal group, Douglass, without acting at all, is able to present himself as subject of three material verbs with positive polarity (*make, move, stand*). Paratactically arranged clauses and a complete absence of qualifiers add to the impression of tension. Yet, for now Douglass does not escape punishment and the strain is released in a series of coordinated material processes controlled by Covey.

5.3.5   Upon this he rushed at me with the fierceness of a tiger, tore off my clothes, and
         lashed me till he had worn out his switches, cutting me so savagely as to leave the
         marks visible for a long time after. (59f)

Eventually, Covey seems to have subdued his adolescent slave. The breaker's ruthlessness is described in act 2 that hardly features the *I*-narrator at all. Then follows the scene that serves as the turning point for the first part of Chapter 10. With an *rf₁* of 56.029 Douglass lets this third act focus upon himself again. In a rhetorically skilled way he describes how the sight of the freely floating boats on the Chesapeake Bay deepen his desperation. He attaches symbolic value to these vivid images and describes how they rekindle his lost desire to escape. Douglass introduces the exclamatory episode, laden with classical stylistic devices, with an apology for his "rude way" (64). What follows is an abundance of alliterations, such as "gentle gale", "dim distance", and "hottest hell", syntactic parallelisms ("You are loosed from your moorings, and are free; I am fast in my chains, and am a slave!"), rhetorical questions, and exclamations. Many lexical items or collocations that occur only once in the entire narrative can be found in this episode: "habitable globe," "turbid waters," and "swiftwinged angels" belong to that category (64). The choice of lexical items such as *lofty, bosom, betwixt,* identified by the *OED* as "archaic," "poetical," or "rhetorical," underlines the heightened language at this point. The climax is characterized by extreme parataxis; the absence of conjunctive devices here is iconic for the lack of logic and reason that the narrator perceives in his situation and serves to illustrate his emotional strain.

5.3.6   O God, save me! God, deliver me! Let me be free! Is there any God? Why am I a
         slave? I will run away. I will not stand it. Get caught, or get clear, I'll try it. (65)

The rhetorical devices, which are by no means completely absent from the rest of the narrative, are massively clustered here and foreground this episode in relation to its co-text and so prepare the reader for the turning point. Douglass introduces this reversal, which occurs not only exactly in the middle of his term with Covey, but is also placed almost exactly in the center of the entire narrative, in the following way.

5.3.7   You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a
         man. (65)

Once again Douglass foreshadows the result before he reports the circumstances. Covey beats Douglass severely after the latter has broken down from a sunstroke. The injured Douglass leaves the farm to appeal to Auld for protection, but is sent back. Two days later, after Douglass has presented himself as superstitious but also as diligent and obedient, Covey tries to whip him, but Douglass resists and fights back. The fighting scene itself is characterized by direct as well as reported speech, and short sentences, often consisting of only one clause or of several coordinated clauses. It is dominated by material verbs and contains a number of nominalizations, yet mostly conversions of verbs such as *blow, kick, call, threat, snatch, help, spring, conduct.* Nominalization through suffixation is much rarer and increases in frequency only towards the end of the fight. In the episode, Douglass, Covey and his other slaves and workers alternate in taking over subject positions. On the whole, the episode appears much more dynamic than what has gone before. As a result of alternating subject positions in this description of the decisive fight, not all of the action is presented as initiated and dominated by Douglass alone. The *I*-narrator thus emphasizes that he is merely reacting to Covey's violence. At times he even appears to dissociate himself from the results of his own violent actions, for instance through nominalizations which

take over subject positions from Douglass ("This kick had the effect . . ." 71). This episode will be discussed more in detail below.

The acts which frame the climactic fight contrast linguistically with the description of the fight itself and so help to foreground the liberating experience linguistically. The episode at the Chesapeake Bay that precedes the fight has already been described above. The act that immediately follows the fight presents the results of the confrontation for Douglass. In contrast to the classical rhetorical devices and the devices connoting activity, this part is characterized by a mixture of material, relational, mental, and behavioural processes supported by a higher density and different type of nominalization, compared with the previous section. The very nature of these nouns such as *determination*, *gratification*, *compensation*, *satisfaction*, *cowardice* and *defiance* raises the level of abstraction. Moreover, as they are embedded in deeply figurative constructions with relational or material verbs, they are made to appear as entities. These can perform as Actors in material processes.

5.3.8   My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place; and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact. (73)

In this manner Douglass presents the results of his "triumph" over Covey not as ephemeral, but rather as material reality with future consequences. The end of being whipped represents the beginning end of his days in slavery.

Nominalizations also appear in relational processes as in the following two examples.

5.3.9   The gratification afforded by the triumph was a full compensation for whatever else might follow, even death itself. (72f)

"Gratification" and "compensation" function as Carrier and Attribute respectively in an attributive relational process. Both belong to the same level of abstraction but to different levels of generalization; this particular gratification is one example of the different possible compensations, a member of the class of compensations, so to speak (cf. Halliday 1994: 120f; Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter 106). By ascribing this attribute to "gratification" Douglass endows the Carrier with additional significance for himself; the connection he creates between the two terms is not predetermined by their semantics. Identifying processes appear, too.

5.3.10   This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. (73)

Douglass assigns an identifying Value ("the turning-point") to the identified Token ("this battle"). The relation is one of representation or symbolization. Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter argue that in these cases the two participants belong to "different orders of abstraction" (ibid.). The clause is not about a class of possible turning-points, but about this particular one represented by the "battle." Semantically, the Value gives a function, role, or status to the Token (Eggins 259f). Thus Douglass defines the Token by assigning a Value to it. This is an active process of making meaning; by choosing this particular form of expression Douglass constructs special significance out of his own experiences. Douglass does not only categorize the material reality of his individual physical confrontation with Covey as a battle with all its martial connotations (likewise "triumph" above), he also identifies it as one singular and decisive moment in his personal history, despite the fact that this fight was by no means the last one he was involved in, as he himself admits (73). For instance, a few years later, while working in a shipyard, he receives a severe beating by a group of white

workers, yet here the narrator does not redefine the episode into a life-changing event. This fight with Covey is not the turning-point of Douglass' life because it sets him free immediately; it is the turning-point essentially because the narrator says so. This is emphasized by the fact that this episode is linguistically contrasted with the preceding and following acts and so foregrounded in relation to them.

Douglass' manner of presentation and assigning significance not only creates meaning for the plot of the narrative, it also contributes to the positioning of the *I*-narrator. Douglass presents himself as being capable of rising above the concrete level of merely recording observable events in their chronological order. While he does exactly that with dramatic skill, too, as the fighting scenes prove, he also reaches an abstract level of reflection about the meaning of the events in his life. Particularly the large number of nominalizations, which afford an abstraction from actual processes, attest to this achievement. The nominalizations themselves take over participant roles as in "cowardice departed" (73), but as Actors in material processes they are not [+human] as were the Actors in the previous battle. The relational processes of identification in the episode interconnect these abstract terms and ascribe symbolic meaning to them, thus offering an additional level of mental activity of which Douglass presents himself capable.

The remaining three parts of Chapter 10 deal with Douglass' two terms with the new master Freeland, a betrayed attempt to escape, and his subsequent return to Baltimore. The relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun in all the three parts is lower than in the initial one just described. Especially the third part about the abortive attempt to escape instigated by Douglass, who ends up in jail, is characterized by a low rf_I. The second part, in which Douglass starts a Sabbath school for his fellow slaves, features a rf_I of 24.664. Douglass is still present as an individual, distinct from his fellow slaves, whom he tries to influence. He says of himself that he "succeeded in creating in [his fellow slaves] a strong desire to learn how to read" (80) and later that he is able to "imbue their minds with thoughts of freedom" (83f). Being a chosen one, he obviously has the capacity to gather disciples. However, gradually he creates a peer group again, into which he immerses. The third part of the chapter is largely dominated by the first-person plural pronoun while the rf_I decreases to 18.331. His skilful move from *I* to *we* is presented in the following paragraph. The mental processes *love* and *confide* emphasize the close relationship between the individuals who are then presented as group.

5.3.11   It is sometimes said that we slaves do not love and confide in each other. In answer to this assertion, I can say, I never loved any or confided in any people more than my fellow-slaves, and especially those with whom I lived at Mr. Freeland's. I believe we would have died for each other. We never undertook to do any thing, of any importance, without a mutual consultation. We never moved separately. We were one; and as much so by our tempers and dispositions, as by the mutual hardships to which we were necessarily subjected by our condition as slaves. (83)

Although the plan to escape fails and the five would-be fugitives are caught, Douglass stresses the fact that the community spirit among them is upheld despite their imprisonment and the danger for their lives (91). At the same time, however, the use of the first-person plural pronoun also deflects the attention from the individual, so that this miniature insurrection eventually stands as a communal experience, for which the narrator must not be held responsible alone. Finally, however, the other four are taken home by their masters while Douglass is left in jail for a while and then sent back to Baltimore.

Similar to Chapter 5, the renewed move to Baltimore in part four co-occurs with an increase of the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun. From 18.331 in the third part it increases to 28.057, albeit with passive voice constructions contributing significantly (4.764). As was the case above, Douglass singles himself out from a relatively anonymous group of slaves to become an individual. He makes himself the focus of this episode, but at the same time he is able to derive general observations about economic pressures and institutional racism from his life. Hugh Auld hires Douglass to a ship-builder. Douglass describes how economic competition on the labor market between black and white carpenters leads to violence. Once again, a fight Douglass is involved in serves as an illustration, and once again Douglass breaks up the chronological order of his account. Before presenting the details and circumstances of the fight with four white apprentices, he discloses the results: considerable injuries and the end of his employment at this shipyard. The episode is dominated by material processes (56%) while mental ones are comparatively scarce (less than 16%).

Douglass reports the incident to his master and mistress, whose emotional reactions are in his favor. Auld even seeks legal redress in court but is rejected because he is unable to produce a white eyewitness for the incident. Douglass' description of the Aulds' reaction, however, is not emotional at all.

5.3.12   He listened attentively to my narration of the circumstances leading to the savage outrage, and gave many proofs of his strong indignation at it. [. . .] He gave expression to his feelings by pouring out curses upon the heads of those who did the deed. (97)

After the dynamics of the fight, Douglass resorts to a highly nominalized mode of speech. He himself as *I*-narrator is not present at all except as transformed subject in "my narration." While in this fourth part of Chapter 10 nominalizations are comparatively scarce (Table 5.3.2 above), they are clustered in this particular stretch. Auld is not 'angry,' nor does he 'feel' or 'curse.' The nominalizations afford an abstraction from the actual concrete happening and, together with a predominance of material and relational processes, serve to keep Auld's emotionality in check. This is supported by the qualifications Douglass adds to the care his mistress applies to his wounds. Although she is "moved to tears" and "melted to pity," – note the characteristic material metaphorization of mental states – Douglass stresses that she was "once overkind" and "once affectionate" (97), which refers back to his earlier claim that slaveholding has changed the Aulds' character for the worse. Apparently, Douglass tries to avoid by all means the impression that the Aulds' behavior might be the beginning of a new trustful and affectionate relationship between the masters and their slave or that they are standing on the same side. As a slave, who has to deliver his weekly wages to his master, Douglass remains dissatisfied with his lot, notwithstanding the Aulds' support in this particular case.

The final chapter of the narrative consists of two parts. In the first one, Douglass presents his increasing restlessness and dissatisfaction despite the relative freedom he enjoys through hiring his own time. In September 1838 he escapes to New York; however, he makes it a point to withhold as much information as possible in order not to acquaint slave hunters and authorities with the loopholes in their system. Lonesome and perilous travels through woods, swamps, deserts, and frost, as presented later by Brown, Bibb, Northup, and Ball, are completely absent. The second part of the chapter is concerned with Douglass' first footsteps in the North. Again the chronological order of the narrative is dis-

rupted. Before presenting the circumstances that lead to his escape, Douglass presents the outcome with an apology for keeping the particulars of his flight secret.

The two parts of the chapter are also linguistically distinct. While the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is high in both sections of Chapter 11, which features the third highest rf_I of the entire narrative, it is higher in the first part than in the second one.

Table 5.3.3: rf_I and nominalizations in Chapter 11 of Douglass' *Narrative*

part	words	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I incl. passive	rf_I without passive	rf_{nom}
1	2306	0.434	21.249	14.310	6.938	2.168	45.100	45.100	22.116
2	2963	0.337	13.837	14.175	6.750	3.375	42.187	38.475	16.200
sum	5269	0.380	17.081	14.234	6.832	2.847	43.462	41.374	18.789

More than in the four parts of the previous chapter Douglass foregrounds his own activities, predominantly material and mental ones. Although he begins the chapter with an apology for his secrecy and an elaborate denunciation of those who publicize the workings of the underground railroad, he renders these rather abstract considerations personal through a high rf_I (45.100) in combination with an unusually high density of nominalizations in this part (22.116). The following example is typical.

5.3.13   But before narrating any of the peculiar circumstances, I deem it proper to make known my intention not to state all the facts connected with the transaction. (100)

The common nouns in the excerpt are abstract and highly general; "circumstances," "facts" as well as "transaction" can serve as hypernyms to almost any kind and number of states or events. In this case *flight* would act as a subordinate term to *transaction*. The same applies to *circumstances* and *facts*, which remain unmentioned in the text. Douglass traveled by train to New York and used forged papers of a sailor (McFeely 70f), but this is never revealed in the *Narrative*. The fact that Douglass is capable of such abstraction and generalization has been repeatedly illustrated, but in this particular episode the point is a different one. Again, the nominalizations increase the lexical density, as any attempt at unpacking them as well as the nonfinite clause will prove, yet here the narrator does not disappear behind nominalized processes and states, as was the case in some of the previous instances. The reverse is true: in the majority of sentences in his apology Douglass presents himself in initial and thus in thematic position. He emphasizes that he is defending his individual opinion, which is not shared by all antislavery activists and which may even harm the material success of his narrative, as he is well aware (100). The nominalizations help to imbue the justification for this gap in the narrative with more than momentary validity. Douglass does not merely 'intend' at that very moment. His intention is fixed, stable and incontestable as the presupposing first-person possessive determiner suggests. The intention has been present for a long time; this is only the moment when the narrator feels the need to make it explicit.

In addition to the differences in the distribution of the *I*-pronoun and nominalizations, the distribution of the process types differs significantly in the two parts of the chapter. The first part is dominated by material doings, which add up to 47% of the processes associated with Douglass, whereas mental processes amount to only 31%. The mental processes in the first part are predominantly of the cognitive type (*know, plan, suppose, think, decide, intend*), whereas those of the second part are mostly perceptive (*see, hear, find, feel*), thus

reflecting Douglass' attempts to learn from and adapt to a new environment. In the second section the ratio is more balanced: both material as well as mental verbs contribute about 36% to the total of processes. The sharp drop of active material processes does not mean that Douglass does not act any more in the second part, but the display of his work ethic towards the end of the chapter, for instance, is short and not connected with many material processes at all. These clearly dominate the first part, where Douglass hires his own time from Hugh Auld and is forced to deliver his entire wages to him. A large number of transitive processes associated with the transfer of goods – also in a metaphorical sense – attest to this impression (*give, keep, carry, pay, spend, get, make,* etc.). The material processes in part two, on the other hand, are frequently associated with motion (*leave*, *reach*, *stroll*, *go*, also *get* used in the same sense) and thus require no directly affected participant but only a Range.

Chapter 11 as he last regular chapter provides the capstone to Douglass' personal development as it is presented in his narrative: freedom. Douglass has finally become the sole actor in his text, which is reflected by the high rf_I. The control over his life story and thus over the way he can present them has become complete.

The narrative closes with an Appendix. In this final part Douglass moves the focus away from his own life and presents his views on institutionalized Christianity in America and its complicity with slaveholding. In terms of language it differs markedly from the rest of the narrative. The rf_I is comparatively low (10.048) because Douglass does not act. Verbs are predominantly mental and reflect the contemplative mode of the episode. Nominalizations initially add a formal element.

5.3.14   To remove the liability of such misapprehension, I deem it proper to append the following brief explanation. (118)

Strong emotive verbs combine with parallelisms and juxtapositions to create vivid images.

5.3.15   I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. (118)

The relative frequency of nominalizations is the highest in the narrative, if not in the corpus (23.797) and contributes to the general and abstract character of this part. Douglass no longer describes his particular fate; in this summary of his observations he presents himself as capable of drawing conclusions. Abstractions such as *marriage*, *influence*, *ravages*, *pollution*, *theft*, *adultery* abound.

5.3.16   He who is the religious advocate of marriage robs whole millions of its sacred influence, and leaves them to the ravages of wholesale pollution. The warm defender of the sacredness of the family relation is the same that scatters whole families, – sundering husbands and wives, parents and children, sisters and brothers, leaving the hut vacant, and the hearth desolate. We see the thief preaching against theft, and the adulterer against adultery. (119)

Sentences are generally shorter (cf. below) and feature very little subordination between clauses. After a few introductory lines Douglass begins to use an increasing number of classical rhetorical devices. Alliterations, such as in the following example, are legion.

5.3.17   He who sells my sister, for purposes of prostitution, stands forth as the pious advocate of purity. (119)

In addition, many parallelisms and repetitions frequently occur in triples.

5.3.18   We have men-stealers for ministers, women-whippers for missionaries, and cradle-
         plunderers for church members. (ibid.)

Through the combination of these characteristics the language becomes increasingly sermonic. Douglass inserts sixteen lines of poetry for his denunciation of religion, which culminates in an excerpt from Matthew (Book 40, Chapter 23), ending in a fourfold "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" The language and dramatization of these paragraphs support claims that the roots of Douglass' oratory lie in his experience as a preacher. O'Meally argues that Douglass' *Narrative* was "meant to be preached," (192), while Andrews has shown that Douglass was indeed an experienced preacher in the Zion Methodist Church in New Bedford before he became an antislavery lecturer (Andrews 1982: 592ff). His narrative must therefore also be seen as a product of his years of experience on the lecturing platform.

Douglass' *Narrative* is in many respects different from the rest of the corpus. The description and analysis of devices in individual chapters have illustrated how Douglass achieves a dramatization of the plot and of himself. The narrative is by no means, unlike some of the other texts, a simple and unvaried chronological account of whatever happens next, but it is crafted in such a way as to become rhetorically effective and powerful.

Not all of the linguistic characteristics that were focused upon in the previous narratives have been analyzed as deeply in Douglass, most prominently ellipsis and syntax. In this chapter the discussion of process types has been foreshadowed and the use of nominalization has been occasionally emphasized, not least because the morphological nominalizations described initially are so much more prominent than in most other texts. Only Northup's narrative nearly reaches Douglass' level of nominalization. These two narratives are also the ones with the highest lexical density; here Douglass (0.5459) occupies the second position after Northup (0.5158). Moreover, these two narrators construct the least intricate sentences with only 2.6 clauses. Likewise, Douglass and Northup feature the lowest relative frequency of subordinating conjunctions (12.762 in Douglass, 12.014 in Northup). However, Douglass uses fewer nonfinite constructions. 80.25% of his clauses are finite, while especially the nonfinite clause of the unattached type, which is almost syntactic standard in Northup, is rare. In the end, what results in clear, straightforward and rhetorically powerful language in Douglass, becomes stylistically tedious and sometimes absurdly contrived in Northup, as will be seen in Chapter 5.6.

In Roper's and Grandy's narratives the events stand for themselves in a chronological account without much linguistic variation. Douglass, on the other hand, is more sophisticated in the presentation of his life story. First of all, he breaks up the chronology of the narrative by foreshadowing results. Moreover, he structures the account in such a way that he is able to construct parallels and contrasts. This in turn is accomplished through a degree of variability in linguistic expression that none of the other two narrators examined so far have achieved. The events Douglass presents are frequently summarized and raised to an abstract level. This enables him to assign special significance to them for his life; an event thus acquires meaning which would not be present if the narrator had not constructed it this way. This mechanism has become particularly apparent in his assessment of his first move from the plantation to Baltimore, the fight with Covey, and the narrator's movement from individual to member of a group and back.

5.3.2 Frederick Douglass' use of transitivity

Douglass' text is characterized by the largest share of mental verbs (32.33%), while material (36.85%) and relational processes (20.15%) occur with rather average frequency. As always, however, the distributions vary considerably from chapter to chapter. Table 5.3.4 presents the selection of the individual process types in the three parts identified earlier. Due to the occasionally extremely low rf_I, the individual chapters in the first part (Chapters 1 to 9) have not been considered separately.

The first part serves as an exposition with a description of Douglass' life in bondage from childhood on; the *I*-narrator frequently observes but is not involved. This impression is a result of the comparatively low rf_I of 21.913, a rather small share of material verbs and a larger share of mental ones. Only about 29% of the verbs are material processes, while almost 40% are mental, and therefore restricted to the inside. The majority of them, about 55%, are cognitive verbs, but verbs of visual perception (mostly *see*) are very frequent, too (26%). Part II (Chapter 10) portrays the narrator's plantation days and contains the turning point in his life. The share of material verbs rises to almost 44%, while that of mental verbs drops to 22%, three quarters of which are cognitive verbs. Douglass not only ponders over his situation, he also acts upon it. At the same time the rf_I increases considerably, too, so that the rf_{mat} almost doubles from 6.348 to 11.383. Although it is not alone responsible for this rise, the fight with Covey plays a central role in the narrative and in the construction of the narrator, and will therefore be considered in more detail shortly. Part III is concerned with Douglass' flight to New York and his life in freedom. The share of material verbs remains high at 41%, but as the rf_I increases again, the relative frequency of material verbs takes another rise to 17.081.

Table 5.3.4: Selection of process types in the four parts of Douglass' *Narrative* (in percent, excluding passive voice and direct speech)

chapters	words	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1 to 9	16383	5.57	28.97	39.28	21.45	4.74	21.913
10	12738	5.42	43.67	21.99	21.99	6.93	26.064
11	5269	0.92	41.28	33.94	16.51	7.34	41.374
A	1891	0.00	15.79	63.16	5.26	15.79	10.048
sum	36281	4.31	36.85	32.33	20.15	6.36	25.578

Table 5.3.5: Relative frequencies of process types in the four parts of Douglass' Narrative

chapters	b	mat	men	rel	v
1 to 9	1.221	6.348	8.606	4.700	1.038
10	1.413	11.383	5.731	5.731	1.806
11	0.380	17.081	14.044	6.832	3.037
App	0.000	1.586	6.346	0.529	1.586
sum	1.103	9.426	8.269	5.154	1.626

Douglass presents himself as an effective narrator. His narrative is characterized by the third smallest share of intransitive verbs with 41.52% (Table 4.8, p. 78). Effective clauses as well as ranged middle clauses each contribute about 27% to the total of material clauses.

This means that Douglass' text features the second largest share of effective material clauses. Unlike Grandy's, however, Douglass' effective material processes are more frequently directed at human Goals. Quoted below are a few of the most prominent examples, which appear in the fight with Covey.

5.3.19   . . . I seized Covey hard by the throat; (71)

5.3.20   This gave me assurance, and I held him uneasy, causing the blood to run where I touched him with the ends of my fingers. (71)

5.3.21   But just as he was leaning over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by his collar, and brought him by a sudden snatch to the ground. (72)

Douglass presents himself as Agent in the processes *seize*, *hold*, *touch*, and *bring*, while Covey is the Goal in each case. Although this might seem the natural way of describing a physical confrontation, Douglass himself presents alternatives, as will be seen shortly.

In his *Narrative* Douglass describes several incidents of physical violence. While in the majority of cases he is just a witness of the action, in a few of them Douglass is involved himself. Most central to Douglass personal development are three consecutive and climactically arranged scenes in which he clashes violently with the slave breaker Edward Covey, to whom the urbanized adolescent narrator was hired out in the year 1833. These episodes appear in the first part of Chapter 10 and will be examined in some detail.

The first explicitly mentioned whipping occurs after the young Douglass, who is not used to this kind of work, is ordered to drive a team of oxen to fetch firewood from a nearby forest. He performs his task not quickly enough and also crashes a gate to pieces. Covey is enraged, drives Douglass back to the woods and whips him. The scene of the violent action itself is short (158 words) and represents the starting point in the rising drama of violence between Covey and Douglass.

5.3.22   Just as I got into the woods, he came up and told me to stop my cart, and that he would teach me how to trifle away my time, and break gates. He then went to a large gum-tree, and with his axe cut three large switches, and, after trimming them up neatly with his pocketknife, he ordered me to take off my clothes. I made him no answer, but stood with my clothes on. He repeated his order. I still made him no answer, nor did I move to strip myself. Upon this he rushed at me with the fierceness of a tiger, tore off my clothes, and lashed me till he had worn out his switches, cutting me so savagely as to leave the marks visible for a long time after. This whipping was the first of a number just like it, and for similar offences. (59f)

Of the 25 processes expressed through verbs only five feature Douglass as subject, whereas almost three times as many depend on Covey. Douglass' processes are material, but none of them extends to another participant. Either they are intransitive ("I got into the woods," "I stood"), reflexive ("nor did I move to strip myself"), or grammatically metaphorical and therefore semantically empty ("I made him no answer"). In no case does Douglass appear as Agent. In contrast to that, the overwhelming majority of Covey's processes (ten) are used transitively, six times with Douglass (or his clothes) as Goal of the material action or as Receiver in a verbal process. In almost all processes Douglass appears in the ergative role of the Medium, this means as an Actor in intransitive processes and as Goal in effective ones. He is the participant who realizes the processes but who does not engender extending actions himself. Yet, the first instance of defiance is discernible as he fails to comply with Covey's order to strip himself.

The second of the three incidents is described in a more elaborated manner (65ff). Douglass explains how he suffers a breakdown from sunstroke after hard work in the heat. He presents himself as entirely unable to control even his own actions.

5.3.23   About three o'clock of that day, I broke down; my strength failed me; I was seized with a violent aching of the head, attended with extreme dizziness; I trembled in every limb. Finding what was coming, I nerved myself up, feeling it would never do to stop work. I stood as long as I could stagger to the hopper with grain. When I could stand no longer, I fell, and felt as held down by an immense weight. (66)

Covey appears and orders Douglass twice to get up and to resume work. When he refuses to comply, Covey first kicks his helpless victim and then beats him on the head with a hickory slat. The feeble and bleeding Douglass flees and walks several miles to seek protection from his master Thomas Auld. He is sent back to Covey's place, and a few days later the third and final violent incident occurs. Covey intends to punish Douglass for leaving and tries to tie him up and whip him. It is only now that Douglass resolves to resist physically although he knows that he risks his life.

The sunstroke scene comprises 310 words and 60 verbally expressed processes, finite as well as nonfinite, whereas the final one contains 569 words with 115 processes. Thus both scenes feature roughly 20 processes per 100 words. Additionally, there are a number of nominalized processes. Within both scenes material process verbs dominate; they amount to 50% and 58% of all processes respectively. In both incidents it is Douglass who outweighs Covey in terms of material verbs by 4:3. Yet in the sunstroke scene only two of Douglass' twelve material verbs are used transitively, that is, with the action extending from him to a further central participant. The majority of them are middle as in "I staggered" and "I fell back" or "I crawled away," all of which are located at the behavioural edge of material processes. Of Covey's nine material actions, six are transitive, four of them with Douglass as Recipient as in "He gave me a savage kick" or as Goal as in "he left me." In the final scene the proportions are reversed. Again, two thirds of Covey's material processes are used transitively, whereas of Douglass' material processes now almost 80% are transitive (18 out of 23). This means that while Covey's ratio has not changed at all, Douglass now depicts his own doings as heavily extending to other participants. His material actions are no longer described as confined to the Actor, that is, to Douglass himself. He has resolved to resist, and therefore he presents himself as capable of acting upon other participants, six of which are Covey himself or his helper Hughes as quoted in the examples 5.3.19 to 21 above.

In his presentation of the events Douglass arranges his linguistic choices in such a way that his control over the environment is made to appear to increase gradually over the three scenes. He does this by shifting his participant role progressively from Beneficiary to Medium to Agent. In the beginning, he either does not act at all, as processes are negated, or he is acted upon as Beneficiary or Goal/Medium, or he acts without influencing his environment as Actor/Medium in intransitive constructions. In the first two scenes the role of Agent is reserved for Covey. After the decision to resist, Douglass uses more effective constructions and so is able to present himself increasingly in the Agent-role as external causer of events and therefore as having assumed some measure of power not only over his own actions but also over other participants in the events.

A number of nominalized processes in the final fight in the *Narrative* underline Douglass' determination.

5.3.24 I resolved to fight; and suiting my action to my resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat, and as I did so, I rose. . . . My resistance was so entirely unexpected, that Covey seemed all taken aback. He trembled like a leaf. This gave me reassurance. (71)

The initial mental process *resolve* is soon transformed into the noun *resolution* and so renders the temporary action permanent. The same applies to *resistance*, which does not have a morphologically related antecedent but by association may be related to the verb *fight*. Finally, Douglass is not merely momentarily reassured by Covey's lack of reaction and apparent fear, he presents the mental process as a material transaction of the exchange of goods-&-services-type. In contrast to the depersonalized kick above, possessive determiners and *me* as Recipient of the transaction present Douglass as the quasi-Possessor of three permanent and psychologically related items: *resolution, resistance, reassurance*. As if to drive the point home even more forcefully, the three words are also connected through their alliterative beginnings. Covey, on the other hand, does not act upon Douglass any longer. He is the Goal of a material process, the Carrier of an attribute and the Behaver of a rather physiological than material process ("He trembled"). In ergative terms Covey is the Medium in all three instances, that is, he does not initiate an action or event in any case.

A comparison of the account in the *Narrative* with a different description of the same incident in Douglass' second autobiography *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855) reveals that no version of the fight can claim exclusive validity. The focus in *Bondage* is not so much on autonomous decision and control but on justification and defense.

5.3.25 Whence came the daring spirit necessary to grapple with a man who, eight-and-forty hours before, could, with his slightest word have made me tremble like a leaf in a storm, I do not know; at any rate, *I was resolved to fight*, and, what was better still, I was actually hard at it. The fighting madness had come upon me, and I found my strong fingers firmly attached to the throat of my cowardly tormentor; as heedless of consequences, at the moment, as though we stood as equals before the law. The very color of the man was forgotten. I felt as supple as a cat, and was ready for the snakish creature at every turn. Every blow of his was parried, though I dealt no blows in turn. I was strictly on the *defensive*, preventing him from injuring me, rather than trying to injure him. I flung him on the ground several times, when he meant to have hurled me there. I held him so firmly by the throat, that his blood followed my nails. He held me, and I held him. All was fair thus far, and the contest was about equal. (*Bondage* 187; italics in the original)

A few examples will illustrate that in this realization of the very same event Douglass presents himself as being much less in control than ten years earlier. The mental process *resolve* has given way to the relational process with *resolved* as Attribute, which describes a permanent quality rather than a momentary process. And yet, it is still a step away from a nominalization, which does not depend on a verb and thus on temporal deixis any more. Of the three earlier nominalizations, only *resistance* appears in *Bondage*, but only towards the end of the paragraph that follows on the quote above. The forceful alliterative arrangement in three steps within one compact paragraph is gone.

Instead, we find that Douglass does not present himself as controlling the action, possibly not even himself. He removes himself into a prepositional phrase when the "fighting madness" comes and thus he is merely a circumstantial element instead of a central participant. It needs a mental act ("found") for him to realize that he has his fingers clasped around Covey's throat. The nonfinite nature of the participle *attached* underlines this

Agent-less and rather relational state of affairs, which was originally expressed as an effective material process ("I seized Covey hard by the throat"). In the same vein, there are two passive voice constructions ("was forgotten," "was parried"), three relational processes ("I felt supple," "I was ready," "I was strictly on the *defensive*") and a material process with negation in the nominal group ("I dealt no blows in return."). Douglass presents himself as passive again, at best reacting to the actions of his "cowardly tormentor," "snakish creature," or "assailant." Douglass as controlling Agent is a thing of the past. It appears as if the feeling of reassurance were gone, and, to be sure, this very expression is no longer in the text. The transitive material process "I flung him to the ground" with Douglass as Agent is immediately qualified by a subclause and thus the impression of aggression is, if not avoided, at least ameliorated as it serves as a justification for self-defense.

What appears as Douglass' triumph and taking control over Covey in the *Narrative* is toned down and becomes more "equal" and "fair" in *Bondage*. Douglass uses fewer transitive material process verbs and therefore has fewer opportunities to present himself as active and in control. His violent actions are presented as a necessary means of self-defense. Neither of the contestants is eventually able to make the decisive blow to win the fight; as the coordination "He held me and I held him" illustrates, the situation is presented as a tie. This changes only when Covey calls Hughes (or "Hughs" in *Bondage*) for assistance. And yet, even then Douglass qualifies his own violence.

5.3.26   I was compelled to give blows, as well as to parry them; and, since I was, in any case, to suffer for resistance, I felt (as the musty proverb goes) that "I might as well be hanged for an old sheep as a lamb." I was still *defensive* toward Covey, but *aggressive* toward Hughs; and, at the first approach of the latter, I dealt a blow, in my desperation, which fairly sickened my youthful assailant. He went off, bending over with pain, and manifesting no disposition to come within my reach again. (*Bondage* 187f)

First of all, he uses a modal expression to emphasize obligation ("was compelled"), which also implies the existence of an outside Agent in a passive voice interpretation. The second time Douglass mentions the blow, it is dealt "in my desperation." In both instances the linguistic realization of the beating is not effective because neither a Goal nor a Recipient is specified. The blows participate as Range in the processes *give* and *deal*. But unlike Douglass' kick in the version in the *Narrative* ("While he was in the act of doing so, I watched my chance, and gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs." *Narrative* 71), linguistically they are not directed at any participant. That the blow must have hit Hughes in order to sicken him can easily be inferred, but it is not made explicit. This is only done a few lines later when Douglass elaborates on why he had to kick Hughes, who was about to tie him.

The impression that Douglass de-emphasizes his own physical actions is supported by several factors. As mentioned before, the transitivity structure of the excerpt does not present Douglass so much in control as in the *Narrative*. Moreover, a few lexical items suggest that the narrator aims to qualify his physical violence. Douglass uses *defense/defensive* repeatedly, despite the ongoing fight he describes his answer to a question of Covey as "polite," and his "vigorous and sudden snatch" brings his "assailant harmlessly" to the ground. Additionally, there is, in spite of the dangerous situation, a fine tone of humor in the episode, which is absent from the *Narrative*. He throws Covey into the cow dung and comments that it serves him right as he has selected the place for the fight. When Covey's hiredman Bill refuses to help, Douglass says himself that the "scene here, had something comic about it" (*Bondage* 189). These humorous elements reduce the aggressive character of

the situation and possibly make the narrator appear less angry than in the 1845 version of the fight. On the whole, Douglass still presents himself as determined never to be abused again, but with ten years down the line he apparently feels that he no longer needs to emphasize the acquisition of control and his anger at being humiliated. Instead, he stresses the need for self-defense and is therefore also able to paint a more favorable picture of himself. He appears more moderate, and his activities less obviously directed at hurting his counterparts.

After this analysis of one of the central episodes in Douglass' *Narrative* and the use of material verbs, the large share of mental verbs (32.33%) deserves attention, too. While it does not exceed that of material processes, it is unsurpassed in the corpus. Only 22% of the verbs are of the perceptive kind, which is the second smallest share after Picquet's. More than 59% are cognitive verbs and 18% verbs of affection. It is again in Chapter 10 that the distribution is significantly different. It features only a small share of mental verbs, but as mentioned above, they are overwhelmingly of the cognitive type (76%). The mental mode has switched from the exposition, as a phase of observation, to one of intellectual activity in the chapter that is styled as the turning point in Douglass' life. Unlike some other narrators, who restrict themselves to *thinking* and *knowing*, Douglass uses a variety of verbs for the display of his mental activity. *Believe*, *consider*, *expect*, *find*, *mean*, *suppose*, *resolve* and a number of other verbs illustrate this versatility, which is hardly paralleled in the corpus.

Cognitive processes differ from other mental processes in so far as they can "project a thought into existence as proposition" (Matthiessen 1995: 261). According to Matthiessen, "[c]ognitive and desiderative processing creates ideas . . . but emotions don't" (ibid.). Perceptions, on the other hand, are "construed as a response to a fact" (ibid.). This means that by cognitive processing narrators are able to create an imagined world that does not necessarily correspond to observed reality as is the case in the following two examples.

5.3.27   For a time I thought I should bleed to death; and think now that I should have done so, but that the blood so matted my hair as to stop the wound. (68)

5.3.28   I supposed that they had consulted together, and had decided that, as I was the whole cause of the intention of the others to run away, it was hard to make the innocent suffer with the guilty; and that they had, therefore, concluded to take the others home, and sell me, as a warning to the others that remained. (92f)

Projections of this kind can be found in the entire text and present the narrator's mental activity as contemporary to the narrated time. Mental activities like these have previously been discussed in the context of the narrator's personal development. In these cases the projecting past tense clause represents a proposition in its own right. But there is large number of cognitive verbs in the present tense, which need to be treated differently. In the following excerpt from a co-text that provides general information about slave life Douglass hypothesizes about possible conditions.

5.3.29   From what I know of the effect of these holidays upon the slave, I believe them to be among the most effective means in the hands of the slaveholder in keeping down the spirit of insurrection. Were the slaveholders at once to abandon this practice, I have not the slightest doubt it would lead to an immediate insurrection among the slaves. (74f)

In the two clause complexes Douglass uses three mental processes to display his estimation of the importance of holidays for the slaves (*know*, *believe*, *have doubt*). The characteristic

point is that Douglass explicitly informs the reader that this is his personal reasoning. Instead of offering the thought without projecting mental verbs and thus as seemingly objective fact, he makes them dependent on his intellectual activities. While this may not change the import of the projected propositions (such as 'holidays are one of the most effective means of keeping down slaves'), it does present them as Douglass' own rationale and therefore himself as its creator. His intellectual capacities are on display here. Douglass repeats this pattern throughout the text; almost 30% of his cognitive verbs are in the present simple tense. In the following quotations the presence of an initial projecting clause in the present tense does not add any experiential content to the proposition. Again, it foregrounds the narrator's mental activity, which otherwise would have been left implicit.

5.3.30   I suppose I looked like a man who had escaped a den of wild beasts, and barely escaped them. (68)

5.3.31   We tried to conceal our feelings as much as possible; and I think we succeeded very well. (88)

5.3.32   I suppose he thought I was never better satisfied with my condition than at the very time during which I was planning my escape. (106)

5.3.33   I suppose I felt as one may imagine the unarmed mariner to feel when he is rescued by a friendly man-of-war from the pursuit of a pirate. (107)

The grammatical dependency of the propositions on 'I suppose' and 'I think' suggests a measure of uncertainty, an implicit 'but I'm not sure.' At this point, ideational meaning intersects with interpersonal meaning. Functionally, the projecting clauses are mood adjuncts similar to *perhaps* and *maybe*. They add a modalizing element to the clause that expresses probability and usuality (Halliday 1994: 354ff). Halliday considers this form of expressing modalization as metaphorical, because the proposition is not the projecting clause but the dependent clause (ibid.). The congruent form would indeed be a construction with *probably* as part of the Mood element. Halliday distinguishes subjective and objective expressions of probability, both of which can be realized explicitly and implicitly. *Objective* and *subjective* in this context do not signify more or less valid mappings of forms of expression with reality. They are mere labels for categories which suggest that by choosing one or the other form a speaker tries to be recognized by the reader as subjective or objective. So by using these hypotactic clause complexes Douglass adds an explicit subjective element instead of an explicit objective one such as 'it is likely that' (Halliday 1994: 355). The effect is indeed interpersonal. The narrator foregrounds himself as the assigner of probability. It is his own estimation of the situation or the activity that is presented and from which the proposition depends, not only grammatically. In terms of the narrators' claim to truth this may be a daring move; not coincidentally is it comparatively infrequent in Roper's narrative (*rf* 0.526). It occurs more often in Grandy's text (0.993), but Douglass is the first narrator who uses this device regularly (1.406) and thus extends the interpersonal element that we have often found lacking in the previous two texts. Arguably, this manner of expression also betrays a greater self-confidence of the narrator. Douglass seems to be convinced that the occasional modalization of his statements does not damage his trustworthiness.

Mental processes are not only frequent, they are also often clustered, which is especially apparent in the last two of the examples above: *suppose – think – be satisfied – be planning* in

5.3.32 and *suppose – feel – imagine – feel* in 5.3.33. At times this leads to rather complicated grammatical structures, in the following quote with Covey as the protagonist.

5.3.34   Such was his disposition, and success at deceiving, I do verily believe that he some-
         times deceived himself into the solemn belief, that he was a sincere worshipper of
         the most high God; and this, too, at a time when he may be said to have been guilty
         of compelling his woman slave to commit the sin of adultery. (62)

The repetition of the related but contrasting mental activities *deceive* and *believe* within this co-text of worship and adultery illustrates Douglass' superior rhetorical capabilities. He not only displays his sharp analytical intellect, but he also reveals a measure of sarcasm. Occasionally, his rhetorical power leads to seemingly rather stilted structures, in which the twisted grammatical complexity appears slightly overdone, as in the following example, which has already been discussed in the previous section.

5.3.35   But before narrating any of the peculiar circumstances, I deem it proper to make
         known my intention not to state all the facts connected with the transaction. (100)

And yet, the construction serves a purpose. By 1845 slave narratives had also become adventure stories, of which Douglass was well aware. The hedging, apologetic tone, transmitted by this projection and embedding of the refusal to state the facts, shows that he knows that he as the narrator must disappoint his audience's expectations at this point. The climactic passage from slavery to freedom, the flight itself, is absent from Douglass' *Narrative*. The rhetoricalness of this introduction to Chapter 11 is an attempt to soften this disappointment; it almost iconically postpones what eventually needs to be said. In pragmatic terms, there is a clash between positive and negative face wants. On the one hand, there is the narrator's desire to appeal to his reading audience, which is positive face; on the other hand, there is the need to show solidarity with those slaves whose safety depends on the secrecy of their escape route. This dissociation from the expectations of the readers, who have paid money for another exciting tale of flight, is negative face. There is no easy way out of this dilemma; Douglass has to perform a face threatening act for himself. By disappointing the audience, he risks his positive face, that is, the need to be accepted. Douglass tries to soften this pragmatic predicament by using as many mitigating devices as possible. First of all, he avoids a straightforward bald on record statement such as 'I'm not going to state the facts.' Of the multiple projecting devices the first one ("I deem it proper") theoretically provides the reader with a possibility to contradict. The nominalized "my intention" provides the hypothetical possibility of reversal; intentions are not necessarily carried out. Nothing is decided yet, it seems. Finally, the word "all" suggests that at least some facts of the flight, and thus of the excitement, will survive this self-censorship. It is only with a bit of untangling the grammatical dependencies that the reader realizes that only the propriety is open to argument, not the intention to omit facts. Somewhat awkwardly the sentence may be paraphrased in the following way: 'I think that it is proper that I tell you that I intend not to state all the facts.' So the actual proposition 'it is proper that etc.' syntactically depends on a mood adjunct, which provides the speaker's attitude towards what is being said. By playing this rhetorical and intellectual trick Douglass achieves several things at the same time. He appears honest before his reading audience; he maintains group solidarity with further fugitives and he also saves his faces although he disappoints his readers' expectations.

One of the most crucial mental acts in the narrative is not presented as thought. When Douglass is standing on the bluffs of the Chesapeake Bay and contemplates his existence as a slave, his "thoughts would compel utterance; and there, with no audience but the Almighty, I would pour out my soul's complaint, in my rude way, with an apostrophe to the moving multitude of ships" (64). What follows on the metaphor is direct speech (and punctuated as such) instead of ideas created by mental activity and restricted to the mind. One excerpt reads thus.

5.3.36   O that I could also go! Could I but swim! If I could fly! O, why was I born a man, of whom to make a brute. (64)

Here, the narrator does not make the mental processes in the form of 'I hoped that' or 'I wished that' or 'I asked myself' explicit. Not only these proposals but also propositions are presented as fact in this episode: "I am left in the hottest hell of unending slavery" (ibid.). Through their presentation as Verbiage of a verbal process Douglass assigns his thoughts more immediacy; in the string of short, simple clauses they appear as discharges of emotion rather than further instances of reasoning and intellectual play.

Relational processes occur with average frequency in Douglass' narrative. Chapter 7 stands out from the rest because here the rf_{rel} reaches 11.769. Relational processes contribute 26.61% in this chapter, which equals the share of material verbs. In this chapter a decisive step in the development of the youthful protagonist in Baltimore is presented. Douglass learns to write, reads Sheridan's book about rhetoric, and presents himself as understanding the moral aspects of slavery for the first time. This cognitive development is illustrated by a large share of mental verbs, but relational processes contribute as well. The relational processes in this chapter characterize Douglass as to what he is and what he has. In the beginning of the chapter he presents the circumstances of his development: "I had no regular teacher" (36). After initially teaching him the alphabet, the Aulds eventually try to prevent his education. But he presents himself as vigorously trying to educate himself. Although he is not active at all, he arouses their suspicion.

5.3.37   From this time I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book, and was at once called to give an account of myself. (38)

He starts bribing white children into teaching him letters whenever he is sent on errands.

5.3.38   I used also to carry bread with me, enough of which was always in the house, and to which I was always welcome; for I was much better off in this regard than many of the poor white children in our neighborhood. (38)

In the course of this he characterizes himself on several occasions.

5.3.39   While in this state of mind I was eager to hear any one speak of slavery. I was a ready listener. (41)

The narrator describes states and qualities such as *perplexed*, *satisfied*, *relieved*, and *successful* that characterize him on his way to greater mental autonomy. In this way the relational processes are used to describe the circumstances in which Douglass is placed in Baltimore. They are favorable to him because he has a chance to learn, but at the same time he presents them as restrictive, too.

Douglass' narrative has the second largest share of passive forms connected with the *I*-pronoun (6.07%); the relative frequency is the fourth highest in the corpus after Bibb, Ro-

per, and Brown (1.657). It is again Chapter 10 that is most revealing. Before the fight Douglass is broken by Covey and expresses his state in the following words.

5.3.40 Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me, and behold a man transformed into a brute! (63)

In this short stretch Douglass masterfully exploits the gray area between true passive voice and intensive relational process. "I was broken in body, soul, and spirit" by itself implies a resultant state rather than the process of being broken. No Agent is present in the clause, and yet this role has been made explicit in the previous sentence by way of coreference between the personal pronouns and lexical repetition of the verb *break*. But Covey is denied more than one explicit occurrence as the Agent of breaking and crushing; what moves increasingly into the center of attention are the physical and psychological results. The same pattern is repeated a few pages further on when Douglass, having suffered a sunstroke, is kicked and beaten. Note also the strongly Christian connotation of *crown*, *thorns*, *blood*, *head* and *feet*.

5.3.41 From the crown of my head to my feet, I was covered with blood. My hair was all clotted with dust and blood; my shirt was stiff with blood. My legs and feet were torn in sundry places with briers and thorns, and were also covered with blood. (68)

The quotation again presents results rather than the activity. The actual fight between Covey and Douglass contains only one instance of passive in the beginning when the narrator is caught by surprise: "I was brought sprawling on the stable floor" (71). The same applies to Covey's surprise when Douglass openly resists: "[m]y resistance was so entirely unexpected, that Covey seemed taken all aback" (71). After that the physical activities of all participants are presented in the active voice, which also reflects the fact that the fight does not have a clear physical winner. But it has a clear psychological winner in Douglass: "[m]y long-crushed spirit rose" (73). It is only afterwards when Douglass extols the effect of the fight from his point of view that the passive voice returns.

5.3.42 From this time I was never again what might be called fairly whipped, though I remained a slave four years afterwards. I had several fights, but was never whipped. (73)

Douglass presents himself as the textual starting point and therefore the theme of these messages. Generally, it may be said that in Douglass' narrative passive forms are rather frequent, but the instances hardly occur in clusters. The effectiveness of the linguistic device is a consequence of its use in strategically important points rather than its clustering.

In contrast to the previous slave narratives, Douglass' text is characterized by a higher variability of expression. The use of process types associated with the first-person singular pronoun illustrates his progression from an observing chronicler, like Roper and Grandy, to a more independent and autonomous individual capable of effective action and cognitive activity. It is not the mere presence of effective and cognitive verbs but the outright display at strategic places (and its absence at others) that makes Douglass the first narrator within the corpus who exhibits a certain degree of self-confidence and independence from his readership. He is also a narrator who is not afraid of establishing a more interpersonal element. He appears confident that the subjective component is counterbalanced by his apparent honesty in other matters such as his leading role in the failed attempt to escape with

other slaves and his will not to be subdued by Covey. He considers his rhetorical moves successful, which may be the reason why he also feels self-assured enough to deprive his paying audience of one of the stock ingredients of a slave narrative.

The variability of Douglass' language also manifests itself in the use of classical rhetorical devices which betray a degree of literary training in the traditional sense. But in addition, Douglass is also able to manipulate personal pronouns, syntax, nominalization and particularly the use of process types according to his situational needs. He creates meaning by assigning significance to a number of events through a sophisticated narrative structure as well as through more locally applied linguistic devices such as abstraction and generalization in combination with relational processes. He presents himself as progressing from ignorance to self-liberation via stages of mental as well as physical resistance as exemplified by education and fights and emphasizes the coexistence of these two aspects in his struggle for freedom through the balance of mental and material activity in his text.

5.4 *Narrative of William Wells Brown, An American Slave*

5.4.1 William Wells Brown's presence in the text

Like Douglass' text, William Wells Brown's narrative was written by the fugitive slave himself. Also like Douglass, Brown revised his own autobiography several times. The edition used here is from 1849. The average rf_I of 28.428 is the fourth highest after Picquet, Roper, and Bibb, but it is significantly lower than these top three narratives, and only slightly above that of Douglass (Table 4.1, p. 59). Although Brown's narrative is not nearly as dynamic in terms of the narrator's presence as that of Douglass, the *I*-pronoun is not evenly distributed, either. The rf_I ranges between 56.891 in the penultimate chapter to 3.322 in the final one, which is not part of the narrative proper. It was appended after the original edition of the narrative had appeared in 1847 and describes how a group of activists including Brown save a fugitive family from being kidnapped back into slavery.[16] Due to this appendix-like status, this final episode should be considered separately. Without it, the narrative features an average rf_I of 32.671. The rf_I increases from beginning to end, while the share of passive voice decreases.

Table 5.4.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Brown's *Narrative*

chapter	number of words	average rf_I in the parts	rf_I including passive voice	share of passive voice (in percent)	rf_I without passive voice
1	1492		9.383	21.43	7.3727
2	1121		23.194	23.08	17.841
3	2060	22.934	22.330	15.22	18.932
4	1058		24.575	11.54	21.739
5	3449		29.574	4.90	28.124
6	805		18.634	0.00	18.634
7	1507		35.833	1.85	35.169
8	794		26.448	0.00	26.448
9	2685	42.795	37.244	7.00	34.637
10	1331		36.814	0.00	36.814
11	3287		56.891	3.74	54.761
12	3311		3.322	0.00	3.3223
all	22900		28.428	5.99	26.725

The plot revolves around Chapter 7, which is the turning point in Brown's life and splits the narrative into two parts. Both parts are distinct as to their respective rf_I. In the first six chapters Brown's owner is Dr. Young, who hires him out to several different masters. This period is characterized by movement, first from Kentucky to Missouri, then to St. Louis. Brown works as a waiter on a Mississippi boat before he is hired out to a soul driver, with whom he travels to New Orleans. These trips, especially on the Mississippi, enable the nar-

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[16] The edition used here was published in 1849 in London. It features a slightly different division between the individual chapters: Chapters 1 and 2 were combined, in Chapter 5 one and a half paragraphs were added, likewise a quotation from Pierpont in Chapter 7. Chapters 10 and 11 were combined as Chapter 10, Chapters 13 and 14 as Chapter 11, which also features with a slightly different ending. Chapter 12 was added.

rator to relate a large number of observations about the nature of slavery. Unlike Douglass, however, Brown never retreats from his text in these episodes; the *rf$_I$* in the first half of the text is 22.934 (including passive voice). Especially Chapters 1 and 6 feature a low relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. In the second part, from Chapter 7 onwards, the average *rf$_I$* almost doubles to 42.795.

The low *rf$_I$* in the first chapter is a result of the fact that, while Brown introduces himself, his family, and the living conditions, he does not focus on himself but on the cruelty of slavery. Brown witnesses brutal whippings of slaves including his mother. In this exposition to slavery the *I*-narrator appears only as the recording instance of the occurrences; but he does not occupy a central position in the activities of his own text. This changes from Chapter 2 onwards. The following four chapters deal with Brown's various employments. While the narrator is always present, he incorporates many anecdotes and incidents in which he is not involved as an acting party. And even when he is acting, or at least affected, he sometimes does not appear in subject position, as in the following example.

5.4.1   Mr. Colburn, for this offence, tied Aaron up in the wood-house, and gave him over fifty lashes on the bare back with a cow-hide, after which, he made me wash him down with rum. (23)

The causative construction "he made me" lets the narrator appear in the oblique case, although he is Actor in the material process *wash*. The Initiator of the process, however, is his master. The next example is not causative in the narrow sense, but it can be related to the same construction when the nominalization *unhappiness* is unpacked as 'to be unhappy.'

5.4.2   While living at the Missouri hotel, a circumstance occurred which caused me great unhappiness. (25)

Again, the narrator does not appear as subject although he can be interpreted as such.

In Chapter 2, the large share of about 26% passive voice constructions is remarkable. While they contribute to the increase of occurrences of the *I*-pronoun by putting the narrator into subject position, they also illustrate Brown's lack of control when he is recaptured after an attempt to escape. Unlike Roper, who describes the punishment from the master's point of view, Brown remains thematic even after his recapture.

5.4.3   As soon as I was convinced that it was them, I knew there was no chance of escape. I took refuge in the top of a tree, and the hounds were soon at its base, and there remained until the hunters came up in a half or three quarters of an hour afterwards. There were two men with the dogs, who, as soon as they came up, ordered me to descend. I came down, was tied, and taken to St. Louis jail. Major Freeland soon made his appearance, and took me out, and ordered me to follow him, which I did. After we returned home, I was tied up in the smoke-house, and was very severely whipped. After the major had flogged me to his satisfaction, he sent out his son Robert, a young man eighteen or twenty years of age, to see that I was well smoked. He made a fire of tobacco stems, which soon set me to coughing and sneezing. This, Robert told me, was the way his father used to do to his slaves in Virginia. After giving me what they conceived to be a decent smoking, I was untied and again set to work. (21f)

This excerpt also illustrates one characteristic syntactic, or more precisely, logical feature of Brown's narrative. In the quote particularly the subordinating conjunctions *after*, *until*, and *as soon as* serve as logical markers between clauses. Temporal sequence as primary ordering principle is clearly established and made explicit. Indeed, the use of subordinating conjunctions in Brown's narrative lies above the average; especially *though*, *since*, *while*, *after*,

and *as soon as* contribute to the high relative frequency of 17.511, which is the third highest in the corpus (Table A.1.5, p. 279). Consequently, simple sentences are very rare in Brown's text. It is more typical of Brown to construct clause complexes. He almost invariably adds some qualification to a matrix clause, which does not lead to longer sentences with more clauses, however. The average sentence consists of 3.49 clauses and has 24.35 words, both of which are average values for the corpus (Table 4.4, p. 66). This means that Brown, whatever he narrates, is likely to expand his observations with some kind of subclause, most frequently with an enhancing clause that adds a temporal or causal circumstance.

Yet, qualifications need not be added in the form of finite clauses only. His text is the one with the highest number of nonfinite constructions. Almost 25% of the clauses are nonfinite. The following excerpt is characteristic of Brown's style and therefore worth being quoted in full. Nonfinite processes, either as participles or as infinitives, are highlighted by italics. Except one, theses clauses are also subjectless. Five instances replace a first-person singular pronouns (underlined).

5.4.4   While <u>*living*</u> with Mr. Lovejoy, I was often sent on errands to the office of the "Missouri Republican," *published* by Mr. Edward Charless. Once, while <u>*returning*</u> to the office with type, I was attacked by several large boys, sons of slave-holders, who pelted me with snow-balls. <u>*Having*</u> the heavy form of type in my hands, I could not make my escape by running; so I laid down the type and gave them battle. They gathered around me, *pelting* me with stones and sticks, until they overpowered me, and would have captured me, if I had not resorted to my heels. Upon my retreat they took possession of the type; and <u>*what to do to regain*</u> it I could not devise. <u>*Knowing*</u> Mr. Lovejoy *to be* a very humane man, I went to the office and laid the case before him. (28, italics and underlining added)

This example represents an extreme case of density of nonfinite constructions, but it illustrates why Brown's narrative lies so markedly above the average of 17.37% of nonfinite clauses in the entire corpus. But while the feature contributes heavily to the elimination of occurrences of the *I*-pronoun, it hardly results in inexplicit logical connections, unlike in some other narratives. The two instances of *while* introducing a nonfinite clause above are indicative of this fact.

Coordination of processes or clauses with subject ellipsis is rather frequent in Brown's narrative. The relative frequency is 2.227, while the average of the corpus is 1.597. This indicates a clear tendency towards an economical use of the *I*-pronoun in cases where this is possible. In 5.4.3 and 5.4.4 above, for instance, there are several cases of ellipsis to be found ("I came down, was tied, and taken to St. Louis jail." "I went to the office and laid the case before him."). However, coordination does not necessarily lead to subject ellipsis; it is impossible when the subjects in the conjoined clauses are not identical. Sometimes the clauses joined by *and* are semantically related, so that the conjunction could easily be replaced with a subordinator, as in the following example.

5.4.5   Toward the latter part of the summer Captain Reynolds left the boat, and I was sent home. (34)

Knowing that Brown is hired out to Reynolds, the reader is able to infer a causal relation between the two processes. But the semantic relation is not always as clear although the clauses are linked by *and*.

5.4.6   I remained on the boat during the season, and it was not an unfrequent occurrence
         to have on board gangs of slaves on their way to the cotton, sugar and rice planta-
         tions of the south. (33)

In these cases the narrator constructs a connection between the two processes, but a
reader would be hard pressed to state explicitly what kind of logico-semantic relation
might be implied. The relative frequency of coordinating conjunctions combined is not
much higher than the average for the corpus, but because of the fact that any element of
equal rank can be coordinated and due to the large number of instances, it is impossible to
filter out only those cases that coordinate clauses or processes. Therefore, the quotes above
have little more than anecdotal value. No conclusive and well-founded statement can be
made about the possible weakness of logical links between processes because of the use of
and instead of a subordinating conjunction. The quotes merely illustrate that Brown uses a
number of different logical and syntactic constructions. The predominance of clause com-
plexes with subordination does not lead to monotony, but proves that Brown, unlike
authors who prefer coordination by *and*, is able to structure his account and to construct
hierarchies between individual processes beyond that of sequence within the text.

   Morphological nominalization is much scarcer than average. After Picquet and Grandy,
Brown's narrative features the lowest rf_{nom} (7.860). And yet, there are nominalizations with
other types of suffixation present, such as zero-suffixation in "my retreat" above or added *-y*
as in "after my recovery" (29); however, these have not been analyzed quantitatively. In
terms of nominalizations collocating with the first-person possessive determiner, Brown's
narrative is average again. 6.67% of the nominalizations investigated collocate with *my* to
make the narrator's involvement in the process explicit. The relative frequency of the collo-
cations is substantially below the average (Tables 4.5 and 4.6 on pp. 68 and 70). Only in four
instances does the possessive determiner indicate a subject role for Brown; incidentally all
of them are mental processes (*observation* twice, *recollection*, *resolution*). It is not typical of
Brown to cluster nominalizations in the same way as Douglass does occasionally. The in-
stances are usually more evenly distributed in the text. However, at times, several instances
of nominalization occur side by side and Brown assumes a rather formal tone.

5.4.7   During a residence of eight years in this city, numerous cases of extreme cruelty
         came under my own observation; – to record them all would occupy more space
         than could possibly be allowed in this little volume. (26f)

5.4.8   But whenever such thoughts would come into my mind, my resolution would soon
         be shaken by the remembrance that my dear mother was a slave in St. Louis, and I
         could not bear the idea of leaving her in that condition. (30)

Both of the examples deal with abstraction and generalization. In 5.4.7 Brown has just
finished his narration of particular and concrete instances of cruelty and uses the sentence
to sum up this episode. In 5.4.8 the conjunction *whenever* suggests general validity of the
statement. Apparently, the scarcity of nominalization does not at all indicate a lack of ab-
straction and generalization. Statements like the following one with clear general meaning
are rare, but they do occur.

5.4.9   None but one placed in such a situation can for a moment imagine the intense agony
         to which these reflections subjected me. (93)

And yet, the quantitative contrast with Douglass is stunning – more than 18 instances in
1000 words versus slightly fewer than eight. But this is partly, though certainly not exclu-

sively, due to the fact that Brown does not exploit the possibilities of nominalization in order to position himself or his activities. While Douglass purposefully uses nominalization as a rhetorical device that can be clustered or absent, Brown's text does not display this dynamic use. Except for the end of Chapter 11, nominalizations are relatively evenly scattered over the narrative; they only become slightly fewer in the second half of the text.[17]

One example from the first part is worth being quoted in full because here Brown combines all the devices discussed so far in one long clause complex. In this stretch of 89 words nominalization, nonfinite clauses, and coordination with subject ellipsis appear together, so that the nominative first-person singular pronoun occurs only twice explicitly.

5.4.10   My employment on board was to wait on gentlemen, and the captain being a good man, the situation was a pleasant one to me; -- but in passing from place to place, and seeing new faces every day, and knowing that they could go where they pleased, I soon became unhappy, and several times thought of leaving the boat at some landing-place, and trying to make my escape to Canada, which I had heard much about as a place where the slave might live, be free, and be protected. (30)

Most economical here is the combined use of subjectless nonfinite clauses and coordination. The matrix clause "I soon became unhappy" is superordinate to a series of three coordinated nonfinite clauses ("passing," "seeing," "knowing") and is coordinated itself with a further elliptical finite clause ("and several times thought of"). As indicated above, the coordination with *and* does not make explicit that the thought of leaving is a result of the narrator's unhappiness. The projected thoughts are nonfinite as well as coordinated ("leaving" and "trying"). While these seven processes (*pass, see, know, become, think, leave, make*) depend on one singular instance of the *I*-pronoun, which is thus Actor, Senser, and Carrier at the same time, its second occurrence is stowed away in a relative clause and only Senser in one mental process. In addition to these eight actual or projected processes, the narrator is involved in more: he is employed, he waits on gentlemen, and he is initially pleased with his situation. Unpacking these combined instances of linguistic condensation would result in a much higher frequency of the first-person singular pronoun in a large number of finite clauses. In addition to presenting logical hierarchies and creating greater informational density, the effect is first and foremost a psychological one that is characteristic of the first part of the narrative. While the narrator is present throughout the text, he does not dominate the narrative through the overwhelming presence of the *I*-pronoun. The narrator exercises syntactic and thus narrative control, but as the use of ellipsis, coordination, and occasionally nominalization shows, to a much smaller degree and less obvious than in the second part. The *I*-narrator oftentimes occurs only as an implied subject. It is likely that this contrast is not coincidental.

The break in the narrative occurs between Chapters 6 and 7, which is illustrated linguistically by the fact that the rf_I almost doubles from 18.643 to 35.833. Here the turning point of the narrative is located. Brown's employment with the soul driver Walker is terminated at the end of Chapter 6. This episode is presented as the nadir in the narrator's life. Brown is in New Orleans, the southernmost station in his journeys. All the experience gleaned

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[17] There is also an interesting editorial aspect to be considered. The edition used here is an English edition from 1852, which features slight alterations. One of these concerns the ending of Chapter 11, which in the edition of 1847 is also the ending of the narrative. In the 1852-edition the final sentence is replaced with a number of sentences in which Brown extols his achievements as an activist in the temperance movement (108). This has effects on the relative frequency of nominalization as these last words contain nine instance alone and so contribute in a disproportionate way. Without this amendment the rf_{nom} would be even lower.

from his travels with Walker – the separation of families, the killings of slaves, kidnappings, the abuse of children and women – substantiate his judgment that his time with Walker was the longest year in his life (61). The chapter is short and the narrator is predominantly concerned with exposing the cruel and unjust character of slavery rather than his own doings. Nevertheless, he intersperses his observations with occurrences of the *I*-pronoun. In this way his account of a slave killing, which corresponds with a case mentioned in Weld's abolitionist book *Slavery As It Is,* is not merely hearsay but the testimony of an eye-witness: "While at New Orleans I saw a slave killed" (58). A number of perceptive verbs illustrate his role as first-hand observer. He describes the murder and his curiosity as to what would happen to the body.

5.4.11   Early in the morning I went on shore to see if the dead body remained there. I found it in the same position that it was left the night before. I watched to see what they would do with it. (60)

Brown witnesses that the body is eventually removed by the trash collector. His role as a first-person chronicler of the evils of slavery is enhanced by processes of perception. This manner of presentation lends additional credibility to his denunciations of slavery. After these events and Brown's subsequent return to St. Louis, his time with the slave trader is finished.

Upon his return Brown learns that his sister is sold and that his master, to whom Brown is related, tries to sell him, too, due to financial problems. In this desperate situation Brown eventually resolves to escape from slavery. Brown's decision to escape marks the turning point of the narrative, but it is not nearly as dramatized as it is in Douglass.

5.4.12   After giving her some advice, and taking from my finger a ring and placing it upon hers, I bade her farewell forever, and returned to my mother, and then and there made up my mind to leave for Canada as soon as possible. (65)

The decision and likely emotional anguish are not introduced openly and do not form a climax to a well-documented personal mental development as is the case in Douglass. In contrast to him, Brown does not disrupt the chronological account, but presents his decision as apparently embedded in a series of events, between which no logical connection beyond that of temporal sequence is made explicit. That it is the narrator's grief over the gradual loss of his relatives that provokes the decision at this point can only be inferred from the co-text. The predominant connector, as the example above illustrates, is *and,* which is occasionally supported by temporal subordination. Brown does not foreground the decision in any way, neither through variation in the logical structure, nor in the experiential setup; the linguistic realization at that stage of the text does not vary from its co-text.

And yet, from now on the rf_I increases drastically; in all chapters except Chapter 8 the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun exceeds 35 (Table 5.4.1 above). The lower rf_I in Chapter 8 is a result of a high relative frequency of the first-person plural pronoun (23.929) as Brown tries to escape with his mother. While the second half of the narrative includes fewer observations and anecdotes about the general nature of slavery, these are not absent, as remarks about the slave trade, religion, and slave marriages prove. Their scarcity does not account for the rising rf_I alone, however. Brown clearly establishes himself as the central focus of his text. The following example illustrates Brown's new generosity in the use of the *I*-pronoun in contrast to previous episodes where he was at times extremely

economical. After his attempt to escape with his mother fails and they are recaptured, his master takes him to the task for it.

5.4.13   He had me brought into the room where he was, and as I entered, he asked me where I had been? I told him I had acted according to his orders. He had told me to look for a master, and I had been to look for one. He answered that he did not tell me to go to Canada to look for a master. I told him that as I had served him faithfully, and had been the means of putting a number of hundreds of dollars into his pocket, I thought I had a right to my liberty. (75)

In contrast to any of the long quotes above, this excerpt features nine instances of the *I*-pronoun within only 100 words. Brown refrains from using nonfinite and subjectless clauses as well as the nominalizations used before, although hypothetical alternative wordings are easily found: 'My answer was that my faithful service had been the means . . . .' But in fact the low rf_{nom} decreases from 9.414 in the first part even further to 6.352 in the second part.[18]

The high frequency of the *I*-pronoun also has a psychological effect. The excerpt shows that Brown does not present himself as subservient to his master. Although it is not particularly foregrounded, the reply illustrates Brown's growing self-confidence, for which the high number of occurrences of the *I*-pronoun is symptomatic. Although, after the failed escape, he cannot prevent his own sale to new masters and that of his mother to New Orleans, he is eventually able to influence the further course of events to some extent. He does not exactly discourage his new owner's wife from buying a female slave she thinks Brown would like to marry, while he himself uses this as a stratagem to strengthen the family's trust in him. The plan succeeds so that it is considered safe for him to accompany his master's family on a trip to the free states. Brown is now in charge of his life.

5.4.14   But the more I thought of the trap laid by Mrs. Price to make me satisfied with my new home, by getting me a wife, the more I determined never to marry any woman on earth until I should get my liberty. But this secret I was compelled to keep to myself, which placed me in a very critical position. I must keep upon good terms with Mrs. Price and Eliza. I therefore promised Mrs. Price that I would marry Eliza; but said that I was not then ready. And I had to keep upon good terms with Eliza, for fear that Mrs. Price would find out that I did not intend to get married. (87)

In this triangle of relations Brown presents himself as the one who controls the action. In contrast to the large number of subject positions for Brown, his mistress Mrs. Price, who thinks she controls the situation, occurs only as a by-Agent and as subject in one projected clause. His scheme is successful and he is taken to New York, where, once again embedded in the flow of events, Brown decides to leave slavery behind for good.

5.4.15   I had looked forward to New Year's day as the commencement of a new era in the history of my life. I had decided upon leaving the peculiar institution that day. (92)

Brown is the definite assigner of significance here. Instead of presenting a simple relational process ('New Year's day was to be the commencement'), he makes the relation grammatically dependent on a cognitive process that is controlled by the *I*-pronoun.

The high rf_I in Chapters 9 and 10 is even topped by that of the flight-chapter. Brown travels on his own and is therefore the only character who acts. Only the middle part features the Quaker Wells Brown and his wife, who aid Brown on his trip North, and a woman who provides him with food. Moreover, the narrator ceases to make general obser-

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[18] If the 1847-edition is taken as a basis, the rf_{nom} sinks to 5.414.

vations. No one other than Brown is in charge and in the focus of the narrative now. While the relative frequency of nominalizations is comparatively low, and the flight-chapter contains many finite clauses, Brown's penchant for hypotactic structures is not at all lost. They come as finite, nonfinite, and verbless constructions and with a variety of conjunctions in order to express different logical relationships between activities, predominantly temporal ones. Sentences such as the following ones are characteristic of the chapter.

5.4.16   He took me to his house, but it was some time before I could be induced to enter it; not until the old lady came out, did I venture into the house. I thought I saw something in the old lady's cap that told me I was not only safe, but welcome, in her house. (100)

The first complex up to the semicolon features coordination with *but*, subordination with *before* and a passive causative clause complex ('induced me to enter'). After the semicolon follows another instance of temporal subordination (*not until*). The second complex after the full stop consists of four clauses, three of which illustrate the potentially endless recursiveness of projections after mental and verbal processes. Note the frequency of finite clauses here. The majority of conjunctions introduce finite clauses, yet especially *after* (in addition to its prepositional use) and *while* are used for nonfinite and verbless clauses. Temporal *while* in about one third of all instances introduces a verbless clause ("while on Lake Erie" [107]); almost 40% of the eighty occurrences of *after* in the text introduce a nonfinite and subjectless clause. Brown does not dispense with one of his most productive devices even in the flight-chapter, however, often at the cost of constructing unattached clauses.

5.4.17   Before leaving this good Quaker friend, he inquired what my name was besides William. (103)

5.4.18   After giving me some little change, I again started for Canada. (104)

In 5.4.17 the "good Quaker friend" as object and "he" as subject in the matrix clause are coreferential. Therefore, in the absence of a third human participant, the implied subject is the narrator himself. The attachment rule has been superceded by psychological proximity. 5.4.18 is structurally equivalent, as the object of the subclause and the subject of the matrix clause are coreferential; here it is the Quaker who is the implied subject. The mechanism for recovering the subject has a psychological, but also a structural aspect. The preceding clause ends "I left the house of my first white friend, Wells Brown" (104). From a psychological point of view, the name of the narrator's benefactor was the last character mentioned and is thus likely the first character to be recalled so that the sentence, within its co-text is by no means nonsensical. From a textual point of view, the non-compliance with the attachment rule provides a cohesive device, albeit an unorthodox one, which is probably best interpreted as an instance of ellipsis. By way of their association with formal, written language, such nonfinite constructions help to position the *I*-narrator. He presents himself as capable of producing expressions that connect processes in ways that go beyond the typical finite S-V-O or S-V-C sequence. The intellectual effort that is required to reconfigure process-participant relationships and relations between them is thus made visible.

In contrast to Chapter 11, the final chapter features an extremely low rf_I, one of the lowest in the entire corpus. After his escape, in Chapter 12 Brown describes an attempt of slave catchers to kidnap a fugitive slave family. Although Brown himself is involved in the violent fight for their freedom, his personal fate is no longer presented as being of major

concern. Instead, Brown presents himself as part of the rescue team and thus frequently uses the first-person plural pronoun. The final chapter features more than one third of all instances of *we* in the narrative; the *rf* of 16.611 is surpassed only in Chapter 8. The lonesome first-person traveler is thus eventually transformed into a part of a community for a good cause. This presentation of himself as an active member of reform movements adds a further element in the positive self-characterization. It is crucial not least because it provides a counterbalance to the egotistical trickster Sandfort, the former slave self of the now reformed and free William Wells Brown (cf. the discussion of Sandfort below).

Brown's narrative is characterized by temporal sequence as the main ordering principle, which is supported by the observation that subordinating conjunctions with temporal meaning are comparatively frequent. Unlike Douglass, Brown does not deviate from the chronological order of relating the events. In contrast to Grandy's or Roper's texts, whose experiences are ordered in the same straight way, Brown's syntax is more versatile and elaborate through his use of nonfinite and verbless constructions. However, the variations he uses are not as dynamic as Douglass', who is able to vary language so as to reflect or create an image of his state of mind in a particular situation or to make it suit his purposes more powerfully. It is only once that Brown tries to do exactly that, too. In a very short sequence of three simple sentences in the middle of Chapter 9 Brown uses extreme parataxis to illustrate his agony at the sale of his mother.

5.4.19   As I left her, she gave one shriek, saying, "God be with you!" It was the last time that I saw her, and the last word I heard her utter.

I walked on shore. The bell was tolling. The boat was about to start. I stood with a heavy heart, waiting to see her leave the wharf. (79)

While this uncohesive sequence of simple sentences may be intended to serve as an illustration for the narrator's state of mind, it appears out of place, because, up to that point, the narrative has featured an invariably regular rhythm of complex syntax, from which no description of cruelty is exempt. Not even a description of a whipping of his mother, which brings the narrator to tears, is able to induce him to modify the syntactic pattern (15f). The lacking variation elsewhere makes this example appear stilted rather than effectively foregrounded to suit a purpose. The pathos of the co-text supports this impression. The episode continues in the following way.

5.4.20   As I thought of my mother, I could but feel that I had lost

"----- the glory of my life,

My blessing and my pride!

I half forgot the name of slave,

When she was by my side."

The love of liberty that had been burning in my bosom had well-nigh gone out. I felt as though I was ready to die. The boat moved gently from the wharf, and while she glided down the river, I realized that my mother was indeed

"Gone -- gone -- sold and gone,

To the rice swamp, dank and lone!" (79)

Traditional rhetorical devices such as rhyme, alliteration, and parallelism combine for additional contrast with the surrounding text. Yet their extreme clustering in the disparate

modes of prose and poetry appears artificial because it is not embedded or prepared by the preceding text as a sort of climactic finale in a development.

Brown appears as the central and focal character of his narrative. He provides fewer abstractions from his slave experience than Douglass, which is indicated by the low relative frequency of nominalizations. What Brown has in common with Roper and Douglass is the increasing relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun towards the end, or, to be precise, towards freedom. Like Douglass, Brown provides a number of observations about slavery, which he invariably embeds into his own experience. Brown, however, never retreats from his text. Even chapters with a comparatively low presence are essentially focused on the narrator, or the events related are focused through the narrator. He always presents himself as witness to the incidents he relates, which (i) leads to a high presence of the *I*-narrator and (ii) lends additional credibility to his statements about slavery because, on the whole, it is Brown's aim to appear not only as a reliable chronicler of his slave life but also as a reformed, reliable, and trustworthy ex-slave.

5.4.2 William Wells Brown's use of transitivity

In Brown's narrative the selection of process types is closest to the average of the corpus. The share of material verbs lies slightly below the average (33.17%) whereas relational verbs are a little more frequent (22.88%; cf. Table 4.14, p. 86). Again, material verbs represent the most frequent process type, followed by mental (29.74%) and relational verbs. Verbal and behavioural processes feature 8.82% and 5.39% respectively. On the whole, the proportions of material and mental verbs decrease from the first to the second half of the narrative. Material verbs from 35.61% to 32.32%, mental verbs from 31.71% to 28.54%. However, as the rf_I almost doubles, the relative frequencies increase correspondingly.

Table 5.4.2: Selection of process types in Brown's *Narrative* (in percent)

chapter	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1	9.09	27.27	45.45	18.18	0.00	7.373
2	0.00	35.00	40.00	20.00	5.00	17.841
3	2.56	43.59	23.08	25.64	5.13	18.932
4	8.70	8.70	43.48	30.43	8.70	21.739
5	6.19	40.21	28.87	15.46	9.28	28.124
6	20.00	33.33	33.33	13.33	0.00	18.634
7	9.43	50.94	22.64	13.21	3.77	35.169
8	0.00	33.33	38.10	19.05	9.52	26.448
9	4.30	22.58	32.26	29.03	11.83	34.637
10	6.12	32.65	24.49	20.41	16.33	36.814
11	4.44	31.67	28.33	26.11	9.44	54.761
12	0.00	18.18	36.36	45.45	0.00	3.322
sum	5.39	33.17	29.74	22.88	8.82	26.725

In Chapters 3, 5, and 7 the material component is particularly high; in terms of relative frequency Chapters 7 and 11 deserve particular attention as in both of them the rf_{mat} exceeds 17. In Chapter 7 the narrator is to be torn apart from his closest relatives, his sister

and his mother. The high relative frequency of material processes does not so much reflect the fact that the final part of the chapter describes the beginning of the flight with his mother, but is mainly a consequence of one scene in which he visits his sister in the city jail. Verbs of locomotion such as *set out*, *go*, and *enter* are responsible for the high frequency.

In Chapter 11 the high rf_I results in an extremely high relative frequency of all major process types. Material verbs are particularly frequent and illustrate the fact that Brown travels on his own for the largest part of the chapter. In the entire narrative ranged and effective material processes contribute about 25% each; in this chapter, however, effective processes make up only 19%. The majority of processes are ranged or intransitive such as *reach*, *travel*, *arrive*, *walk*, *go* and a number of similar ones. In this chapter Brown is a protagonist whose material actions hardly affect other participants; human Goals are affected only twice. Although the flight is presented as a succession of material activities, the material side of the chapter is by no means foregrounded since mental and relational verbs occur with high frequency, too. The effect is a balance between the material action of running away, the mental actions associated with it, particularly *fearing*, and descriptions of the states the narrator experiences on his flight. This is illustrated in the following quote.

5.4.21   After giving me some little change, I again started for Canada. In four days I reached a public house, and went in to warm myself. I there learned that some fugitive slaves had just passed through the place. The men in the bar-room were talking about it, and I thought that it must have been myself they referred to, and I was therefore afraid to start, fearing they would seize me; but I finally mustered courage enough, and took my leave. As soon as I was out of sight, I went into the woods, and remained there until night, when I again regained the road, and travelled on until next day. (104)

Brown combines material (*start for*, *reach*, *go*, *regain*), mental (*learn, fear, think*) and relational processes (*be afraid*, *be out of sight*) in this short stretch. The fact that the *I*-narrator features most prominently as subject is not surprising; and yet, he neither presents himself as the sole focus, for instance through verbs of perception ('I heard that the men in the bar-room were talking'), nor does he foreground any sort of activity or relation by clustering it. This presentation of the flight, together with the fact that the syntactic rhythm remains relatively unvaried, makes the event appear rather uniform, occasionally even flat. The adventurous and emotional part of the narrative is not the successful flight but the narrator's journey to new Orleans and the subsequent disruption of his family in Chapter 6. The flight itself is devoid of dynamics, of episodes where quick material action and mental reflection, for instance, are contrasted to produce tension and relaxation. The only variation in the flight-chapter is provided by a stretch of direct speech between the narrator's godfather Wells Brown and himself, which presents one central aspect in a slave's life, the process of naming. It is this episode which is also responsible for the high number of verbal processes in this chapter. On the other hand, through this balance of process types Brown presents himself as a narrator who does not keep the mental stratum of his life shut up as some earlier narrators did. Notwithstanding some pathos, the fear and desperation that are part of his life, including the flight, are not exempt from being presented to the readership. That this is not self-evident was illustrated in the narratives by Grandy and Roper.

Effective clauses with human Goals are rare. This applies even to the third chapter, when the narrator is attacked by a gang of white boys (cf. ex. 5.4.4). Only few human Goals are to be found despite a large portion of material verbs. Initially, Brown resists his oppo-

nents but then is overwhelmed by their number. Note that the episode is not assigned special significance as is Douglass' fight with Covey. All that Brown says is the following.

5.4.22   Having the heavy form of type in my hands, I could not make my escape by running; so I laid down the type and gave them battle. (28)

Brown presents the confrontation in only a few words. His counterparts are never presented as Goals of his actions ('I hit them with snowballs'). Instead, of the three material processes, two are grammatically metaphorical constructions with a Range: process (*make escape*, *give battle*). The fight has consequences, which is indicated by the only effective material process in the episode with a human Goal. Elijah Lovejoy, to whom Brown is hired out at the time, informs him, "that Samuel McKinney had told him he would whip me, because I had hurt his boy" (28f). The effective process *hurt* is presented as projected by a verbal process and therefore represents the Sayer's estimation of what Brown has described as *giving battle*. Soon afterwards, Brown is indeed beaten so violently by McKinney that due to his injuries he loses his job at the printing office. In contrast to Douglass, Brown relates these incidents as anecdotes but does not allocate special weight to them beyond what is being described. What Douglass develops into observations about his master's character and the legal system that denies redress to black people, just stands on its own in Brown: "During this time it was necessary to have some one to supply my place at the office and I lost the situation" (29). No more is said about the consequences. Without the aim of using such a particular incident as point of departure for generalizations and abstractions, it seems, it is not necessary for Brown to present himself as an effective narrator who is able to act upon other human beings, or upon other entities in general, as the high portion of intransitive verbs suggests.

This does not mean that Brown as a narrator lacks the self-assuredness that characterizes Douglass. But it is presented in a different way and does not manifest itself in rhetorically sophisticated clusters of, for instance, mental verbs. In Chapter 5 the narrator plays a trick on another slave in order to dodge a whipping meant for himself. He vividly describes the incident, including his dialogues with the various participants, in direct speech. The scene is one of giving and receiving, as the predominance of verbs that signify processes of material exchange illustrates (*give*, *hand*, *take*). Yet at the same time, there exists a subtext about lying and deceiving, which is not so well documented on the surface. Brown, here still the unreformed trickster Sandfort, receives a note by his master to have him whipped, but as he finds out his master's intention, he hands the note and the dollar meant as payment for the jailer to another black man. The unsuspecting victim is told he is hired to fetch a trunk and receives the whipping in Brown's stead. When the punishment is completed, the jailer writes a note to the master, which Brown buys from his victim. What is foregrounded in this episode through the use of material processes with a Goal is the exchange of the note and the money. The rest of the material verbs describes intransitive locomotive processes.

In the episode the narrator presents himself as not in control. In order to avoid the whipping, Brown does not explicitly develop a plan.

5.4.23   While I was meditating on the subject, I saw a colored man about my size walk up, and the thought struck me in a moment to send him with my note. (53)

While Brown is drawn into mental activity, the thought comes over him. The mental process, in which Brown would act as the Senser, is expressed metaphorically as a material one,

in which Brown appears as a Goal while the thought is the Actor. The narrator is merely the Medium in this clause whereas the thought appears as the Agent. So in an episode in which the narrator is not loath to present himself as the central character (rf_I of 44.408), Agency is transferred at this important point to an abstract entity, presumably beyond control. During the entire presentation of the incident Brown does not describe himself as responsible or even repentant; instead he mocks his victim as "my friend" and "my customer." Finally, he also deceives his master: "Before I went in where Mr. Walker was, I wet my cheeks a little, as though I had been crying (56)." Note the presence of material processes; the actual meaning, the deception is not made explicit ('I pretended'). Brown presents himself here as a true picaro, who can play tricks on unsuspecting victims and get away with it because the humorous description supercedes the morally questionable behavior.

And yet, in the final paragraph of the episode the retrospecting narrator William Wells Brown dissociates himself from the deeds of his former self Sandfort. Mental verbs such as *lie*, *reproach*, *practise deception*, *regret*, *desire to make amends*, *suffer* – previously absent – are clustered in these few lines. However, while Brown as the narrator who now knows right from wrong regrets the deed and calls the man "poor fellow," in the final analysis he also presents himself as victim, even if only by inference.

5.4.24   This incident shows how it is that slavery makes its victims lying and mean; for which vices it afterwards reproaches them, and uses them as arguments to prove that they deserve no better fate. Had I entertained the same views of right and wrong which I now do, I am sure I should never have practised the deception upon that poor fellow which I did. I know of no act committed by me while in slavery which I have regretted more than that; and I heartily desire that it may be at some time or other in my power to make him amends for his vicarious sufferings in my behalf. (57)

Brown draws a clear dividing line between Sandfort then and Williams Wells Brown now. Note the explicit subjective mood adjunct ("I am sure") as projecting clause in the matrix clause of the conditional complex.

The need to justify such an act lends itself for comparison with Douglass' narrative. While Douglass has to justify an omission, Brown feels forced to justify an act of deception that he does not want to omit for the sake of entertainment. As he is aware that his deed will be considered morally degraded and thus can be turned against him, he uses his rhetorical power to point out that the mischievous slave Sandfort and the free William Wells Brown are not the same person (Andrews 1986: xx). This is also reflected linguistically. Apart from the fact that he uses present tense, slightly more complex syntax and a number of abstract terms, all of which contrast with the language used before in the description of the incident, we also find a shift from the material mode of exchange to a mental mode of reflection. In contrast to the distribution of verbs in the previous anecdote, there are only cognitive and emotive verbs to be found in his final apology. At this particular point the narrator William Wells Brown – now reformed – uses them in order to display his capability of rising above the level of purely entertaining his audience.

The two linguistically distinct episodes implicitly reveal William Wells Brown's estimation of his readers. On the one hand, he sees them as appreciating adventure and entertainment, otherwise he may have omitted the episode that depicts him as a morally flawed deceiver of a fellow slave. Yet, at the same time Brown associates his audience with clear moral concepts, too, which is why he felt it necessary to apologize for his act. The fact that

justification and dissociation are considered necessary says at least as much about Brown's value system as it does about that of the audience, which is implicitly characterized as requiring such a move. To put it in a cynical way, it is a marketing move on Brown's side, but it is a matter of hypocrisy on the audience's side to find such an episode morally perverted but possibly entertaining. Whether the narrator's apology in the end is sincere does not matter at all; what matters for the discursive Brown is the fact that by delivering the dissociation from former behavior, which is expressed rhetorically skillful and logically plausible, he appears to associate his narrating self with moral and ideological concepts of the dominant society. His former rebel-self has become adapted to certain values and middle-class standards, a move which is made particularly explicit is his later association with a number of reform movements.

As is the case in all other narratives, cognitive verbs contribute the largest share to the total of mental verbs (53.04%) but still below the average (Table 4.10, p. 81). And yet, Brown's text features the highest relative frequency of the verbs *believe*, *think*, and *know* with the exception of Picquet's (2.183, Picquet's *rf* of 7.170 is exceptional). Verbs of perception, too, occur with slightly less than average frequency (28.73%), and they are restricted to *feel*, *hear* and especially *see*. The share of affective verbs, on the other hand, is remarkably high (18.23%).

The rf_{men} is highest in Chapter 11 (15.516), and also, the share is not reduced for the benefit of material verbs as in many other narrative's description of the final flight. On Brown's journey towards the North his mental activities, along with the material ones, are quantitatively foregrounded. The narrator finds out things, he knows, and he thinks.

5.4.25   As soon as I saw it [the North Star], I knew my course, and before daylight I travelled twenty or twenty-five miles. (95)

5.4.26   I travelled on at night until I became so chilled and benumbed – the wind blowing into my face – that I found it impossible to go any further, and accordingly took shelter in a barn, where I was obliged to walk about to keep from freezing. (98)

But as these examples and the following one illustrate, the major process types appear indeed frequently well-balanced side by side.

5.4.27   In this situation I travelled two days, when I found that I must seek shelter somewhere, or die. (98)

The journey towards freedom thus becomes an intellectual as well as a physical effort. And yet, among many instances of *know* and *think*, there is a noticeable cluster of the desiderative verb *want* in Chapter 11, when the narrator realizes that he is eventually free.

5.4.28   I am satisfied that none but a slave could place such an appreciation upon liberty as I did at that time. I wanted to see mother and sister, that I might tell them "I was free!" I wanted to see my fellow-slaves in St. Louis, and let them know that the chains were no longer upon my limbs. I wanted to see Captain Price, and let him learn from my own lips that I was no more a chattel, but a man! I was anxious, too, thus to inform Mrs. Price that she must get another coachman. And I wanted to see Eliza more than I did either Mr. or Mrs. Price! (101f)

In this quote the combination of mental and relational processes also illustrates Brown's penchant for expressing mental states as Attributes (*anxious*, *satisfied*) to make them appear less temporary.

Relational verbs are slightly more frequent than in the average narrative. The majority of them are realized by forms of *to be*; *I was* alone constitutes about 42% of them. The only other verbs worth mentioning are *feel*, *remain*, and *have*, although the latter, signifying possessive processes, is comparatively rare (*rf* 0.699). Remarkable in the use of relational processes is the fact that Brown's narrative is the one with the second largest share of near-passive constructions in the corpus. Its share of the total of relational processes amounts to 15%, which corresponds to a relative frequency of 0.961 (Table A.1.9, p. 281). They occur with particular density in Chapter 9, in which Brown is sold twice after the failed escape with his mother (74ff). But the majority of the relational processes are not attributive, but circumstantial. After his recapture Brown is jailed and afterwards has to justify himself before his master for running away. "I had been in jail," "I had been to look for [a master]," "I remained on board" and similar expressions are much more prevalent than attributive ones such as "I had been accustomed" or "I was glad." Towards the end of the chapter, attributive processes regain the upper hand again when his new mistress, Mrs. Price, tries to bind him to the family by buying a female slave as his wife.

5.4.29   I gave but little encouragement to this proposition, as I was determined to make another trial to get my liberty, and I knew that if I should have a wife, I should not be willing to leave her behind; and if I should attempt to bring her with me, the chances would be difficult for success. However, Eliza was purchased, and brought into the family. (86)

Brown describes his state of mind as "determined" and "willing," but as was illustrated in many examples above, here, too, the major process types are all present. Dense clusters do not occur.

Brown's narrative is the one with the third highest relative frequency of passive forms (1.703). His use of the passive voice is remarkable insofar as it almost exclusively occurs in the first four chapters of his narrative cf. examples 5.4.3 and 5.4.4 above). It is not absent from the remainder of the text, but in the beginning the share of passive forms amounts to between 11% and 23%. As the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is relatively low in these chapters, however, the impact on the rf_p is only slight.

In the course of his narrative Brown's masters change quite a few times. Partly this is reflected by the use of the passive voice. The scenes where the narrator is "hired," "taken," and "placed" to a different situation account for about half of the instances in the first four chapters. While these rather scattered samples certainly illustrate a certain degree of powerlessness against being handed over, there is one instance where passive voice constructions are clustered (cf. example 5.4.3 above). Brown, hired out to the cruel Major Freeland, hides in the woods for a few days. When he is tracked down by bloodhounds and returned to the farm, he is "tied," "whipped," and "smoked" and eventually "again set to work" (21f). Similar to Douglass' descriptions of violent incidents, the actual Agents are recoverable from the co-text, so that the use of passive forms does not render the activities the narrator is subject to anonymous. Here the Agents are Freeland, his son, and other white helpers. Unlike in Douglass, however, these instances of true passive voice present material actions rather than their results. All in all, although comparatively frequent in the text, passive forms are used far less effectively than in the narratives by Douglass or Bibb.

Linguistically, Brown's narrative is characterized by a rather even distribution of many items or structures. The syntax in particular does not vary to a noticeable extent. As a consequence the narrative appears to be lacking dynamism and tension. Episodes of direct

speech are rare. This does not render the narrative uninteresting or tedious. The occasional general observations, often interspersed with cynical comments from the narrator, and the apparent humor make the narrative a much more pleasant read than Grandy's or Roper's. But other than Douglass, Brown is not able to retreat from his text for a long time; he remains the focal character of the narrative throughout the text. He presents himself as a witness and chronicler of slave life and thus provides his few generalizations with additional credibility. His central role in the narrative also enables Brown to present himself as two beings. His slave self, though loyal to his family, is depicted as a morally flawed character. But through an elaborate and linguistically distinct apology for his behavior Williams Wells Brown in retrospect is able to point out that it is slavery which inflicts moral degradation and thus also suggests that mental development has taken place from Sandfort to William. But unlike Douglass, whose development is at times foregrounded linguistically, Brown simply relates a number of events in his life up to his freedom without assigning them with special significance in terms of this personal progress. This is also underlined by the fact that the narrator hardly ever emphasizes any of his doings by contrasting them linguistically with their co-text.

5.5 *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, an American Slave*

5.5.1 Henry Bibb's presence in the text

Henry Bibb's narrative features the third highest relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun of all texts discussed. This applies irrespective of whether the passive voice is included or not, although his text has the largest number of passive forms (7.7% of all finite verbal groups with the first-person singular pronoun). The narrative is also characterized by a strong variation of the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. The chapters with the highest rf_I coincide with Bibb's descriptions of his attempts to escape on his own. Chapter 4, for instance, deals with his first successful flight from Kentucky to Cincinnati and features an rf_I of 49.813. Chapters 14 to 16, in which Bibb escapes from his "Indian" masters to Cincinnati and final freedom, feature the *I*-pronoun between 40 and 58 times per 1000 words. Chapter 11, in which Bibb tries to run away with his family, has a much lower rf_I (32.222), which is complemented, however, by the highest relative frequency of *we* in the narrative (17.037; average in the narrative: 4.586). Chapters with abortive escapes and recaptures (Cs. 5 to 7), on the other hand, are characterized by a much lower rf_I.

Table 5.5.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Bibb's *Narrative*

Ch.	number of words	rf_I including passive voice	share of passive voice (in percent)	rf_I without passive voice
1	1664	40.865	23.53	31.250
2	3039	30.273	7.61	27.970
3	3323	25.880	2.33	25.278
4	2670	49.813	8.27	45.693
5	3781	32.531	14.63	27.770
6	3029	33.674	7.84	31.033
7	2762	28.965	20.00	23.172
8	1865	18.767	2.86	18.231
9	2547	27.876	5.63	26.305
10	1774	15.784	7.14	14.656
11	2700	32.222	8.05	29.630
12	3081	24.992	10.39	22.395
13	2153	25.546	3.64	24.617
14	1807	39.845	2.78	38.738
15	1996	58.116	2.59	56.613
16	2564	50.702	2.31	49.532
17	3317	13.265	9.09	12.059
18	1364	31.525	2.33	30.792
19	1280	25.781	0.00	25.781
20	1471	13.596	5.00	12.916
sum	48187	31.025	7.76	28.618

As was observed in other texts, in Bibb's narrative the chapters with the highest and lowest rf_I lie close together, too. The flight chapters 15 and 16 feature the first-person singular pronoun 58.116 and 50.702 times per 1000 words respectively, while Chapter 17, dealing with Bibb's first experiences as an antislavery activist, represents the low mark with 13.265 occurrences. Unlike the majority of slave narratives, however, Bibb's text does not display a general tendency in the development of the rf_I, which in the texts discussed so far was upwards.

In many episodes, but most prominently in the flight chapters, the *I*-narrator focuses on himself. Several factors contribute to this impression. First, the rf_I is high whenever Bibb tries to escape on his own. Chapter 4 may serve as an initial example. Although there are further characters present, such as his wife and several abolitionists who help him on the way to Canada, these occupy only few subject positions. Bibb, on the other hand, tends to place himself in subject positions, even when he does not act. In many instances he uses the passive voice, which is very prominent in Bibb's narrative.

5.5.1   This being the first voyage that I had ever taken on board of a Steamboat [sic], I was filled with fear and excitement, knowing that I was surrounded by the vilest enemies of God and man, liable to be seized and bound hand and foot, by any white man, and taken back into captivity. (83)

As the number of passive forms is greater than in all other texts, it will receive particular attention below. Additionally, Bibb uses mental verbs (*hear*, *suppose*) to present events in which he himself is not involved or which are mere projections. Thus he constructs complex clauses that support the focalization of the events through the narrator's mind and lend presence to the *I*-pronoun.

5.5.2   I still maintained my position in the hammock, until the next morning about 8 o'clock, when I heard the passengers saying the boat was near Cincinnati; and by this time I supposed that the attention of the people would be turned to the city, and I might pass off unnoticed. (84)

What the passengers say and where their attention might be turned to in this way is presented as the narrator's perception and projection instead of an independent event, the dependency being illustrated by syntactic subordination. This function of Bibb's mental activities, especially perceptive ones, is recurrent not only in Chapter 4.

5.5.3   I found him willing to aid a poor fugitive on his way to Canada, ... (85)

5.5.4   When I got near the house, moving very cautiously, filled with fearful apprehensions, I saw several men walking around the house as if they were looking for some person. (103)

5.5.5   I saw many of them shedding tears while I related the sad story of my wrongs. (157)

Mental processes are rare in Chapter 4 (only 22.95%), but 17 of the entire 28 mental verbs are of the perceptive type (*see*, *find*, *hear*) and sustain this sort of focalization, which will be discussed more fully below.

In three further flight chapters (14 to 16), in which the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is the highest in the narrative, Bibb, while not being omnipresent, still dominates the text. Chapter 14 with an rf_I of 39.845 contains Bibb's observations about Native American customs and differences between white and Native slaveholders. The narrator does not intrude at all here. But as soon as these observations are made and Bibb's Native master has

died, the flight begins and the narrator does not retreat from his text any more. Of the remaining 50 clause complexes in this chapter, only eleven do not contain the *I*-pronoun at all; the rf_I for that section rises to over 55. Nominalizations of processes are extremely rare, and so is subject ellipsis in clause complexes such as the following one, which is typical of this chapter.

5.5.6   I laid down and pretended to be asleep, but I slept none that night, for I was afraid that they would kill me if I went to sleep. (143)

There are six finite verb forms in the clause complex and four occurrences of the *I*-pronoun. Two processes are coordinated and lead to subject ellipsis; three coordinated independent clauses feature an explicit subject, as does each clause in the subordinate complex projected by "afraid." Not only is the narrator's pronoun quantitatively prominent in this sentence, Bibb also projects ideas, that is, activities by other participants ("they") that do not actually take place. The projected activity is syntactically and in terms of perspective dependent on the narrator's state of mind and in this way supports his dominant role.

The fact that Bibb's text has the third largest share of nonfinite clauses after Brown and Northup (21.26%) does not automatically lead to a low rf_I. Constructions such as the following one are comparatively frequent.

5.5.7   Not being able to find the road I came into an Indian settlement at the dead hour of the night. I was wet, wearied, cold and hungry; and yet I felt afraid to enter any of their houses or wigwams, not knowing whether they would be friendly or not. (143)

In addition to two subjectless nonfinite clauses and coordination of Attributes in a relational process, the first-person singular pronoun occurs three times explicitly. In this particular case, the two negated mental processes *find* and *know* are syntactically subordinated; their – possibly causal – logical connection is not made explicit. Note that the relational process in which other participants ("they") are engaged is a projection of the narrator's mental activity again. Once more, what "they" do and are is created in the narrator's mind, and is syntactically dependent on his doings.

The same pattern is continued in the following two chapters. In Chapter 15 Bibb is on his lonesome journey to the North, and, apart from a short description of three men Bibb assumes to be slave hunters and a justification for stealing a horse, the *I*-pronoun is present in every single clause complex. Like in the previous chapter, the events are presented through the narrator's perception. One night Bibb arrives at a plantation, where he decides to take a horse to speed up his progress (146). In addition to a few material verbs, there are four instances of "I found."

5.5.8   I found a road leading pretty nearly in the direction which I wanted [to] travel, and I kept it. After traveling several miles I found another large plantation where there was a prospect of finding a horse. I stepped up to the barn-yard, wherein I found several horses. There was a little barn standing with the door open, and I found it quite an easy task to get the horses into the barn, and select out the best looking one of them. (146)

All four instances of this mental verb express an existential ('there was a road' etc.) or relational process with *it* as a dummy subject ('it was an easy task') in terms of the narrator's perception. Bibb acts again as a focalizer and so raises the frequency of the *I*-pronoun.

The narrator maintains this way of presentation with material verbs, too. Whenever he travels a few miles and arrives at a new location, Bibb presents this fact thus.

5.5.9   But I had not gone over three or four miles before I came to a large stream of water
         which was past fording; yet I could see that it had been forded by the road track, but
         from high water it was then impassable. (146f)

5.5.10   After I got out a mile or so from the river, I came into a large prairie, which I think
         must have been twenty or thirty miles in width, and the road ran across it about in
         the direction that I wanted to go. (147)

Like the barn in 5.5.8, the places the narrator arrives at, or the objects he finds, exist at specific locations. Yet they are not presented as being located in an absolute manner or as simply existing somewhere; they are invariably presented in relation to the first-person narrator and his movement towards them. Objects do not exist by themselves, they are found and arrived at. This is also possible for past actions. The stream in 5.5.9 carries high water, but the fact that it has been forded is explicitly presented through Bibb's perception.

It might be argued that it is completely natural and self-evident that an episode with Bibb describing his lonely flight must feature a high rf_I. The short episode discussed here, however, shows that an extremely high relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is by no means inevitable, but has become a strategy. There are alternative ways of presentation, but the fact that the chosen wording is recurrent and apparently preferred by the narrator creates meaning and contributes heavily to the construction of the narrator's discoursal self. There is a significant difference between a narrator who presents events and objects as existing on their own ('there was') and one who creates the objects and events through presenting his own perception of them ('I saw'). In the latter case, the objects and events become syntactically and epistemologically subordinate to the narrator's mental and material activities. In these episodes Bibb is a creator and manipulator not only of his own experience but also of his environment. The material and mental processes mentioned make this explicit and so also illustrate Bibb's wish to establish himself as a reliable narrator. He appears to be honestly admitting his manipulation of perspective. Yet by sophisticatedly positioning the events of his flight through his perception, he also positions his readers towards them. The readers see only what the narrator allows them to see; the readers arrive only at those places that Bibb creates by describing his arrival there. While this applies to all narratives – and to many kinds of other writing – this short episode with the narrator's use of a few specific linguistic devices provides a valuable illustration of this mechanism because of its comparative density here. It appears time and again in all texts, but the extremely high rf_I in Bibb's flight-chapters, despite nonfinite clauses and occasional nominalizations, provides one of the most effective variants, because this manner of focalizing events through the narrator supports the reader's identification with the narrator immensely and also adds to the immediacy of what Bibb himself calls "adventures" (149). It is worth emphasizing that this process does not depend on the presence of mental verbs alone; in none of the three flight-chapters discussed the share of mental verbs is greater than average. In fact, it does not exceed 26%, which is below the average of the corpus. In Chapter 14 it is even as low as 21%. On the contrary, especially in Chapters 15 and 16 the share of material verbs is much greater than the average (55% and 46% respectively).

The chapters with the lowest rf_I, on the other hand, include general observations about living conditions in a Southern jail (Ch. 8), a description of plantation life (Ch. 10), letters, Bibb's antislavery activities, as well as incidents of racism (Ch. 17). The final chapter provides further details about the fate of female slaves, religion, as well as an account of a slave

auction. Here, Bibb does not present his own experience as being the sole focus; he mixes it with general remarks. Yet even where he does that, he remains present in the narrative as the following example illustrates. Note the use of the mental verbs *see* and *hear*.

5.5.11   There is no legal marriage among the slaves of the South; I never saw nor heard of such a thing in my life, and I have been through seven of the slave states. (77)

Again Bibb presents himself as the mediating agency through which events do not become only existent but, as in this case, also reliable. His presence becomes the legitimization of the claim made in the initial existential clause.

In the following paragraph, Bibb comments on the morally destructive consequences of the lack of legal protection for slave marriages. He finishes thus.

5.5.12   And I hazard nothing in saying, that this state of things exists to a very wide extent in the above states. (78)

Then he develops the subject further with the words "I am happy to state that . . ." (78). In that way, he relegates the general remarks to a dependent status; sometimes they are explicitly syntactically dependent, but in any case dependent on his own observation and evaluation. In contrast to Bibb, Douglass at times retreats completely from his text. For instance, Chapter 2 of Douglass' *Narrative* contains an account of the Lloyd-plantation system of more than 1300 words where the *I*-narrator intrudes only twice. Stretches like these occur in Bibb, too, but they are generally much shorter. Bibb is hardly ever absent, and typically submits generalizations through his perception.

In Chapter 10 Bibb and his family have just arrived at his new master's plantation. The narrator describes the living conditions there.

5.5.13   I have often heard the sound of the slave driver's lash on the backs of the slaves, and their heart-rending shrieks, which were enough to melt the heart of humanity, even among the most barbarous nations of the earth. (121)

5.5.14   I have heard him say that he was no better pleased than when he could hear the overseer's loud complaining voice, long before daylight in the morning, and the sound of the driver's lash among the toiling slaves. (ibid.)

Apparently, the familiar formula of focalization is present even in chapters with a low density of the first-person singular pronoun. Bibb presents the slaves' conditions through his own perceptions and therefore as his own experiences, although neither the driver's lash nor the speech is directed at him. And yet, like Douglass, Bibb often resorts to the third-person pronoun when talking about his fellow slaves and events that directly concern him as well as all the others. Nevertheless, he is never absent from his text for long; usually he introduces himself as the witness.

5.5.15   I have known the slaves to be so much fatigued from labor that they could scarcely get to their lodging places from the field at night. (122)

In this instance, Bibb focalizes the event, and yet – by choosing the third-person pronoun – he dissociates himself from the ordinary field hand. Indeed, Bibb says that he spends "the greater part of my time . . . working about the house," while his wife is employed as a cook (120). Although it is not mentioned explicitly, a (class) distinction between field and house slaves is implied.

Nominalizations contribute to focalization, too, although they eliminate subject roles in the nominative case. This applies particularly to those that collocate with possessive deter-

miners. Bibb's narrative is notable for the highest relative frequency of *my* collocating with a nominalized process (1.121; cf. Table 4.6, p. 70). Also, the share of collocations with *my* of the total of nominalizations in Bibb's text is the highest in the corpus with 9.89%. It is remarkable that, in both respects, this narrative lies even ahead of Douglass' text, which taken as a whole by far outnumbers Bibb's *rf*$_{nom}$. If collocations of *my* and nominalizations with *-ing* are taken into account, the lead of Bibb's narrative over the other texts increases further (*rf* 2.096, average of corpus 1.222). Chapters that feature a high *rf*$_I$ are not devoid of this device. Chapter 4, for instance, abounds with instances such as "my preparation," "my former resolution," "my intention," and "my anticipation" (82), only to name a few of those in which the possessive represents a subject role for the narrator and so associates the transcategorized process with him explicitly. Incidentally, the nominalizations quoted here are predominantly transformations of mental processes and therefore contribute to the focalization on the first-person narrator. But also a number of nominalized concrete material doings such as the recurrent use of *my arrival*, *my departure*, and *my detection* contribute to the association with the narrator.

In addition, the morphologically derived nominalizations, typically of Latinate origin, not only contribute to higher lexical density, but, through their lack of temporal deixis, also to a higher level of abstraction. They remove the concrete processes from particular reference and the immediate human experiencers. The nominalizations take over participant roles themselves. Bibb, for instance, introduces his decision to escape and leave his family behind in the following words.

5.5.16   In the fall or winter of 1837 I formed a resolution that I would escape, if possible, to Canada, for my Liberty. I commenced from that hour making preparations for the dangerous experiment of breaking the chains that bound me as a slave. My preparation for this voyage consisted in the accumulation of a little money, perhaps not exceeding two dollars and fifty cents, and a suit which I had never been seen or known to wear before; this last was to avoid detection. (82)

In the remainder of Chapter 4, from which this excerpt is taken, the narrator is almost omnipresent, but here he is reluctant to take over open participant roles in his "resolution," "experiment," "accumulation," and "preparation" beyond two possessive determiners. The subsequent paragraph explains why. Bibb is aware of the fact that his decision to leave his wife and child behind is hardly justifiable and can easily be challenged as egotistical by his readers. This is true especially in the light of his earlier defense of the slaves' wish to live as legally acclaimed husbands and wives. Moreover, at that point in the narrative, the reader is not yet acquainted with Bibb's numerous returns to the South in order to rescue his family. His uneasiness becomes obvious when he states that "[h]ad Malinda known my intention at that time, it would not have been possible for me to have got away" (82). Bibb is fully able to construct complexes such as a hypothetical 'if I had told Malinda what I intended to do, I would have been unable to get away,' as was demonstrated above, but in this situation he chooses not to do so. In the episode at the beginning of Chapter 4, which is 406 words long, the *I*-pronoun occurs 13 times. Morphological nominalizations, however, occur 14 times, if conversions such as *pledge*, *cost*, *act*, or *sacrifice* are added, the frequency of nominalizations exceeds that of the *I*-pronoun by far.

5.5.17   On the twenty-fifth of December, 1837, my long anticipated time had arrived when I was to put into operation my former resolution, which was to bolt for Liberty or consent to die a Slave. I acted upon the former, although I confess it to be one of

the most self denying acts of my whole life, to take leave of an affectionate wife, who stood before me on my departure, with dear little Frances in her arms, and with tears of sorrow in her eyes as she bid me a long farewell. It required all the moral courage that I was master of to suppress my feelings while taking leave of my little family. (82)

What Bibb explicitly expresses in terms of processes in this paragraph is *put into operation*, *act upon the former*, *confess*, and *be master of his courage*. Only two of the processes are material, but they are abstract and do not at all reflect the narrator's actual material doings. What he does in nominalized or nonfinite form is to *bolt for liberty*, *take leave of his family, depart*, and *suppress his feelings*. So in the beginning of the chapter a major transcategorization of the narrator's activities has taken place. Not once does he say 'I left my wife and child alone.' He indeed characterizes his leaving as "one of the most self denying acts," but unlike in most other instances when his wife and child are mentioned, they are not introduced by a possessive determiner. This is remarkable insofar as in the entire text no other item collocates as frequently with *my* as do *wife* and (*little*) *family*.

In addition to the morphologically derived nominalizations, Bibb uses a large number of zero-suffixations, or conversions, and *-ing*-forms used nominally. Chapter 2 will exemplify this feature. With an rf_I of 30.273 it is an average chapter, yet it splits into two parts. The first half is atypical as the *I*-narrator is not present at all. Bibb explains some of the slaves' customs and beliefs in a general way without the participation of particular characters. He uses present simple tense and the third-person plural pronoun for generic reference.

5.5.18   The Sabbath is not regarded by a large number of the slaves as a day of rest. They have no schools to go to; no moral nor religious instruction at all in many localities where there are hundreds of slaves. Hence they resort to some kind of amusement. (68)

The generalizing effect is supported by a high density of nominalized processes. In addition to the well-documented suffixations such as *excitement*, *amusement*, *movement*, and *instruction*, there are many conversions as well as other nouns describing a process or a quality to be found (*rest, bets, insult, blows, want, labor, will, remedy, account, scrape, order, charge, strength, anger, love, effect, fear,* to mention only a random sample). These nouns have the same syntactic effects as morphological nominalizations, that is, they create networks of things and relations between them. Together with the indeterminate reference to "the slaves" (68f), the nominalizations all contribute to a process of impersonalization of social actors and the backgrounding of individual identities (van Leeuwen 39, 59). Moreover, they add to a rather formal tone here, which appears appropriate in the context of Bibb's social analysis at the beginning of the chapter.

The impersonalization in the first half of the chapter contrasts with the foregrounding of the *I*-narrator in the second part. Here Bibb elaborates on his own experiences with superstition and thus illustrates some of the general points made earlier. While the density of nominalizations remains similar in both parts of the chapter and so the formal tone is retained, the contrast is formed by a sudden appearance of the *I*-pronoun, and a switch to past tense, both of which underline specific reference. Bibb thus creates himself as an individual social actor who is distinct from the anonymous mass. While "the slaves" are merely anonymously categorized by their doings and beliefs and therefore lack individual features with which a reader can identify, Bibb makes himself unique. He admits to have believed in

superstition, too, but points out to have risen above this level of unawareness presented as typical for the common slave.

> 5.5.19   This is all done for the purpose of defending themselves in some peaceable manner, although I am satisfied that there is no virtue at all in it. I have tried it to perfection when I was a slave at the South. (70)

He presents and analyses his own doings in retrospect and is able to dissociate himself from his former belief in witchcraft. This contrast between the two parts of the chapter linguistically "differentiates an individual social actor or group of social actors from a similar actor or group, creating the difference between the 'self' and the 'other', or between 'us' and 'them' . . ." (van Leeuwen 52). The chapter therefore serves two functions. On a political level, it reveals how the denial of education helps the slaveholders in the subjugation of the slaves. On an individual level, it serves to position this particular *I*-narrator as a unique, individual human being that stands out from the anonymous mass. Unlike Douglass, Bibb does not explicitly call himself "chosen;" his method of individualizing himself is slightly more subtle, and yet effective (for parallels between Douglass and Bibb cf. Chapter 5.5.2 below). The general observations provide a stage, on which the trickster Bibb can enact his slave activities as – sometimes even comic – adventures, which certainly aided the commercial success of the book considerably. At the same time, this stage enables him to position his reformed and aware self that is capable of analytical thought, abstraction, and generalization. For this act of individualization Bibb uses two foils: the generic, morally degraded slaveholding whites, who deny education and awareness to the slaves, and the generic slaves themselves, from whose ranks the narrator has risen.

The syntactic rhythm of the narrative remains constant. Bibb generally constructs shorter sentences than most narrators; his 2.89 clauses per complex are among the shortest, but the evenness over the text is similar to Brown's. Paratactically arranged simple sentences with only one clause are rare. Whether flight, recapture, or mental anguish at being a slave (cf. Chapter 5.5.2 below), the typical sentence consists of a clause complex with at least one subordinated clause, frequently more. Here is an example from his recapture in Chapter 5.

> 5.5.20   But I broke away from the man who stood by with his pistol drawn to shoot me if I should resist, and reached the fence and attempted to jump over it before I was overtaken; but the fence being very high I was caught by my legs before I got over. (91)

What is punctuated as one sentence consists of two parts, each of which features a number of subordinated clauses; coordination occurs only in the first part. Not even rather spectacular scenes of flight, which would lend themselves for parataxis to support or create the impression of pace and tension, deviate from this most-favored pattern. An example from Chapter 6 may serve as an illustration.

> 5.5.21   It would be impossible for me to set forth the speed with which I ran to avoid my adversary; I succeeded in turning a corner before Dan got sight of me, and by fast running, turning corners, and jumping high fences, I was enabled to effect my escape.
>
> In running so swiftly through the public streets, I thought it would be a safer course to leave the public way, and as quick as thought I spied a high board fence by the way and attempted to leap over it. The top board broke and down I came into a hencoop which stood by the fence. The dogs barked, and the hens flew and cackled so, that I feared it would lead to my detection before I could get out of the yard. (97f)

In this episode Bibb runs away again after his first recapture. The stretch is punctuated as four sentences, all of which are more or less intricate complexes. Subordination is the rule; the shortest sentence is one with two coordinated clauses and a relative clause ("The top board . . ."). In fact, the four sentences in this episode of 132 words are even longer than the average of the text. It appears as if the narrator would rather display his affinity for complex constructions than vary his syntax according to the content. This is indeed something that Bibb never does.

The construction of these clause complexes creates effects. By relating actions, events, and states through coordination and subordination, the narrator provides a network of logical relations between processes and states. Hardly any process thus stands isolated, unrelated to something else. In the majority of cases the relations are temporal ones, as the high frequency of temporal subordinators illustrates (Table A.1.5, p. 279). They are, however weakly, supported by *and*, as the example above shows. The relative shortness of Bibb's clause complexes is independent from the frequency of conjunctions. Neither coordinators nor subordinators are scarce and in sum lie above the average of the corpus. The introduction of nonfinite clauses with *while* and *after* is a recurrent pattern in Bibb's text. Both of them occur with more than average frequency and so contribute to the overall frequency of subordinating conjunctions. They also illustrate that in Bibb's narrative, too, the temporal sequence of events dominates. And yet, it is not unbroken. Chapter 4 has already been quoted repeatedly and deserves to be mentioned in this context again. In the very beginning of the chapter, quoted above (ex. 5.5.17) Bibb, like Douglass, introduces what is to follow before relating the details. It is only after the preparation through the sophisticated justification that the narrator relates the details of the flight. But here the disruption of the chronology is not so much a rhetorical device that serves to create dramatic tension, it rather emphasizes the importance of the initial justification for Bibb.

Bibb's text may not be as elaborately and dramatically structured as the exceptional narrative by Douglass. And yet, the analysis so far suggests that Bibb's narrative is exceptional for the focalization of the events through the narrator. Especially remarkable is the fact that he provides a large amount of general information and still manages to remain the most prominent character in his own text. He disappears temporarily, but these rare occasions appear not as remote from the narrator as Douglass' general descriptions of plantation life, because typically Bibb uses these to introduce or justify his own activities, which serve to particularize the generalizations and to individualize the narrator. The differentiating linguistic devices Bibb uses facilitate the reader's identification with the narrator. At the same time, as the discussion of his introduction to his first flight has revealed, they betray his "conflicting desires for family and freedom" (Taylor 2). So whenever it appears advantageous, he strategically backgrounds his own role, too. From the way the narrator presents the majority of his experiences and observations, this desire for his individuality and freedom take the upper hand, while occasionally his uneasiness with his decision becomes apparent nonetheless. Many critics such as Taylor, consider Bibb a trickster or a picaro, and so he is (ibid., cf. also Byerman). As Taylor states, Bibb "took pride in his resourcefulness" (2), which he also displays in the linguistic representation of his life story in his narrative and which the distribution of process types underlines.

5.5.2 Henry Bibb's use of transitivity

Henry Bibb's narrative is characterized by a strong element of material activity. The share of 41.84% is second only to Roper's narrative, while the relative frequency of material verbs of 11.974 is surpassed only by Roper and Picquet (Tables 4.14 and 4.15). The contrast between the frequency of material and mental processes is closer to the distribution in the early narratives by Roper and Grandy than to Douglass, Brown, or any of the later narratives. Despite this contrast, mental verbs are present with average frequency; it is the number of relational processes that is comparatively low here. Verbal processes occur with average frequency, too, whereas behavioural verbs are fairly rare.

Table 5.5.2: Selection of process types in Bibb's *Narrative* (in percent)

ch.	words	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1	1664	7.69	25.00	32.69	23.08	11.54	31.250
2	3039	2.35	47.06	23.53	24.71	2.35	27.970
3	3323	2.38	23.81	39.29	29.76	4.76	25.278
4	2670	3.28	54.92	22.95	13.11	5.74	45.693
5	3781	1.90	41.90	29.52	13.33	13.33	27.770
6	3029	4.26	48.94	29.79	14.89	2.13	31.033
7	2762	3.13	50.00	21.88	20.31	4.69	23.172
8	1865	0.00	38.24	41.18	11.76	8.82	18.231
9	2547	1.49	31.34	25.37	29.85	11.94	26.305
10	1774	0.00	26.92	42.31	23.08	7.69	14.656
11	2700	2.50	38.75	45.00	10.00	3.75	29.630
12	3081	7.25	39.13	24.64	17.39	11.59	22.395
13	2153	1.89	35.85	22.64	24.53	15.09	24.617
14	1807	10.00	34.29	21.43	27.14	7.14	38.738
15	1996	0.00	55.75	25.66	13.27	5.31	56.613
16	2564	0.79	46.46	25.98	20.47	6.30	49.532
17	3317	2.50	37.50	25.00	10.00	25.00	12.059
18	1364	0.00	50.00	35.71	14.29	0.00	30.792
19	1280	0.00	24.24	21.21	27.27	27.27	25.781
20	1471	0.00	36.84	36.84	10.53	15.79	12.916
sum	48187	2.76	41.84	28.57	18.78	8.05	28.618

Material verbs are by far the most frequently selected process type, but as Table 5.5.2 reveals, they are not distributed evenly across the narrative. There are chapters in which the frequency of material verbs is exceeded by mental verbs (Cs. 1, 3, 8, 10, 11), or even by relational processes (Cs. 3, 19). In four of the twenty chapters, the share of material verbs equals or exceeds 50%. Chapters 4, 7, and 15 deal with escape and recapture, so that a large proportion of material doings, typically intransitive or ranged, is not unexpected. Chapter 18, however, is different as it describes Bibb's last attempt to rescue his wife, his frustration and his remarriage. It will be discussed shortly. Effective clauses with Bibb in Agent position are relatively rare. Only 20% of the material processes feature a Goal, whereas 27% are ranged middle clauses. As large parts of the narrative are concerned with flight, recapture

and traveling, it is not surprising that an overwhelming majority of the intransitive material processes are locomotive verbs such as *arrive*, *stop*, *walk*, *travel*, *return*, *come*, *go*, etc.

In Chapter 15, as Bibb describes his lonesome and adventurous journey through the prairie, material verbs contribute 55% of the process types. The majority is intransitive.

5.5.22   I walked as fast as I could, but when I got about midway of the prairie, I came to a high spot where the road forked, and three men came up from a low spot as if they had been there concealed. (145)

The material processes here support the focalization through the narrator discussed earlier. The few transitive verbs, on the other hand, typically also feature a genuine Goal, such as *catch a horse*, *cut a grape vine*, *kill someone*, *pull down the fence*, *stop someone* etc. Ranged material processes, such as "I pursued my journey" (146), are even rarer in this chapter. Notwithstanding the presence of a few effective processes, generally Bibb does not present himself as an effective narrator during his journey. His actions rarely affect or even range over other participants.

In Chapter 18, Bibb initially travels again, this time from relative safety in the North, to the South in order to make one last attempt to rescue his wife Malinda. He gives up, however, when he is informed that his wife is living together with her new master. Bibb tries to make sense of her behavior to be able to justify his own and eventually declares that she is "practically dead to me as a wife" (163). The final part of the chapter deals with Bibb's re-marriage several years later and general observations about the status of female slaves. More than half of the material processes are ranged (twelve of 21). A number of combinations between a dummy verb and a Range: process occur, such as *run a risk*, *make an effort*, *spend time,* or *take a trip* or *a passage*. These constructions are recurrent throughout the narrative and contribute to the frequency of material verbs in general. But this particular chapter features various more original instances, some of which are quoted here.

5.5.23   Poor unfortunate woman, I bring no charge of guilt against her, for I know not all the circumstances connected with the case. (163)

5.5.24   I conceived the idea that it would be better for me to change my position, provided I should find a suitable person. (ibid.)

5.5.25   Of Malinda I will only add a word in conclusion. (165)

Although Bibb tries to present himself as acting upon some other participant here, in experiential terms he does not do so. Instead of Sayer in *blame* or *say*, or a Senser in *think*, he appears as an Actor in three grammatically metaphorical material processes. As a Range, represented by *charge*, *idea*, or *word*, is typically not realized by a human participant, this type of construction contributes to what van Leeuwen calls the backgrounding of social actors (31). In 5.5.23 Bibb's wife not only appears in a prepositional group and thus is no longer a central participant (also "Of Malinda"), eventually her fate is categorized as a "case." A number of further constructions support this impression. In the paragraph subsequent to 5.5.23, passive forms, nominalizations and nonfinite clauses connected with Bibb's former wife aid in the backgrounding of her role. Consider also the following quote.

5.5.26   Voluntarily assumed without law mutually, it was by her relinquished years ago without my knowledge, as before named; during which time I was making every effort to secure her restoration. (165)

The complex begins with a nonfinite subjectless clause followed by a passive construction with Malinda in the Agent-role, but not in thematic position. In the final part Bibb is Actor in a ranged material process. His former wife does not figure in the effort – compare 'I tried to rescue her' – it is "her restoration" that occupies a participant role. This means that eventually Malinda has come to be represented by the possessive determiner of an abstract nominalization. The reference is not irretrievable, but she is no longer positioned in central participant roles in the grammar of Bibb's life. Linguistically backgrounded, she is finally also experientially backgrounded. In addition to this experiential effect, constructions with a dummy-verb plus Range: process frequently appear rather formal because the Range is typically a nominalized process and abstract. This formula even applies to the chapter in question here, although it is concerned with intimate and emotional matters such as marriage, adultery, faith, and remarriage.

It is significant that Bibb's language becomes formal at this point. Constructions with a semantically empty dummy-verb and a nominalization to metaphorize the actual process are recurrent. In addition to the examples above he runs "sacrifices, sufferings, and risks," finds "a kind reception," and keeps up "a regular correspondence." The same pattern applies to a number of relational processes, too. Of his former wife Malinda and her new master Bibb says the following.

5.5.27   It is also reasonable to suppose that there might have been some kind of attachment formed by living together in this way for years; and it is quite probable that they have other children according to the law of nature, which would have a tendency to unite them stronger together. (163)

Subjective mood adjuncts, found in similar positions in Douglass or Brown, are notably absent from this episode. Instead of 'I think' Bibb uses an explicit objective form without the intrusion of the first-person singular pronoun ("reasonable," "probable"). It is clear that he is the one who supposes reasonably or considers something likely, but the absence of the *I*-pronoun and concomitant mental verbs betray the narrator's difficulties in handling this emotional subject. Note also additional forms of hedging such as conditional auxiliaries, "kind of," "tendency," and "quite." It is important to compare these forms to what Bibb does not express here, but could have. The hypothetical attachment, for instance, is expressed without participants but occurs in a clause that is neither purely existential nor purely passive but interpretable either way. In neither case is there any human participant who feels attached. The final relative clause is equally vague and emotionally detached. The relative pronoun refers to the hypothesis that "they have other children according to the law of nature." Rather than presenting the children as unifying agency, it is this hypothesis that has a tendency to unite them – albeit only conditionally ("would"). The possible parents are not presented as acting or even being acted upon. The wording reveals Bibb's uneasiness to express these thoughts before his readership. The fact that verbs of affection are absent from the chapter except in one instance supports this impression further.

Mental processes dominate only in a few chapters. In three chapters the share of the mental verbs even exceeds 40% (Cs. 8, 10, 11). In Chapter 10, which has a low rf_I (14.646) the narrator arrives at his cruel new master's farm and describes his first impressions there. The majority of processes are perceptive.

5.5.28   The next thing I observed was that he made the slave driver strip his own wife, and flog her for not doing just as her master had ordered. (119)

Also, the examples 5.5.14 and 5.5.15 quoted above feature Bibb as perceiving narrator and contribute to the observing and receptive mode. But the narrator also thinks and feels.

5.5.29   I really felt as if I had got into one of the darkest corners of the earth. I thought I was almost out of humanity's reach, and should never again have the pleasure of hearing the gospel sound, as I could see no way by which I could extricate myself; yet I never omitted to pray for deliverance. (120)

Note the high presence of the *I*-narrator in the co-text of mental activity, which is not only expressed through verbs such as *feel*, *think*, *hear*, *see*, but also through "pleasure" and "sound." Note also the intensifying adverb "really" and the intensified negations "never again" and "no way." The examples reveal that Bibb is very well able to present himself as a feeling and sensing human being in this situation. And he is not shy to extol his piousness at this point, either. The contrast to his strict avoidance of this emotional level in his discussion of the breakup of his marriage could hardly be more strongly developed.

In Chapter 11 Bibb relates two attempts to escape. Except material and mental processes, all other verbs are marginal here. Having attended a prayer meeting without his master's permission, Bibb is to be cruelly punished. Before the punishment is executed, he escapes alone, but returns later to save his wife and daughter, too. The material doings of this flight are described in the first-person plural, whereas all mental processes are associated with the singular pronoun. Hence the large share of mental verbs, reflecting the fact that many of the material verbs do not occur in the singular. But in contrast to the previous chapter, the mental processes are almost exclusively cognitive verbs, predominantly *think*. The mental activity is clustered in a paragraph preceding his family's recapture.

5.5.30   I then thought that the hour of death for us was at hand; that we should not live to see the light of another day; for there was no way for our escape. My little family were looking up to me for protection, but I could afford them none. And while I was offering up my prayers to that God who never forsakes those in the hour of danger who trust in him, I thought of Deacon Whitfield; I thought of his profession, and doubted his piety. I thought of his hand-cuffs, of his whips, of his chains, of his stocks, of his thumb-screws, of his slave driver and overseer, and of his religion; I also thought of his opposition to prayer meetings, and of his five hundred lashes promised me for attending a prayer meeting. I thought of God, I thought of the devil, I thought of hell; and I thought of heaven, and wondered whether I should ever see the Deacon there. (126f)

After a few initial conjunctions, the clauses are no longer connected through logical links. Thus, on the one hand, the narrator presents himself as being capable of such mental activity during a nightly attack by a pack of wolves. On the other hand, the juxtaposed clauses show that these thoughts are not the result of rational, logical thinking; they are isolated images of past episodes in his life. The narrator is helpless; but at the same time he is the focus of the narrative and uses this stage to perform. Once again Bibb seizes an opportunity to present a contrast between hypocritical slaveholding whites and the pious self.

Despite the attack of wolves and the narrator's later recapture, verbs of affection such as *fear* are absent from the incident. This is not coincidental. Mental verbs of affection are generally rather rare in Bibb's narrative (12.63% of the total of mental verbs). The majority of them are desiderative verbs such as *want*, *wish*, and *desire*. A number of emotive ones are to be found as well, but *fear* is expressly rare. So is *love*, while *hate* is completely absent from his account. Mental verbs are to almost 60% of the cognitive kind. In addition to the typical verbs *suppose*, *think*, and *know*, Bibb uses a large variety of different ones that signify

reason such as *conclude*, *consider*, *expect*, *resolve*, *presume* etc. Another compelling example of the narrator's repression of the emotive element whenever his relation with Malinda is touched can be found in Chapter 4. It is concerned with his first escape to the North. He resolves to use the Christmas holidays 1837 to ask for a permission to hire himself out for wages, but in fact, he intends to escape and leave his family. The chapter is dominated by material verbs, but verbs of affection that might have been used to describe the separation from his family are absent. Like in the episode described earlier, the narrator expresses emotional states in a nominalized and impersonal way. While the nominal style does not only apply to mental activities as was discussed above (cf. example 5.5.16), the absence of verbs of affection is particularly chilling. When, upon his "departure," he puts "into operation [his] former resolution," he admits that "[i]t required all the moral courage that I was master of to suppress my feelings while taking leave of my little family" (81). After all, his wife is not informed that he intends to run away. In the ensuing justification of his leaving he speaks about "intention," "inducement," and "mental degradation" (ibid.). Listing the obstacles to his escape he mentions "attachments" and "fear," but this is as emotional as it gets. Note the indefinite article of "love" and the impersonal relational process "were hard."

5.5.31   My strong attachments to friends and relatives, with all the love of home and birth-place which is so natural among the human family, twined about my heart and were hard to break away from. And withal, the fear of being pursued with guns and blood-hounds, and of being killed, or captured and taken to the extreme South, to linger out my days in hopeless bondage on some cotton or sugar plantation, all combined to deter me. (82)

The nominalizations render the emotive states more permanent, but also more detached from the immediate first-person experience. Their frequency at this point and the conco-mitant absence of the *I*-pronoun illustrate the narrator's desire to suppress or at least to downplay his feelings, even before his readers. Unlike in many other episodes, the narrator backgrounds his own role at this particular point through abstraction, generic reference ("the human family"), and nonfinite clauses ("being pursued," "being killed"). After his justi-fication for escaping alone, he is then "fully prepared to make the sacrifice" and to fulfill his "pledge" (82). At this moment, neither his wife knows that he wants to escape, nor does the reader know that Bibb will return in order to rescue his family. Bibb as the narrator has the formidable task to present this "self-denying act" although he knows that he might be per-ceived as egotistically violating commonly accepted standards such as loyalty to wife and children. In these introductory paragraphs of the chapter it is surprising that the narrator does not even try to appeal to the reader's understanding and compassion for his act. He simply concludes the introduction to what he calls his "first adventure at liberty" with the following words.

5.5.32   I must forsake friends and neighbors, wife and child, or consent to live and die a slave. (83)

None of the forsaken participants is particularized by name or at least through a deter-miner; they remain indeterminate while the narrator appears as an individual. The entire scene is devoid of verbs of affection, so the mental element of the incident is moved into the background by the recurrent nominalization of mental as well as material processes. The emotional element in the narrative, though not in this episode, is rather a matter of

lexical choice and specific collocations such as *poor child*, *dear (little) child* and, preferably, *little family*, which alone occurs 19 times in the text.

Together with Ball, Bibb's text has the smallest share of relational verbs. Like in the other narratives, too, these are predominantly of the attributive kind. More than most texts, however, Bibb's features a very high number of possessive processes. Possession and various forms of negation are frequently combined as in "I had no disposition to steal a horse from any man" (147). The combination of the possessive process with abstract terms, frequently nominalizations of mental states or processes, is recurrent in Bibb, too. Constructions such as "I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am only the father of one slave" (81) or "I had some very serious religious impressions" (68) are legion. Apparently, in these instances alternative wordings with a mental verb would have been possible but they were not chosen. They add to the overall impression that the narrator oftentimes prefers rather formal, grammatically metaphorical expressions when it comes to describing his inner, mental life.

In a scene that clearly echoes Douglass' "soul's complaint" at the "lofty banks of that noble bay" (Douglass 64), Bibb uses the combination of possessive processes with negated nominal group for rhetorical impact.

5.5.33   But more especially after having been flogged, I have fled to the highest hills of the forest, pressing my way to the North for refuge; but the river Ohio was my limit. To me it was an impassable gulf. I had no rod wherewith to smite the stream, and thereby divide the waters. I had no Moses to go before me and lead the way from bondage to a promised land. Yet I was in a far worse state than Egyptian bondage; for they had houses and land; I had none; they had oxen and sheep; I had none; they had a wise counsel, to tell them what to do, and where to go, and even to go with them; I had none. (72)

Repetition and lexical choice echo biblical language and so linguistically support the motive of the Promised Land. Bibb does not only present himself as familiar with scripture but also as capable of adapting his own style. The short, mostly simple sentence with juxtaposed clauses and the repetition of "I had none" render the paragraph sermonic and thus set it linguistically apart from its co-text. But unlike the corresponding scene in Douglass, this is not the mental climax of the narrative – and soon forgotten, too, as the narrator is "introduced into the society of young women" in the subsequent paragraph (72).

In addition to the characteristics presented so far, Bibb is the master of the passive voice, not only in quantitative terms. In four of the twenty chapters the share of passive voice exceeds 10%, in two chapters it even lies above 20%. In eight chapters, on the other hand, it is much lower and ranges between zero and four percent. A look at the contents of the chapters reveals that there is a correlation between flight and a low frequency of passive forms on the one hand, and recapture and a high proportion of passives on the other. Chapters 4, 6, and 11 present the narrator as fugitive who returns each time to rescue his family. The share of passive forms ranges around 8%. Chapters 5, 7, and 12 present the narrator as recaptured fugitive; the shares of passive forms are 14.6%, 20.0%, and 10.39% respectively. An additional chapter with a large share of passive constructions is the very first one, in which the narrator presents his childhood and youth (23.5%). The chapters describing his departure from the excessively cruel Whitfield and the eventual escape (12 to 16) only feature percentages between two and four percent.

Chapter 7 will serve as an illustration of Bibb's mastery of the passive. Having escaped for the second time, Bibb returns to Kentucky to rescue his wife and child, but he is betrayed and recaptured. He is bound and brought to a slave prison in the city. While in the first part of the chapter, when Bibb is still free, the passive voice is comparatively rare, its frequency increases in the second part after the recapture. In the stretch of about 1800 words the *I*-pronoun occurs 46 times, which yields an *rf₁* of 25.556. The first-person singular pronoun occurs thirteen times in connection with the passive voice. This means that the passive share amounts to 28.26%, while the relative frequency is 7.234, which is a very high value. The narrator is "betrayed," "surrounded," "tied," "locked," "driven through the streets," "confined" in jail and eventually "shocked" at the circumstances in the prison workhouse. One might argue that all of these instances and the use of the passive voice are self-evident; the narrator is not in a position to act, so that the use of passive forms appears simply as a consequence and illustration of that fact. Bibb indeed tries to make this helplessness very clear.

5.5.34   My hands being confined with irons, and my feet tied under the horse with a rope, I had no power to help myself. (107)

However, the almost complete absence of agents betrays a strategy in itself. Except for three instances, the Agents of the processes are deleted. Those who act upon the narrator are made invisible. When Bibb is nearly killed by a kicking horse, he describes the consequences in the following way.

5.5.35   It was thought by all that I was dead and would never come to life again. When the horse was caught the cords were cut from my limbs, and I was rubbed with whiskey, camphor, &c, which brought me to life again. (107)

This invisibility of Agents not only applies to the activities in which the *I*-narrator is involved, but to over 30 additional instances of passive forms in the same part of the chapter. After this incident the narrator is cared for.

5.5.36   A physician was then sent for, who doctored me several days before I was well enough to be sold in market. (107)

After this incident Bibb is jailed and then locked up in a workhouse. He describes how "the large iron gate or door was thrown open," food "was all spread out on a long table in separate plates," and after the meal, the slaves "were hurried back to our work" (109). The Actors in the prison become invisible, the doings become anonymous and lie beyond the control of the inmates.

Bibb's skilful use of the device can be appreciated more fully when the presence of the passive voice is contrasted with its absence in an earlier episode in the same chapter. When Bibb is recaptured, his powerlessness begins, which he mentions clearly.

5.5.37   I saw it was no use then for me to make any resistance, as I should be murdered. (104)

In the scene that follows, Bibb describes how his capturers, like Bibb pious members of the Methodist Episcopalian church, rob him of his possessions. But in this episode the perspective is not so much the victim's but that of the offenders. Here, it is not his own helplessness that Bibb emphasizes, notwithstanding his complaint about the immense material loss, but the active theft committed by his hunters. It is worth while quoting the paragraph in full.

5.5.38   In searching my pockets, they found my certificate from the Methodist E. Church, which had been given me by my classleader, testifying to my worthiness as a member of that church. And what made the matter look more disgraceful to me, many of this mob were members of the M. E. Church, and they were the persons who took away my church ticket, and then robbed me also of fourteen dollars in cash, a silver watch for which I paid ten dollars, a pocket knife for which I paid seventy-five cents, and a Bible for which I paid sixty-two and one half cents. All this they tyrannically robbed me of, and yet my owner, Wm. Gatewood, was a regular member of the same church to which I belonged. (105)

Although he is the victim, the narrator does not present himself as subject of passive voice constructions, neither does he emphasize the anonymity of the offenders like in the episodes quoted above from the same chapter (ex. 5.5.34 - 37). The point here is exactly the opposite of that; Bibb stresses that the culprits are known to him. By doing so, his denunciation of their hypocrisy becomes even more effective; his own suffering is not the focus of this episode.

The passive voice is also frequently used to express modalization. Examples would be expressions such as *was compelled*, *was permitted* or *was allowed*, which have equivalent, but not synonymous, non-passive forms with modal auxiliaries such as *had to* or *could*. Again, Bibb's narrative stands out from the corpus. First, the relative frequency of modal constructions is higher than in other texts (5.665); moreover, it is also the text that features the highest number of modals expressed as passives. The relative frequencies of *compelled*, *permitted*, *allowed*, *forced*, and *obliged* combine to 0.436, which no other text achieves. In Chapter 7 Bibb tries to free his wife and finds that the house where she lives "was well guarded by the watch dogs of slavery, and I was compelled again to forsake my wife for a season, or surrender" (101). While a modal alternative such as 'I had to' precludes the grammatical possibility of adding an Agent in a prepositional phrase, "was compelled" may at least imply the presence of an unmentioned Agent or Initiator. Consequently, even if modal form and passive form may be used to represent the same state of affairs, the passive form sometimes implies even less control than a modal auxiliary, and it is not surprising that Bibb makes ample use of this device.

To sum up this brief discussion of the passive voice in Bibb, it may be noteworthy that Quirk *et al.* claim that the frequent use of passive forms is characteristic of informative rather than imaginative writing (166). This claim may indeed connect the observations that this narrative is the one with highest relative frequency of passive forms, which is occasionally very formal in tone, and that emotional aspects are rarely expressed through processes associated with the first-person singular pronoun but through nominalizations, which, according to Halliday, are typical of scientific discourse (1998).

Henry Bibb is a rhetorically extremely skillful narrator. He is able to vary the use of many linguistic structures and items according to his situational needs, which the discussion of the passive voice has illustrated. Only the structure of his syntax remains relatively constant over the text; notwithstanding occasional parataxis, he prefers complex clauses. Bibb's use of process types with the preference for material verbs, and the tendency to downplay the expression of mental activities, especially emotion, render his language often rather formal. This is illustrated by the strategic use of nominalization, which contrasts with the fact that the rf_{nom} in his narrative is below average. The adroit manipulation of process types also presents Bibb clearly as the focal character of his own story, which he occasionally uses as a stage. He is not shy to present himself in central position; many linguistic

devices attest to this self-assuredness. In terms of van Leeuwen's system of indetermination and differentiation, Bibb manages to background most other characters in his narrative either through nominalization, nonfiniteness, or the use of particular process types. He creates himself as the only differentiated character, the only unique and singular being that prevails over the course of the narrative. Neither his two wives, his daughter, his mother, nor his various masters are presented or identified in such a distinct manner, not even for a short period, as most descriptions of other characters explicitly depend on Bibb's perception. In this way even by presenting others the narrator manages to foreground himself.

In the end, Bibb as a narrator faces a formidable task. He needs to create a discursive self that would appeal to his reading audience despite the fact that many of his readers may see his flight as a disloyal and egotistical act. The narrator's uneasiness becomes apparent in the language of his elaborate justifications for his flight as well as for his later remarriage. And yet, Bibb must be credited with exposing this dilemma before his audience at all. Douglass, for instance, excludes the romantic element from his narrative altogether, while Brown may humorously justify his deception of Eliza with the division between the earlier Sandfort and the reformed William Wells Brown. Bibb, in contrast, is the first major slave narrator to make accessible and emphasize this element of slave life and to present the conflict between loyalty to the self, to wife and child, and the need to present the characters, emotions, and events in terms such as *wife*, *child*, and *marriage*, so that the readership would be willing and able to identify with an ultimately alien slave world, in which these terms had entirely different connotations. That this is done at the cost of the innermost sentiments is not a shortcoming of the text, but a vivid illustration of the narrator's predicament.

5.6   *Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup*

5.6.1 Solomon Northup's presence in the text

Northup's text, which was like Grandy's, Ball's, and Picquet's, not written by the fugitive slave himself, has the lowest relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun in the corpus (14.946). The gap to other texts is not marginal; Ball's text, which has the second lowest rf_I (23.310), features nine occurrences more in thousand words. Northup's narrative occupies an extreme position in other, related, aspects, too. It is the narrative with the highest lexical density, the second highest relative frequency of nominalizations, the lowest relative frequency of subordinating conjunctions, and the shortest sentences. Moreover, together with Grandy's it is the only text in which the presence of the narrator decreases from beginning to end. The rf_I drops from 19.660 in the first half to only 10.660 in the second half.

Table 5.6.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave*

Ch.	words	rf_I including passive voice	share of passive voice (in percent)	rf_I without passive voice
1	2706	20.695	3.70	19.217
2	2942	33.651	4.04	32.291
3	3640	23.626	3.49	22.802
4	2895	14.162	7.32	13.126
5	3371	18.392	14.52	15.722
6	2946	9.165	7.41	8.486
7	4004	13.487	9.43	11.988
8	3176	21.725	2.90	21.096
9	3343	18.546	6.45	17.350
10	3896	36.448	2.11	35.678
11	4110	18.248	6.67	17.032
12	3581	2.513	0.00	2.513
13	3840	13.542	7.84	12.240
14	4372	7.548	9.09	6.862
15	3712	4.310	12.50	3.772
16	3438	18.615	1.56	18.325
17	3573	10.635	0.00	10.635
18	3150	9.841	6.67	8.889
19	4166	14.402	6.67	13.442
20	2587	16.622	2.33	16.235
21	5158	13.571	10.00	12.214
22	3138	15.615	8.33	14.022
sum	77744	15.924	5.68	14.946

The chapters with a high rf_I present instances of flight or confrontation (Chapter 10), whereas those with an extremely low presence of the *I*-pronoun are typically concerned with general information about the nature of slavery, as applies to Chapters 12, 14, and 15.

The difference between Northup's text and the other narratives manifests itself in the very first sentence. While seven out of nine narratives begin with a programmatic "I was born" (cf. Olney), Northup's narrative begins in the following way – equally programmatic in respect to the linguistic devices used.

5.6.1   Having been born a freeman, and for more than thirty years enjoyed the blessings of liberty in a free State – and having at the end of that time been kidnapped and sold into Slavery, where I remained, until happily rescued in the month of January, 1853, after a bondage of twelve years – it has been suggested that an account of my life and fortunes would not be uninteresting to the public. (17)

Where in the majority of narratives the *I*-narrator occurs as the very first grammatical subject and therefore lends a focus to the beginning, this is not the case here. The matrix clause "it has been suggested," from which all other clauses depend, is an impersonal one with the dummy subject *it* standing in for the following projected *that*-clause. The passive verbal process *suggest* does not have a Sayer, so that the text does not disclose who made the suggestion to whom. This is not all. As early as in the very first sentence the writer's affinity for nonfinite clauses is betrayed. According to the results from random excerpts, 23.78% of the clauses in the text are nonfinite, a result which is only slightly lower than Brown's (Table 4.4., p. 66). But in contrast to Brown's text, unattached subjectless clauses are the rule rather than the exception. Thus the first-person narrator becomes an implied subject in his own text. The implied subject for "having been born," "enjoyed," "having been kidnapped and sold," and "rescued" is the *I*-narrator, who as an overt subject, however, occurs only once – in a relative clause. Not only is the implied subject of the subjectless clauses different from that of the matrix clause, it is also the case that five processes that depend on this subject are coordinated. This condensation of information is recurrent throughout the narrative and leads to high lexical density and a low rf_I. As a social actor the *I*-narrator is frequently backgrounded through these devices from the very outset.

The beginning foreshadows the style in which the narrative for the most part continues. In addition to nonfiniteness and nominalization ("blessings," "account"), the example also illustrates the scarcity of subordinating conjunctions in Northup (*rf* of 12.014). With the exception of the relative pronoun, only *until* and *after* act conjunctively for the multitude of processes. While the former indeed is a conjunction, the latter must be interpreted as a preposition here; however, the function of introducing a temporal qualification, either as clause or as nominalized process ('after I had been in bondage'), remains similar. The only property that distinguishes the initial complex from the average of the narrative is its length. Generally, the sentences in Northup's text are shorter than in the example and shorter than in any other narrative as well; they contain only 2.6 clauses and 19.87 words, the latter only undercut by Jacobs' text.

More frequently than in other texts, with the exception of Brown's, the narrator's activities are presented in nonfinite subjectless clauses without subordinating conjunctions, in which the overt presence of the *I*-pronoun becomes seemingly superfluous. The following examples will illustrate how heavily this singular device contributes to the elimination of overt subject roles for the narrator.

Chapter 10 has the highest frequency of the first-person singular pronoun (36.448), and yet it can hardly compare with what is average in Roper or Picquet. The chapter deals with a particular episode in the struggle between Northup and Tibeats, the carpenter to whom the *I*-narrator was partly sold and partly mortgaged in order to settle his former master's debts. A physical fight and ensuing escape is the climax of a confrontation that is a matter of a few weeks but stretches over almost four chapters of the narrative. Shortly after the sale, Northup and Tibeats fight for the first time; and after the latter is whipped by his own slave, Tibeats tries to hang him. Northup is rescued first by the overseer and then by his

former master. For a short time Northup is hired out, but when he returns to Tibeats, the conflict continues. The ill-tempered carpenter attacks Northup with a hatchet and after a fight Northup runs away through the swamp and woods, hunted by dogs, to seek his former master's protection.

In flight scenes, where narrators are usually on their own, the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun is likely to be high. Yet, in comparison with other narratives, the *I*-pronoun is scarce in Northup's text. Even in one of the most intriguing episodes the narrator remains comparatively inconspicuous in his own text. In Brown's escape chapter, which is not nearly as spectacular as Northup's fight and flight from Tibeats, the *I*-pronoun appears 56.891 times per 1000 words. Bibb's final flight, which stretches over three chapters, provides the narrator the opportunity to present the *I*-pronoun between 38 and 56 times per 1000 words. Ball's flight from slavery is spread over four chapters, in which the rf_I ranges from 37 to 51 instance per 1000 words. And Douglass' confrontation with Covey is presented with an rf_I of over 46.

Nonfinite constructions contribute considerably to the low relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. Only a few of the many that appear in Chapter 10 – and elsewhere – may serve as illustrations. In the following example Northup and Tibeats have just begun their fight. The scene is described from Northup's perspective in the following way.

5.6.2   Springing towards him with all my power, and meeting him full half-way, before he could bring down the blow, with one hand I caught his uplifted arm, with the other seized him by the throat. (133)

The *I*-pronoun appears only once in the matrix clause "I caught his uplifted arm" while all the other processes ascribed to Northup are presented by participles or in an elliptical clause with the pronoun omitted. While Northup is presented as performing four actions and therefore in four cases could have been the overt Actor of a material process, the first-person singular pronoun appears only once. This is not an isolated incident. The fondness Northup's ghostwriter Wilson seems to have had for this device makes him repeat it so often that it more than once becomes at least logically questionable if not outright absurd, as the following examples from Northup's flight show.

5.6.3   My resolution was soon formed, and swinging him from the work-bench to the ground, I leaped a fence near by, and hurried across the plantation, passing the slaves at work in the cotton field. (135)

In addition to the nominalization *resolution*, which transforms an *I*-pronoun in the Senser-role into a possessive determiner, two present participles and one ellipsis work in the same way as in the previous example. Once again, in only one out of five material processes, the narrator appears explicitly as Actor. Moreover, even if none of the participles is unattached in this excerpt, the first one is at least logically questionable. According to Quirk et al. (1125), the most likely interpretation for a nonfinite clause of this kind is a temporal one of simultaneity (*while*, *as*) or a causal one (*because*), neither of which is plausible here. Northup cannot at the same time swing Tibeats down *and* leap a fence, nor is bringing Tibeats to the ground the reason for Northup's leap. If anything, the two actions are performed in sequence. If the analysis of this incident seems to be too far-fetched, consider the following from the same chapter, which also shows that Wilson does not habitually omit the conjunction *after* although he would like to indicate temporal sequence.

5.6.4   After crossing this bayou the water became so deep I could not run. (139)

Here, the participle is clearly unattached to the subject of the matrix clause ("the water became deep") because it is certainly not the water that crosses the bayou. Even if the intended subject of the crossing is retrievable from the co-text, the entire sentence is still grammatically questionable. Furthermore, it works according to the same principle as the examples above: the *I*-narrator is deprived of an Actor-role. The material process which depends on the first-person singular pronoun is negated and relegated to a subclause of result. Therefore, semantically, it functions as an enhancement to the relational process in which the water is involved.

Not all instances of dangling participles are equally unacceptable or even ungrammatical. Quirk et al. state that "[t]he acceptability of unattached participles perhaps varies according to how easily the particular hearer or reader can perceive the implied subject" (1123). Yet, Wilson, in his eagerness for stylistic extravagance even crosses that line and goes overboard. Some incidents, still from the same chapter, are rather grotesque. The following one needs to be quoted with the preceding co-text.

5.6.5   [1] Stepping on to the piazza, I knocked at the door, which was soon opened by Mistress Ford. [2] My appearance was so changed - I was in such a wobegone and forlorn condition, she did not know me. [3] Inquiring if Master Ford was at home, that good man made his appearance, before the question could be answered. (144)

The sentence in question is [3]. According to the attachment rule, the implied subject to "inquiring" should be "that good man," which refers to Master Ford himself and, of course, does not make sense at all. The closest subject from the preceding co-text is "she" referring to Ford's wife, but as she must be the addressee of the question, this interpretation is equally absurd. The absence of other characters as well as the parallelism with [1] suggests that it is the *I*-narrator who asks, although in terms of textual proximity the *I*-pronoun is the most remote possibility. Logically as well as grammatically, the sentence can hardly be considered acceptable. This violation of the normal attachment rule, possibly for the benefit of what Wilson considers stylistically desirable, leads to complete absurdity in the following example, taken from Chapter 10, too.

5.6.6   Not provided with a pass, any white man would be at liberty to arrest me, and place me in prison until such time as my master should "prove property, pay charges, and take me away." (140)

Only slaves were required to have a pass when traveling on their own to avoid being arrested by any white person. But as the nonfinite construction neither has an overt subject nor is introduced by a conjunction clarifying the logical relationship between the two clauses, readers need to rely on their extratextual knowledge to make sense of the sentence. The same applies to the following example. Although it is not a participle clause like the ones quoted above, it belongs to the class of supplementive clauses, too, which are not introduced by subordinators, so that the semantic relationship must be inferred from the co-text, but is "generally clear," as Quirk et al. state (1124).

5.6.7   The white man I knew would demand my pass, and not able to give him one, would take me into possession. (143)

Here, however, the relation is not entirely clear, not only because of the ambiguous status of "I knew." Although an interpretation as a defining relative clause is theoretically possible, the flight situation suggests that it is likely to see it as the embedded highest order clause that projects all other activities. Then "the white man would demand my pass [and]

would take me into possession" functions as matrix clause to the supplementive clause, whose subject, in order for the sentence to make sense, must be inferred from the projecting clause. This, however, is awkward because the projecting clause and supplementive clause of reason are not directly related but only with one level in the syntactic hierarchy between them. The *I*-narrator again occurs only once.

Like participle clauses, verbless clauses are frequent in Northup, too. The most condensed example is possibly the following one from Northup's flight through the swamp.

5.6.8   Wet and weary, but relieved from the sense of instant peril, I continued on, more cautious and afraid, however, of the snakes and alligators than I had been in the earlier portion of my flight. (140)

Here, four Attributes (or possibly five, depending on the interpretation of "relieved"), congruently expressed through relational processes, are presented twice with two coordinated adjectives. The relational copula "was" must be inferred from the verbal group "had been." Moreover, the participle clause ("relieved") is coordinated with "wet and weary" through *but*, so that the first-person singular pronoun occurs only twice. The condensation is increased by nominalizations ("sense," "flight"). The device of presenting processes and qualities in verbless clauses not only contributes to syntactic condensation in general. The previous examples have shown that the *I*-narrator becomes backgrounded in what is presented as his own text. The information that he is acting or that Attributes are associated with him is retrievable, but the suppression of Actor-roles through subject-elision and elliptical coordination is so recurrent that the quantitative and experiential effect is immense. It appears as if not the *I*-narrator were focal to the narrative, but his and other characters' doings, adventures, and therefore his unique selling point.

The prevalence of nonfinite clauses is not the only factor that contributes heavily to the low relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. As indicated, nominalizations abound throughout the text as well and are more frequent than in any other narrative except Douglass'. The rf_{nom} is 16.168. The share of the nominalizations that collocate with the first-person possessive determiner is only 5.41% and therefore the lowest in the entire corpus (Table 4.6, p. 70). The nominalizations are distributed evenly over the text. Although the narrator provides general observations, such as an account of cotton cultivation in the South (Chapter 12), these are not connected with a higher density of abstract nominals. They are not absent from these observations but they do not contribute to abstraction, as the following example illustrates.

5.6.9   Some of them seem to have a natural knack, or quickness, which enables them to pick with great celerity, and with both hands, while others, with whatever practice or industry, are utterly unable to come up to the ordinary standard. (166)

This description has a general value, which is indicated by present tense and the generic reference of the third-person plural pronoun to any number of slaves but none in particular. Apart from that, however, the nominalizations mostly add to a formal tone rather than having any functional or situational value in the description.

Typically, nominalizations can be found in any episode of this narrative. While individual instances affect the number of explicit occurrences of the *I*-pronoun in a general way, the narrator does not use nominalizations strategically as a device to achieve a local effect, such as dissociation from an activity or the emphasis of permanence. A number of quotations from different parts of the text will illustrate this assertion. The examples 5.6.10 to

5.6.13 are taken from Chapters 2 and 3, which describe Northup's being kidnapped and imprisoned in Washington.

5.6.10   I only remember with any degree of distinctness, that I was told it was necessary to go to a physician and procure medicine, and that pulling on my boots, without coat or hat, I followed them through a long passage-way, or alley, into the open street. (37)

The construction "any degree of distinctness" nominalizes a quality and paraphrases as 'quite distinctly.' The adverb is realized as a stable entity, but the abstract quality does not appear motivated, as it does not match the situation, which is otherwise described in a concrete way with concrete items.

5.6.11   How long I remained in that condition – whether only that night, or many days and nights – I do not know; but when consciousness returned I found myself alone, in utter darkness, and in chains. (38)

In this excerpt, the nominalized adjectives *conscious* and *dark* underline the narrator's helpless position in prison. The nominalized qualities enclose him; he is not actively regaining consciousness. The coordination of "darkness" and "chains" emphasizes that both contribute to his lack of power: he cannot see and he cannot move, either. All he can do is think after the return of his consciousness. The nominalizations continue to be used.

5.6.12   I complained bitterly of the strange treatment I had received, and threatened, upon my liberation, to have satisfaction for the wrong. (43)

In addition to the quality *satisfied*, the processes *treat* and *liberate* are nominalized. They eliminate clauses such as 'I was treated' or 'after I would be liberated,' but they do not completely eliminate the presence of the *I*-pronoun. It is not the case that the narrator tries to obscure participation in the processes; rather, it seems that he would like to appear maintaining linguistic decorum even in the face of utter injustice and mistreatment. The kidnapped Northup never swears at his capturers. Instead, he behaves properly, if not patiently, and he expresses this fact with the greatest possible politeness.

5.6.13   I indulged the anticipation of escape, and that speedily. (47)

These examples should suffice to illustrate the point, although the list of examples is virtually endless in this particular text. It is clear that each individual instance of nominalization has its own local effects. But as the device is hardly ever clustered or completely absent from any stretch of text, the effect is first and foremost a global one. The frequency and the evenness of the device add a formal quality to the text. Although each instance creates meaning for itself and its co-text, many occurrences appear not very well motivated, except for the writer's desire to create exactly this impression of formality, politeness, and the intellectual capacities that such linguistic recategorizations require. Qualities and processes, typically realized as adjectives and verbs, are presented as things and entities between which further – and sometimes different – relations obtain than between the original human participants. Human experience becomes transformed and therefore increasingly and consistently metaphorized. This process may not be considered as foregrounding because the instances are so evenly distributed, but its quantitative impact is immense. After all, Northup's narrative is the only text in which the relative frequency of nominalizations exceeds that of the *I*-pronoun. On a very general level, this removes the linguistic realization enormously from actual, immediate human experience (cf. also Halliday 1998).

In addition to the quantitatively examined morphological derivations, a great number of conversions are to be found in the text. A few examples show how they help to eliminate Northup as an explicit participant in processes.

5.6.14   It was a conspicuous position, from whence the whole plantation was in view. (136)

5.6.15   Fear gave me strength, and I exerted it to the utmost. (137)

5.6.16   Hope revived a little as I reached the water. (138)

5.6.17   The dread of them now almost equaled the fear of the pursuing hounds. (140)

All of the nouns *view*, *fear*, *strength*, *hope*, and *dread* are derived from adjectives or verbs and therefore signify compressed processes or states whose the participants are not overt but must be inferred from the surrounding text. Furthermore, all of the examples between 5.6.10 and 5.6.17 also illustrate that Wilson scarcely lets his nominalizations collocate with a possessive determiner. When the nominalizations act as participants themselves, the *I*-narrator is able to depersonalize his own doings as he does in the following example from the first fight with Tibeats in Chapter 8.

5.6.18   I cannot tell how many times I struck him. Blow after blow fell fast and heavy upon his wriggling form. (111)

Although, according to the *OED*, *blow* is not a true conversion, it, being an abstract nominal form of a concrete process, achieves the same effect as nominalization proper, except for the possibly learned connotation of Latinate expressions. The semantic tie between *blow* and *strike* in the preceding clause complex makes it clear that the narrator himself is the one who beats. And yet, the beating has acquired a life of its own. The behavioural verb *fall* supports the lack of conscious and responsible action and adds a sense of inevitability. Moreover, the second sentence initiates a shift of the focus away from the beating Northup to the beaten Tibeats, as the remainder of the paragraph shows.

5.6.19   At length he screamed – cried murder – and at last the blasphemous tyrant called on God for mercy. But he who had never shown mercy did not receive it. The stiff stock of the whip warped round his cringing body until my right arm ached. (111)

The acting *I*-narrator has departed from the scenery and can only be detected in the possessive determiner before the right arm. The stock of the whip has become Actor, whereas the human participants are only present through what van Leeuwen calls "somatisation" (60). This is the representation of social actors by way of reference to parts of their body, which, in this case, have the grammatical potential to act independently. This example may suggest that nominalizations are used by Wilson to deflect attention from specific, un-Uncle-Tom-like, activities of the narrator, but this is not the case. While they may background the role of the narrator, they emphasize the activity itself. Moreover, the explicit occurrence of the *I*-narrator is not only backgrounded when his actions might hurt his public image. Consider the following excerpt from an earlier episode.

5.6.20   It was the desire of Ford's approving voice that suggested to me an idea that resulted to his profit. (98)

Northup's desire as well as his idea signify in abstract terms mental processes that originate from the absent *I*-narrator. Yet in this case, there is no reason why the narrator should dissociate himself from his ingenuity. In fact, Northup is presented as taking pride in his re-

sourcefulness more than once in the narrative; he is made to say of himself that he is "the Fulton of Indian Creek" (99)[19] as well as "a sort of 'Jack of all trades'" (102). In this incident, his idea of building a canal to raft lumber is eventually put into practice and Northup is given control over the entire business.

There are numerous further examples where the presence of the first-person singular pronoun is eliminated by an abstract noun, nominalization, or a nonfinite verb. But these occurrences do not seem to follow any strategy for the construction of the narrator's discoursal self such as to display mental capacities of abstraction and generalization, or support tactics of dissociation and association. At times it appears as if the use or non-use of the devices mentioned were led by the writer's desire to appear stylistically elaborate rather than reflecting a scheme to present the narrator's activities favorably, or in such a way that he becomes and remains the focal character of his own text. Even when Northup acts, albeit only hypothetically, as in the following example, Wilson inserts devices to eliminate the *I*-pronoun. Here Northup thinks about trying to escape, but he is bound.

5.6.21   Had I not been hand-cuffed the attempt would certainly have been made, whatever consequence might have followed. (56)

The conversion *attempt* and the use of the passive voice alike appear unmotivated. The process of running away is presented as a nominalized and abstracted result in what appears as a creative material process, but is really semantically empty as in *make a blow* or *make an answer*. From an experiential point of view, the wording removes the hypothetical escape at least twice from what is more congruently represented by a material process with a human Actor as participant.

It is only once in the narrative that the linguistic devices may suggest the narrator's dissociation from his own activities. In Chapter 18 the narrator presents himself as being forced to commit one of the worst breaches of solidarity among slaves. In one of the most chilling incidents Northup, who for eight years performs the office of a slave driver on the plantation of the cruel drunkard Epps, is forced to whip a female slave because of his master's jealousy. It is clear that Northup executes the grim castigation, yet the majority of his actions must be inferred from the co-text. Initially Epps orders what is to be done.

5.6.22   Then turning to me, he ordered four stakes to be driven into the ground, pointing with the toe of his boot to the places where he wanted them. (255)

There is no semantic connection between the turning and the ordering, yet Northup may safely be assumed to be the implied Receiver of the order. The rest of the activities is presented in the passive voice, and it is by syntactic analogy and implication only that Northup can be associated with them, because both Receiver and Actor are likewise unmentioned.

5.6.23   When the stakes were driven down, he ordered her to be stripped of every article of dress. Ropes were then brought, and the naked girl was laid upon her face, her wrists and feet each tied firmly to a stake. (255f)

Eventually, Epps explicitly orders Northup to flog the victim. Northup states his compliance with the words "[u]npleasant as it was, I was compelled to obey him." But before the whipping is described, the focus pans away and presents the spectators of the punishment. What follows is a difficult scene for the narrator to describe; solidarity with his victim and

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[19] The allusion refers to Robert Fulton (1765 - 1815), an American inventor and artist, who was critically involved in the construction of the first successful steamboat and submarine.

fear of being punished himself are irreconcilable and pose a terrible dilemma for him. Only once in the entire episode of about 700 words does the *I*-narrator explicitly *strike*. The narrator is, on the one hand, present in the first-person singular in the description of the whipping; thirteen instances of the *I*-pronoun in the episode attest to this. On the other hand, behavioural, verbal, and mental process types outnumber material ones in a description of what is essentially a material activity, and therefore deflect the focus from the narrator's material doings. The entire episode features only one transitive material process signifying *strike* that is not a projection.

5.6.24   When I had struck her as many as thirty times, I stopped, and turned round toward Epps, hoping he was satisfied; but with bitter oaths and threats, he ordered me to continue. I inflicted ten or fifteen blows more. (256)

Northup eventually refuses to continue the whipping so that Epps proceeds himself. Epps occupies twelve subject roles but does not explicitly *strike* his victim: "He then seized [the whip] himself, and applied it with ten-fold greater force than I had" (256). The instrument of torture is the grammatical object, semantically Goal and Range of the processes *seize* and *apply*, whereas the experiential object, Patsey, is not mentioned here.

And yet, the victim Patsey is neither ignored nor objectified in this description. In fact, she occupies fifteen subject positions herself, more than any other participant. If somatizations with possessive determiners such as "her back," "her head," "her screams" are taken into account, there are more than twenty subject positions linked to her. Most process types associated with her are verbal (*exclaim*), behavioural (*struggle, writhe, shrink, lie*), and relational (*be, remain*); mental ones are projected by Epps ("demanding if she would like to go"). They do not extend to other participants and so illustrate her helplessness. Eventually she stops acting at all: "she ceased struggling. [. . .] She no longer writhed and shrank beneath the lash when it bit out small pieces of her flesh" (256). It is here at the latest that the lash has taken over, but now, as the pain increases, the focus pans away again: "the bird chirped merrily amidst the foliage of the trees."

Coordination, especially of verbally as well as nominally expressed processes, is frequent in this episode. At times the coordinated items are, if not near synonyms, at least semantically closely related and thus intensify the meaning. There are "painful cries and shrieks," "loud and angry curses," "screams and supplications," and the "blood, which flowed down her sides and dropped upon the ground." The semantic proximity of the coordinated items is supported by a phonetic dimension. In addition to the alliterative "Poor Patsey prayed piteously for mercy," "screams and supplications" (note the religious connotations of the latter term), there is onomatopoetic [i:] as well as the diphthongs [ei] and [ai], while the flow of blood is underlined by the predominance of low back vowels. Many nominalized or converted processes in this episode are, unlike in many others, not dissociated from their participants.

5.6.25   The painful cries and shrieks of the tortured Patsey, mingling with the loud and angry curses of Epps, loaded the air. (256)

While they eliminate grammatical subjects and so contribute to lexical density, the genitives provide cues as to whose cries are being heard. At the same time they contribute to the impression that the description of the incident does not appear impersonal and detached because the victim and her sufferings are presented in detail.

This episode illustrates that the *I*-narrator does not instrumentalize the possibility to vary the density of the *I*-pronoun through nominalization and the use of nonfinite subjectless clauses only to dissociate himself from particular, possibly unfavorable, events. The *I*-narrator does not appear in fewer instances than his violent counterpart Epps, neither is the narrator presented as being involved in fewer material processes signifying the whipping. The subject roles are relatively equally distributed between Northup and Epps, if any participant stands out it is Patsey. To indicate that the narrator distances himself from the activities, other linguistic devices such as the passive voice and a careful choice of process types are utilized. The general effects are sustained by a number of rhetorical devices such as parallelisms, alliterations, and, not least, religious vocabulary and imagery.

In addition to nominalization and subjectless clauses it is Wilson's affinity for tedious description that reduces the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun, too. In many episodes the *I*-narrator is not the topic of the text. In the episode analyzed above, after the whipping the narrative focuses on the victim Patsey and on brutality as committed by Epps' son. In the remainder of the chapter, which is about 900 words long, the *I*-narrator appears only once more. Even in the second part of Chapter 10, besides its focus on Northup's flight, which features an *rf*$_I$ of 41.237, there is still room for a description of the nature and use of bloodhounds, the swamp and its ferocious animals, and the woods, often in wordy detail. Generally valid descriptions are characterized by the use of present simple and sometimes stretch over a number of sentences; yet even in the midst of action there is space for descriptive passages. Emblematic is the description of "all the fowls of the air, and all the creeping things of the earth" in the swamp, where "the feathered tribes . . . seemed to throng the morass by hundreds of thousands and their garrulous throats poured forth such multitudinous sounds . . ." (141). Wilson is so busy extolling the birds' talkativeness that it seems he completely fails to notice his own garrulity and over this forgets the main character, too.

In sum, Northup's low presence in the text is a consequence of his ghostwriter's stylistic disposition. Wilson tends to sacrifice Northup's presence for rhetorical devices that are regarded as elevated and for the desire to provide as much information about slavery as possible. Rather than general, however, most of the information is anecdotal and involves specific characters from the narrator's experience in slavery. This supports the earlier observation that the narrator himself is frequently not the primary subject or topic of the narrative, but his adventures. Like in the incident of the whipping, the descriptions may lead into general observations about freedom, insurrection (249), cotton picking (164) etc. Especially in the second half of the narrative, when Northup presents his ten years on Epps' plantation, the presence of the narrator occasionally sinks as low as 2.513 and 4.310 in Chapters 12 and 15 respectively. The narrator provides a large quantity of detail about slavery in general as well as his fellow slaves and masters he has come to know during his enslavement in Louisiana. Northup here completely retreats from the text, and, in contrast to Brown, he does not even present himself as the projecting instance of the events related.

As the *I*-narrator's presence is so uniquely low because of his writer's predilections, Northup frequently appears in what is presented as his own text as an "implied subject," grammatically as well as epistemologically. However, Wilson hardly ever strategically associates his main character with particular activities or dissociates him from others. The motivation for backgrounding Northup is not to render the main character in a more favorable light in particular local occurrences. If anything, the effect is a foregrounding of the

adventure and description of slave life. The relative lack of linguistic variation in terms of syntactic structure, the use of nominalization, and nonfinite constructions, suggests that the effects of the narrator's particular style are of a rather global nature.

Especially in this narrative one must be aware that the narrator's discoursal self created through the text is not equivalent with the historical Solomon Northup; Wilson's peculiar narrative style, which in many respects differs from the language of the other narratives, is only a more obvious reminder of this fact.

5.6.2 Solomon Northup's use of transitivity

In Northup's narrative material verbs dominate quantitatively, followed by mental and relational verbs. However, the contrast between the major process types is not as strongly developed as for instance in Grandy, Roper, or Bibb. It is remarkable that mental verbs are only slightly more frequently selected than relational ones; in all other texts except Roper's the contrast between these two process types is more marked.

Table 5.6.2: Selection of process types in Northup (in percent)

ch.	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1	0.00	40.38	17.31	40.38	1.92	19.217
2	6.32	21.05	41.05	29.47	2.11	32.291
3	6.02	12.05	27.71	42.17	12.05	22.802
4	5.26	18.42	47.37	18.42	10.53	13.126
5	1.89	39.62	28.30	16.98	13.21	15.722
6	12.00	28.00	40.00	16.00	4.00	8.486
7	2.08	22.92	39.58	29.17	6.25	11.988
8	2.99	32.84	19.40	28.36	16.42	21.096
9	10.34	36.21	29.31	20.69	3.45	17.350
10	5.76	47.48	26.62	16.55	3.60	35.678
11	2.86	50.00	12.86	24.29	10.00	17.032
12	0.00	44.44	22.22	22.22	11.11	2.513
13	8.51	42.55	6.38	38.30	4.26	12.240
14	0.00	23.33	36.67	36.67	3.33	6.862
15	0.00	35.71	14.29	42.86	7.14	3.772
16	6.35	33.33	30.16	19.05	11.11	18.325
17	5.26	36.84	23.68	26.32	7.89	10.635
18	3.57	28.57	42.86	10.71	14.29	8.889
19	10.71	28.57	26.79	25.00	8.93	13.442
20	14.29	45.24	19.05	11.90	9.52	16.235
21	9.52	31.75	19.05	22.22	17.46	12.214
22	4.55	40.91	15.91	29.55	9.09	14.022
sum	5.77	33.82	26.59	25.56	8.26	14.946

After the two female narrators and Brown, Northup's text has the smallest share of material verbs (33.8%). 31% of them are ranged middle processes, while more than 47% are intransitive. In accordance with the narrator's affinity for nominalization we find that of the ranged processes many feature a dummy verb with a Range: process such as *begin a relation*, *catch a glimpse* or *a sight*, *receive a flogging*, *make an answer*, *make havoc*, *obtain employment* etc. The share of effective clauses is small (20%); and yet a number of human Goals can be

found. These are especially recurrent in the description of the two fights between Northup and Tibeats (Cs. 8 and 10). Although Tibeats initiates both instances of physical confrontation, Northup, too, is presented as Actor as well as Agent in many processes.

5.6.26   I cannot tell how many times I struck him. Blow after blow fell fast and heavy upon his wriggling form. (111)

5.6.27   Springing towards him with all my power, and meeting him full half-way, before he could bring down the blow, with one hand I caught his uplifted arm, with the other seized him by the throat. (132)

5.6.28   I seized him by the throat, and this time, with a vice-like gripe [sic] that soon relaxed his hold. (135)

Northup strikes, catches and seizes his counterpart in these episodes. As indicated earlier, it is characteristic that parts of the body take over participant roles. But instead of downplaying his actions, Northup, or rather Wilson, owns up to the *I*-narrator's rage prompted by fear, although black violence, even in self-defense, was not socially sanctioned and made the slave usually subject to immediate violent punishment. The narrator expresses this rage through his material doings but also through his mental activities, which display the preference for vivid metaphorical expression again. In the following example the first-person singular pronoun is absent from the murderous thought; the narrator is merely Receiver in a verbal process. Note again the somatization of the human actors.

5.6.31   There was "a lurking devil" in my heart that prompted me to kill the human bloodhound on the spot – to retain the gripe [sic] on his accursed throat till the breath of life was gone! (135)

The sentence illustrates that, on the one hand, the *I*-narrator is not presented as dissociated from his violent doings, although the absence of the *I*-pronoun backgrounds him in relation to his activities. On the other hand, the presentation transfers responsibility from the first person to the "lurking devil." The material processes *kill* and *retain* are projected through the verbal process *prompt*. Significantly, alternative wordings such as 'I was strongly tempted to kill him,' 'I intended to kill him' with the *I*-pronoun in subject-position or even a more explicit Agent-role 'I almost killed him' were not chosen.

Material as well as mental processes together with the *I*-pronoun, scarce as it may be, provide a point of identification with the narrator for the reader. Tibeats, however, is referred to either in a metaphorical way ("human bloodhound," "wriggling form"), in terms of his parts of the body ("arm," "throat") or his actions ("hold"). The final transformation in 5.6.31 is particularly remarkable in this respect. Tibeats' "life" does not figure as a participant in its own right. It is the "breath" that is involved in an attributive process that metaphorizes the more congruent experience 'he was dead.' Thus Tibeats' occurrences in subject position are minimized and the narrator's antagonist is also deprived of his features as an individual.

Northup uses fewer mental verbs than other narrators except Roper and Grandy. Not only is the relative frequency of mental processes the lowest in the corpus due to the generally low rf_I (rf_{men} 3.975), the share is the third smallest as well (26.6%). Mental verbs are particularly frequent in Chapters 2, 4, and 18, which cover the kidnapping, the deportation to the South, and the whipping of Patsey respectively. What distinguishes his use of mental verbs from other narrators is the fact that more than 62% of the mental processes are verbs of cognition, whereas verbs of affection are scarce; only Ball's narrative features fewer affec-

tive verbs in comparison with the total of mental verbs (Table 4.10, p. 81). In addition to the typical past tense uses of *think*, *know*, *understand*, etc., there is a large number of cognitive verbs in the present tense. Some of them appear to be purely retrospective such as *recall* and *remember*, which explicitly allude to the active role of the narrator's memory.

5.6.32   There dwells on its shore a tribe of Indians, a remnant of the Chickasaws or Chicko-
         pees, if I remember rightly. (100)

5.6.33   He had a pistol in each hand, and as near as I can now recall to mind, spoke in a
         firm, determined manner, as follows: . . . (115)

Like the following constructions these add uncertainty to the proposition stated.

5.6.34   Continuing my course due south, as nearly as I can judge, I came at length to water
         just over shoe. (138)

5.6.35   On the corner of Congress street and Broadway near the tavern, then, and for aught
         I know to the contrary, still kept by Mr. Moon, ... (28)

In this way, their use resembles other cognitive verbs, such as *think*, *presume*, or *doubt not*, which add a modal element of probability to the proposition. Compare this example.

5.6.36   She was born, I think she said, on his plantation. (52)

These explicit expressions of subjective probability add an interpersonal element to the narration. Like Douglass, Northup does not seem to fear that they may hurt his position as a trustworthy narrator. In fact, these constructions are notably more frequent than their congruent objective counterparts (*probably*, *certainly*). However, this invariably applies to all narratives in the corpus; Grandy's narrative, otherwise characterized as impersonal, features the second highest relative frequency of subjectively expressed probability (Table A.1.10, p. 282). In Northup's text the relative frequency of explicit objective probability is among the highest in the corpus whereas that of explicit subjective probability is among the lowest. But the picture is blurred through the low rf_I in this case. If we consider the number of occurrences of the *I*-pronoun used to express subjective probability in relation to the total of instances of the first-person singular pronoun, we find that Northup's text has the second largest share. Only Picquet uses a larger proportion of the *I*-pronoun to express subjective probability explicitly. In a more abstract way this means that the narrator uses a large portion of his first-person occurrences to intrude explicitly from his present into the development, presentation, and evaluation of the past events. Thus, despite the generally low rf_I and a resulting low rf_{men}, the subjective element in Northup's narrative is comparatively strongly developed. It seems as if the presentation of the narrative were geared towards compensating for what some critics consider a lack of authenticity through an enhanced explicitness of this particular subjective element.

There are more instances of mental processes in the present tense that help characterize the narrator as trustworthy.

5.6.37   The mate's name was Biddee, the captain's I cannot now recall, though I rarely ever
         forget a name once heard. (72)

Northup is presented as being reliable even in details of his narrative. Ironic as it may seem for an as-told-to-narrative, in this instance it is the fact that the first-person narrator admits that his memory is failing him that is supposed to enhance the trust in him. In addi-

tion, the claim that he normally remembers names well betrays his pride in his intellectual capacities, which reappears time and again in the text.

Another unique feature of Northup's narrative is the fact that more than a quarter of the processes associated with the first-person singular pronoun are relational ones (25.56%). Although the size of their share does not exceed that of mental verbs, it is larger than in any other narrative. Larger than in any other narrative, except Roper's, is also the share of constructions with copular *be* in the past tense. While in most texts about 45% of the relational processes are realized by *I was*, these amount to more than 55% in Northup. The overwhelming majority of the relational processes are of the attributive kind, but a few instances of identifying processes are to be found as well. The narrator uses them to stress some unique quality about himself. When Northup's suggestion to build a canal through the woods is successfully carried out, he can hardly hide his pride.

5.6.38 On all sides I heard Ford's Platt pronounced the "smartest nigger in the Pine Woods" – in fact I was the Fulton of Indian Creek. I was not insensible to the praise bestowed upon me, and enjoyed, especially, my triumph over Taydem, whose half-malicious ridicule had stung my pride. (99)

While the initial identification of Platt, Northup's slave name, as the "smartest nigger" is hearsay but as such dependent on the narrator's perception, the second identification is not characterized in this way. The impression that the narrator himself is convinced of his resourcefulness is supported by the switch of the personal pronoun; it is not *he* that is used to refer to "Ford's Platt" but *I*, the narrator. Possessive determiners together with "pride" and "triumph" and the negated attributive process ("I was not insensible") underline the importance that this incident has for the narrator's ego. The reference to Robert Fulton, an American inventor and artist of the beginning nineteenth century, has the additional effect of extolling the narrator's presumed learnedness.

Northup uses attributive processes in the same vein. Several paragraphs later his master needs a loom.

5.6.39 He could not imagine where one was to be found, when I suggested that the easiest way to get one would be to make it, informing him at the same time, that I was a sort of "Jack at all trades," and would attempt it, with his permission. (102)

But Northup is not only smart and inventive. Being able to play the violin, he is much sought after to play at festivities, and paid quite well for his services. Eventually, he has been able to save seventeen dollars and is proud of his wealth.

5.6.40 With this sum in possession, I was looked upon by my fellows as a millionaire. It afforded me great pleasure to look at it – to count it over and over again, day after day. Visions of cabin furniture, of water pails, of pocket knives, new shoes and coats and hats, floated through my fancy, and up through all rose the triumphant contemplation, that I was the wealthiest "nigger" on Bayou Boeuf. (196)

These characterizations, despite a slightly ironic touch introduced through the mock-condescending "nigger," betray the narrator's pride at his achievements and of the admiration by whites and fellow slaves alike.[20] In other occurrences of attributive processes this irony is absent and the *I*-narrator explicitly characterizes himself as "skillful" (99) and "diligent."

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[20] Note that the use of *nigger* among blacks as a form of address or as a self-identificatory device does not have automatically the same denigrating meaning as its use by whites. It is more ambiguous as it may vary in meaning from affectionate to condescending and depreciative (cf. Genovese 437f). In Northup it is interesting to see a white ghostwriter repeatedly use it as self-identification of an escaped slave.

The latter instance as a replacement for a simple 'working' is especially telling: "for three days I was diligent in the garden" (147). An adjective takes the place of a material verb and thus produces a rather permanent characterization of the narrator instead of a temporary characterization of his activity in 'was working diligently' or the absence of such in simply 'was working;' yet it clashes with the temporal expression "for three days." Moreover, the expression also removes the progressive aspect that is more typical with material verbs than with relational ones. 'I was being diligent' would have been possible, but in contrast to a material progressive form is a rather marked form of expression and rare in the corpus.

The high frequency of *I was* is strongly associated with the high number of constructions that fall into the categories of semi- and pseudo-passives. These constructions have the effect of implying an outside Agent in a process that experientially often does not have one. When Northup, for instance, says "I was tormented with continual thirst" (47), the passive impression is by no means accidental. He is has just been kidnapped and is incarcerated in a slave pen in Washington. Although he does not say that his enslavers deliberately deprive him of drink, the possibility for an unnamed, implied outside Agent is obvious. At the same time, the adjectival character of the participle conveys the impression of a state and thus permanence. The same applies to a large number of similar constructions.

5.6.41   The light admitted through the open door enabled me to observe the room in which I was confined. (41)

Note here how well the state of being confined, expressed in a passive way, matches "admitted" and thus indeed implies outside agency twice. The following sentences may serve as further illustrations of the phenomenon.

5.6.42   But I was yet bound, the rope still dangling from my neck, and standing in the same tracks where Tibeats and his comrades left me. (118)

5.6.43   In the first place, I was deprived of pen, ink, and paper. (230)

In a number of cases these constructions also tend to sound rather formal and elaborate and therefore possibly more learned than nearly equivalent but experientially different counterparts. Compare 5.6.43 with 'I had no pen, ink, and paper.' Likewise constructions such as *I was employed*, *I was accustomed to* and *I was acquainted with* are often used where 'I worked' or 'I knew' might convey a similar meaning with a different connotation. The Latinate origins of many of the participial adjectives add to this impression of heightened language here (*indebted*, *engaged*, *entitled*, *induced*). That these constructions are most frequent in Northup's narrative is in accord with the observation that he is also the master of nominalization. Both ways of expression fall under the category of grammatical metaphor, that is, a grammatical reconfiguration of an experiential setup. In a nominalization a process is realized as a noun, while in a relational process of this particular type a material or a mental process is realized as an Attribute and therefore as a state. The general effect, already mentioned above, is that in the form of an Attribute the process appears as a permanent characterization in contrast to the temporary quality of a (finite) verbal group.

Proper passive voice, on the other hand, is not particularly prominent in this text. The rf_p of 0.913 is the lowest in the corpus due to the low overall relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun. The proportion of 5.68% is slightly above average. Of those chapters that feature a high proportion of passive forms together with a high relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun only Chapter 5 stands out. The share of passive forms amounts to almost 15% while the rf_I

is 18.392. The chapter describes the narrator's sea voyage on a slave ship from Richmond to New Orleans. Together with a few other slaves Northup plans a slave mutiny, but the enterprise fails when one of the conspirators is taken ill and dies. The individual instances of passive forms are scattered over the entire chapter; only towards the end is there a small cluster when the narrator ponders over his situation.

5.6.44   Could it be possible that I was thousands of miles from home – that I had been driven through the streets like a dumb beast – that I had been chained and beaten without mercy – that I was even then herded with a drove of slaves, a slave myself? (77)

The passive voice puts the narrator himself into the focus of attention, which is underlined by a comparatively high density of the *I*-pronoun, whereas the unmentioned Agents of the material processes are of no concern here.

Noteworthy in this context is also the scarcity of the passive voice in Chapters 8 to 10, where Northup's confrontation with Tibeats reaches its climax in the two fights and Tibeats' attempt to hang Northup. Although the narrator is tied for a long time and unable to move, passive forms are scarce (cf. ex. 5.6.42 above). What we find instead is a high proportion of behavioural verbs in this episode, most notably *stand*, which contribute to the comparatively large share of behavioural verbs in this text.

A few more words need to be added about relational verbs. They are especially frequent in Chapters 1, 3, and 13, in which they amount to approximately 40%. The typically expositional nature of an initial chapter in a narrative provides ample opportunity for relational processes. And yet, their use in the first chapter already sets the scene for the elaborated rhetoric that is to characterize the entire text. A few examples will serve to illustrate this.

5.6.45   How long he remained in the latter place, I have not the means of definitely ascertaining. (19)

5.6.46   In the winter season, I had numerous calls to play on the violin. (23)

The possessive processes with an abstract nominal as possessed element illustrate once more the frequent use of abstraction, although the activities described refer to concrete incidents. These elaborate constructions and their particular lexical choices ("remained" instead of 'stayed,' "definitely ascertaining" instead of 'finding out for sure,' "numerous" instead of 'many') in the very beginning of the narrative position the narrator at an early point in the narrative as rhetorically skilled. There is no doubt that this narrator intends to emphasize intellectual equality. Even the presentation of simple field work is instrumentalized in this vein. The narrator is not 'used to field work' and does not simply 'like' it.

5.6.47   I had been accustomed from earliest youth to agricultural labors, and it was an occupation congenial to my tastes. (23)

Note how a second relational process appears as a grammatical metaphor for a mental process of the *please*-type: 'the occupation pleased me.' And even this paraphrase is in fact rather metaphorical as it contains a nominalization.

In sum, the rhetorical self-assuredness of this text helps Northup to come across as a self-confident narrator, despite the fact that he is often an implied one. The particular bent for grammatical metaphor, informational density, and exceptional lexical choices signify linguistic self-confidence. Although this is due to his amanuensis Wilson rather than to the historical Northup (cf. Olney 161ff), it carries over to the discursive figure. More particular, the way of presenting Northup's role, for instance, in the physical confrontations with Ti-

beats, the explicit use of subjectivity, and the deliberate use of attributive processes contribute to the creation of the narrator's discursive self as a self-assured being. He admits having committed violence; he also admits the intrusion of the memory and of uncertainty, but instead of undermining his position, this apparent honesty supports his claim to trustworthiness. He does not downplay possible negative elements such as his rage at Tibeats; after all, after Douglass, Northup is only the second narrator who describes a physical fight with a white and thus supposedly superior person in all detail. But unlike Douglass, Northup does not isolate this or other single incidents in order to transform them into existential turning points.

The *I*-narrator and his life story are styled as extraordinary and, contrary to earlier narrators such as Roper and Grandy, the discursive narrator desires to be considered as extraordinary, too. He is made to appear as knowing what his story (and thus the plot Wilson weaves) is worth; therefore, the rhetorical boldness, or what Olney characterizes tongue in cheek as "pretty fine writing and awfully literary" (162), appears justified. Northup's narrative is one where activities and events are reconfigured to a very high degree to add significance to experiences which other narrators may share, but which are described in a more congruent manner. However, other than in Douglass, for instance, this added significance is not a function of local transformations and attributions, but it is a global effect that is built up over the entire narrative.

This interpretation may appear to clash with the claim made earlier that Northup frequently appears only as an implied narrator. But this is not the case. The extraordinary character of the events is indeed brought to the fore while the *I*-narrator himself is often not explicitly there. The effect is that the emphasis of the narrative lies on slave life, the adventure, and the narrator's description of his achievements and resourcefulness while in slavery. The narrator as human being is often only implied because the narrative is not at all concerned with his personal development as are Douglass' or Brown's. But this only mirrors the fact that other slave narrators have a progression from bondage via knowledge to freedom to present. Northup does not, because he was kidnapped at the age of thirty-two, when he was already a husband and a father in New York. If anything, the twelve years as a slave represent a regression for a free, literate, and skillful man, who was forced to hide his true identity, his ability to write, and his knowledge of the North because of his fear. Most scholars from Douglass himself onwards have for a long time agreed that this story is indeed extraordinary (Eakin and Logsdon ixff), and to a large extent, the language in which these events are presented contributes to and emphasizes this quality of Northup's narrative.

5.7 *Fifty Years in Chains; or, The Life of an American Slave*

5.7.1 Charles Ball's presence in the text

Ball's narrative has an exceptional status within the corpus. According to Taylor, it ranks in popularity among the most successful ones by Equiano, Douglass, Northup, and Henson (1: 261), but unlike these, the authenticity of Ball's text was considered questionable for a long time. It was originally published as *Slavery in the United States* in 1836 and accompanied by authenticating documents to prove its accuracy. Yet, when texts such as *Memoirs of Archy Moore* (1836) and the *Narrative of James Williams* (1838) were denounced as fictional, Ball's text came under attack as well. While the other two were dismissed as fictitious and withdrawn by abolitionists, Ball's text remained on the market, although, like Whittier's *James Williams*, it used similar techniques of concealing the true identity of the first-person narrator, such as the sparing revelation of the names of places and owners (Starling 229ff). More importantly, however, even the narrator's name itself is generally considered a pseudonym (Taylor 1:260). Yet, although the identities of the slave and the writer were never disclosed according to Starling (107, 227), and the book's sales seem to have stalled after the controversies over *Archy Moore*, editors later found that the authenticity of Ball's narrative had not been disproved and thus it could be safely re-edited and republished in what Starling calls a "gala hoax" (232).

The first edition of 1836 identifies a "Mr. Fisher" as the author of the text and names the *I*-narrator "Charles Ball." Yet an unidentified voice in the introduction also concedes that a few of the anecdotes and observations do not originate from the interviewed slave's accounts. The anonymous introducer makes the following assertions.

> The narrative is taken from the mouth of the adventurer himself; and if the copy does not retain the identical words of the original, the sense and import, at least, are faithfully preserved. Many of his opinions have been cautiously omitted, or carefully suppressed, as being of no value to the reader; and his sentiments upon the subject of slavery, have not been embodied in this work. (xi)

In how far these statements were helpful for the credibility of the narrative cannot be ascertained anymore. But curiously, although the text of the 1859-edition is identical with the first edition except for slight condensations and abridgements, no part of the introductory material was preserved. Likewise, all references to "Mr. Fisher" and even "Charles Ball" himself are omitted, whose full name does not appear in either of the editions. The new title was *Fifty Years in Chains; or, The Life of an American Slave*; the new preface consisted of three lines extolling the necessity to conceal the slave's name, as he was still subject to persecution, and the fact that his being a slave "unfitted him for literary work" (n. p.). Thus the text, twenty-two years old, was advertized as new. A gala hoax, indeed.

In contrast to Starling, other scholars, such as Smith Foster and Blassingame, are not so skeptical about the authenticity and credibility of the events in Ball's narrative; they freely quote from *Slavery in the United States* (Smith Foster 1994, Blassingame 1972, 1985). Blassingame points out that historical documents from South Carolina substantiate many of Ball's descriptions and that even Ulrich Bonnell Phillips included Ball's text in the sources for his *Plantation and Frontier Documents* of 1909 (Blassingame 1985: 81f). As this present study is not concerned with questions of historical truth or authenticity of any of the texts,

the controversies and the withdrawal do not *per se* exclude this particular narration from the corpus. Rather, its halted but unquestioned popularity over more than two decades makes it an object of study worthy of investigation, even more so as Starling claims that "more copies are to be found of this particular edition than are to be found of any other edition of this slave narrative, or any other slave narrative, in the libraries throughout [the USA]" (232).

And yet, it is not only its popularity alone that determines the significance of this text. It is also the question of the presentation of truth that plays a crucial role here, because Ball's narrative occupies, as Andrews asserts, a "prototypical" and "pioneering" position in the history of the genre (1986: 83, 84). Taking the original edition as the basis, he interprets the text as the first one in a countermovement to the spiritual autobiography, as epitomized by the narratives by Solomon Bayley (1825), Richard Allen (1833), and Jarena Lee (1836). It purports to concentrate on truth and simplicity (Ball 1), while, as the original preface claims, "every sentiment of this kind [i.e. the narrator's "bitterness of heart"] has been carefully excluded from the following pages" (Taylor 1: 264). Accordingly, in his metaphorical categorization of slave narratives Andrews identifies it as an assertive speech act, which is based on the assumption that words can be made to fit the world (1986: 82f). In this way, irrespective of authenticity and white control over the text, Ball's narrative sets the tone for further texts in the same mode, such as Roper's and Grandy's, where truth to the facts is supposed to dominate over the expression of the self (ibid.). The absence of the introductory authenticating statements and the silence on the sources of what is being presented as an anonymous narrator's life story in the republication of 1859, beg the question what kind of *I*-narration it is which in 1837 had to be withdrawn from the market, but in 1859 was considered suitable for a readership that had become increasingly abolitionized. In the light of the narrative's overwhelming popularity, it may be hypothesized that it was also the way of relating the events that made the readers honor the narrator's initial claim to truth ("My story is a true one") despite the lack of authentification through white sponsors and the lack of identification through a name.[21]

While the earlier withdrawal of some narratives suggests that contemporary readers of what was advertised as a slave narrative assumed the identity of historical figure and discoursal creation, for the analysis it is crucial to distinguish the historical slave, whom the original introductory documents as well as Blassingame's research attest real existence (1985: 81f), from the textual creation "Charles Ball." This applies to all narratives and narrators, but the fact that the deliberately anonymous editors of this particular edition of the text chose to omit their authenticating material at hand to turn an old story into new profit should arouse enough suspicion to ask what kind of *I*-narrator this text aims to present – and possibly why. Among all the narratives in the corpus, this edition of Ball's narrative is the only one that was published anonymously and without any kind of author's, editor's, or sponsor's documents.

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[21] While for the reader the names and their significance may have been less interesting than the character's adventures, the fact that later narrators emphasize this point suggests a different attitude for the fugitive slave. Throughout their texts narrators such as Brown and Northup are addressed with names that are at variance with those that appear on the cover of their books. While in slavery, Brown is called "Sandfort," Northup is addressed as "Platt." While the *I*-narrator in Ball is altogether silent on the subject of naming, other narrators point out that they understand the significance of having and keeping a name as an aspect of identity. The lack of a full name and the absence of the topic in Ball already contribute to the positioning of the *I*-narrator.

Charles Ball's narrative, even in the slightly clipped edition of 1859, is the longest one in the corpus; it contributes about one fourth of the words. Unlike the previous narrative by Northup, the present one does not occupy extreme positions in the various quantitative analyses. The relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun lies slightly below the average of the corpus and it increases from beginning to end. The relative frequency rises from 14.851 in the first quarter to 20.493 and 24.981 in the second and third. In the final quarter, which is predominantly concerned with the narrator's flight, it is as high as 35.722. Table 5.7.1 shows that only few chapters deviate strongly from the average. Chapters 3 and 4 feature a markedly lower rf_I than the rest, while the flight chapters (15 to 18) greatly exceed the average rf_I of 24.284. These chapters will be dealt with in detail below.

Table 5.7.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Ball's *Fifty Years in Chains*

Ch.	number of words	rf_I including passive voice	share of passive voice (in%)	rf_I without passive voice
1	3859	18.139	7.14	16.844
2	6032	19.562	6.78	18.236
3	5903	10.164	1.67	9.995
4	5102	7.840	0.00	7.840
5	4153	20.226	2.38	19.745
6	3382	16.263	12.73	14.193
7	4880	15.574	6.58	14.549
8	1374	28.384	0.00	28.384
9	10969	22.062	7.85	20.330
10	4379	22.836	6.00	21.466
11	7388	20.168	2.01	19.762
12	5380	23.978	2.33	23.420
13	3956	17.947	1.41	17.695
14	7382	22.081	4.91	20.997
15	4316	45.876	2.53	44.717
16	5261	51.891	1.47	51.131
17	4139	39.381	1.84	38.657
18	7546	38.563	1.72	37.901
19	4169	27.105	13.27	23.507
20	6095	21.657	2.27	21.165
sum	105665	24.284	4.01	23.310

In parts, *Fifty Years in Chains* is an adventure novel and, possibly more than any other narrative, also a travel account. Yuval Taylor, speaking of the longer 1836-edition, claims that it "rivals Frederick Law Olmsted's *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States* as one of the best antebellum portraits of the region" (1: 260). The condensed edition of 1859, too, is full of detail about nature, plantation life, the cultivation of different crops, and different slaves' and slaveholders' characters. These ingredients are spiced up by a gothic murder story, and, not least, the narrator's lonely travels through Georgia and the Carolinas in his endeavor to return to his family in Maryland.

The abundance of anecdotes and detail that are presented, however, cannot be held accountable for the relatively low presence of the *I*-pronoun in some chapters alone. Especially the two chapters with the lowest relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun, Chapters 3 and 4, are by no means devoid of the *I*-narrator. Having been sold South, in Chapter 3 Ball is a member of a chain gang on the way to Georgia. When the entourage stops over near Columbia at an acquaintance of their master's, this is Ball's first encounter with cotton cultivation. He begins to observe and comment on the peculiarities of plantation life. Due to the descriptive passages, the occurrences of the *I*-pronoun are few and far between, yet the narrator is not absent from his text. In this episode almost 60% of the process types associated with the first-person singular pronoun are mental, predominantly perceptive ones such as *see*, *hear*, *observe*, and *learn*, which is characteristic of the entire beginning of the narrative. Four of the initial six chapters are dominated by mental processes. While this manner of presentation is reminiscent of Brown's way of creating his environment, Ball does not try so much to set himself apart here as an individual that dominates the account. In addition to the first-person singular pronoun, the plural form is prominent in Chapters 2 and 3; 13% and 11.7% respectively of all occurrences in the text are to be found here (*rf*$_{we}$ 11.771 and 10.842 vs. 5.186 for the entire text). For those, material and relational verbs predominate, mental processes are exceedingly rare. So, typically, the observations are individualized as the narrator's own, whereas the doings are presented as a community efforts ("we boiled the rice," "we wet the clothes"); states and possessions are likewise communal ("we remained in this place," "we had no beds"). Although Ball does not distinguish his fellow slaves by naming them or presenting their individual activities, he does not single himself out of this community, either. The occurrences of singular and plural pronouns mostly alternate or relate to each other, as the following example illustrates.

5.7.1   I had been so long oppressed by the weight of my chains, and the iron collar about my neck, that for some time after I commenced walking at my natural liberty, I felt a kind of giddiness, or lightness of the head. Most of my companions complained of the same sensation, and we did not recover our proper feelings until after we had slept one night. (43f)

The semantic ties between the process *feel* and the nouns *sensation* and *feeling* not only provide cohesion to the sequence of sentences, they also relate the *I*-narrator's emotions to those of his fellow slaves. In this way, despite the individual perceptions, Ball does not set himself apart from the fate of others but remains integrated and so creates a community. This is corroborated by the scarcity of the third-person plural pronoun here. At this point the narrator does not set himself apart himself and other slaves. The only occurrences of *they* that refer to slaves at all in Chapter 3, do not refer to his fellows in the chain gang, but to a group of his master's friend's slaves, whose chores are described. These two groups of slaves do not mingle. But in contrast to other slave narrators, such as Douglass, Bibb, and Brown, at least in these chapters Ball does not emphasize his individuality and his being singled out from his peer group of slaves.

In the Chapter 4 the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is even lower. Voluntarily helping out in the cotton field and therefore integrating himself into the other group of slaves, Ball meets an old slave, whose story of stealing a sheep and the ensuing cruel punishment is told from a first-person perspective. In this embedded narrative, which covers more than half of the chapter, the *I*-pronoun is omnipresent (the *rf*$_I$ 28.273), but as it does not refer to Ball, it has been omitted from the quantitative account. Apart from this epi-

sode, Ball as the *I*-narrator is hardly ever absent from his own text. Observations about nature or his master's residence are frequently interspersed with the first-person singular pronoun in association with mental processes. In Chapter 5 Ball is even present in his description of Magnolia trees: *observe*, *have no doubt*, and *hear* are the process types involved.

5.7.2   I have heard it asserted in the South, that their scent has been perceived by persons fifty or sixty miles from them. (107)

The actual experience of perceiving the scent is at least twice removed from the narrator. Although he only hears that someone asserts that persons have noticed the scent, he nevertheless involves himself as the Senser in a mental process of perception.

Similar mechanisms are at work in other chapters with a comparatively low rf_I. Chapter 6 is a description of his new master's large plantation near Columbia. As the living conditions of the slaves and the cultivation of the several crops are described in detail, Ball uses the first-person singular pronoun regularly and intersperses his observations with many instances of the first-person plural pronoun, too. In the next chapter the relative frequency of *we* almost equals that of *I*; the *rf* of the first-person plural pronoun is the highest together with Chapter 8 (12.090 and 12.373). Ball's work while he is on the plantation as a field hand, butcher, or fisherman is invariably presented as taking place within a community of which he is part. Chapter 8 is in so far exceptional as it features a high relative frequency of both the singular and the plural first-person pronouns. The activities associated with the singular pronoun describe Ball's improvements as a skilled cotton picker, of which he is very proud, as he is able to earn money by picking more than the assigned amount.

5.7.3   When I came to get my cotton weighed, on the evening of the second day, I was rejoiced to find that I had forty-six pounds, although I had not worked harder than I did the first day. On the third evening I had fifty-two pounds; and before the end of the week; there were only three hands in the field – two men and a young woman – who could pick more cotton in a day than I could. (148)

That he is no longer concerned with observing his new environment but with his activities is reflected in the predominance of material processes (48.72%) and the complete absence of the passive voice. The processes associated with the plural pronoun describe communal work in the fields, too, but at least an equally large part of them is concerned with Ball's description and justification of stealing peaches from his master's orchard.

5.7.4   We were allowed to take three bushels of peaches every day, for the use of the quarter; but we could, and did eat at least three times that quantity, for we stole at night that which was not given us by day. I confess that I took part in these thefts, and I do not feel that I committed any wrong, against either God or man, by my participation in the common danger that we ran, for we well knew the consequences that would have followed detection. (146)

Thus, while the narrator individualizes the display of his laudable work ethic, the morally questionable theft is at least partly communalized, although the narrator explicitly accepts his responsibility. The same applies to Chapter 11, where Ball and some of his fellow slaves make a regular business of stealing fish as well as other goods. This culminates in anepisode where a white farmer is severely punished for a theft committed by one of Ball's companions. It is remarkable that again the first-person plural pronoun is comparatively prominent in this chapter (10.016). A moral justification, such as the one in 5.7.4 above, however, is absent, although Ball takes part in the posse that burns down the white farmer's house.

In the first fourteen chapters the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun is never remarkably high. Until Chapter 15, when Ball's flight begins, only Chapter 8 concerned with Ball's progress as a cotton picker stands out from the rest with an rf_I of 28.384. It is only in Chapter 15 that the rf_I rises drastically from 22.081 in the previous chapter to 45.876. For several months Ball is chiefly on his own in the woods and swamps of Georgia and the Carolinas. The escape is described in extreme detail and covers four chapters, in which the *I*-narrator is the sole focus of the text. Chapters 15 to 18 contribute slightly above 21,000 words and thus twenty percent of the entire narrative. The protagonist only rarely interacts with other characters except another fugitive slave, until one day he is recaptured, shot in the attempt to flee, and imprisoned. He is nevertheless able to escape to Maryland, where he lives for ten years in comparative happiness and freedom, before he is kidnapped by his former mistress' brother. In these four chapters the rf_I does not drop below 38.563; in Chapter 16, devoid of interaction with other characters, it even amounts to 51.891.

As the narrative progresses from enslavement to freedom, the initially large share of mental verbs decreases for the benefit of material verbs, while the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun increases steadily. From Chapter 14 to 15 the rf_I doubles. At the same time, from the second half of the narrative onwards, the relative frequency of the first-person plural pronoun decreases. Except in Chapters 11 and 13, the first-person plural pronoun becomes scarce; as soon as Ball begins his escape, it is nearly absent. Ball progresses from an observer, who nonetheless integrates himself into groups of whites and blacks alike, towards an individual acting only for himself, who for about one fifth of the narrative is a lonesome traveler. Material processes dominate; verbs such as *come to*, *travel*, *enter*, *cross*, *pass*, and *reach* describe his activities. Verbal process are extremely rare during the flight, the narrator does not even talk to himself. Relational processes are comparatively few during the flight, too (between 13 and 18%). Most of them are concerned with locating the narrator geographically. Mental processes have become slightly scarcer, the overwhelming majority falls into the groups of perceptive and cognitive verbs. Affective verbs, on the other hand, which would describe the narrator's emotional status during the flight, are almost absent, as they are scare in the entire narrative, which relates Ball's text to Roper's and Grandy's.

The final two chapters cover Ball's second enslavement in Georgia, the second escape after several months, and the final sequence, when the narrator discovers that during his absence his second wife and the children have been sold South and his residence is occupied by a white person. Here the rf_I drops gradually to 27.105 and 21.657 respectively. Interaction, and therefore the share of verbal processes, increases again, yet material processes continue to dominate.

Syntactically, Ball's narrative is comparatively static, even as the text progresses. Therefore, in addition to the presence or absence of purely descriptive episodes, the relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun in Ball's text is mainly a function of the involvement of characters other than the narrator himself, which is supported the high rf_I in the flight chapters. Syntactic parameters, such as subordination and coordination of processes, and subjectless nonfinite clauses, remain constant throughout the text. Generally, the sentences are fairly long. The average sentence contains 36.78 words and 4.15 clauses, which in both respects is second only to Roper's narrative. Unqualified, simple sentences with only one clause occur as well, but they are exceedingly rare, especially in sequence. From an ideational point of view this means that central propositions presented in a matrix clause are almost invariably expanded upon and thus qualified in some way. Two kinds of expansion, elaboration and

enhancement, predominate in Ball's text and are usually realized hypotactically. Hypotactic elaboration yields nondefining relative clauses, which "add[. . .] a further characterization to something that is taken to be already fully specific" (Halliday 1994: 227). The following quotes may serve as illustrations.

5.7.5   He told me he was free, and lived in Philadelphia, *where* he kept a house of entertainment for sailors, *which*, he said, was attended to in his absence by his wife. (19; italics added)

Neither Philadelphia nor the house of entertainment require further specification. The relative clauses merely provide additional information that "functions as a descriptive gloss to the primary clause" (Halliday 1994: 227). In this case, from a narratological perspective, the elaborations might be considered dispensable, as the neither the sailor's wife nor his public house plays a further role in the narrative. And yet, the elaborations inform the reader in passing about the opportunities for free blacks in Philadelphia and so form a contrast to Ball's enslavement. Apparently, in Philadelphia free blacks can own property, they can be married, and they can leave their property to the care of their wives. The following excerpt, taken from the beginning of the immediately subsequent paragraph, sums up the preceding specifics under the general heading of "liberty." The cohesive tie formed in this way is therefore also a logical follow-up to the above quotation.

5.7.6   His description of Philadelphia, and of the liberty enjoyed there by the black people, so charmed my imagination that I determined to devise some plan of escaping from the frigate, and making my way to the North. I communicated my designs to my new friend, *who* promised to give me his aid. We agreed that the night before the schooner should sail, I was to be concealed in the hold, amongst a parcel of loose tobacco, *which*, he said, the captain had undertaken to carry to Philadelphia. (19f; italics added)

The two nondefining relative clauses here are similar to the ones above. The friend as well as the tobacco are specific enough, yet the additional, nondefining piece of information is integrated so as to provide anchors for cohesive ties with the ensuing text. These semantic ties help structure the individual elements into a cohesive and eventually coherent plot that is logically developed. Thus, the "descriptive glosses" are not merely dispensable embellishments to a chronologically ordered tale, but as the examples illustrate, their presence provides logical cues that help guide the reader. In addition to their textual function, they also help position the narrator because they demonstrate his capability of constructing such a logically constructed argument, which is far different from a purely chronological guidance by, say, (*and*) *then*, as provided most typically by Picquet, or by *then*, *before*, and *after* in Roper. The impression that structuring and transcategorization has taken place is supported by the large number of abstract nouns in 5.7.6 (*description*, *imagination*, *designs*, *aid* etc.). Incidentally, Ball's text contains the second highest relative frequency of interrogative pronouns which have the potential to function as relative pronouns (Table A.1.7, p. 280). Yet, as the pronouns have not been differentiated according to their syntactic functions, the quantities can only be used as rough indicators.

Occasionally, Ball's relative clauses are not only clustered, as in the above examples, but also slightly idiosyncratic, because the distribution of propositional content within the clause complex appears counterintuitive as to its being allocated dependent or independent status.

5.7.7   I went home with my master, Mr. Gibson, who was a farmer, and with whom I lived three years. (21)

The syntactic arrangement seems to create a hierarchy in informational importance. The length of Ball's service and his new master's occupation are relegated to a subordinate status to the simple proposition that Ball accompanies him home. The theme, presented as an independent matrix clause, is the fact that Ball, whose ownership is contested at that moment, indeed does leave his old master. His new master's occupation as well as the time Ball serves him are presented as mere expansions, as footnotes to this topic. And indeed, Ball's three years with Gibson do not cover much space within the narrative.

A more explicitly logical component is provided by the second kind of expansion, by elaboration. Here, an adverbial clause not only adds further information, that is, a circumstantial element, but specifies a logico-semantic relationship with the central proposition in the matrix clause. Quantitatively, the relative frequency of items that can function as subordinating conjunctions is only average in Ball's text (15.871; Table A.1.5, p. 279). Especially the relative frequencies of the temporal conjunctions/prepositions *before*, *after*, and *until* exceed the average of the corpus, although they are by no means as dominant as in some of the narratives mentioned above.

In most instances Ball's clause complexes feature a combination of subordination as discussed earlier and coordination, which is extremely frequent in this narrative. The relative frequency of the conjunction *and* (36.247) is the second highest of all narratives after Picquet's, whereas *but* and *or* exceed the average only slightly (5.868 and 3.492 respectively). Complex constructions such as the two sentences in the following excerpt are legion and through subject ellipsis influence the rf_I greatly.

5.7.8   Daylight made its appearance, when I was moving to the South, for the daybreak was on my left hand; but I immediately stopped, went into a thicket of low white oak bushes, and lay down to rest myself, for I was very weary, and soon fell asleep, and did not awake until it was ten or eleven o'clock. (327f)

Coordination with *and* and *but* as well as subordination with a number of temporal as well as causal conjunctions combine in a sentence with a high density of the *I*-pronoun and subject elision alike. The predominant order of the presentation of events is determined by their temporal sequence, but also by association. This latter factor is apparent in the first instance of *for*. In the paragraph immediately preceding the quote, the narrator talks about having lost his course, so that this reference to determining the direction is not unprepared. And yet, the reason-clause does not appear to be cohesive with the preceding matrix clause because the sun being on the left is not the reason for moving South but only the reason for the narrator's noticing that he is moving into that direction.

It is especially in the description of the flight, that long, complex sentences connect a number of events that are related only by temporal sequence or association. In the following quote the movement is ordered chronologically, but sight and light, or their absence, is always associated with a further thought.

5.7.9   When it was quite dark, except the light of the moon, which was now brilliant, I took to this road, and traveled all night without hearing or seeing any person, and on the succeeding night, about two o'clock in the morning, I came to the margin of a river, so wide that I could not see across it; but the fog was so dense at this time that I could not have seen across a river of very moderate width. (331)

Occasionally, in this narrative this rather rambling sentence structure with subordination, coordination, and subject ellipsis may lead to ambiguous or questionable logical relations between processes.

5.7.10   [1] As I was always very obedient, [2] and ready to execute all his orders, [3] I did not receive much whipping, [4] but suffered greatly for want of sufficient and proper food. (17; numbers in square brackets added for further reference)

The two causal subclauses [1] and [2] with a relational process each are coordinated with the elision of subject and copula. The two further processes, material in [3] and behavioural in [4], may be interpreted as two coordinated processes in one matrix clause or as independent clauses joined by a shared subject, which is preferred here due to punctuation. Yet subject ellipsis still indicates that the second process ("but [I] suffered") is closely linked and logically juxtaposed to the negated first one ("I did not receive"), which, if only these two processes are taken by themselves, is logical. However, as this logical complex is – presumably jointly by means of subject ellipsis – presented as the result of the preceding adverbial clause, a logical uncertainty ensues. As the near absence of whipping is presented as the result of obedience and readiness, it is unclear whether the *but*-clause is supposed to form a contrast to the initial logical complex of cause and effect in [1], [2], and [3], which does not make sense, or only to the first independent clause [3], which would only be logical if [4] were not linked logically to the adverbial clauses. The problem arises because the elision of the subject in [4] indicates that the closest relationship of the clause is to [3], with which it is syntactically on the same level; but from a logical point of view, it is more likely that the contrast is one between the supposed desirable qualities in the slave as presented by [1] and [2], and the negative consequences in [4]. Yet this interpretation is made unlikely through ellipsis and the position of [4] after [3].

Whether the logic is questionable or not, the effect, or rather, the underlying principle, is always the same in these long sentences, especially in the description of the flight. Through the high density of the *I*-pronoun in the flight-chapters the narrator is focused upon. This principle is echoed in the sentence structure, where many relations between events and activities must be seen as associations. Although conjunctive devices are used to indicate logical relations, the above examples illustrate that the conjunction and the meaning of some connected clauses do not always match in a strictly logical way, but often make sense only by way of association, by psychological proximity, so to speak. This mental phenomenon is particularly remarkable in a narrative that was not written by the narrating subject himself.

Variation from this nearly constant syntactic complexity can hardly be found in Ball. Neither suspense, as in a search for a young lady's kidnappers or a short encounter with an alligator during the flight, nor mental agitation after being unjustly whipped is syntactically foregrounded. Traditional devices to create or heighten suspense, such as paratactically arranged short, simple sentences, are not used at all. Not even in such episodes as the following, where the fugitive Ball is hunted by dogs and forced to defend himself, does the narrator deviate from the predominant syntactic pattern of combined co- and subordination.

5.7.11   The dogs would not permit me to run, and unless I could make free use of my heels, it was clear that I must be taken in a few minutes. I now thought of my master's sword, which I had not removed from its quilted scabbard, in my great coat, since I commenced my journey. I snatched it from its sheath, and at a single cut laid open the head of the largest and fiercest of the dogs, from his neck to his nose. (326)

All three sentences consist of clause complexes with coordination as well as subordination. In this example, conditional enhancement (*unless*), elaboration (*which*) and coordination of clauses ("and unless," "and at a single cut") combine to a series of clause complexes, in

which the *I*-pronoun features prominently. And the *I*-narrator even finds the time in the description of this life-threatening event to elaborate on the sword. The repeated coordinations and subordinations slow down the pace of the narrative at this point, so that the syntactic structure does not quite match the dangerous and hectic content of the episode.

Incidentally, the examples also illustrate that the entire narrative features a comparatively low rate of nonfinite clauses, especially of the subjectless type. Only about 14% of the clauses are nonfinite, which is, after Grandy and Picquet, the third smallest share. And yet, nonfinite clauses do appear, sometimes even in clusters, such as in the following example near the end.

5.7.12   After remaining in Philadelphia a few weeks, I resolved to return to my little farm in Maryland, for the purpose of selling my property for as much as it would produce, and of bringing my wife and children to Pennsylvania.

On arriving in Baltimore, I went to a tavern keeper, whom I had formerly supplied with vegetables from my garden. (426)

Here, like in many finite hypotactic clauses, subordinating conjunctions are used to indicate the logical relationships between processes.

There is also a number of unattached nonfinite clauses, occasionally also clustered, but they are not nearly as frequent as is Northup's text.

5.7.13   Having resolved to pursue the road I was now in, it was necessary again to resort to the utmost degree of caution to prevent surprise. Traveling only after it was dark, and taking care to stop before the appearance of day, my progress was not rapid, but my safety was preserved. (376)

The *I*-pronoun occurs only once in the two clause complexes, but instead of appearing in any matrix clause, it is the subject of a relative clause. Although grammatically questionable, the unattached clauses thus may be interpreted as reflecting psychological proximity, too. Only one relational process depends grammatically on the *I*-pronoun ("I was"), and yet almost all of the activities described in this excerpt experientially depend on the fugitive narrator. A large number of processes are presented in nominalized or nonfinite form. A hypothetical rough paraphrase of the events reveals some of the transcategorizations. The *I*-narrator is the one who has resolved that he is going to pursue this specific road, so that he needs to be careful if he wants to avoid being surprised – note the impersonal transformation of modality through "necessary." Nominalization, subjectlessness and the scarcity of conjunctions combine to condense the experiential arrangement of the first sentence so much that the *I*-narrator, whose experience is being described, is hardly present explicitly, although at least the processes *resolve*, *pursue*, *be*, *have to resort*, *be cautious*, and *prevent* can be associated with him. The same applies to *travel*, *take care*, *progress,* and *be safe* in the second clause complex, which lacks the *I*-pronoun altogether. As indicated above, it is psychological closeness to the *I*-narrator, which any reader familiar with the co-text is likely to infer, that makes the implied subject of the transcategorized processes easily recoverable and identifiable. The narrator being the only acting human participant in this episode, recoverability is granted. As a result, the use of unattached clauses in instances like these is not so much bad grammar or striving for stylistic extravagance, but rather a stylistic device that, in the light of the scarcity of mental: affective processes, may help indicate the protagonist's psychological or mental involvement, which, from a narrator's perspective, implies that he takes it for granted that the activities are interpreted as semantically associated with him.

At this point a naturalization of this first-person perspective seems to have taken place, so that all activities are associated with the *I*-narrator regardless of his explicit presence or absence in the text. This is different from nominalization used to dissociate oneself from particular activities, by means of presenting activities in nominalized form ("the kick"), or the overdone use of nonfinite constructions leading to absurd interpretations as in Northup's narrative, where the ubiquity of such devices, that is, nominalization as well as nonfiniteness, renders them automatized, stale and eventually absurd rather than functional within their specific co-text.

The relative frequency of nominalization in Ball's text is average (11.868). The quantitatively examined morphological nominalizations are only slightly less frequent than in the rest of the corpus, but they are not distributed evenly over the text. Some stretches are completely devoid of this device, whereas in other episodes, such as example 5.7.13, they appear in clusters together with conversions (*caution*, *surprise*, *appearance*, *progress*, *safety*). However, they do not occur predominantly in the flight chapters. In fact, in the four flight-chapters, the rf_{nom} is slightly lower than in the other chapters (1 to 14: 12.301, 15 to 18: 10.206, 19 to 20: 12.276). Before the parts with a higher relative frequency of nominalization will be focused on, a brief discussion of 5.7.13 above is rewarding. Four of the five nominalizations are condensed clauses with the narrator in subject positions, so that the device affects the rf_I. Additionally, the linguistic characteristics involve a high frequency of the verb *be* as a relational process. It supports the rather static impression left by mental processes such as *resolve* and *take care* as well as the nominalizations. At first glance incongruous with the notion of movement associated with traveling, these parameters still combine to support the presentation of the narrator's slow, meandering, and repeatedly halted progress to freedom covering four chapters. Although his pace is sometimes quicker and sometimes slower, the narrator's road to freedom is generally one with only slow progress, occasional setbacks, and moments of being lost. Therefore, the linguistic impression of staticness at times is well-chosen for an illustration of the protagonist's not so swift escape.

In the first fourteen chapters clusters of nominalizations almost invariably appear in the narrator's general remarks. These describe his reflections about the slaves' industriousness (128ff), his justification for taking part in slave festivities (142f), observations about the typical master-slave relationship (150f), the justification of theft committed by slaves (218f), the cultivation of rice and indigo (243ff), the corrupting character of taverns (269ff), and the love of freedom in both black and white people alike (298f). In these episodes the nominalizations are clustered and, in combination with present simple tense, help point out that the observations are supposedly of general value. At this point, one of the shorter examples should suffice as an illustration. In addition to nominalizations proper, several abstract terms such as *fare*, *impulse*, and *memory* augment the abstracting quality of the excerpt.

5.7.14   A man cannot well be miserable when he sees every one about him immersed in pleasure; and though our fare of to-day was not of a quality to yield me much gratification, yet such was the impulse given to my feelings, by the universal hilarity and contentment which prevailed amongst my fellows, that I forgot for the time all the subjects of grief that were stored in my memory, all the acts of wrong that had been perpetrated against me, and entered with the most sincere and earnest sentiments in the participation of the felicity of our community. (128ff)

Ball uses the allegedly categorical validity of the initial statement set in the present tense to develop a justification for his own participation in the slave festivities. Nominalizations,

most of which can only indirectly be associated with the *I*-narrator because they lack a possessive determiner (*sentiments*, *participation*, *felicity*), dominate the stretch, which is devoid of mental: affective verbs and features only one instance of the *I*-pronoun. The processes associated with the first-person singular pronoun are *forget* and *enter*, none of which suggests mental, much less emotional involvement. Nominalizations derived from (mental) adjectives or verbs with positive, affective connotation such as *pleasure*, *hilarity*, *contentment*, and *sentiments*, as well as other similar abstract terms (*felicity*) occur consistently in prepositional groups as circumstances and are therefore not even central participants in any of the processes. This results in the narrator's mental dissociation not only from the feast itself, which is not mentioned further, but also from the fact that he takes part in it. The presentation of the initial statement as generally valid enables the narrator to present himself as absolved from responsibility for his own doing. The narrating human being does not act out of his own volition but his feelings receive impulses from abstract entities that can neither be grasped nor held responsible. This strategy suggests that such a justification is considered necessary in the first place. The narrator's participation in such a feast, after the entire plantation is supplied with meat and other rare foodstuffs, apparently is a breach of a convention for him. He points out the internal conflict between his grief at being separated from his family and being drawn into the festivities. Through inclusion of the general statement and abstractions he tries to negate or at least downplay the emotional quality of the incident and shift it to a rather abstract rational and intellectual level, at which concrete, particular, human deeds – or supposed flaws – are not an issue and thus cannot be argued about. The abstractions thus effectively detach the specific event from narrating individual.

The strategy of justifying one's actions by means of generalizing and abstracting a concept appears to be a common one. What is remarkable in this narrative is the contrast between such generalizations and the initial claim of the preface of 1836 that "[m]any of [the slave's] opinions have been cautiously omitted, or carefully suppressed, as being of no value to the reader" (xi), which suggests that these categorical remarks were either overlooked or deliberately retained and thus represent the actual writer's, that is "Mr. Fisher's," estimation of what he perceived as valuable for the reader.[22] Consequently, the fugitive slave, the *I*-narrator, appears as a discursive self that is aware of societal conventions and that is moreover presented as adhering to them instead of going against the grain. There are further similar instances in the text, which deserve more attention later, as they deal explicitly with master-slave relationships and issues of moral conduct that are likely to be of importance for the characterization of the narrator by his readership.

In addition to the effects of naturalization and dissociation, nominalizations of verbs (*progress*, *surprise*) and adjectives (*cautious*, *safe*) result in higher levels of abstraction and generalization from particular events fixed in time and explicitly associated with particular participants. And yet, clusters like in 5.7.14 above also appear during the narrator's flight, which is nonetheless often described in specific detail. Although the narrator is the only acting character, the rf_I is comparatively low at times and nominalizations are recurrent. This phenomenon is especially significant when nominalization is used in association with other devices that eliminate the *I*-pronoun, as the use of nonfinite subjectless clauses and passive forms in the following example.

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[22] This particular preface is absent from the edition of 1859, but these general remarks are identical with the original unabridged text from 1836.

5.7.15   [1] The world was now all before me, but the darkness was so profound, as to obscure from my vision the largest objects, even a house, at the distance of a few yards. [2] But dark as it was, necessity compelled me to leave the plantation without delay, and knowing only the great road that led to Milledgeville, amongst the various roads of this country, I set off at a brisk walk on this public highway, assured that no one could apprehend me in so dark a night.

[3] It was only about seven miles to Milledgeville, and when I reached that town several lights were burning in the windows of the houses; but keeping on directly through the village, I neither saw nor heard any person in it, and after gaining the open country, my first care was to find some secure place where shelter could be found for the next day; but no appearance of thick woods was to be seen for several miles, and two or three hours must have elapsed before a forest of sufficient magnitude was found to answer my purposes. (402; numbers in square brackets added for further reference)

In this stretch of 184 words taken from the very beginning of Ball's second flight after having been kidnapped (C. 20), the *I*-narrator appears only three times. In addition to the familiar formula of long, complex sentences, there is a multitude of events and states in which the narrator is experientially involved but not made to appear as such. Of the fifteen grammatical subject roles only three are occupied by the *I*-pronoun, to which four nonfinite clauses must be added. In the beginning, it is the abstract concepts *world*, *darkness*, a dummy-*it*, and *necessity* which are being and doing something, while the first person is made to appear as possessive determiner and in oblique case. It is the environment that is fixed and that acts upon the narrator. Not even a potential negation of the mental process *see* from the narrator's point of view is made explicit. The abstract entity *darkness* does not act upon the narrator's vision directly; the *vision*, being part of a prepositional group, is a mere circumstance to the material process of obstruction, of which general *objects* are presented as Goals. Unable to influence his surroundings, which are fixed as nominalizations and to which the narrator is merely circumstantial, all that he can do is "set off." Four instances of nonfinite subjectless clauses ("knowing," "assured," "keeping," "gaining") eliminate further instances of the *I*-pronoun, as do the three instances of passive voice in the final clause complex ("could be found," "was to be seen," "was found"). The effect is similar to the one described before. Through nominalizations and a concomitant high frequency of relational *be* the episode appears static. The narrator does perform material processes denoting movement such as *leave*, *set off*, *reach* and *gain*, yet they are balanced by mental *know*, *assured*, *see* and *hear*. Abstract concepts such as *care*, *shelter*, *appearance* and *hours* not only add to the ones in [1] and [2], they also take over subject positions in processes for which the direction of activity is presented as reversed by means of the passive voice. The moving and searching *I*-narrator disappears towards the end of the paragraph; the only material process here is performed by time.

These two quotations from the narrator's flight have more than anecdotal status. Despite the high *rf_I* in the flight-chapters, other linguistic devices such as nominalization and nonfiniteness are very frequent in these chapters, too. Not only is the *I*-narrator's presence at times apparently taken for granted, or naturalized, and thus only implied; particular linguistic characteristics also combine to illustrate and support individual aspects of Ball's flight. Several times he describes how he is lost on his way North; his meandering escape through three states makes him occasionally travel in circles. In these instances it is not the *I*-narrator who determines what he can do and where he can go; it is his environment,

which is frequently described in abstract terms but is nonetheless able to act upon him, that determines large parts of his movements away from slavery. In this way, the language not only reflects but also creates the impression of Ball as a first-person slave narrator who cannot claim to be self-determined. More than in many other slave narratives Ball's language suggests that he frequently lets things happen to him, that the environment is in subject position and so determines his participant role rather than the reverse. If one wanted to interpret Ball's occasionally low rf_I despite the narrator's experiential involvement in the activities as iconic like in Grandy, the iconicity would have to be looked for on a more abstract level than in the mostly observable material processes Grandy uses. Higher syntactic complexity, a larger number of nominalizations and a much higher share of mental processes associated with the *I*-narrator support this impression.

Ball is not a trickster like Brown or Bibb, who make the world created through their language fit their purposes, or, in Andrews's terms, the direction of fit is one of world to words and therefore an assertive speech act. Where Bibb foregrounds his presence and his decisions, Ball does the opposite. Even when he is on his own, the linguistic style suggests a rather unassuming protagonist. Ball's discoursal self, as it has been analyzed so far, reflects the fact that the text itself, although republished in slightly different form in 1859, originates from 1836 and thus from a much earlier stage in the development of the genre. And yet, the faithful, loyal, and generally obedient slave, who only escapes after his master has died, apparently appealed to a readership that by 1859 had become accustomed to more outgoing and self-determined fugitive slaves, who not only resisted and deceived their masters but occasionally also their own fellow slaves.

5.7.2 Charles Ball's use of transitivity

Charles Ball's doings are characterized by the predominance of material verbs, while the share of mental verbs is only slightly greater than average. Material verbs contribute 39.10% of the processes the *I*-narrator is involved in, which corresponds to a rf_{mat} of 9.114. This is well below Roper's, Picquet's or even Bibb's relative frequencies, but still slightly above the average in the corpus. Mental verbs contribute 30.69%, which corresponds to a rf_{men} of 7.155. The share of relational processes, on the other hand, is the smallest (18.68%); the rf_{rel} of 4.353 is the second lowest. Ball's text is also the one with the smallest number of verbal processes. His narrative is the only one with a share smaller than 5%; the rf_v of 1.117 is the lowest one as well (Table 5.7.2 below).

The observation that Ball's narrative contains an extremely lengthy description of his travels towards freedom corresponds with the fact that ranged material processes are more frequent than in other texts. More than 35% of the material processes are of this type while the average for the corpus is below 30%. Verbs such as *cross*, *enter*, *reach*, and *pass* are characteristic in the context of traveling. But in addition to these processes associated with a Range: entity, there are also many examples where the Range expresses a process. Among these we find well-known examples such as *make a reply*, *make use*, *take refuge* or *shelter* or *a seat* in addition to the wordings from the lexicogrammar of traveling. While all of these constructions are instances of grammatical metaphor, they have also become stock expressions supposed to convey the connotation of elaborate language.

Table 5.7.2: Selection of process types in Charles Ball (in percent)

ch.	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1	10.77	33.85	24.62	27.69	3.08	16.844
2	10.91	21.82	45.45	18.18	3.64	18.236
3	3.39	18.64	59.32	13.56	5.08	9.995
4	0.00	40.00	25.00	25.00	10.00	7.840
5	12.20	25.61	34.15	15.85	12.20	19.745
6	2.08	31.25	33.33	29.17	4.17	14.193
7	2.82	43.66	26.76	12.68	14.08	14.549
8	5.13	48.72	15.38	25.64	5.13	28.384
9	9.42	24.22	39.01	20.18	7.17	20.330
10	3.19	50.00	22.34	20.21	4.26	21.466
11	2.05	32.88	26.71	27.40	10.96	19.762
12	5.56	39.68	32.54	19.84	2.38	23.420
13	5.71	22.86	34.29	27.14	10.00	17.695
14	6.45	34.84	36.77	18.71	3.23	20.997
15	8.81	49.22	25.39	15.54	1.04	44.717
16	7.06	46.10	31.60	13.75	1.49	51.131
17	8.13	39.38	31.25	18.75	2.50	38.657
18	7.69	53.50	23.43	13.64	1.75	37.901
19	4.08	46.94	26.53	19.39	3.06	23.507
20	5.43	41.86	23.26	20.16	9.30	21.165
sum	6.74	39.10	30.69	18.68	4.79	23.310

Occasionally, the narrator uses more original expressions of a similar structure. Yet even in these cases the use of ranged material processes often goes hand in hand with abstract terms, not rarely nominalizations. This renders the process itself, which may very well be a concrete material doing, as an abstraction, such as *danger* and *transit* below.

5.7.16   . . . but on the third night after this I encountered a danger, which was very nearly fatal to me. (325)

5.7.17   There was no alternative but swimming this stream, and I made the transit in less than three minutes, carrying my packages on my back. (338)

In fact, the majority of these expressions are grammatically metaphorical as in the following example. The abstraction *knowledge* is presented as if it could be acquired materially.

5.7.18   This chain I acquired the knowledge of removing from my feet, by working out of its socket a small iron pin that secured the bolt that held the chain round one of my legs. (384f)

Yet, in addition to the emphatic O-S-V inversion, the abstraction inherent in the nominalization of *know* together with the heightened "acquired" instead of simply 'I learned' clashes

even more than in 5.7.16 and 17 with the concrete and detailed description of trying to re-move the fetters. Or maybe it does not; after all, liberty is the central topic and the final destination of the text. Therefore, some emphatic language may not be so inappropriate in order to stress the importance of the concept, even in cases where the context is not at all abstract but refers to a particular occasion, a material and observable activity. This inter-pretation is supported by the following excerpt with two ranged material processes and a number of abstract terms in connection with freedom.

5.7.19   This man certainly communicated to me the outlines of the plan, which I afterwards put in execution, and by which I gained my liberty, at the expense of sufferings, which none can appreciate, except those who have borne all that the stoutest human constitution can bear, of cold and hunger, toil and pain. (104)

A plan is "put in execution" and liberty is "gained." Neither of the material verbs denotes a concrete activity; both depend on their respective Range for the semantic content of the process itself. The point is a more general one that applies not only to the nominalizations used as Range. The use of abstract nominalizations generally does not follow a pattern. They may be used as an advance label to summarize an event that is to follow, such as *danger* in 5.7.16 or *sufferings* in 5.7.19. In these particular cases the labels also provide the narra-tor's evaluation of the following action before it has been stated itself (cf. Francis 83ff; 97). But more often, the nominal is not used as such a label that precedes or follows an activity, but embedded into the material action itself. It is in these cases that the inherent abstrac-tion clashes with the concreteness of the event and so appears to be motivated by stylistic considerations rather than an attempt at textual cohesion, which it does not provide.

In the following excerpt a large number of metaphorical expressions combine for syn-tactic and semantic complexity.

5.7.20   With this view, I assumed the appearance of resignation and composure, under the new aspect of my fortune; and even went so far as to tell my new master that I lived more comfortably with him, in his cotton fields, than I had formerly done, on my own small farm in Maryland; though I believe my master did me the justice to give no credit to my assertions on this subject. (393)

Expressions such as *go far*, *give credit* and *do justice* illustrate the material roots of many men-tal processes; here the metaphoricalness is one that transgresses the boundaries of process types. Nominalizations provide an additional level of metaphoricalness that oversteps the borders between parts of speech. The occurrences of grammatical metaphor between pro-cess types have not been analyzed quantitatively. But the large number of examples that can be found suggests that the high number of material verbs in Ball's text is partly due to the writer's predilection for metaphorization on the lexicogrammatical level.

The large number of what might be called pseudo-material processes, of which the ex-tremely large share of 35% ranged material processes is an indicator (Table 4.8, p. 78), not only reflects the general fact that many abstract linguistic expressions originate in concrete material doings. In this particular text they also contribute to a way of using language that stresses the narrator's rhetorical, and therefore by implication also the supposed intel-lectual capabilities, as was already indicated above in the discussion of nominalization and complex syntax. Not only syntactic complexity and abstraction, but also a general drift to-wards more metaphorical ways of expression supports this observation (cf. also Halliday 1998). Thus, Ball may experientially appear as an unassuming protagonist who frequently seems to let things happen to him – *receive* and *obtain*, for instance, outnumber *take*. Yet at

the same time, the complexity on several linguistic levels betrays the narrator's desire to appear learned, versatile, and rhetorically skillful. The discussion of various linguistic characteristics of the text, however, has shown that in this narrative form does not always follow function. Syntactic complexity remains unvaried, for instance, and does not match or support narrative content. The same applies to the use of ranged material processes and the concomitant use of abstract nominals, which, as the examples above illustrate, often do not harmonize with the narrative situation, either.

The distribution of the various types of mental processes in Ball's narrative is exceptional. The size of the share is only slightly greater than average (30.69%); the same applies to the rf_{men} of 7.155. But the distribution is unique. The narrative features by far the smallest share of verbs of affection with less than 6% (Table 4.10, p. 81). This is extreme and influences the average of the entire corpus considerably as the narrative contributes about 25% of all words. The next lower value is 10% in Northup and Picquet; all other narratives range considerably higher. Cognitive verbs contribute almost 54%, but especially the extremely high number of perceptive verbs (40% of all mental processes) is worth a closer look.

While cognition is typically restricted to the mind, which projects the ideas, aural and visual perception usually transcends the mind (and body) of the Senser. The Phenomenon is typically located outside the mind of the Senser. According to Matthiessen, "[c]ognitive clauses project a thought into existence as a proposition whereas in perceptive clauses, the perception is construed as a response to a fact" (1995: 261). And yet, the act of perceiving does not affect the Phenomenon directly; therefore, in terms of Agency, clauses of perception are middle with the Phenomenon functioning as Range. Only clauses of the *please*-type, such as 'it strikes me,' are effective (Matthiessen 1995: 271), but they are not relevant in the present context. In this way the high number of ranged material processes in Ball's text finds an echo in the mental processes. Processes that can enter effective clauses are much more frequent in the emotive category (ibid.), which, as subcategory of the affective type, is underrepresented in this text.

The actual Phenomenon may be one of two types. It may be a simple Phenomenon consisting of a nominal group as in the first instance of *see* in the following example, or it may be a hyperphenomenon as in [2].

5.7.21   In the course of this night I [1] saw but few plantations, but was so fortunate as to [2] see a ground-hog crossing the road before me. (353; numbers in square brackets here and below added for further reference)

As already mentioned above, hyperphenomena, according to Halliday, come in two variants (Halliday 1994: 249, Matthiessen 1995: 258), but the difference is at times very small. They can be macrophenomena, as in [2] above, where the nonfinite clause "ground-hog crossing the road" is "treated as a single complex phenomenon" (Halliday 1994: 249). A metaphenomenon, on the other hand, is a "projection or idea of a phenomenon" and realized by a finite clause as in [1] in the following example (ibid.).

5.7.22   Looking at this man attentively, [1] I saw that he was a black, and that he did not move more than a few rods from the same spot where [2] I first saw him. (354)

With this kind of phenomenon the process of seeing is often used cognitively in the sense of knowing as in [2] of 5.7.23 below. These extensions in meaning, however, are rare in Ball.

5.7.23   This was the season of hunting deer, and [1] knowing that the hunters were under the necessity of being as silent as possible in the woods, [2] I saw at a glance that

they would be at least as likely to discover me in the forest, before [3] I could see them, as [4] I should be to see them, before [5] I myself could be seen. (315)

"I saw at a glance" translates into cognitive 'I understood immediately,' but perception is quantitatively foregrounded here in order to stress the importance of seeing without being seen as a prerequisite for a successful flight. The overwhelming majority of Ball's verbs of perception are used in their literal sense and feature either a simple Phenomenon or a macrophenomenon.

Nevertheless, projections are used as well; they typically occur with verbs such as *perceive* and *observe*. These instances serve to make the narrator's perspective explicit.

5.7.24   We traveled a road that was not well provided with public houses, and we frequently stopped for the night at the private dwellings of the planters, and I observed that my master was received as a visitor, and treated as a friend in the family, whilst I was always left at the road with my wagon, my master supplying me with money to buy food for myself and my mules. (282)

In this example the introduction of the observation as dependent on the first-person singular pronoun serves to heighten the contrast between joint travel and separate accommodation. By stressing the act of observing, the narrator reveals that he is fully aware of the difference between himself, being left with the animals, and his master, who receives cordial treatment among friends. Syntactically, the projected idea stands in a hypotactic relationship with its projecting clause. The propositions presented as observed could stand on their own, but from an experiential viewpoint the presence of the projecting clause emphasizes the narrator's mental process. The propositions are not merely presented, but they are presented as having been mentally processed by the narrator. Many more examples of this type are to be found.

5.7.25   I observed that running away, and stealing from his master, were regarded as the highest crimes of which a slave could be guilty; . . . . (69)

5.7.26   As I was now in a thickly-peopled country, I never moved until long after night, and was cautious never to permit daylight to find me on the road; but I observed that the north-star was always on my left hand. (335)

The presence of a thing, an act, or a fact is presented as experientially dependent on the mental faculties of the first-person narrator. This applies also to events etc. in which the *I*-narrator is not involved. Although arguably all of the events in the narrative are in some way presented through the eyes of the narrator, his role as Medium, here in its grammatical as well as its literal sense, in perceptive processes makes this function explicit. This is not restricted to metaphenomena, that is, projections; macrophenomena may achieve this effect as well. This becomes most obvious in expressions such as the following one, where the arrival at the river and its explicit perception at first appear rather tautologous.

5.7.27   Keeping straight forward, I came unexpectedly to a broad river, which I now saw running between me and the town. (340)

And yet, even here, the verb of perception serves a purpose. The process of seeing in combination with the time adverb *now* emphasizes the unexpectedness of the river that obstructs the narrator's progress on his way to freedom once again.

See and *hear* together contribute 75% of the verbs of perception; *see* alone contributes more than 50%. In this narrative the verb has the highest relative frequency of all verbs of

perception in the corpus (1.543). While this selection may not attest to much stylistic variability, it is not accidental. Instances of this use of verbs of perception are recurrent in Ball. In 5.7.28 below the visual perception is again made explicit although, with equal validity, the "blue sky" itself may have appeared in subject position. Yet, the narrator underlines once more that perceiving without being perceived is essential for his flight.

5.7.28   When the sun had been up two or three hours, I saw an appearance of blue sky at a distance through the trees, which proved that the forest had been removed from a spot somewhere before me, and at no great distance from me; and, as I cautiously advanced, I heard the voices of people in loud conversation. (313f)

The frequency of verbs of perception is therefore not to be seen as a stylistic aberration or bad writing. While at times it may appear monotonous or wordy, it serves a distinct purpose, beside that of foregrounding the point of view and the mental process involved. During the two flights, which cover more than one fourth of the text, verbs of perception illustrate the extreme caution that is necessary. The narrator emphasizes that he is moving on unfamiliar territory, which needs to be scanned for sounds and appearances that are potentially harmful to his life. The movement through unfamiliar territory together with imminent danger will also be addressed later in a discussion of an episode of Chapter 9, in which Ball searches for a kidnapped white lady. Not coincidentally are forms of *see* particularly frequent in this chapter as well as between the flight chapters (14 to 18). This high frequency during the latter part of the narrative is especially noteworthy as it stands in sharp contrast to the overwhelming material orientation of the narrator's actions during the flight. From Chapter 15 onwards material processes contribute between 39 and 53% towards the processes associated with the narrator, while mental ones only range between 23 and 31%, but usually below the average.

In several episodes in the narrative the narrator is not directly involved as an acting party. Incidentally, three of the most prominent scenes are concerned with murder and cruel revenge and add an element of gothic horror to the narrative (Cs. 9, 13, and 14). It is remarkable that in all three chapters mental processes are quantitatively more prominent than material ones. In the first instance in Chapter 9 Ball is charged with having murdered a young white lady. He is to be cruelly punished for the deed by being skinned and bled to death, but his innocence is eventually ascertained by the victim's brother. Later the same night, sounds from the swamp arouse Ball's suspicion, so that he initiates a search for the murderers as well as for the victim. He is still under suspicion. The description of the search stretches over some 6000 words and features an rf_I of 17.532. The narrator uses predominantly mental verbs. In the search episode they contribute about 43% and so even exceed the high average of 40% for the entire chapter. These are especially verbs of perception (*see*, *hear*, *feel*, *observe*). Material processes are not absent, but less frequent (about 28%). Remarkable, too, is the comparatively large share of verbal processes (14%) when compared with the average of the entire narrative, which amounts to only 4.79%. As they demand or at least imply a Recipient, they help to create a narrator who interacts with his superiors. He is in a role to supply information. Ball primarily perceives, believes, and informs, as the following quote illustrates.

5.7.29   When the gentlemen had assembled, I informed them of signs of footsteps that I had traced from the other side of the island; and told them that I believed the young lady lay somewhere under the heap of brushwood before us. This opinion obtained but little credit, because there was no opening in the brush by which any one could

enter it; but on going a few paces round the heap, I perceived a small, snaggy pole resting on the brush, and nearly concealed by it, with the lower end stuck in the ground. (176f)

Ball does several things at once in the episode from which the excerpt is taken. He quantitatively foregrounds his own perception of objects and sounds, his thinking, and his informing the white members of the search party of his findings. Moreover, he emphasizes his being located somewhere and so implies that he is as ignorant of the circumstances and the terrain as his masters, which is supported by relational and behavioural verbs, such as *stand*, *sit*, *speak*, and *look* and expressions that imply coincidence.

5.7.30   It so happened that the place where I sat was in the shade of the bush, within a few feet of the road, but screened from it by some small boughs. In this position, which I had taken by accident, I could see a great distance along the road, towards the end of my master's lane. (160)

Yet despite occasionally extolling his initiative during the search, such as tracing the footsteps in 5.7.29 above, the narrator refrains from presenting himself in a too active role. He presents himself as observing and searching, of communicating with his master and overseer, and only then as acting, too. Thus he is the one who eventually discovers the hideout where the young lady is kept hidden. At the same time, in addition to using verbal and therefore interactive processes, he makes his being included in the search explicit by using a high number of first-person plural pronouns in this particular part of the chapter.

5.7.31   We proceeded silently, but rapidly, on way; and as we passed it, I shewed them the place where I sat under the holly bush, when the mulatto passed me. We neither saw nor heard any person on the road, and reached the log at the end of the cart-road, where I sat when I heard the cries in the swamp. (168)

In the episode the *rf* of *we* is 9.103. The other rescuers' doubts about his role are downplayed, though. When they reject his ideas, he nominalizes what he believes ("this opinion" in 5.7.29) and avoids a first-person possessive determiner. In this way the *I*-narrator avoids presenting himself as a rebuffed participant in a hypothetical 'they did not believe me.' Through this combination, in the presentation of the crime, the search, and the final yet futile recovery of the lady the narrator aims at a fine balance between being included into a group of white rescuers, and being individually responsible for finding the retreat as well as the criminal slaves. Yet by avoiding to foreground his material doings that lead to the discovery too explicitly, he also avoids suspicions of being involved in the crime.

   Eventually, this way of presenting the incident creates a narrator who, despite the initial unjust and cruel treatment, strives to associate himself with his white superiors. Rather than being revengeful and seeking confrontation after his near lynching, or opting out of interaction altogether, he is cooperative and keen on his masters' approval. He does not even criticize the exceedingly cruel punishment of the perpetrators of the crime. When the two slaves are sentenced to be stripped naked, tied to the ground, and left in the woods, Ball applies the epithets "cruel" and "most horrible" only in reference to the manner of punishment, but not to those who pass the judgment. In addition, almost the entire scene is composed in the passive so as to focus the attention on the slaves who are to be punished – and to be able to keep the Sayers and Doers of the processes unmentioned, including Ball himself, who explicitly includes himself in the ranks of the executors. Needless to say, the *I*-pronoun is absent from this scene.

5.7.32   The sentence was instantly carried into effect, so far as its execution depended on us. Hardy and his companion were divested of their clothes, stretched upon their backs on the ground; their mouths bandaged with handkerchiefs - their limbs extended - and these, together with their necks, being crossed by numerous poles, were kept close to the earth by forked sticks driven into the ground, so as to prevent the possibility of moving any part of their persons; and in this manner these wicked men were left to be torn in pieces by birds of prey. (189)

Finally, the *I*-narrator is able to turn the horrific incident into a positive experience, even materially. Although rescued from her kidnappers, the lady ultimately dies. At her funeral Ball is pointed out to the mourning ladies and gentlemen, by whose "orderly" and "decorous" "deportment" he is impressed, and commended for his "conduct and fidelity" (192). But more importantly, Ball is materially rewarded. "[S]ome gave me money. One old lady, who came in a pretty carriage, drawn by two black horses, gave me a dollar" (ibid). As the writer of the preface to *Slavery in the United States* correctly observes, bitterness on the part of the narrator is absent from the text.

There are two more chapters in the second half of the narrative in which the share of mental verbs exceeds that of material verbs (Table 5.7.2 above). Incidentally, both of them are concerned with killings and violence, too. But it is not violence itself or its presentation that determines the use of process types. In Chapter 13 Ball is given to his master's son-in-law and moves to Georgia with him. After his new master dies in a duel during a visit in South Carolina, the estate is leased to a new owner with an exceptionally cruel wife. Neither the killing nor the new environment is presented through the eyes of the *I*-narrator. In addition to a few verbs of perception, there is a number of cognitive verbs to be found (*understand, believe, consider, doubt*). These are supported by the unusually large share of relational processes (27.14%), the majority of which here describe mental states (*sorry*). Many of the adjectives involved are derived from past participles (*pleased, prepared, interested, satisfied* etc.). The predominance of mental processes and states is continued in Chapter 14, which precedes the narrator's flight, and is, apart from Chapter 9, the one with the most brutal incidents. The narrator witnesses three terrible punishments of four slaves. Two of them are hanged for having murdered a white person, one is nearly whipped to death, while another is punished by having a cat's paws drawn over his bare back.

The share of material verbs in Chapter 14 is not at all low (34.84%), yet it is exceeded by mental processes. However, this is not a seamless continuation of the narrator's cognitive mode form the previous chapter. More than half of the mental verbs are verbs of perception. In addition to his role as witness and chronicler of the cruelties, however, Ball himself becomes a victim as well as an executor of violence. His description of the whippings he himself performs when he occupies the position of an overseer is noteworthy, not only because it immediately precedes and therefore contrasts with the presentation of his own whipping, but also because of what the narrator presents himself as doing. In addition to various forms of avoiding subject-specification, the description is almost devoid of material verbs for the benefit of mental processes. Only the beginning is quoted here to illustrate some of the narrator's strategies.

5.7.33   As I was now entrusted with the entire superintendence of the plantation by my master, who never left his house, it became necessary for me to assume the authority of an overseer of my fellow-slaves, and I not unfrequently found it proper to punish them with stripes to compel them to perform their work. (301)

The *I*-pronoun appears only twice; Ball's being handed over control is either indicated by passive forms, nominalization (*superintendence*), or rendered impersonal through the *it*-clause. Note the hedgings. The material process *punish* does not directly depend on the *I*-pronoun. It is part of a nonfinite verbal group that depends on the adjective *proper*, so that the narrator appears as a Senser in a mental process instead of a Doer and also appears in the remotest position from the actual subject as is possible. Likewise, as an infinitive of purpose, "to compel" is nonfinite and remote from the subject. Additionally, the double negation avoids 'frequently,' while "punish with stripes" not only paraphrases the more specific alternative 'to whip,' it also becomes more expressive through the triple alliteration on the voiceless plosive [p] and the echo on biblical register.[23] Finally, the first-person plural pronoun, used earlier in reference to the narrator himself and his fellow slaves, has given way to a division between the speaking and acting *I* and the spoken-about and acted-upon *they*. While his attempt to dissociate himself from the violence he commits is apparent in the syntactic arrangement above, he also admits that "a few years of perseverance and experience would have made me as inveterate a negro-driver as any in Georgia" (301). Nevertheless, he points out that he never did "strip a person for the purpose of whipping" just as his mistress does in the ensuing episode (ibid.). Thus, the *I*-narrator achieves several effects at once. He appears honest and reliable because he does not avoid mentioning incidents that might be considered breaches in the code of solidarity among slaves. At the same time, the language the narrator uses distances him from his deeds as much as possible, while he also distances himself from his mistress and her brothers, who in the following episode whip Ball without reason with a hickory stick, incidentally the same instrument he uses himself. But unlike Brown and Bibb, who under similar circumstances manage to dissociate their narrating selves from their former slave selves' tricks, deceptions, and breaches of solidarity through the use of irony, Ball's text is devoid of such a comic element.

In contrast to Ball's whippings as an overseer, the beating he receives himself immediately after and the physical consequences are depicted in gruesome detail. More important for the course of the narrative, however, is the psychological result. Ball is eventually saved by his declining master and resolves to remain loyal as long the latter lives, but to escape as soon as he dies. Several weeks later the master passes away, and the flight begins. A number of verbs of perception are used in a metaphorical way again connected with nominalizations. Expressions such as *feel attachment*, *feel apprehension* describe mental states, which may be at least as congruently expressed by affective processes such as *like* and *fear*. Alternatively, these can also be expressed as relational processes with *attached* and *apprehensive* as Attributes, but these are almost nonexistent in the text. Here, the categories of mental: affective and relational converge semantically. Incidentally, affective verbs are rare, and so are relational verbs, even though not to the same extent. Purely affective verbs with a human being as the Phenomenon are almost completely absent, and so are *love*, *like* and *hate*. Ball once only hates an idea; the one he loves is his master (306)!

Ball's narrative is the one with the smallest share of relational verbs (18.68%), which leads to the second lowest rf_{rel} after Northup (4.353). Relational processes that express a

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[23] The best known and most frequently quoted example in reference to biblical justifications of slavery is from Luke, but there are several further occurrences to be found: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (012:047).

mental state are recurrent, however. Particularly frequent are expressions with *feel* used in a relational sense (*feel anxious*, *indifferent*, *secure*, *indignant*, etc.) and possessives such as *have no doubt*. But even here, the expression of affect is ultimately rather rare; in the entirety of relational processes it is eventually outnumbered by cognitive adjectives (*resolved*, *satisfied*, *careful*, *confident*, *determined*) and nominal groups ("I was a stranger").

As usual, the majority of relational processes are of the attributive intensive kind. Possessives as well as circumstantial constructions are much rarer, but they do occur. Especially the latter ones are to be found in the travel account and present space and time. Occasionally, all three types of relational processes even appear in clusters.

5.7.34   [1] I had no doubt that [2] I was in the neighborhood of some town, but of its name, and the part of the country in which it was located, [3] I was ignorant. (339f)

In this sentence we find possessive in [1], circumstantial in [2] and intensive in [3], all of which contribute to the impression of obstructed progress in Ball's flight. In the foregoing discussion of mental and material verbs it became apparent that Ball uses a large number of grammatically metaphorical expressions. This also applies to the use of relational verbs. Expressions such as the following ones represent mental states in the guise of a circumstance.

5.7.35   I was now in possession of the clearest evidence of the guilt of the two murderers, . . . (166)

5.7.36   I was in no fear of being punished by the fish-master, for he was now at least as much in my power as I was in his; . . . (218)

While the second one paraphrases as 'I didn't fear,' the first one is best seen as an elaboration and intensification of 'I knew.' In 5.7.36 the use of circumstantial processes is continued to illustrate the power balance between Ball and his master at this point.

Once again it becomes obvious that the occurrence of abstract nominals is a companion phenomenon to the grammatically metaphorical expression. Although generally, Ball's narrative has not been found to feature an excessive quantity of nominalizations, the previous discussion of the individual process types has revealed a slightly more differentiated picture. The narrative is characterized by a high number of processes that are used in a metaphorical way involving nominalization. Oftentimes this includes dummy-verbs, as in material processes that depend on a Range: process for their semantic content, such as in "taking an observation of the stars" (413). But many instances have not been quantified because they do not range among the typical morphological nominalizations. These examples, such as "provided myself with a supply of corn" (323f), therefore do not figure in the statistics of nominalization, but nevertheless they contribute to the impression that grammatical transcategorization is a recurrent device. The previous example shows that this leads at times to rather wordy, if not tautologous, constructions. But the grammatical transcategorization that involves nominalization also suggests abstraction and stylistic elevation, both of which do not always match the concreteness of the narrative content, as has been discussed above. This is not necessarily so. For instance Ball's relational statement "I had at times serious thoughts of suicide so great was my anguish" (35) is appropriate in the serious situation, possibly much more so than many of Northup's amanuensis' rather foolish examples of attempted poeticalness. This does not mean that 'I was so desperate that I thought of killing myself' would not have transported the message, too; but in the form of expression lies another message that illustrates the narrator's ability to work with language. This

ability is not measurable in a purely quantitative way, and yet it is one essential factor that contributes to the construction of the narrator's discursive self.

In Ball's narrative the passive voice is comparatively scarce. The rf_p of 0.975 is the second lowest after Northup, while the passive share of all instances with the first-person singular pronoun is 4.01%. There are two chapters that attract attention quantitatively, namely Chapters 6 and 19 with a share of passive forms that exceeds 12% in both cases. The latter is particularly remarkable as the frequency of the construction clashes with its scarcity in the surrounding Chapters 18 and 20, where passive forms account for only about two percent of all processes associated with the *I*-pronoun. In Chapter 19 Ball is kidnapped into slavery again after many years of freedom. Clearly, the accumulation of passive forms in this chapter creates and increases the impression that the narrator is no longer his own master but subject to the will of others. Ball even tries to have his case reviewed in court, but he loses as he is not able to prove that he is a free black. In the chapter he presents himself as the victim of a mixture of racist laws, corruption, brazen lies, and violence. The most obvious cluster of passive forms occurs when Ball describes an incident where his kidnapper whips him in order to prevent his appearance before court.

5.7.37   His evil passions were like fire covered with ashes, concealed, not extinguished. He now found that I was determined to try to regain my liberty at all events, and the sheriff was no sooner gone than the overseer was sent for, to come from the field, and I was tied up and whipped, with the long lashed negro whip, until I fainted, and was carried in a state of insensibility to my lodgings in the quarter. It was night when I recovered my understanding sufficiently to be aware of my true situation. I now found that my wounds had been oiled, and that I was wrapped in a piece of clean linen cloth; but for several days I was unable to leave my bed. When Friday came, I was not taken to Milledgeville, and afterwards learned that my master reported to the court that I had been taken ill, and was not able to leave the house. The judge asked no questions as to the cause of my illness. (397)

None of the passive voice constructions in this excerpt features the Agent of the processes explicitly. From the co-text it may be inferred that it is his master, but eventually the Doer of the actions remains unmentioned. The presentation in the passive voice makes it clear that the narrator considers himself as being in the center of attention and that at present he is overwhelmed by his master's power. It is remarkable that the clustering appears in direct collocation with physical violence. There are further instances, such as *dragged*, *tied*, *held*, *locked up*, *taken*, and *watched*, but they are scattered across the chapter and do not accumulate in the same manner. Here the narrator illustrates by way of linguistic realization that his subjugation is only physical and could not have been achieved by other means. He makes it clear that it is only physical violence that keeps him in check and prevents him from seeking what rightfully is his – his freedom. Therefore, it is only consistent that as soon as physical control over him falls short when the overseer fails to lock Ball's cabin, the passivity is broken and Ball is able to escape for good.

The discussion of a number of linguistic characteristics has shown that this particular narrative is far from stylistically simple. Syntactic complexity and a number of semantically condensing devices occur throughout the text with almost unvarying frequency. Only nominalization is subject to considerable statistical variation. This means that the anonymous *I*-narrator of this text is construed through structured and logically elaborate discourse, notwithstanding a few logical fallacies or ambiguities. The text is dominated by coordinated clauses and hypotactic elaboration. Although writer and narrator are not identical,

the way the presentation is crafted has an effect on how the *I*-narrator is perceived and interpreted, namely as a narrator who aims to present as much detail as possible about his environment and his life in slavery. The predominant syntactic structure presents many details as logically connected with each other, although they are frequently only related by association and thus by psychological proximity. In terms of historical truth, it is irrelevant that the narrative was not written by its subject himself, although this is important for the match between the events and their linguistic (re-) presentation. And yet, it is remarkable that the language of the text creates experiences of the slave and their relationships in terms of this psychological dimension, which the reader is likely to apply to the fugitive slave despite his completely unfathomable role in the production of the text. While in Northup's narrative the actual fugitive slave is at least credited with having recounted his life story, this is not so in Ball's. And while in Northup's narrative the attempted literariness is made so obvious due to the recurrent use of traditional stylistic devices, Ball's narrative purports to be rather unadorned and simple and in this way tries to create an impression of historical accuracy although it was subject to the same processes of selection, ordering and wording as all other texts.

Occasionally, the lack of variation in the choice of linguistic expression fails to create a match between language and narrative content. A number of linguistic characteristics, particularly the use and clustering of abstract nominals in concrete events, are not well matched and thus appear rather unmotivated. It stands to reason that they occur mainly due to the writer's preference for a certain style, which he appears to have considered fit for all purposes. This, too, has effects on the *I*-narrator. The static style underlines that he is not presented as developing. Notwithstanding general observations about slavery, ethnic relations, but also personal matters, his awareness is not presented as progressive. There is no change in character from the childhood days in slavery until the final escape.

Ball is created as an unassuming, observing character, who does not act much upon his surroundings. Rather, his activities are often affected or even controlled by his the people in his environment or the environment itself. Not only during his flight but also while still in slavery Ball observes his surroundings and relates many concrete incidents as well as abstract conclusions to his readership. Material processes are to a large extent ranged or intransitive; the impression that he rarely affects other participants is supported by the comparatively large share of behavioural verbs (6.74), which express rather static activities such as *live*, *lay down*, *sleep*, *stand* etc. The scarcity of affection is maybe not a surprise when the date of the original publication is taken into account. Pouring out one's "soul's complaint" in emotive terms had not become sanctioned and fashionable when the text was written. Stoicism in the face of suffering and the claim to truth still stood in the way of expressing emotional anguish in words that would go to the readers' hearts rather than to their minds.

5.8   *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

5.8.1   Harriet Jacobs' presence in the text

Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents* stands out in a number of ways, not only among the narratives of the corpus, where it is the second longest text after Ball's. It is also one of the comparatively few narratives written by female fugitive slaves (Smith Foster 1993: 92) and, according to Jean Fagan Yellin, the "first full-length narrative by a woman" published in the USA (1985: 263). Yellin identifies several additional firsts and "onlies" It is the only text that focuses on the sexual exploitation of female slaves, the only one that explicitly distinguishes its audience as female, and the only narrative that imitates the style of sentimental fiction (ibid.). Originally published under the pseudonym "Linda Brent," the text was for a long time supposed to have been written by the abolitionist Lydia Maria Child, who is credited as the editor. However, Yellin's studies of private correspondence between Jacobs, Child, and Amy Post eventually established Jacobs herself as the author (Yellin 1981: 480ff).[24]

The relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun lies slightly above average in the corpus and is subject to considerable change within the narrative (Table 5.8.1 below). A division into four parts (Cs. 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-41) reveals that the rf_I rises from 21.887 in the first quarter to 31.168 in the last with the intermediary stages of 27.149 and 25.832 in the second and third parts respectively. The low rf_I in the beginning is mainly due to three chapters concerned with general descriptions of slave life (Cs. 3, 8 and 9). Two of them, 3 and 8, are very short, while Chapter 9, with an rf_I of 5.405, is a fairly long chapter and therefore influences the quantitative presence of the *I*-pronoun in the first quarter heavily. Jacobs' general observations, typically written in the present tense, are not absent from the rest of the narrative (Cs. 12, 13, and 22), but these later chapters are much shorter than Chapter 9, which occupies a central position in the development of Jacobs' argument. It provides an effective link between nonspecific observations about the debasing character of slavery on blacks and whites alike, and the narrator's personal fate as presented in Chapter 10, which is incidentally also the chapter with the highest rf_I in the entire narrative. The highly contrasting relative frequencies of the *I*-pronoun between Chapters 9 and 10 mark the transition from the introduction of the background with frequent generalizations to the eventually more effective depiction of the experience of an individual.

The first quarter of Jacobs' narrative is remarkable, as its rhetorical strategy at some crucial points not only differs from the rest of the text but also from all other narratives. *Incidents* is unique in the recurrent explicit recognition of her readers' presence. At times, similar to other narrators, she acknowledges her readers indirectly in the third person as in "I hardly expect that the reader will credit me, . . ." (224; cf. also 5, 13, 253, 258). But more frequently, and more effectively, she addresses her readers directly in the second person, occasionally even with various additional vocatives. The occurrences of second-person addresses to the reader are most recurrent in the first ten chapters, later they notably decrease in frequency. The use of vocatives and second-person pronouns will be addressed below.

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[24] Yellin's article in Davis' and Gates' *The Slave's Narrative* (1985) is a revision of the earlier article in *American Literature* from 1981 and provides useful information about the debates over the authenticity of Jacobs' narrative.

Table 5.8.1: Distribution of the first-person singular pronoun in Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Ch.	number of words	rf_I including passive voice	share of passive voice (in percent)	rf_I without passive voice
1	1518	26.350	10.00	23.715
2	2355	16.136	5.26	15.287
3	731	5.472	0.00	5.472
4	4401	15.451	4.41	14.769
5	1378	30.479	4.76	29.028
6	2572	29.938	10.39	26.827
7	2738	36.523	7.00	33.966
8	944	10.593	10.00	9.534
9	3145	5.405	0.00	5.405
10	2332	52.316	5.74	49.314
11	2049	36.115	5.41	34.163
12	1989	16.088	3.13	15.586
13	3145	13.037	4.88	12.401
14	1378	34.833	0.00	34.833
15	2575	34.175	1.14	33.786
16	3991	38.086	7.24	35.329
17	1293	40.217	3.85	38.670
18	3128	24.616	2.60	23.977
19	2028	15.286	0.00	15.286
20	1703	35.819	1.64	35.232
21	1687	38.530	12.31	33.788
22	856	11.682	10.00	10.514
23	1531	31.352	8.33	28.739
24	1058	44.423	4.26	42.533
25	2133	19.691	2.38	19.222
26	1720	13.372	0.00	13.372
27	2917	34.967	1.96	34.282
28	2076	15.414	3.13	14.933
29	3681	30.155	4.50	28.797
30	1310	26.718	2.86	25.954
31	1940	41.753	3.70	40.206
32	1495	47.492	4.23	45.485
33	1126	39.964	8.89	36.412
34	1525	20.328	6.45	19.016
35	969	34.056	6.06	31.992
36	2121	32.532	2.90	31.589
37	1082	29.575	3.13	28.651
38	791	29.077	0.00	29.077
39	761	32.852	0.00	32.852
40	2252	25.311	8.77	23.091
41	3071	30.283	4.30	28.981
sum	81495	27.597	4.85	26.259

It may be assumed that nearly every act of writing or speaking presupposes an implied reader, but, especially in the written prose of this particular autobiographical genre, the receiver of the message is usually left implicit. Although the implied reader in a slave narrative is by no means unidentifiable, slave narrators typically do not explicitly address their readers as second-person participants in a – rather one-sided – communicative act. By acknowledging the presence of the readers, and more effectively yet, by addressing them directly with a second-person pronoun, the otherwise implied recipient is not only made explicit but also asked to participate, although in a rather hypothetical way, since the speaker is unable to check the actual effect of his or her initial speech act.

The foremost issue remains the question what this particular way of expression does for the construction of the narrator's discursive self. The introduction of an explicit second-person recipient, albeit a hypothetical one, is an interpersonal act that has implications for the experiential level of meaning, that is, the way the events in the narrator's life are presented to the audience. As will become clear soon, Jacobs uses the addresses to her readers in a strategic way not only in order to establish an emotional bond between herself and the audience, but also to set the scene for her own experiences. In this way she tries to guide her readers through the text, and, it may be hypothesized, aims to guide and anticipate the readers' response as well.

The use of the second-person pronoun instead of, or in addition to the third-person "reader" (cf. ex. 5.8.3 below) has a powerful effect. First of all, it situates Jacobs' argument into a communicative situation between a first-person speaker and a second-person addressee, who is psychologically closer to the narrating subject than a spoken-about third-person participant ("the reader"). While a hypothetically uncooperative reader may refuse to identify with the general reader by choosing to ignore the intended exophoric referentiality between the general term *reader* and him- or herself, this rejection becomes impossible in a second-person address. The link between *reader* and the actual reading individual is a semantic one between the lexical item and the activity which is being performed. The actual readers are thus referential only by way of their function vis-à-vis the present text. This does not apply to the second-person pronoun. It transforms the reader as the referent from a general, theoretically even endophoric, i.e. intratextual, entity into a clearly exophoric, extratextual one (Halliday/Hasan 1976: 48f). In addition, the reference of the second-person pronoun is understood as specific and unique. The referential tie is not semantic but deictic and involves communicative function; it is thus much harder to disregard. As first- and second-person pronouns are typically considered to be speech roles and stand in contrast to other roles, the tie facilitates a sense of closeness between narrator and reader across the boundary of the text (Halliday 1994: 189).

Two related aspects are important at this point: perspective and familiarity (cf. also Siwierska 76ff; 105ff). The use of the second-person pronoun effects a switch in perspective, if perspective is interpreted in its literary use as "the viewing of situations and events through the eyes, literally or figuratively, of one of a range of potential parties" (76). While in a first-person narration this range of potential parties is typically limited to the *I*-narrator, the use of the second-person pronoun provides the means for a different camera angle. Jacobs achieves mastery in the use of this device, especially due to the frequent association with mental verbs, particularly of the perceptive type, as in the following excerpt (cf. also Jacobs 41, 54, 63, 67, 82, 86, 109, 164, 202, 261).

5.8.1   Could you have seen that mother clinging to her child, when they fastened the irons upon his wrists; could you have heard her heart-rending groans, and seen her blood-shot eyes wander wildly from face to face, vainly pleading for mercy; could you have witnessed that scene as I saw it, you would exclaim, *Slavery is damnable!* (38; Italics original)

Notwithstanding the hypothetical character of the conditional clauses, Jacobs describes her own experiences here in such a way that the processes depend on the second-person pronoun and thus epistemologically on the reader and not on the *I*-narrator.

Siwierska develops the literary use of perspective into a more restricted functional linguistic framework, where perspective is understood as the particular assignment of participant roles (77). This "linguistic perspectivizing" is subject to a number of parameters, which can be grouped together under the concept of "familiarity" (105ff). In addition to linguistic factors such as givenness, definiteness, referentiality and temporal priority, it also comprises several idiosyncratic aspects such as personal preference and emotive involvement (107). The dialectic relationship between language and reality suggests that familiarity can be expected to be a dialectic concept as well. While particular linguistic expressions thus may reflect the speaker's emotive involvement, they may likewise be used to create such an effect in the reader as the use of the second-person pronoun does.

Apart from several instances of the second-person pronoun in Chapters 3 and 4, which begin to establish the bond between the narrator and her reader, the two most outstanding chapters in this respect are 5 ("The Trials of Girlhood") and 10 ("A Perilous Passage in the Slave Girl's Life"). Both of them present the narrator's distress because of Dr. Flint's sexual harassment. Jacobs' general argument about the corrupting effects of slavery evolves at this point out of her own experiences in the household of the Flints. Involvement of the reader here plays a crucial role for the positioning of the narrator as an individual whose fate is to be pitied, but also as a representative for the degradation of female slaves in general (Braxton 23f). Jacobs' task is complicated by one of the prevailing prejudices about African American women, which is at variance with the "mid-nineteenth century ideal of the Victorian lady" (Gray White 29).[25] According to Deborah Gray White, "[o]ne of the most prevalent images of black women in antebellum America was that of a person governed almost entirely by her libido, a Jezebel character" (28f). In the light of these prejudices on the one hand and white stereotypes of female virtues on the other (Schmidli 68f), Jacobs needs to make sure that her justification of deliberately taking a white lover and bearing his children as presented in Chapter 10, is effectively prepared as a defiant, yet self-liberating act that must not be judged according to the prevailing moral standards.

The description of her sufferings commences in Chapter 5, when the narrator has reached the age of fifteen and Dr. Flint begins to molest her. This chapter lays the foundations for Jacobs' strategy of presenting the depiction of her personal fate as exemplary for the fate of the female slave. By setting this goal, however, she risks more than her individual reputation. It is therefore essential for Jacobs to create a strong emotional bond between herself and her audience before she publicly owns up to her non-Victorian behavior. The chapter consists of five parts, for which the narrator's appeals to the reader provide a

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[25] Cf. also Karin Schmidli's analysis of Jacobs' rejection of typically female virtues according to Barbara Welter's theory of the "ideology of true womanhood" in the mid-nineteenth century (Schmidli 68ff). Smith Foster discusses this ideology and the competing term "Real Womanhood" and suggests that this alternative model is more appropriate for Jacobs (Smith Foster 1993:103f).

framework. Jacobs describes the increasing harassment by her owner and points out that neither law nor mistress provides protection for the female slave. From the second part onwards Jacobs appeals to the reader directly and claims that it is the northern readers' moral duty not to cooperate in this degradation of the female slave. The argument begins with an outright accusation.

5.8.2   Surely, if you credited one half the truths [sic] that are told you concerning the helpless millions suffering in this cruel bondage, you at the north would not help to tighten the yoke. (45).

The hypothetical character of the condition implies that the speaker believes that it is not fulfilled at present (cf. Quirk *et al.* 1091). Therefore, the negated proposition in the matrix clause is presented as not true. The result is a slightly less direct accusation than the logically analogous paraphrase 'you don't believe the truths, therefore you help to tighten the yoke.' In the following the narrator deflects her argument from her personal experience and keeps it at a general level, while in the third part of the chapter she switches back to the first person. A further direct appeal to the reader introduces part four, in which the narrator seeks to illustrate the contrasting experiences of black and white half-sisters by way of an example.

5.8.3   Reader, it is not to awaken sympathy for myself that I am telling you truthfully what I suffered in slavery. (47).

The fifth part closes the chapter with a plea for assistance in the guise of rhetorical questions with vocatives and second-person pronoun addresses.

5.8.4   In view of these things, why are ye silent, ye free men and women of the north? Why do your tongues falter in maintenance of the right? (48)

Of the three direct addresses to the reader in the second person, the initial as well as the final one drastically accuse the northern audience of failing to lend assistance to the slaves (5.8.2 and 4). Clearly, the direct second-person address with vocatives renders the accusation more pointed than a nonspecific third-person, which readers may easily choose to interpret as not being coreferential with them. Yet, the charge is toned down not only by the initial indirectness of the hypothetical condition, but also by the second appeal, in which Jacobs claims that she does not write for her own personal advantage but "for my sisters who are still in bondage, suffering as I once suffered" (47). So the narrator's hard-hitting charges of northern complicity are rendered more acceptable by her claim to ulterior motives. Her second-person accusations may provoke protest and objection, or the realization that there is truth in them. In any case, they contrast the readers' free world with Jacobs' own experience as a female slave and so incite emotive involvement on the readers' side. Moreover, Jacobs links her slave experience with a further claim to truthfulness. In this way, the use of the second-person pronoun address here helps to position the narrator as an individual who dares to see (and speak) eye-to-eye with her readers, despite her supposedly morally deviant behavior.

Chapter 9 ("Sketches of Neighboring Slaveholders") is a report of the degrading aspects of slavery for blacks and whites alike. The incidents related do not involve the narrator; the chapter therefore features the lowest rf_I in the narrative (5.405) and contrasts heavily with the subsequent one, which has the highest rf_I (49.314). It ends with a few generalizations about Jacobs' observations and another direct address to the reader in the second person:

"You may believe what I say" (81). It so prepares the transition from her third-person observations to the then following painful first-person point of view, which requires the reader's understanding and compassion again.

In Chapter 10 Jacobs eventually resolves to try and escape from her master's perpetual persecutions. She aims to spoil Flint's scheme of setting her up as his concubine in a lonely cottage by taking an unmarried white man, Mr. Sands, as her lover. When she becomes pregnant, she hopes that Flint will eventually sell her to Sands, but the plan fails. More than in the previous chapters Jacobs feels forced to justify her behavior to her readership. She is aware that her conduct is considered a breach of Victorian decorum, but she makes it clear that she considers the circumstances for the female slave as different from those of a northern white lady, so that different moral standards apply (83, 86). As she knows that this argument is controversial and bound to create opposition, the strength of the emotional bond between herself and her readership becomes all the more important for her aim to enlist the readers' moral support for her cause.

As before, the second-person address is essential in Jacobs' strategy. She begins with a pledge for absolute honesty, which she places above all considerations of decorum.

5.8.5   It pains me to tell you of it; but I have promised to tell you the truth, and I will do it honestly, let it cost me what it may. (83)

Carefully selected and qualified vocatives, such as "O, ye happy women, whose purity has been sheltered from childhood" (83) and "O virtuous reader!" (86), not only imply a predominantly female target audience for her argument and thus "emphasize the importance of female bonding" (Braxton 38), they also combine with the second-person pronoun and several generalizations about human behavior for an effective justification of her conduct. At this point, there is a remarkable gap in the use of the *I*-pronoun in a chapter in which it is elsewhere very frequent. Instead, a remarkable combination of generalness, abstraction, and the use of the second-person pronoun occurs.

5.8.6   It seems less degrading to give one's self, than to submit to compulsion. There is something akin to freedom in having a lover who has no control over you, except that which he gains by kindness and attachment. A master may treat you as rudely as he pleases, and you dare not speak; moreover, the wrong does not seem so great with an unmarried man, as with one who has a wife to be made unhappy. There may be sophistry in all this; but the condition of a slave confuses all principles of morality, and, in fact, renders the practice of them impossible. (85f)

The general validity of the argument is implied by the use of present simple tense, the predominance of indefinite articles in reference to persons, and impersonal constructions such as existentials with *there*, dummy-*it*, and the use of abstract nominals (*compulsion*, *wrong*, *condition*, *practice*, etc.). By using these devices, Jacobs again deflects the argument from her own person, although the generalizations are easily transferable to her situation. Through the generalization and the absence of the first-person from this episode the narrator achieves two effects. First of all, this presentation provides a psychological shelter for her. While she feels forced to own up to her actions, the nonspecific third-person form affords distance between herself and what she thinks the readership considers immoral according to the cult of "ideal womanhood" (Braxton 38), that is, her affair with Mr. Sands. The obviously sexual nature of their relationship, Jacobs is an unwed mother of two after all, remains implicit throughout the narrative. The romantic details are unspeakable even in the third person and remain hidden beneath the conventions of Victorian decorum as well as

Jacobs' desire to avoid the prejudices about the sensuality of African American women in general. In addition to this psychological shelter, the episode provides the generalization the narrator is aiming at in her quest of positioning her slave experience as representative for the degradation of female slaves.

Moreover, the use of the second-person pronoun provides a change of perspective and so helps to achieve the greatest possible effect. Although the instances of *you* in 5.8.6 above imply a general meaning akin to *one* (cf. Halliday/Hasan 1976: 53), the reference is an exophoric one and may hypothetically be extended to the reader as well. This applies predominantly to the first instance of *you*, where a master-slave relationship has not been stated explicitly yet, so that a reader may well feel inclined to identify with the second-person in the statement. Having done so in the first instance, the reader is likely to carry over the reference to the next two occasions by way of lexical repetition, although the pronouns now clearly refer to a general female slave. Arguably, by expressing this particular state of affairs in this manner, especially by switching the perspective, the narrator is able to achieve several seemingly conflicting aims simultaneously. She is able to maintain her dignity while she involves the audience emotionally. Moreover, she positions herself as central in the narrative, and yet she also emphasizes that her personal fate is supposed to serve as an example.

Jacobs' manner of addressing the reader through a combination of the second-person pronoun with other linguistic devices is unparalleled in the corpus. Other narrators, such as Douglass, Bibb, and Northup, occasionally employ similar strategies of trying to guide or to anticipate an imagined reader's response to the text. Bibb states, "[t]he reader may perhaps think me tedious on this topic, . . ." (Bibb 127), while Northup evaluates his text thus: "THE year 1850, down to which time I have now arrived, omitting many occurrences uninteresting to the reader, . . " (Northup 236). But the reader as a second-person addressee, and therefore as a participant, does not occur except only once in Bibb's narrative (65) and in Douglass (cf. example 5.3.7 above). It is remarkable that although all of the texts were generated to evoke favorable responses from their readers for the abolition of slavery, it is only Jacobs who makes use of this device to an extent that one could call strategic.

The pragmatic dimension of this way of expressing oneself must not be underestimated. According to Halliday (1994: 69), the four initiating speech functions *offer*, *command*, *statement*, and *question* are based on the three key systems defining speech functions: giving vs. demanding, goods-&-services vs. information, initiating vs. responding (Martin 35). All four of them are matched by expected responses: *acceptance* of an offer, the *undertaking* of a command, the *acknowledgement* of a statement, and the *answer* to a question (Halliday 1994: 69; cf. also Eggins 109ff, 153ff, Martin 32ff, Yule 78ff). While written narrative is typically dominated by the giving of information, Jacobs, more than other narrators, acknowledges the presence of her readers and provokes a response by using more than the one speech function of statement. She involves demanding types, that is, questions and commands, to which the expectation of a response is much more salient than the mere acknowledgement of a (written) statement. Demanding speech functions create a gap, a pragmatic expectation, which the recipient is expected to fill. Despite the fact that the medium is written language, where feedback is nearly impossible, this device helps Jacobs to foreground the interpersonal dimension of her narrative.

The choice between spoken and written language is part of the mode component within register and comprises several interdependent systems. Martin provides a detailed analysis of the systems involved, such as the degree of turn-taking, the likelihood of a reply, and va-

rious degrees of self-consciousness (1992: 509ff.). The medium of written text, especially in planned discourse (cf. Ochs 1979), limits the possibilities of the addressee considerably. Physical absence of the audience precludes aural as well as visual contact between the communicating parties; moreover, turn-taking is not possible, nor is any reply of the audience likely. The selection of the written medium therefore seemingly constrains direct feedback. However, whenever the reader is directly addressed, preferably in demanding speech functions, the text is constructed as if replying and thus turn-taking were not only possible, but expected from a cooperative readership, as in the following two examples.

5.8.7   Reader, did you ever hate? I hope not. (66).

5.8.8   O reader, can you imagine my joy? No, you can not, unless you have been a slave mother. (261)

These (rhetorical) questions occur with and without initial vocatives. In both cases they establish a communicative situation which explicitly requires a second participant. Although the questions remain rhetorical ones, they establish an emotional bond between narrator and reader not least through the use of mental verbs and the references to affective states (*hate*, *joy*). The second instance, moreover, indicates that Jacobs imagines that her readers are most likely not to be found among (former) slaves. Leckie-Tarry argues that it is contextual and cultural knowledge that enables writers "to take into account the potential feedback of implicit/model readers in the process of realization" (49). This reader orientation is the focal point in Bell's concept of style as a speaker's accommodation to the audience. In his model of audience design he claims that speakers respond to their audience, even in situations where they initiate communication (Bell 1984: 184f). Bell distinguishes between the direct addressee in the second person, who is "known, ratified and addressed," third-person "auditors," who are ratified and known to be present but not addressed, and further, even less direct roles (159). In audience design the addressee is the role closest to the speaker and therefore has the potentially greatest effect on the speaker's style. The most remote role is the referee, who is a physically absent third person, yet so salient for speakers that their language is influenced nevertheless. Here, audience design becomes referee design instead. Referees may be social groups with which speakers would like to be identified, or from which they want to dissociate themselves (186f).

The important point is that the model is reversible for audience as well as for referee design. In accordance with the fundamentals of this study, speakers are not only influenced by the audience as to their linguistic choices, speakers may also choose specific linguistic devices in order to create a desirable communicative situation, including roles for the audience. From the perspective of audience design this means that whenever readers are mentioned in the third-person, their presence is acknowledged and ratified, but they are not addressed and so kept at a distance, as in Bibb and Northup. They are constructed to remain in the auditor position at best. The second-person pronoun, however, creates an addressee who is presumed to be known, even if this is actually not the case. Bell applies his model to mass communication, which is also appropriate for the situation of the slave narrative. In media communication, he claims, a speaker's style is initiative style design, where a relationship with an audience is created through language, rather than the language being based on an existing relationship (192). For radio announcers, for instance, Bell argues that "[t]hey use style as an expressive instrument, a declaration of identity, saying to the audience 'you and I are ingroup'" (ibid.). Arguably, although slave narrators usually do not know

their audience personally, their language is likely to converge with their conception of how an ideal but not individually specified group of addressees appreciates being addressed. This does not mean that Jacobs' audience actually speaks the way Jacobs writes. But it means that Jacobs expects her model readers to accept and appreciate her way of addressing them (Bell 1984: 191f), and that by way of this particular address she is able to construct the desired emotive relationship between the audience and herself.

The written medium may preclude direct feedback from the reader. Nevertheless, the use of the *you*-pronoun together with vocatives contributes to the relationship between narrator and reader. Through exophoric reference across the boundary of the text and by using initiating speech functions that request a cooperative response Jacobs effectively minimizes what Martin has termed "'interpersonal' distance" in a speech situation (1992: 516).

Jacobs clearly aims to create identification between herself and her presumably female readership (Braxton 37). Once she even uses inclusive *we* for this effect.

5.8.9   But, alas! we all know that the memory of a faithful slave does not avail much to save her children from the auction block. (15)

At the same time and in contrast to other slave narrators, however, her identification with other characters in the text is not so strongly developed. The relative frequency of the first-person plural pronoun is remarkably low. While the average in the corpus is 4.073, Jacobs' narrative contains only 2.65 instances per 1000 words. Jacobs' seven year long solitary confinement in the garret of her grandmother's house cannot be held responsible for this scarcity alone, as it does not cover more than nine chapters (21 to 29) or close to 22% of the text. Whenever the first-person plural pronoun occurs, it almost invariably refers to herself and a female, either her grandmother, her daughter Ellen, or her northern friend Mrs. Bruce. Only a few instances include other people, such as initially her brother William, her uncle Benjamin, and in Chapter 7 ("The Lover") the anonymous free black man she is forbidden to marry. Most notably only one instance can be interpreted as including Mr. Sands, the father of her children, but the occurrence is far from unambiguous.

5.8.10   Always it gave me a pang that my children had no lawful claim to a name. Their father offered his; but, if I had wished to accept the offer, I dared not while my master lived. Moreover, I knew it would not be accepted at their baptism. A Christian name they were at least entitled to; and we resolved to call my boy for our dear good Benjamin, who had gone far away from us. (120)

Although the reference of *we* to Sands and Jacobs is likely here, it may with some validity also apply to the narrator and her grandmother, whose church membership is addressed in the subsequent paragraph. Unlike other slave narrators such as Douglass or Brown, Jacobs hardly uses *we* to present herself as integrated into a community of slaves. And in contrast to Ball, she does not try to present herself as a member of any white community, either. As other authors have noted, Jacobs' narrative emphasizes female solidarity as well as family ties whenever such emphasis appears due (Smith Foster 1993: 97), but she does not seem to model herself as a member of such groups without qualifications. She is not shy to discuss the lack of solidarity from her mistress (54), likewise she expresses disappointment and even fear that her uncle, her brother, and her son have left for the North (34, 202ff).

After the initial quarter of the narrative, when the setting is established and the relationship with the readers has been negotiated, the rf_I remains relatively high. A few chapters with a low relative frequency of the *I*-pronoun appear nevertheless. In addition to only

one chapter with rather general concerns (C. 22), some episodes concentrate on other persons, such as the narrator's brother William (C. 26) or her aunt Nancy (C. 28). Apart from these, however, the narrator herself remains central to the narrative, even in chapters with a comparatively low rf_I. This effect is partly due to the fact that direct speech is much more frequent in Jacobs' narrative than in any other text. This is underlined by the fact that her narrative features the second largest share of verbal processes (13.04%). Of the 2769 instances of the *I*-pronoun 515 (18.6%) occur in direct speech, while the average of the corpus is only 9.34%. In the entire text more than 640 instances of direct speech are to be found, a number that exceeds all other narratives by far. In Chapter 19 about one third of the text consists of direct speech. 45.6% of all instances of the first-person singular pronoun occur in direct speech. While the narrator is hiding under the protection of a white woman, the father of her children tricks Dr. Flint into selling them. A large part of the chapter consists of direct speech, where the first-person singular pronoun does not refer to the narrator herself. And yet, dialogues, such as the bargaining between Flint and a slave trader (5.8.11 below), and, even more frequently, monologues are told in such a way that it appears as if the narrator were present throughout. This dramatic method of showing, that is, presenting the characters in what are supposed to be their own words, not only renders the account more vivid and immediate than a purely telling mode as, for instance, in Roper's narrative. It also contributes to a focalization of the events so that they seem to be presented through the narrator's eyes. Unlike other narrators, such as most notably Roper and Grandy, who typically follow the actions in which they participate or that concern them immediately, Jacobs presents events which are locally remote from her.

This method strengthens her position as a narrator considerably. Arguably, on the one hand, the presentation of events that she does not witness might put her claims to strict truth at risk and a number of authors have accused her of having fictionalized her biography (Smith Foster 1993). The use of a pseudonym and the alterations of names and locations did not help the acceptance of her narrative as fact, either. On the other hand, however, provided that her audience was inclined to find her narrative trustworthy, this narrative strategy puts tremendous power into the hands of the narrator. Like other narrators, too, Jacobs possesses the power over the words and deeds of all persons in the text. But other narrators either claim to be direct witnesses, or to have spoken to a direct participant, otherwise they restrict their representations to the telling method whenever the first-person narrator is not directly involved or present. In *Incidents* the situation is different. The narrator claims to be able to represent even words and actions she does not witness herself. The following quote presents the conversation between Dr. Flint and a slave trader.

5.8.11   At all events, he came to the conclusion that he had better accept the slave-trader's offer. Meeting him in the street, he inquired when he would leave town. "To-day, at ten o'clock," he replied. "Ah, do you go so soon?" said the doctor; "I have been reflecting upon your proposition, and I have concluded to let you have the three negroes if you will say nineteen hundred dollars." After some parley, the trader agreed to his terms. (160f)

Many more instances of this kind can be found in the text (cf. 232). The question is not one of historical truth, but one of control over the text. More than other narrators do, Jacobs exercises her narrator's power over the participants of her narrative by using direct speech. For instance, direct speech provides her with the means of depicting the members of her family as speaking an elaborate version of Standard English, whereas the black servants

Betty (Cs. 19 and 20), Aggie (C. 26), and the "mischievous housemaid" Jenny (C. 29), but more notably the "motley crowd of [white] soldiers" (98), are made to speak some form of substandard dialect. Flint is presented uttering terms of abuse and violent threats regularly, notwithstanding the fact that decorum makes the narrator stop short of representing his "foul words" to her in direct speech (45). At times, the instances of direct speech are not integrated into dialogic scenes at all so that the monologic character does not even distinguish them from thoughts.

5.8.12   Whenever the children climbed on my knee, or laid their heads on my lap, she would say, "Poor little souls! what would you do without a mother? She don't love you as I do." (140)

This dramatization of events, speech, and thought has effects on the narrative perspective and therefore for the position of the first-person narrator. The use of direct speech may occasionally lower the rf_I, but this "loss" is fully made up for by the power gained over the text. Especially in situations where the *I*-narrator is not present at all, the perspective is no longer the restricted angle of a narrating first person, but shifts, or rather extends, towards an omniscient point of view (232f). The narrator here claims to have access to areas which are typically not accessible to first-person autobiographers. Cuts and rearrangements in the chronology of the account, which represent one aspect of the poetic process any narrative undergoes, are to be found in other narratives as well. The process of extending the point of view while upholding the claim to truth, including the presentation of authenticating devices, however, is a novel phenomenon in Jacobs' narrative. The *I*-narrator does not have to be explicitly omnipresent in the text and the rf_I of the entire narrative is only slightly higher than the average. And yet, the narrator provides access for the reader to episodes outside the first-person experience. The reader's view is carefully guided – note that access to other, more intimate or romantic areas is strictly limited if not sealed – while the second-person address in the beginning has secured the greatest possible trust in the narrator and her ulterior motives. Provided that the reader is a cooperative one, Jacobs' repeated claim to truth seemingly keeps a check on her own power over the narrative, while in fact the bond with the reader verifies this power.

Several additional linguistic characteristics of Jacobs' text deserve attention. Syntactically, *Incidents* is slightly different from the average text. Jacobs' average sentence contains only 2.9 clauses and, even more remarkably, only 18.96 words, which is the lowest value in the corpus (Table 4.4, p. 66). This means that Jacobs' typical sentence is half as long as Ball's. Generally, Jacobs' sentences are not only shorter but also less complex than in many other narratives. 83.41% of them are finite, which is slightly above the average. Subjectless nonfinite clauses with initial participle, so frequently found in Northup's text, are rare; they are exceedingly rare with the first-person narrator as the implied subject. Nonfinite clauses with temporal or causal meaning, which represent the majority of such constructions in other texts, appear in Jacobs, too (5.8.13), but they are uncommon, especially in combination with a subordinating conjunction (5.8.14).

5.8.13   Looking up, I saw my master watching us from his window. (65)

5.8.14   After receiving various orders from him, I ventured to ask permission to spend Sunday in town. (137)

More frequently than in other narratives these nonfinite subjectless clauses represent a circumstantial element of means.[26]

5.8.15   By managing to keep within sight of people, as much as possible, during the day time, I had hitherto succeeded in eluding my master, though a razor was often held to my throat to force me to change this line of policy. (51)

5.8.16   Hitherto, I had escaped my dreaded fate, by being in the midst of people. (82)

The effect is a reduction of the occurrences of the *I*-pronoun in the text. Yet, in contrast to Northup's and Brown's texts, the device of expressing circumstantial elements in subjectless nonfinite clauses is in rather marginal use in Jacobs.

The majority of nonfinite clauses lack an initial conjunction, so that the logical-semantic relationships between the clauses remain unspecified. While all three types of nonfinite clauses of expansion, that is, enhancement, extension, and elaboration, can occur without introductory conjunction, in fact only the latter form of relationship typically appears without this element (Halliday 1994: 240). Halliday admits that due to the absence of a conjunctive element there is often considerable overlap between extension and enhancement, as the following example illustrates (1994: 241).

5.8.17   One afternoon I sat at my sewing, feeling unusual depression of spirits. (32)

A relation of simultaneity is likely here, and yet a finite gloss of the dependent clause with initial *while* yields a questionable result. A hypothetical temporal subclause with a progressive aspect ('while I was feeling') suggests that the feeling acts as a background action to the sitting, which is unlikely because of the static character of the behavioural verb *sit* expressed by the nonprogressive form. In fact, as both verbs contain the feature of duration, they denote processes that may be interpreted as background to another activity ('While I was sitting at my sewing, the door opened.'). According to Halliday, clause complexes like this one "are probably best treated as straightforward 'and'-type additives" (1994: 241) and therefore extensions that add a new element to the matrix clause. These are comparatively frequent in Jacobs' text; at times the reduction of the dependent clause is extreme as in 5.8.20.

5.8.18   . . . and I turned away from the grave, feeling thankful that I still had something left to love. (18)

5.8.19   I walked on recklessly, not caring where I went, or what would become of me. (88)

5.8.20   I rose from my seat, but fell back again, sobbing. (88)

5.8.21   He noticed this; and while I stood before him, trembling with weakness, he heaped upon me and my little one every vile epithet he could think of. (119)

These findings about the inexplicit logical-semantic relationships between clauses, or rather between processes, matches an observation made earlier about paratactic relations with *and* in Jacobs' text (cf. page 62 above). All of this is in accordance with the fact that the relative frequency of subordinating conjunctions and prepositions acting as such is comparatively low. The average of the corpus is 15.011, while in *Incidents* it is only 13.522. Moreover, it is also striking that the relative frequency of the coordinating conjunctions

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[26] While Halliday includes Instrument as well as Agent in the category of means, which he treats as a subcategory of manner (1994: 154), Quirk *et al.* describe means, instrument and agentive adjuncts as different and thus distinct classes of adverbials (559).

and, *or*, and *but* is the lowest within the entire corpus (38.258 in *Incidents* versus 42.382 for all texts). It is clear that neither the subordinating nor the coordinating conjunctions are used solely to combine clauses but also other elements that can stand in tactic relation to each other, yet a tendency is clearly discernible. It is supported by the fact that further items that can be used as linking devices, such as *then*, *yet*, *thus*, *therefore*, *however*, and *as*, are also invariably less frequent than in the average (Table A.1.5, p. 279). In sum, these observations corroborate the impression that Jacobs' text is syntactically not only less complex than most other narratives investigated, but also that the logical-semantic relations between clauses are frequently left implicit.

The relative frequency of morphological nominalizations in Jacobs' text lies at 10.945 and thus below the average. This applies to all categories except nouns formed with the suffix *–ness*, which denote states or conditions and typically condense a relational process of the intensive attributive kind, such as 'I was sad.' But only a small number of this form of nominalization collocates with the first-person possessive determiner to indicate direct participation of the narrator. Generally, collocations of nominalizations with *my* occur with average frequency in the text (0.871). This is remarkable in so far as *Incidents* has by far the highest relative frequency of *my* (18.357 vs. 13.731 in the corpus). *Kindness* as the most frequent nominalization on *-ness* (*rf* 0.344) actually refers to the narrator only once.

Generally, the nominalized processes are quite evenly distributed over the text: only occasionally does a chapter deviate from the average. One of those is Chapter 23 ("Still in Prison"), in which the rf_{nom} is 15.656. If conversions are taken into account, this relative frequency is even twice as high. In a chapter where Jacobs is confined in the attic of her grandmother's house, the language reflects this confinement and forced inactivity very well. Nominalizations often occur together with relational verbs such as *have* and *be* and so render the text static. While the presence of the *I*-pronoun is slightly above the average (28.739), the distribution of the process types supports the impression of inactivity. The relative frequency of material verbs is low (4.572), so that the narrator's potential to act upon others is limited. Mental verbs, on the other hand, especially perceptive and cognitive ones, dominate (9.789), but being internal processes, they do not let the narrator's actions affect others. She can only perceive what is going on outside through a small hole in the wall of her garret, but she uses these observations as a strategic narrative device to present episodes about other slaves she claims to have witnessed. Additionally, relational (7.838) and behavioural (3.919) verbs are more frequent than the average of the text would suggest. Relational processes such as "I had glimpses of things out of doors" (183) or "I had a very painful sensation of coldness in my head" (185) illustrate how they cooperate with nominalizations to replace mental verbs and enhance the static character of the episode. The same effect is created by the high relative frequency of behavioural verbs such as *suffer* and *die*, even if they do not co-occur with nominalizations. At times, the nominalizations, including conversions, completely take over the activities, or the lack thereof, as in the following:

5.8.22   My limbs were benumbed by inaction, and the cold filled them with cramp. (185)

The *I*-narrator herself does not figure in the increasing lifelessness of her body anymore. The static qualities are even carried over from her situation in the attic to the narrator's description of her feelings toward Dr. Flint.

5.8.23   During the long nights I was restless for want of air, and I had no room to toss and
            turn. There was but one compensation; the atmosphere was so stifled that even

mosquitos [sic] would not condescend to buzz in it. With all my detestation of Dr.
Flint, I could hardly wish him a worse punishment, either in this world or that which
is to come, than to suffer what I suffered in one single summer. (182)

First, the nominalizations suggest staticness. Moreover, especially *detestation* avoids the *I*-
pronoun in combination with a negatively charged item, although the determiner makes re-
ference explicit. The *I*-pronoun, however, does occur in combination with the Christian re-
nunciation of vindictiveness. A less metaphorical expression, such as 'I detested Dr. Flint,
and yet I didn't wish him a worse punishment,' for instance, realizes the narrator's mental
activities as processes and does not characterize the narrator's attitude towards the man as
subordinate to not wishing punishment. Jacobs effectively incorporates this linguistic de-
vice into the tone of the entire episode, which is supposed to illustrate the lack of progress
and movement in her attempt to escape and the suffering this causes for her.

The same applies to a large number of conversions, which have not been accounted for
quantitatively. With 37 occurrences in the text *fear* is a good representative for this group.

5.8.24   I dreaded the consequences of a violent outbreak; and both pride and fear kept me
        silent. (47)

5.8.25   It was the first time he had ever struck me; and fear did not enable me to control my
        anger. (61)

5.8.26   Fear gave speed to our steps, and we were not long in performing the journey. (133)

5.8.27   The pain in my leg was so intense that it seemed as if I should drop; but fear gave me
        strength. (153)

The nominalizations of the mental process *to fear* take over subject positions and therefore
different participant roles. The nominalization acts as Attributor in 5.8.24 or Initiator in
5.8.25 in causative processes (cf. Halliday 1994: 171f, 285ff), or as Actor in the two material
ones 5.8.26 and 27. In all cases the nominalization renders the original mental affective pro-
cess more permanent than an untransformed verb or the adjective *afraid* would suggest.
This also applies to the nominalizations in the near vicinity of *fear*, which support the im-
pression of permanence. Although *pride*, *anger*, *speed*, and *strength* are not typical nominaliza-
tions or conversions derived by simple (zero-) suffixation, their semantic and morphological
relation to adjectives denoting mental states or qualities is obvious. This matches with the
observations about the comparatively high frequency of nouns derived with *-ness* from
states and qualities. By expressing the events in such a way Jacobs not only presents herself
as able to condense the processes involved in the events on a general level, but especially
the transcategorizations of fearing also iconically illustrate the ubiquity of fear in Jacobs'
life. After all, *Incidents* has the second highest relative frequency of *fear* after Bibb's text and
also the second highest relative frequency of *afraid* after Roper's.

Some of the examined characteristics make *Incidents* unique among the selected texts.
Due to this fact, the emphasis of the linguistic analysis in the first part of the chapter dif-
fered from the previous narratives. It has become evident that more than other narrators
Jacobs is able to exploit linguistic means in order to control her readers' perception. The
use of the second-person pronoun address as well as direct speech attest to this power Ja-
cobs exercises over her text and thus over her readers. In this way she is also able to model
herself as a strong individual and yet representative for the suffering of the female slave.

5.8.2 Harriet Jacobs' use of transitivity

Table 5.8.2: Selection of process types in Jacobs (in percent)

chapter	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
1	5.56	13.89	38.89	38.89	2.78	23.715
2	2.78	36.11	33.33	22.22	5.56	15.287
3	0.00	25.00	50.00	25.00	0.00	5.472
4	9.23	13.85	40.00	13.85	23.08	14.769
5	12.50	20.00	30.00	27.50	10.00	29.028
6	13.04	23.19	27.54	21.74	14.49	26.827
7	3.23	15.05	33.33	30.11	18.28	33.966
8	22.22	11.11	33.33	11.11	22.22	9.534
9	0.00	5.88	29.41	17.65	47.06	5.405
10	7.83	25.22	29.57	23.48	13.91	49.314
11	5.71	15.71	38.57	24.29	15.71	34.163
12	12.90	25.81	32.26	6.45	22.58	15.586
13	0.00	28.21	30.77	17.95	23.08	12.401
14	10.42	22.92	25.00	27.08	14.58	34.833
15	9.20	20.69	32.18	20.69	17.24	33.786
16	7.80	38.30	29.79	15.60	8.51	35.329
17	2.00	52.00	26.00	6.00	14.00	38.670
18	6.67	30.67	40.00	18.67	4.00	23.977
19	12.90	12.90	48.39	16.13	9.68	15.286
20	6.67	25.00	31.67	28.33	8.33	35.232
21	15.79	29.82	29.82	21.05	3.51	33.788
22	0.00	11.11	66.67	22.22	0.00	10.514
23	13.64	15.91	34.09	27.27	9.09	28.739
24	13.33	31.11	33.33	11.11	11.11	42.533
25	2.44	31.71	36.59	2.44	26.83	19.222
26	8.70	17.39	52.17	13.04	8.70	13.372
27	6.00	34.00	27.00	19.00	14.00	34.282
28	22.58	22.58	29.03	12.90	12.90	14.933
29	9.43	25.47	20.75	26.42	17.92	28.797
30	5.88	14.71	32.35	29.41	17.65	25.954
31	2.56	39.74	28.21	16.67	12.82	40.206
32	2.94	51.47	16.18	19.12	10.29	45.485
33	7.32	36.59	26.83	19.51	9.76	36.412
34	0.00	34.48	37.93	20.69	6.90	19.016
35	16.13	25.81	25.81	19.35	12.90	31.992
36	4.48	29.85	28.36	26.87	10.45	31.589
37	0.00	22.58	51.61	19.35	6.45	28.651
38	0.00	34.78	39.13	21.74	4.35	29.077
39	12.00	16.00	28.00	24.00	20.00	32.852
40	5.77	32.69	26.92	21.15	13.46	23.091
41	6.74	28.09	33.71	21.35	10.11	28.981
sum	7.43	27.43	31.45	20.65	13.04	26.259

The selection of process types in Harriet Jacobs' narrative is characterized by the fact that mental verbs exceed material ones in frequency. In fact, Jacobs' text is the one with the smallest share of material verbs in the corpus (27.43%). The relative frequency of material verbs is the second lowest after Northup's text (7.203). The share of mental verbs associated with the first-person singular pronoun, on the other hand, is the second highest in the corpus after Douglass (31.45%); in terms of relative frequency it ranges together with Douglass at the second position after Picquet (8.258). Two further peculiarities distinguish this narrative from most other texts: the frequency of behavioural as well as verbal processes is also among the highest of all narratives.

The frequency of material verbs in Jacobs is not only lower than in most other texts, many of the processes are also used in a different way. It is especially noteworthy that 27% of the material verbs feature a Goal, which is a high value for the corpus (Table 4.8, p. 78). Among these, a large number of tactile verbs with a human Goal are to be found, such as *hug*, *hold*, and *kiss*. Further examples are the following ones, in which bodily contact between the narrator and another human is presented.

5.8.28   I would clasp the dear boy in my arms, trusting that he would be free before he was old enough to solve the problem. (123)

5.8.29   She drew back a little, and looked at me; then, with sweet confidence, she laid her cheek against mine, and I folded her to the heart that had been so long desolated. (211)

5.8.30   I clasped the hand of my good uncle, to whom I owed so much, . . . (237)

5.8.31   I pressed her to my heart, then held her away from me to take a look at her. (250)

5.8.32   I quietly took the child in my arms, went to our room, and refused to go to the table again. (266)

It is remarkable that if material processes of the male narrators feature human Goals at all, they often occur in the context of physical violence. Examples are Douglass' fights with Covey as well as Northup's repeated confrontations with Tibeats. Jacobs, in contrast, is the first narrator in the analysis who presents physical contact materially between human Actor and human Goal not as a sign of resistance but of affection. Not even Bibb, whose love for his wife Malinda makes him repeatedly return to the slave states, presents affectionate physical contact in such a way, except once when he says of Malinda that "she caught my hand with an affectionate smile" (Bibb 76). Note, however, that she is the Actor, not he. Jacobs, on the other hand, does not shy away from presenting such contact with herself as Actor and Agent. Her networks of supportive social relationships, especially the bonds her family relations provide, are thus made explicit. Mr. Sands, the father of her children, however, is exempt from this physicalness. The only contact between him and the narrator occurs when Jacobs walks in disguise through the streets.

5.8.33   The father of my children came so near that I brushed against his arm; but he had no idea who it was. (172)

Yet her contact with Sands is presented syntactically only as the result of his action, in which she does not figure. Incidentally, neither his nor her action (*come*, *brush*) takes a second participant as they are both middle. This means that neither of the Actors figures in the respective other's action as a direct participant. Apart from this incident, Mr. Sands,

who is never addressed by his first name, remains a distant and untouched character – even his arm is merely circumstantial.

Intransitive material processes are scarcer than in other texts (39.86% of all material ones), while ranged material processes occur with average frequency (30.15%). Among the former ones locomotive verbs such as *arrive*, *come* and particularly *go* are frequent. Apart from such ubiquitous verbs like *enter*, *make* and *take*, the ranged processes establish the transmission of information as an important topic in the narrative. Jacobs receives many *news*, *letters*, *tidings*, *warnings*, *notes*, and *messages* from various people and thus emphasizes her involvement in human networks again. The combination of ranged material processes with nominalizations, so apparent in Ball, is not absent from Jacobs' text, but it is less obvious and also less wordy. Jacobs is especially busy making *arrangements* and *preparations*; she also keeps "close watch" (295) and makes "diligent inquiries" (253). Unlike in many of Ball's instances ("saw an appearance"), however, Jacobs' expressions belong to the lexical stock of formal language. These phrases have become lexicalized, which does not apply to the majority of Ball's constructions. While Jacobs' wordings therefore do not appear stylistically original, they show that the narrator is familiar with conventional ways of expression that would be expected by her readership in contemporary popular romantic novel as well. In this way, Jacobs' text appears stylistically more secure and experienced than the occasionally rather awkward phrasings found in Ball and the overdone literariness in Northup.

Material verbs are particularly frequent in the chapters concerned with flight. In Chapter 17 ("The Flight") Jacobs escapes from her cruel master and seeks refuge at a friend's house for a short time, before she is conveyed to another hiding place. Material verbs dominate the chapter, but mental verbs are not absent. Behavioural as well as relational verbs are almost negligible in number. In the following example, taken from the beginning of the narrator's flight, parataxis adds to the impression of quick and decisive action that does not require elaborate logical explanations.

5.8.34   At half past twelve I stole softly down stairs. I stopped on the second floor, thinking I heard a noise. I felt my way down into the parlor, and looked out of the window. The night was so intensely dark that I could see nothing. I raised the window very softly and jumped out. Large drops of rain were falling, and the darkness bewildered me. I dropped on my knees, and breathed a short prayer to God for guidance and protection. I groped my way to the road, and rushed towards the town with almost lightning speed. I arrived at my grandmother's house, but dared not see her. (146)

The narrator is presented as completely on her own on a dark and rainy night. Mostly mental and intransitive material processes combine to convey an impression of isolation and loneliness; even the grandmother, who, after all, takes care of the narrator's children, cannot be contacted at this moment. Jacobs' material actions at this point are entirely guided by sensory perception: *hearing*, *feeling*, *looking*, *seeing*, and also *groping*, despite the latter's material orientation, lead the way for her.

A further peak in the use of material verbs is to be found in Chapters 31 and 32, concerned with the narrator's first arrival in the free states. After a sea voyage, she arrives in Philadelphia and then moves on to New York as well as to several other northern cities in order to visit friends and relatives. It is not only the vocabulary of motion that is responsible for the high frequency of material verbs. In addition to *arrive* and *go*, once again the transmission of information is presented as important, particularly in Chapter 32. Jacobs makes inquiries, begins, writes, and sends notes and letters and eventually receives answers. This is

her way of finding orientation in a new environment; in addition these verbs emphasize that the narrator is a learned person who is part of a social network. Generally, it is the movement along the new and still unfamiliar territory that is described in a predominantly material way. Unlike in Ball's narrative, where perception plays an essential role for safety, Jacobs does not feel as threatened in this environment. Cognition as well as perception are present, too ("I had never seen so large a city, or been in contact with so many people in the streets" [246]), but material activity clearly dominates.

The narrator's effective use of language is also apparent in her handling of mental processes. At first glance it might appear self-evident that a narrator who spends seven years of her life in a small garret should use a large number of mental and possibly behavioural verbs. After all, confinement in this "loophole of retreat" does not afford much opportunity for material activity. But this is not the case; in fact, only two chapters (21 and 23) are directly concerned with Jacobs' imprisonment in the little den; and here the frequency of the mental process type is not even excessively high. The relative frequency lies at around 10 instances per 1000 words in both chapters. Jacobs uses mental processes in a more subtle and pointed manner. Not only is the proportion of mental verbs second only to Douglass, we also find that the relative frequency of affective verbs is higher than in any other text (1.595), even than in those with a much higher rf_1, such as Roper's and Picquet's. Therefore, this subtype of mental verbs deserves further attention below.

Only in a few chapters is the share of mental verbs extremely high in comparison with the average of the text. Rather than a few excessive peaks, a large number of chapters together contribute to the high frequency of mental verbs. And yet, there are clusters as in 5.8.34 above. One such cluster of mental verbs is to be found in Chapter 37 ("A Visit to England"). The chapter deals with the narrator's journey through England and her life in a new environment. The fact that Jacobs presents her impressions through a large number of verbs of perception (*observe*, *see*, *hear*) has been found typical of other travel accounts, too, and thus does not come as a surprise. In contrast to many other episodes in the narrative, it does not contain any verbs of affection.

While processes of perception are not particularly frequent in this narrative, it is noteworthy that the text has the highest relative frequency of the verb *hear* (0.969), which contributes almost half of all verbs of perception. Similar to Ball's usage of *see*, this is an effective way of pointing out the centrality of the narrator's point of view. Observations, aural ones in this case, do not stand on their own but become syntactically as well as experientially dependent on the narrator. The process recurs particularly often between Chapters 16 and 21, when Jacobs escapes from the plantation and hides at a friend, in the swamp, and at a white woman's house, before she is conveyed to the garret her uncle has prepared for her in the meantime. She hears voices, conversations, noises, footsteps, as well as Dr. Flint's threats. As Jacobs is confined in a little closet for most of the time and therefore unable to act upon her environment, these aural perceptions, especially when the doctor appears, contribute a strain of gothic horror to the narrative. The elements of darkness and of being entombed alive without a possibility to escape from imminent (or imagined) danger are recurrent in popular fiction of the early nineteenth century and may quite safely be assumed to have added to the appeal of a slave narrative, too.[27] The quote 5.8.34 above is one

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[27] Cf. Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* for a rather comprehensive treatment of gothic horror.

example that combines the elements of darkness, isolation, and danger with the absence of visual perception, but there are some more to be found. The following excerpt from Chapter 18 ("Months of Peril") creates this sense of terror very effectively.

5.8.35   Suddenly I heard a voice that chilled my blood. The sound was too familiar to me, it had been too dreadful, for me not to recognize at once my old master. He was in the house, and I at once concluded he had come to seize me. I looked round in terror. There was no way of escape. The voice receded. . . . After a while I heard approaching footsteps; the key was turned in my door. (159)

Perception and cognition combine with a number of nouns such as *voice, sound, footsteps* that imply activity but lack subjects. The absence of doers makes it clear that the activities are presented from the narrator's purely aural perspective. The presentation of the activities as depersonalized lets the reader experience Jacobs' fear from her own point of view. Experientially, the episode foregrounds the role of Medium instead of presenting Agents and therefore the originators of an activity. This is particularly apparent in the final three sentences. The *voice*, the *footsteps*, and the *key* do not act out of their own volition, although they are presented as subjects of a process. Each one of them is a Medium, while the actual Agents are not presented. This means that a controlling force over what is intruding on the narrator from the outside is left unmentioned and so the wording enhances the impression of powerlessness that leads to fear in this situation.

On the other hand, the use of *hear* occasionally introduces a comic element into the narrative, too. Despite the confinement, the narrator is able to overhear a number of conversations or monologues, which provide her (and thus the reader) with information from the outside world, such as the following example from the same chapter.

5.8.36   When she was alone, I could hear her pronouncing anathemas over Dr. Flint and all his tribe, every now and then saying, with a chuckling laugh, "Dis nigger's too cute for 'em dis time." When the housemaids were about, she had sly ways of drawing them out, that I might hear what they would say. She would repeat stories she had heard about my being in this, or that, or the other place. To which they would answer, that I was not fool enough to be staying round there; that I was in Philadelphia or New York before this time. (158)

Eavesdropping enables the narrator to present other character's thoughts and speech without participating directly. In her closet Jacobs is a spy; reporting what others say and do is a practical device to overcome the limitations of a first-person point of view, as was already suggested the discussion of the high proportion of direct speech elsewhere. The comic element in this episode capitalizes on the well-known stereotype of the resourceful black servant who outwits his (or her) master and the fact that black humor was and still is frequently associated with oral elements, as the title of Osofsky's collection of narratives *Puttin' On Ole Massa* suggests, too.

A further cluster of mental verbs is to be found in Chapter 11 ("A New Tie to Life"), in which the narrator's first child is born. Having confessed her pregnancy to her grandmother and to Dr. Flint, she suffers from the former's remonstrations and disappointment, from the latter's humiliations, and later from physical illness after the birth of her son. The rf_{men} is 13.177, which is one of the highest counts in the text; the proportion of mental verbs amounts to 38.6% in this chapter. The continuous arguments between Jacobs and Dr. Flint characterize the episode, but in addition to presenting the quarrel in direct speech, the narrator also reveals her inner conflicts and mental anguish over the loss of her pride.

5.8.37   I did not feel as proud as I had done. My strongest weapon with him was gone. I was lowered in my own estimation, and had resolved to bear his abuse in silence. (90)

Mental and relational verbs combine for a description of the narrator's desolate mental state. Although Jacobs and her child recover from illness and she shows affection for the little boy, the positive moments are always counterbalanced by fear. The final paragraph illustrates the pattern that is to be found elsewhere in the narrative as well.

5.8.38   The little vine was taking deep root in my existence, though its clinging fondness excited a mixture of love and pain. When I was most sorely oppressed I found a solace in his smiles. I loved to watch his infant slumbers; but always there was a dark cloud over my enjoyment. I could never forget that he was a slave. Sometimes I wished that he might die in infancy. (96)

In addition to mental verbs and attributes, the narrator uses a number of nominalizations to present her inner state (*estimation*, *love*, *pain*, *enjoyment*). The use of the passive voice for the material verbs *lower* and *oppress* add to the impression that during this episode Jacobs is restricted to mental activity and to bearing her fate instead of being able to control it actively herself. Active material verbs thus amount to only 15.7% in this chapter.

Affective mental processes are frequent in this narrative. They contribute slightly less than 20% of all mental processes (Table 4.10, p. 81). Some directly respond to facts and therefore clearly fall into the category of emotive verbs.

5.8.39   I did not like to move thus blindfolded, but I had no choice. (153)

5.8.40   How often did I rejoice that I lived in a town where all the inhabitants knew each other! (55)

These affective processes respond to embedded facts that are not merely brought into existence through a mental act of the Senser. More frequent in Jacobs' narrative, however, are affective verbs that indeed project ideas into existence, such as the following ones. Here, the metaphenomenon does not correspond to a state of affairs in reality.

5.8.41   Sometimes I wished that he might die in infancy. (96)

5.8.42   I feared that circumstances might arise that would cause her to be sent back. (213)

The combination of affective verb and finite declarative clause with future meaning in relation to the independent clause yields a projection (Halliday 1994: 259, 289). The projected clause represents an idea that exists merely in the narrator's mind. Even more frequent than these projections of finite clauses are constructions that Halliday preferably interprets as verbal group complexes, which have the capacity to project.

5.8.43   I wished to appear as contented as possible. (132)

5.8.44   I hoped to be able to give her and Benjamin a home, and send them to school. (269)

Generally, constructions that project ideas such as examples 5.8.41 to 44 are the most recurrent ones in Jacobs, with the verbal group complexes in the majority. In this category the desiderative processes *hope*, *long*, *want* and *wish* are particularly frequent. Sentences like 5.8.43 and 44 above as well as the following ones are to be found throughout the text.

5.8.45   I wanted to confess to her that I was no longer worthy of her love; . . . (86)

5.8.46   I longed to have their emancipation made certain. (203)

In this category of complexes, negatively charged emotive verbs such as *fear*, *dread*, and *despise* are less recurrent as they prefer simple Phenomena. And yet, their ubiquity illustrates the narrator's mental anguish throughout almost the entire narrative – there are no clusters to be found. *Fear* and *dread* are slightly more frequent in the second quarter between Chapters 11 and 18 when Dr. Flint's harassment reaches its peaks.

5.8.46   There was nothing I dreaded so much as his presence. (120)

Frequently, positive and negative sentiments, fear and hope, balance each other in these episodes and thus illustrate the mental dilemma in which the narrator is caught (cf. also 5.8.38 above).

5.8.48   I was dreaming of freedom again; more for my children's sake than my own. I planned and I planned. Obstacles hit against plans. There seemed no way of overcoming them; and yet I hoped. (126)

This pattern does not only apply to processes expressed congruently as verbs; occasionally nominalized verbs contribute as well.

5.8.49   I loved, and I indulged the hope that the dark clouds around me would turn out a bright lining. (58)

During the final quarter of the narrative the negatively charged affective processes become notably rarer, and the desiderative ones *hope*, *long*, and *wish* together with *love* clearly gain more prominence. Especially the very end of the narrative is telling in this respect. Jacobs freely admits that, although she has reached freedom, there are still aims to be achieved and hopes left open for her.

5.8.50   The dream of my life is not yet realized. I do not sit with my children in a home of my own. I still long for a hearth stone of my own, however humble. I wish it for my children's sake far more than for my own. (302f)

Note the semi-passive construction with *dream* in subject position. It implies that it may not only be up to her for the dream to become reality, otherwise 'I haven't realized the dream of my life' would have been equally valid. Eventually, she is not to be blamed for this, but rather the unspecified (and unmentioned) circumstances of her life. This ending reflects the narrator's partial disillusionment with life in a Northern society that has not always been supportive and occasionally even outright racist towards her.

    Among the simple Phenomena, which represent the largest class among the objects of the narrator's (dis-)affection, Dr. Flint, or some reference to him, is notably frequent. Jacobs dreads and despises him, but it is only once that she explicitly refers to him as the object of her hate.

5.8.51   I was determined that the master, whom I so hated and loathed, who had blighted the prospects of my youth, and made my life a desert, should not, after my long struggle with him, succeed at last in trampling his victim under his feet. (82)

In the course of the entire narrative these explicit negative affections are outweighed by positive ones expressed by *love* and *like*. But as Mr. Sands is never the Goal of the narrator's material activities, so is he never the Phenomenon of her affections. Jacobs loves several people, among them her family, her mistress as a child, and her hostess in New York. She even admits to loving a free black carpenter in her youth, whom she is not allowed to marry (cf. also 5.8.49).

5.8.52   I loved him with all the ardor of a young girl's first love. (58)

The interracial relationship between Sands and her, however, is not expressed in affective terms at any point in the text.

This direction of emotions as well as desires away from the father of her children is remarkable. On the one hand, Jacobs' use of material as well as affective verbs suggests that she would like to be seen as an affectionate person. She is not at all loath to make the presentation of emotion subservient to her aim of winning her readers' compassion. In addition to appearing as determined and hopeful despite all odds, the presentation of affectionate family ties and loyalty is clearly one of the most prominent goals of the text. At first sight, these aims may seem to clash in the person of Mr. Sands. He is not presented as particularly loyal towards her or their children; after all, he leaves his slave concubine and their children for a political career and a marriage with a white woman in Washington. But Jacobs deliberately refrains from making him a central character in the story of her life. Rather than endowing him with a central position and then being able to fashion herself as the forsaken lover and him as a heartless opportunist who takes advantage of a young slave girl, Jacobs deflects her own activities and her readers' attention from Sands and so backgrounds him. Instead, she uses the absence of male support and affection to foreground her own determination. She admits that she is what Victorian standards considered a fallen woman, but the experiential gap that her affair with Mr. Sands represents is not one of shame and guilt, but one from which arise strength and self-determination.

A number of cognitive verbs and Attributes support this impression. In addition to the most frequent cognitive verbs *think* and *know*, the processes *conclude*, *plan*, *determine,* and especially *resolve* in their various forms are recurrent throughout the narrative, although the proportion of cognitive verbs is comparatively small (less than 53% of all mental verbs). This is quantitatively evident; the combined relative frequencies of expressions including the processes *plan*, *conclude*, *determine*, and *resolve* is higher than in any other text (0.417). The same applies to the verb *know*, which, in contrast to *believe* or *think*, implies an amount of certainty. No other narrative surpasses Jacobs' text in the relative frequency of this verb, either (1.117).

As a further comment on Mr. Sands it should be noted that, while Jacobs never explicitly addresses emotional ties between herself and him, and, when asked whether she loves him, answers "I am thankful that I do not despise him" (92), she does not portray Sands as another cold-blooded male, either. Speaking of her newborn boy, she extols the gentleness of his father, who "caressed him and treated him kindly, whenever he had a chance to see him" (98), which supports the impression that she refrains from presenting herself as his victim, too.

Relational processes occur with average frequency (rf_{rel} 5.424; 20.65% of all processes); and yet a few characteristics in the distribution deserve to be mentioned. The high proportion of affective verbs observed before is partly reflected in the use of relational processes. The relational use of *feel* is recurrent and particularly frequent in Chapter 10 ("A Perilous Passage in a Slavegirl's Life"). In this chapter Jacobs addresses her audience directly several times and pleads for understanding after she has admitted that Sands was her means to escape Dr. Flint's persecutions. Here, the feeling expressed as a relational process implies the opposite of the certainty observed above in the mental verb *know* or the relational expression with *be*.

5.8.53   Of a man who was not my master I could ask to have my children well supported; and in this case, I felt confident I should obtain the boon. I also felt quite sure that they would be made free. (85)

The feeling is a deceptive one as becomes clear later on; but at this point this tinge of uncertainty matches the narrator's situation as a fifteen year-old slave girl. On the one hand, persecuted by the old doctor, on the other deliberately taking a white lover but trying to present herself as living up to the standards of female virtue, Jacobs has a hard time justifying her behavior. The implied deceptiveness of *feeling* "quite sure" instead of *being* sure or knowing at this point is an attempt at honesty, at admitting before her readership that in retrospect she may have been mistaken but did not see an alternative to her behavior.

A further recurrent construction, in addition to the attributive intensive processes with *be*, are possessive processes with *have*. Especially striking is the fact that many of them co-occur with negated nominal groups. Thus we find a number of the following constructions.

5.8.54   I had no words wherewith to comfort her. (27)

5.8.55   I had no such hopes for them. (140)

5.8.56   I had not the slightest idea where I was going. (169)

5.8.57   I had no inclination to slumber. (212)

Whether negated or not, the majority of the possessive processes must be seen as metaphorical. Often they signify a mental process, such as 'did not want,' 'did not hope,' or 'did not know.' Similar to other narratives, this metaphorical use contributes to a certain formality in style as the instances usually collocate with nominalizations. This particular use is rare in narratives such as Roper's or Grandy's, but it is quite recurrent in Bibb as well as in Douglass. Jacobs' narrative, however, appears to be the one with the greatest number of instances of this type with possessive processes.

Behavioural verbs as a group of processes that has been neglected so far are more frequent in Jacobs' narrative than in any other text. Almost 7.5% of her verbs are behavioural. This amounts to a relative frequency of 1.951, which is surpassed only slightly by Picquet due to her immensely high rf_I. In three chapters of the narrative the rf_b even exceeds 5 occurrences per 1000 words (21, 24, 35). Two of these chapters display the narrator in her hiding place in the garret. Intransitive processes such as *sleeping*, *lying*, *waiting*, and *suffering* are indeed more frequent than in most other episodes. Moreover, a large number of behavioural processes in Jacobs' narrative serve to support mental perception as in the following examples. Oftentimes then the relation between the behavior without direct object, that is, the Phenomenon, and the actual mental process of perception is made explicit.

5.8.58   I looked round me with fear and trembling, dreading to see some one who would recognize me. (265)

5.8.59   I looked round, and saw women who were nurses, as I was, and only one shade lighter complexion, eyeing me with a defiant look, as if my presence were a contamination. (267)

The same applies to the near-mental verbs *look*, *peep*, and *listen*. Other behavioural processes that recur in the text include near-material ones such as *live*, *sit*, *weep*, *stand,* and *sink*. A further group are occasional near-verbal processes such as *speak* and *talk*. Their scarcity does not reflect the high frequency of proper verbal process but can be explained by the fact

that behavioural processes cannot be used to report direct speech, which is much more frequent in this text than in any other narrative.

In Harriet Jacobs' narrative the passive voice occurs with slightly less then average frequency. The share of all instances of the *I*-pronoun is 4.85%; the rf_p is 1.338. Of the chapters that stand out quantitatively it is the central one, Chapter 21 ("The loophole of retreat"), that attracts attention with the highest relative frequency of passive voice forms (4.742) and a share exceeding 12%. However, the accumulation of passive forms is not simply a direct reflection of Jacobs' being confined in the den. The majority of instances in the chapter occur when she complains that the lack of space forces her "to sit or lie in a cramped position day after day, without one gleam of light" (174).

5.8.60   Yet I would have chosen this, rather than my lot as a slave, though white people considered it an easy one; and it was so compared with the fate of others. I was never cruelly over-worked; I was never lacerated with the whip from head to foot; I was never so beaten and bruised that I could not turn from one side to the other; I never had my heel-strings cut to prevent my running away; I was never chained to a log and forced to drag it about, while I toiled in the fields from morning till night; I was never branded with hot iron, or torn by bloodhounds. On the contrary, I had always been kindly treated, and tenderly cared for, until I came into the hands of Dr. Flint. (174)

The negation of all the processes reveals that no actual Agent exists that could be mentioned. The narrator herself is the focus of attention in this episode even though she does not do anything, and much less is anything done to her. Where in many other narratives passive forms occur in connection with physical violence, the scheme is reversed here; physical violence is not committed to the narrator – and this fact is being emphasized. The fact that she still seeks refuge in a small garret for seven years despite the near absence of physical abuse implies for the first time that the psychological damage that is done to the female slave may be of equal if not sometimes greater impact than beating, whipping, and locking up.

In sum Jacobs is a first-person narrator who tightly controls her narrative through a very effective use of language. She wins the readership's trust and compassion through forms of direct address, claims to ulterior motives, and the fact that she owns up to what her contemporary readers would consider morally questionable behavior. Once this bond with a potentially cooperative (female) readership is created, the narrator's power of the text is immense. Sentimentalization and what might be considered fictionalization, for instance through direct speech despite the narrator's absence, thus become sanctioned and are transformed from a potentially weak point into one of the strengths of this narrative, because they enhance its effectiveness in the quest for support. The quantitative predominance of mental verbs illustrates that the narrator's inner life is a main aspect of this narrative. Her mood oscillates between hope and fear, both of which are ubiquitous in the text, but once she has resolved to escape, her determination is unbroken.

Jacobs dominates her text, except where other characters can take the foreground when their story serves as an example for the lot of the slave. In the father of her children, Mr. Sands, one of the main characters in her life, however, is curiously backgrounded, a fact which provides one key to the interpretation of her description of her life. Whenever the narrator's relation with him is addressed – or rather not addressed at all – the language creates gaps or in some other way keeps the man at a distance. For a narrator who

elsewhere foregrounds her mental anguish or joy, this absence is remarkable. Jacobs' motives for creating this gap can only be speculated about. Although Sands has managed to buy the children from Flint, she is disappointed, because the former does not emancipate her brother nor, contrary to his promise, the children (191, 253). Neither does he promote her freedom; in fact, he even tells his wife that the mother of the children is dead (207), so that he is not suitable to serve as a foil for Dr. Flint. The emotive indifference in Jacobs' language suggests that her beginning a relationship with Sands was emotionally not more than an act of defiance rather than one of tenderness. And yet, Jacobs completely refrains from evaluating Sands' behavior. While Dr. Flint's persecutions are characterized and labeled as such (84, 124, 217), and he is identified as "tormentor" (123f) and "persecutor" (55), Mr. Sands' deception in respect to her and their children is not termed thus explicitly.

5.8.60 Mr. Sands had not kept his promise to emancipate them. I had also been deceived about Ellen. (253)

The passive voice leaves the deceiver implicit; it is only "also" that may indicate the identity of the two Agents in the sentences, but with equal validity the word may refer to the fact that both statements describe her feeling of insecurity about the safety of her children generally. In any case, Jacobs does not utter a single word about how she assesses Sands' character.

The backgrounding of Sands may be partly due to questions of decorum. After all, an interracial romantic affair initiated by a female slave was without doubt not considered appropriate, even by a well-meaning readership. And yet, with only a slightly different presentation of the relationship, for instance an addition of evaluative labels, it would have been easy for Jacobs to characterize herself as Sands' victim, too. After all, notwithstanding Jacobs' supposed consent, he takes sexual advantage of a fifteen-year-old slave girl's distress. But this is not the role in which the narrator aims to present herself. While she clearly sees herself as Flint's victim, she does not portray herself as emotionally or materially dependent on the father of her children. By creating this version of herself through effective linguistic means she emphasizes her resolve and self-determination; she does not want to present her fate as a function of another white male. In that respect, both Flint and Sands serve as foils for the narrator: the former as thoroughly morally corrupted until the end of his life, the latter as a weak, opportunistic, and eventually indifferent character who neglects his moral obligations because he strives for a political career. Jacobs, on the other hand, may thus present herself as a character who knows moral right from wrong. She owns up to what is considered morally questionable behavior, and, more importantly, she presents herself as accepting the responsibility for her children. Her role as a responsible, affectionate and protective mother in the end compensates for the breach of female virtue in the beginning and so provides another anchor for identification with her supposed female readership. Despite the initial act of defiance, she portrays herself eventually as an affirmative character in terms of her values.

5.9 *Louisa Picquet, The Octoroon: A Tale of Southern Slave Life*

5.9.1 Louisa Picquet's presence in the text

Picquet's narrative represents another unique case within the corpus. Like *Incidents* it is a tale of moral corruption and the degradation and strength of female slaves, but *Louisa Picquet, The Octoroon: A Tale of Southern Slave Life*, is not a first-person narrative in the sense that the other texts are. As *The Octoroon* is partly a transcript of an interview of Picquet conducted by the Rev. Hiram Mattison, and therefore to a certain degree dialogic, there are two voices to be found. These voices at times betray seemingly conflicting aims. Picquet tells her story and has it published because she needs the revenue to buy her mother from slavery, while Mattison intends to investigate and expose the corrupting effects of American slavery (Barthelmy xlf). Occasionally, this leads him to neglect all concerns for decency and tact. Picquet appears to be well aware of her interlocutor's – and possibly her readers' – particular interest in intimate details; and yet she is a compliant and cooperative interviewee, who is nonetheless able to shield some facets from all too prurient looks. On the one hand, Picquet's display of her understanding of religiousness, decency, and chastity may indeed be sincere; on the other hand, however, Mattison's questions that associate her master's violence with a kind of sensuality certainly were not lost on the readership and did not impede the sales of the book, either. Eventually, both Picquet and Mattison profited from its publication; the former in the intended pecuniary way, the latter in his quest for moral condemnation of slavery, self-righteous and instrumentalizing as it may have been (Barthelmy xxxix).

It may be argued that Picquet's text cannot or should not be compared with the rest of the narratives in the corpus because the differences in production and its dialogic and oral character place it outside the generic boundaries of written prose narrative. Three responses to these objections are possible and valid. The first one is an entirely quantitative one. *The Octoroon* contributes only slightly more than 2% of the words in the corpus, in terms of the number of the first-person singular pronoun slightly above 4%. In comparison with the weight of Ball's and Jacobs' narratives, this is statistically almost negligible; in any case the contribution is too small to skew the results, although the rf_I in *The Octoroon* is the highest in the corpus. Secondly, the text's openly oral qualities provide a valuable foil for other narratives, whose linguistic characteristics may be measured against this text. Parameters such as sentence length and complexity in terms of finiteness, subordination and nominalization can be seen as indicative of a narrative's position on a cline between orality and literacy (cf. Leckie-Tarry). The third argument against the exclusion of this text is that hypothesized generic boundaries are arbitrary in any case. For instance, Grandy's as well as Northup's narratives, among many others not considered here, were dictated to an amanuensis. Yet, in these narratives the way the ghostwriters gathered their information is no longer visible due to editing processes. Eventually, the linguistic analytical tools are fit to tackle all kinds of texts, as was argued in Chapter 3, so that specifically this different narrative may yield fresh results that shed new light on the observations gained so far.

However, the peculiarities of this narrative have been taken into account. In addition to the usual topics, such as nominalization and syntactic characteristics, oral features as well as traces of African American Vernacular will be analyzed; in fact, the discussion of these

topics will cover the largest part of the present chapter. Moreover, the dialogic quality of the narrative will be examined as to the distribution of power between the participants.

The text is divided into 27 chapters, but only less than half of the words are presented as Picquet's. It is only in Chapters 2 to 13 and then again in Chapters 17 and 19 that she speaks herself. In the beginning, the middle, and towards the end, when the Reverend quotes letters and eventually takes complete control over the narrative, her voice is drowned out entirely. Then it is Mattison who reports Picquet's attempts to solicit money and adds incidents of cruelty towards slaves, which are unrelated to Picquet's case. After Picquet has acquired freedom and moved to Cincinnati in Chapter 13, she remains a third-person character within her own (auto-) biography. The later parts, which deal with her travels, are told entirely by Mattison from a third-person point of view. For the calculations below, only those parts of the text in which Picquet speaks herself have been used; Mattison's questions as well as his prose have been omitted in the quantitative account.

Table 5.9.1: Distribution of the *I*-pronoun in *The Octoroon: A Tale of Southern Slave Life*

Ch.	words	Picquet's words	Picquet's share of words in percent	rf_I incl. passive voice (without letters and direct speech	rf_I without passive voice
1	322		0.00		
2	126	126	100.00	39.683	23.810
3	451	373	82.71	26.810	21.448
4	653	645	98.77	21.705	21.705
5	2617	2525	96.48	59.010	58.614
6	1575	1323	84.00	40.816	38.549
7	488	395	80.94	25.317	25.316
8	669	613	91.63	58.728	58.728
9	798	743	93.11	61.911	61.911
10	259	192	74.13	26.042	26.042
11	267	235	88.01		
12	1177	1050	89.21	62.857	62.857
13	1621	356	21.96	53.372	47.753
14	407		0.00		
15	530		0.00		
16	243		0.00		
17	486	486	100.00	41.152	39.095
18	295		0.00		
19	507	143	28.21	13.986	13.986
20	207		0.00		
21	214		0.00		
22	425		0.00		
23	645		0.00		
24	293		0.00		
25	443		0.00		
26	1683		0.00		
27	2933		0.00		
sum	20334	9205	45.27	47.366	46.171

In the initial chapter Mattison describes Picquet's physical appearance and her character in favorable words; the subject of the narrative, however, is not heard until Chapter 2. While other narratives, too, feature an introductory voice from a usually white amanuensis, editor, or abolitionist benefactor, and integrate letters into the main body, no other text integrates this non-autobiographical voice openly into the narrative proper, that is, within actual chapters.[28] This opening presentation through the interlocutor replaces, or rather delays, the usual "I was born"-formula and introduces Picquet as a third-person: "Louisa Picquet, the subject of the following narrative was born in Columbia, South Carolina . . ." (5). It is thus made clear from the beginning that Picquet is a character in Mattison's tale rather than the sole individual in power over the question which events of her life are to be made public. Some linguistic mechanisms of Mattison's control over the narrative will be investigated more in detail below.

The individual chapters vary considerably in length as do Picquet's contributions to them. Likewise, the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun is subject to variation. Typically, a low rf_I is combined with a description of other persons, such as an old love affair (C. 4), the white slave woman Lucy (C. 7), or Picquet's husband Henry and his family (Cs. 10 and 11). Unlike in most other narratives, a comparatively low rf_I is never associated with general descriptions, reflections on the nature of slavery, or abstractions from personal experience. Picquet, also due to Mattison's guidance, restricts herself to incidents from her own environment without attempting to imbue any of her personal experiences with further, more general, significance. It is not coincidental that *The Octoroon* is the text with the lowest relative frequency of nominalizations by far (rf_{nom} 2.390; cf. Table 4.5, p. 68). Collocations with *my* are completely absent. Other abstract nouns are comparatively scarce, too. Items such as *pain*, *fear*, *strength*, *pride*, *liberty/freedom* as well as a number of others are invariably less frequent than in the rest of the corpus, if not absent. However, in the context of abstract concepts it is noteworthy that Picquet's text is the one with the highest relative frequency of *religion*.

And yet, the text occasionally claims to provide generally valid observations, as some chapter-headings indicate. An example is Chapter 8, entitled "Octoroon Life in New Orleans." What from the title purports to be of general value due to the absence of definite determiners is in fact narrowly restricted to an account of a small portion of Picquet's life as the concubine of her owner in New Orleans, Mr. Williams. The same applies to Chapter 11, "Domestic Purity in Georgia," in which Picquet narrates a few details about her husband's first marriage while still a slave within 235 words rather than elaborating on the morals in the state of Georgia in general, as might be expected from the title. Assuming that it was Mattison who chose the titles for the individual chapters, the putative generalness is another indicator of his editorial power over the story as well as his wish to give Picquet's life a representative touch, a promise which the contents of the chapters can hardly fulfill.

Chronology is the basic ordering principle of all narratives, and so it is in *The Octoroon*. Picquet's text – as long as it is her own – does not stray from a straight account of her own experiences, except for the occasional descriptions of other persons just mentioned. The

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[28] Stepto distinguishes "eclectic" and "integrated" narratives in his characterization of the relationship between narrative proper and the authenticating material (5ff). Although Picquet's narrative can be categorized as an integrated one in Stepto's sense, this is not the kind of integration that describes Mattison's function or role. While he is integrated in the text, he is not one of the tale's protagonists; in fact, he is not even an authenticating "device" for Picquet's narrative.

extremely high relative frequency of the time adverb *then* (14.883; the average in the corpus is 1.817), mainly used as a listing conjunct, creates an impression of strict temporal linearity in Picquet's account as does the use of *if* and *when*, both of which are capable of indicating sequence, too. Their relative frequencies lie above the average as well. The relative frequency of *when* is 5.323 (corpus 3.595); that of *if* is 7.061 (corpus 2.533), which can be expected considering that this conjunction is likely to combine with *then* (Halliday/Hasan 1976: 259). *When* and *if* together carry more than 50% of the combined relative frequencies of subordinating conjunctions (Table A.1.5, p. 279).

Picquet typically lists activities according to their temporal order and presents them in complete finite clauses, which are arranged paratactically (*then*) as well as hypotactically (*if, so that, before, as long as, when*). The share of nonfinite clauses is the lowest within the corpus together with Roper's narrative (92.31% finite clauses in both texts). The sentence length of 3.25 clauses per sentence corresponds almost exactly to the average of the corpus (Table 4.4, p. 66). The following excerpt is taken from Chapter 8 ("Octoroon Life") and illustrates the predominant syntactic patterns of the narrative very well.

5.9.1   [1] I begin then to pray that he might die, so that I might get religion; and then I promise the Lord one night, faithful, in prayer, if he would just take him out of the way, I'd get religion and be true to Him as long as I lived. [2] If Mr. Williams only knew that, and get up out of his grave, he'd beat me half to death. [3] Then it was some time before he got sick. [4] Then, when he did get sick, he was sick nearly a year. [5] Then he begin to get good, and talked kind to me. [6] I could see there was a change in him. [7] He was not all the time accusin' me of other people. [8] Then, when I saw that he was sufferin' so, I begin to get sorry, and begin to pray that he might get religion first before he died. [9] I felt sorry to see him die in his sins. [10] I pray for him to have religion, when I did not have it myself. [11] I thought if he got religion and then died, I knew that I could get religion. (22; numbers in square brackets added for further reference)

In this stretch the majority of clauses are hypotactically arranged and finite except "to see him die" in [9] and "for him to have religion" in [10]. Many of the subordinated clauses are projected by verbal or mental processes (*pray, promise, see, feel, think, know*), of which Picquet's text has a remarkably large share (Table 5.9.4 below). The narrated time of this episode stretches over a period of almost a year, but the prevalence of mental and relational processes (*be, get*) makes it appear nearly devoid of activity. As the majority of clauses are finite, a large number of subjects is required. The first-person singular pronoun accounts for 14 of them, *he/him* and "Mr. Williams" with 15 instances for the rest, except one instance of dummy-*it*. The temporal ordering is emphasized by seven instances of *then*, all of which function as enumerative or additive conjuncts, thus matching the general finite setup of the text. Further instances of *before* (2 occurrences), *when* (2), and *if* (3) support the impression of sequence, in a temporal as well as a conditional sense.

The clause complexes [1] and [8] illustrate the syntactic complexity, which is characteristic of Picquet's text as an oral narrative. Projection and expansion, paratactic as well as hypotactic, are used within the same sentence. This complexity is associated with an extremely high relative frequency of conjunctions. The combined relative frequencies of subordinating conjunctions and prepositions is 23.140, which is the highest in the corpus (average 15.011). The same applies to the coordinating conjunctions (*and, or, but*); their combined relative frequencies amount to 50.516 (average 42.382), which is mainly carried by *and* (40.521). The frequency of coordination on the clause level is illustrated by the following excerpt.

5.9.2   In the afternoon he went to his room, and said he was sick. I was afraid to go there that night, and I told Mrs. Bachelor what Mr. Cook said to me. Then she whispered with her sister, Mrs. Simpson, and then told me I need not go. She said she would go up and see Mr. Cook, and have some one else go and take care of him. (10)

Every single clause complex here contains two coordinated elements, occasionally with subject ellipsis. The chronology of the incident is indicated by *then* and in addition only iconically by sequence and the logically weak link *and*. More exclusively than in example 5.9.1, subordinate clauses are projected through the verbal processes *say* and *tell*.

Although Picquet's clause complexes are not at all remarkably long, they are relatively variable. In episodes of activity (as opposed to reflection), such as 5.9.2, a very large proportion of events is syntactically coordinated and therefore not experientially hierarchized. One thing simply happens after the other; if relations of dependency between events occur at all, they are most typically relations of projection. This is the case when Picquet describes happenings, as in 5.9.2 or in the sentences [3] to [7] of 5.9.1, where some activity takes place and there is a temporal flow of observable events. However, when it comes to reflection, usually in the shape of mental verbs, syntactic complexity increases and the relations between processes become more intricate as in [1], [8], and [11] of 5.9.1. Hypotactic expansion and projection are intertwined in complexes such as "I thought if he got religion and then died, I knew I could get religion." In Picquet's reflective mode the hierarchization between the individual processes grows and illustrates the narrator's ability to realize logical dependencies beyond those of simple temporal linearity indicated by *and then*. Conditional relations expressed through *if* are frequent, and yet, even here temporally iconic sequentiality prevails. In 31 of the 41 conditional clause complexes in the text, the *if*-clause precedes the matrix clause and thus represents the flow of events in the real world (cf. the conditional clauses in [1], [2], and [11] of 5.9.1), where the fulfillment of the condition must precede the consequence. And yet, notwithstanding a degree of syntactic hierarchization, which always represents a logical ordering of events, semantic condensations as in nominalizations or restructurings of transitivity as in the use of the passive voice remain exceedingly rare. Quantitatively, the contrast in the elaboration of the logical component between Picquet and Jacobs or Northup at the low end of the conjunctive scale discussed above is made apparent by the high frequency of a small set of conjunctions in Picquet. Qualitatively, however, Picquet's ordering principles between processes remain predominantly sequential and thus logically very restricted.

These results are compatible with modern research about African American Vernacular English. According to Taylor and Matsuda, expository writing by African American students has been found to be less tightly structured but rather written in such a way that a series of associated segments is linked implicitly. The authors contrast this topic associating style with a topic-centered style taught in classes of academic writing and conclude that bias towards a certain kind of discourse structure is a reason for comparatively weaker performance of African American students in standardized tests. The example of topic associating style quoted in Rickford, incidentally also a first-person narration, albeit a very brief one, reflects the quantitative results of the present narrative, especially in terms of syntactic coordination (Rickford 287).

Many characteristics of Picquet's narrative, such as the scarcity of nominalization and abstraction as well as syntactic complexity match the oral orientation and origin of the text. A few additional remarks about the openly spoken characteristics as represented in

writing by Mattison are due nevertheless. Typical features of spoken language, such as con-
tractions (*don't, didn't, I'd*), deletion of the final consonant in *-ing*-endings (*walkin', mornin'*)
and the adverbial use of adjectives (*real good*) abound. Moreover, personal pronouns may at
times be omitted as in the following example.

5.9.3   He had no beard; just a young man, might have been nineteen or twenty. (8)

While these characteristics are typical of casual spoken language in general, others can be
directly associated with African American Vernacular English (AAVE). This applies, for in-
stance, to zero-relative pronouns acting as subject in a relative clause, which Rickford char-
acterizes as "more unique" to AAVE than to other dialects (8).

5.9.4   His master was not married, but had a girl belong to him, . . . (8)

Case for personal pronouns is occasionally different from standard usage as well as in "he
could not wait on his self" (7) or "[h]im and his wife had parted, . . ." (18).

    An even stronger indicator of AAVE is the repeated, but apparently inconsistent use of
uninflected verb forms with past tense meaning for the third- as well as the first-person
singular.

5.9.5   Then the boy stay with him all night, and just about daylight he come down. When
          he come down he come to the room (you see, I slept in Mrs. Bachelor's room) – he
          call me and says, 'Your massa, Henry, says you must take him up a fresh pitcher of
          water;' and Mrs. Bachelor told him to go and take it up himself; that I was busy. (10)

In this excerpt only the uninflected forms *come* and *run* are used with past meaning whereas
the other verbs occur in their standard past form (*slept, told*). Curiously, for a number of
verbs both the standard *-ed*-form form and the basic form are used to indicate past mean-
ing. This does not apply to *ran,* which does not occur in the narrative; *came*, on the other
hand, is actually more frequent than *come* with past meaning (31 versus 3 occurrences). The
same applies to *say*, which in its uninflected form may have both past as well as present
meaning, but the inflected forms *said* and *says* are again more frequent. *Said* occurs 62 times
whereas *says* is used with past tense meaning only twice, *say* three times. These results agree
with modern studies about AAVE, which claim that past tense forms of verbs with a final
consonant cluster (*picked*) and *say* frequently have zero past tense marking (Rickford 273).
Other such inconsistencies, also quoted by Rickford (ibid.), include *ask*, which is not in-
flected in present tense usage but may or may not be with past tense meaning. Of the verb
tell regular and nonstandard use of past tense can even be found side by side.

5.9.6   I told him I had great faith in the Lord; and I would pray that his last days might be
          his best. I tell him if she was livin', and he would sell her, I would try to buy her.
          (32f)

While the predominantly spoken dialect AAVE and casual spoken Standard English at
times overlap, there are traces of typical AAVE to be found in the text. In addition to the
occasional lack of past tense marking, a number of similar indicators support this claim.
There are two examples of the following uninflected (or zero-concord) form, described by
Labov in *Language in the Inner City* as typical (Labov 271), which Rickford as well as other
authors have confirmed (Rickford 7, 261ff, 273).

5.9.7   She have long hair, but it was kind a wavy. (8)

5.9.8   He never have no gentlemen company home. (19)

Note also the double negation in the second example (cf. Martin and Wolfram 1998: 17 about this feature of AAVE). The lack of concord is more recurrent for the past tense form of *be*, however, which Labov characterizes as the invariant form (271).

5.9.9   My mother and brother was sold to Texas, and I was sold to New Orleans. (16)

As it is not at all invariant in Picquet – there are three instances of *was* versus twelve of standard *were* – the question arises whether this is an inconsistency on the editor's side or indeed on the speaker's, which is also possible, as Rickford and others have demonstrated for a number of features (261ff). *Do*, on the other hand, is consistently inflected according to tense and person, although, as Labov claims, AAVE speakers tend to omit the *-s*, too (271). In the text there are verbs with zero-inflection, for past tense as well as for third-person singular such as *see*, and occasional *go*, only to name two more. One further example, singular as it is, is worthy of attention.

5.9.10   Yes, she pretty white; not white enough for white people. (8)

Although this usage of the zero-copula, depending on the co-text, is a typical feature of AAVE (Rickford 7, 61ff, 267ff), it occurs only once in the entire narrative, whereas similar constructions feature the standard usage as the following example.

5.9.11   Oh no; she is the darkest one in the house. But her hair is straight, only little bit [sic] wavy. (27)

   Labov has shown that the use of the copula as well as other verb forms is by no means defective in AAVE but rule-governed, even if the rule is not always consistently applied. Provided that Picquet was consistent in her use, which is admittedly purely speculative, however, these rules do not seem to have been observed in the transcript of her interview. Possible parameters such as momentariness versus habituality for zero-inflections or zero-copula do not apply in the quoted examples and thus cannot be held responsible for the variation. Rickford has shown that the coexistence of AAVE and standard forms as intra-speaker variation is not exceptional and may indeed be interpreted as an example of style as audience design according to Bell (Rickford 114ff). And yet, the clear predominance of the standard forms over AAVE in the transcript of Picquet's speech provides an occasion for some hypothesizing.

   In the first chapter Mattison points out that Picquet's "plantation expression and pronunciation, [and] her inability to read and write" prove her slave origin and therefore put her narration of her life story beyond any doubt (5). From this introductory remark it may be safely concluded that Picquet did indeed speak some form of African American dialect. The analysis so far has shown that the characteristics of Picquet's speech as transcribed by Mattison can be roughly divided into two groups: those features which are common to many samples of casual spoken of English and those which are more strongly associated with AAVE. Features such as contractions, *a* instead of *of*, or *-in'* instead of *-ing* belong to this first group. They are not absent from AAVE, but they alone are not characteristic for the dialect. To the second group belong features such as double negation, zero-copula and, most prominently, uninflected verb forms with past meaning or for the third-person singular present tense. Table 5.9.2 provides an overview over the examples with their respective number of occurrences in the text. The dividing line between spoken registers of Standard English and AAVE is a visual aid for orientation rather than an absolute division between two clearly separate categories. If we accept this division, however, it is obvious, that

in the first group most standard forms are outnumbered by their colloquial counterparts. For the features associated with AAVE, on the other hand, the proportion is reversed, that is, the standard forms are in the majority, sometimes overwhelmingly so.

Table 5.9.2: Standard English forms and AAVE forms in Picquet

expression	casual spoken English		Standard English forms	
	kind a	3	kind of	2
	realØ (adverb)	5	really	0
	-in'	114	-ing	46
	don't	11	do not	1
	didn't	19	did not	22
	wan't	3	was not	5
	wasn't	1		
	AAVE forms		**Standard English forms**	
come	he/she/it comeØ	0	he/she/it comes	0
	come (past)	4	came	25
say	say (past)	4	said	62
	he/she/it sayØ	0	he/she/it says	5
ask	ask (past)	9	asked	12
	he/she/it askØ	0	he/she/it asks	0
be	(they) was	3	were	12
			was	260
copula *is*	Ø	1	is	11
want	he/she/it wantØ (present)	1	wants	0
	wantØ (past)	8	wanted	20
do	done (past)	3	done (participle)	4
go	go (past)	3	went	32
have	have (past)	3	had (not as auxiliary)	65
run	run (past)	2	ran	0
take	take (past)	2	took	12
tell	tell (past)	1	told	71

Language use, even of one single speaker, is hardly ever completely consistent. A number of contextual factors, such as the relationships between speakers, their emotional involvement, topic, or the physical setting, are bound to influence the speaker's style, possibly down to such parameters as pronunciation (cf. Bell about radio announcers, 1984: 191ff; 2001: 139ff; also Rickford about addressee- and topic-influenced style shift, 112ff). While it is impossible to recover these factors for the interview situation between Picquet and Mattison, we may try to approach the characteristics of the text from a different angle. The observation that the two groups of linguistic features appear with different regularity in the text leads to questions about the effects especially on the representation of Picquet,

her discoursal self. We do not know what exactly characterized Picquet's "plantation pronunciation," but obviously characteristics of AAVE such as [t] or [d] for [T] and [+] respectively, or the devoicing of final stops, [p] and [k] for [b] and [g], are not represented at all, while they are legion in the transcripts of the WPA-narratives of the 1930s. Rickford lists a large number of AAVE-features (4ff), but he emphasizes that "[n]ot every African American speaks AAVE and no one uses all of the features . . . 100 percent of the time" (9). We can only speculate as to which features of Picquet's pronunciation survived the transcription from spoken into written language and which ones did not, but the quantitative evidence from the text in connection with modern studies of African American dialect suggest that many characteristics were edited out from the final written version. Mattison's own comment about her way of expression and her illiteracy does not qualify as a final proof, but it strongly supports this hypothesis.

Whether a consequence of heavy editing or not, it is a fact that Mattison recorded some peculiarities such as contractions quite regularly while other phonological features more strongly associated with AAVE are absent from the transcript. Picquet's speech is thus in accordance with her nearly white physical appearance, which is described by Mattison as "fair" and "ladylike" (5). Her speech appears as colloquial and tinged with a slight African American dialect, yet not so heavy that it could be turned against her and her linguistic, and therefore intellectual, capabilities. The linguistic peculiarities of the text are just obvious enough to make her Southern slave provenience credible, yet they are so toned down as to permit the speaker access to a space among written publications, limited though it may have been. This observation is also in accordance with the rest of the corpus, where AAVE, or some form of written representation of it, is almost completely absent. Most notably, none of the other *I*-narrators present themselves as using dialect, and even casual spoken language is extremely rare. Note, for instance, Bibb's highly elaborate conversation with Malinda before their engagement – and the absence of any indicator of plantation expression.[29] The political, social and therefore discursive possibilities for black persons speaking African American dialect without being perceived as comical, as they were stereotypically presented in minstrel shows or in post-war plantation romances, and in some way intellectually inferior, were apparently still heavily restricted in 1861.[30]

Mattison not only controlled the way Picquet's language is represented in writing to their readers, he also controlled the way the course the conversation would take. His questions betray exactly what kind of information he wanted to extract from Picquet in order to create his readers' knowledge about slavery. Through his 90 questions he guides Picquet's narrative, and more than once he is not particularly sensitive about his role. He unwittingly reveals his objectives best whenever he interrupts Picquet's narrative thread. In Chapter 3 Picquet speaks about her mother and herself being nurses in her master's family.

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[29] Bibb represents himself as saying, "I never will give my heart nor hand to any girl in marriage, until I first know her sentiments upon the all-important subjects of Religion and Liberty. No matter how well I might love her, nor how great the sacrifice in carrying out these God-given principles. And I here pledge myself from this course never to be shaken while a single pulsation of my heart shall continue to throb for Liberty" (76). Note the differences from Picquet, such as nominalization, abstraction, and the absence of contractions. Malinda is made to answer in a similar register: "I have long entertained the same views, and this has been one of the greatest reasons why I have not felt inclined to enter the married state while a slave; I have always felt a desire to be free; I have long cherished a hope that I should yet be free, either by purchase or running away" (77).

[30] In narrative fiction the situation is slightly different. Wells Brown's novel *Clotel, or the President's Daughter*, initially published in 1853, features black characters speaking dialect, yet even here an occasional comic note is noticeable.

5.9.12   "Then I was sold to Georgia, Mr. Cook bought mother and me. When mother first went to Georgia she was a nurse, and suckled Madame Cook's child, with me. Afterward, she was a cook. I was a nurse. I always had plenty to do. Fast as one child would be walkin', then I would have another one to nurse."

Question (by the writer).--"Did your master ever whip you?" (7)

Cohesion between Picquet's turn and Mattison's question, which is incidentally the very first one in the narrative, is low. While Picquet speaks of "Mr. Cook," her interlocutor introduces the general term *master*, which is cohesive solely by implication. Mr. Cook bought her and is therefore her master. It is Mattison who, by way of his lexical choice, mentions the idea of a master-slave relationship explicitly; the term *master* itself is comparatively infrequent in Picquet's narrative. The only other cohesive tie is the personal pronoun with which Picquet is addressed, but this is rather part of the dialogic situation. Mattison breaks her narrative flow and introduces a completely new topic through his question, to which she replies in the affirmative. Note that *master* is theme as well as subject/Actor in the clause, while Picquet's role is switched to object/Goal. Through the syntactic arrangement of his question Mattison assigns Picquet to a different role than the one she has had in her own turn before. By using the active voice he makes her an object and induces her to answer in the same voice. The paragraph that succeeds his question features only one first-person pronoun, but in the oblique case; subject of the clauses that follow is invariably the master.

5.9.13   Answer. --"Oh, very often; sometimes he would be drunk, and real funny, and would not whip me then. He had two or three kinds of drunks. Sometimes he would begin to fight at the front door, and fight every thing he come to. At other times he would be real funny."

Q. --"He was a planter, was he?" (7)

Mattison's first question thus has changed the course of the narrative flow. Picquet's narration in 5.9.12 initially includes a number of participants, of which she herself is the dominant one with four subject-roles. Mattison's hardly cohesive first question changes the situation; from then on the master ("he") is in subject position and remains thematic for the ensuing paragraph. Mattison's second question consolidates this situation; he stimulates Picquet to tell the story of one of her masters instead of that of her own life.

In a later scene, likewise concerned with whipping, Mattison attempts to extract some more delicate details from Picquet. This time it is Picquet herself who has introduced the topic, that is, whipping. Mattison is persistent with his questions and keeps alluding to physical aspects. The following excerpt is probably unparalleled in the corpus in terms of its voyeuristic qualities.

5.9.14   "Then in the mornin' he want to know why I didn't come up, and I told him I forget it. Then he said, I don't believe you forgot it; but if you forget that, I won't forget what I told you. So he whip me, so that I won't forget another time.

[1] Q. --"Well, how did he whip you?"

A. --"With the cowhide."

[2] Q. --"Around your shoulders, or how?"

A. --"That day he did."

[3] Q. --"How were you dressed--with thin clothes, or how?"

A. --"Oh, very thin; with low-neck'd dress. In the summertime we never wore but two pieces--only the one under, and the blue homespun over. It is a striped cloth they make in Georgia just for the colored people. All the time he was whippin' me I kept sayin' I forgot it, and promisin' I would come another time."

[4] Q. --"Did he whip you hard, so as to raise marks?"

A. --"Oh yes. He never whip me in his life but what he leave the mark on, I was dressed so thin. He kept asking me, all the time he was whippin' me, if I intended to mind him. Of course I told him I would, because I was gettin' a whippin'. At the same time, I did not mean to go to his room; but only did it so that he would stop whippin' me. (12, numbers in brackets added for reference)

At least three out of four of Mattison's questions in this scene betray the interviewer's aims. Mattison's first question is, being a *wh*-question, still open. *How* may refer to the manner of whipping as well as the means. The second question, being an elliptical polar one ([Did he whip you] "Around the shoulders?"), is narrower; the final *wh*-tag purports to suggest an alternative, which, however, is never made explicit. Picquet answers the polar question in the affirmative and ignores the alternative. The same applies to question three. The two *wh*-items ("How were you dressed . . . or how?"), indicating a discretionary alternative to an affirmative answer are ignored for the benefit of what Mattison has suggested anyway with [were you dressed] "with thin clothes?". In the final question, the same pattern is repeated; Mattison suggests an option with which Picquet chooses to comply, as she has done before. Eventually, Picquet answers all of Mattison's questions in the affirmative and accepts his explicit suggestions instead of providing alternative, confronting reactions or even choosing not to comply at all.

Resistance against Mattison's form of sensational journalism is difficult; yet occasionally it is there. In order to understand these difficulties, it is necessary to take a closer look at the structure of the conversational interaction.[31] Although the interview is possibly not an example of casual, unpremeditated conversation that develops spontaneously, the categories provided by a systemic functional model of conversation analysis apply to this text and yield a sufficiently clear picture of the power relationship between the interacting parties.

Halliday distinguishes four basic speech functions resulting from the cross-combination of giving versus demanding speech roles and two types of commodity that can be exchanged, *viz.* goods & services versus information. Thus we find the four speech functions *offer*, *command*, *statement*, and *question*, to which supporting as well as confronting speech functions are possible reactions. Table 5.9.3 summarizes the four initiating speech functions and their respective supporting and confronting counterparts.

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[31] Eggins and Slade provide a sufficiently delicate network of speech functions according to systemic theory (1997: 180ff). My analysis of the conversational structure draws on their classifications and terminology, although not all levels of delicacy have been explored here.

Table 5.9.3: Speech function pairs (cf. Halliday 1994: 69; Eggins and Slade 183)

initiating speech function		responding speech functions	
	typical mood in clause	supporting	confronting
offer (give goods & services)	modulated interrogative	acceptance	rejection
command (demand goods & services)	imperative	compliance	refusal
statement (give information)	declarative	acknowledgement	contradiction
question (demand information)	interrogative	answer	disclaimer

The choice of a particular initiating speech function constrains the possibilities for the responding move (Eggins and Slade 181); the role that the initiating speaker chooses inevitably puts the responding speaker into a role as well. The question is, however, which moves are opening: initiating and which ones are sustaining. The system network according to Eggins and Slade is provided in Figure 5.9.1 below. According to Eggins and Slade, "opening moves are not elliptically dependent on prior moves" although they can still be cohesive in different ways (193). Mattison's move "Around your shoulders, or how?" is therefore not an opening move but a sustaining one that "keep[s] on negotiating the same proposition" (195). According to this system, only seven of Mattison's 90 moves in the interview are elliptical and can therefore be classified as sustaining.
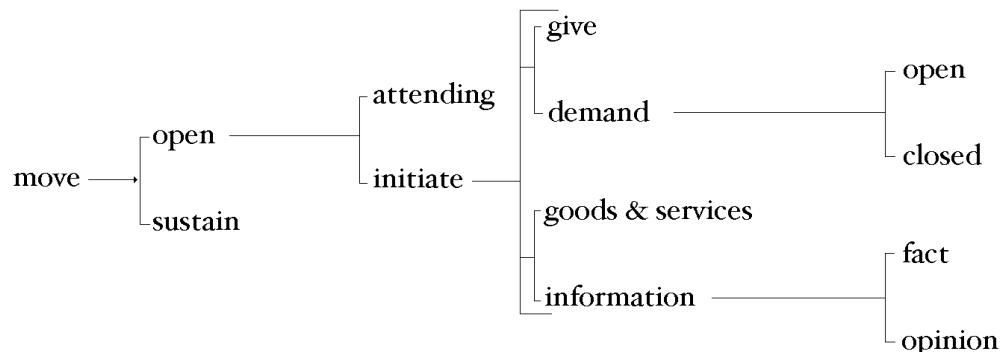
Figure 5.9.1: Speech functions in conversation (Eggins and Slade 193)

Initiating moves, on the other hand, set up a Mood structure in terms of Subject and Finite of their own and "function to initiate talk about a proposition" (194). This applies to the remaining 83 moves in Mattison's part of the interview. In these initiating moves Mattison uses only two of the four possible initiating speech functions. They are both of the demanding type: two commands and 81 questions. Even a cursory glance reveals that the use of speech functions is not equally distributed between the interactants; Picquet never directs a command at Mattison, nor does she ask back, except for one instance. Mattison's commands, realized congruently as imperatives ("now tell me . . ." 22, 29), are both met with compliant behavior by Picquet. This means that all opening moves are Mattison's, which according to Eggins and Slade, "indicat[es] a degree of control over the interaction" (194).

It is rewarding to analyze Mattison's way of demanding information more in detail, as his questions are also responded to in a supporting way.

Mattison's questions illustrate the interviewer's guidance and his power over the possible responses. Of the 81 questions 40 are polar interrogatives and therefore considered closed. This type simply "present[s] a complete proposition for the support or confrontation of the addressee" (Eggins and Slade 194). An example of this type is "Had you any children while in New Orleans?" (19). The remaining 41 questions are open; they ask the addressee to complete a proposition, and they are realized as *wh*-interrogatives as in "What was her color?"(20). Both types may appear as fact or opinion questions. The former are characterized by the absence of modality and what Eggins and Slade call "appraisal lexis" (193), while the latter feature one or both of these properties. The authors provide a systemic outline of the concept of appraisal in the context of interpersonal assessment and define four subcategories of appraisal (124ff). For the present analysis it is sufficient to say that in addition to all modal expressions, appraisal items can be evaluative adjectives (*wonderful*) and adverbs (*honestly*), but also affective mental verbs (*hate*, *like*).

An analysis of Mattison's interrogation according to this model illustrates the restrictive character of his interview. Of his closed questions only three are of the opinion-type. A specimen of this type would be the following question, where "doing right" as evaluative label is clearly an example of appraisal lexis, while "feel" enhances the subjective character.

5.9.15   Did you feel that you were doing right in living, as you did, with Mr. Williams? (20)

The initial part of question [4] in 5.9.14 above may also be counted towards the opinion-type, but note the final "so as to raise marks," which restricts the possible interpretation of "whip hard" again. The overwhelming majority of polar questions belong to the fact-type without modality and without particular evaluative or affective vocabulary. These are exemplified by the questions in the following two pairs.

5.9.16   Q. --"Are the two children you brought with you from New Orleans now living?"

A. --"No; one of them died soon after I got to Cincinnati. I have only one of them livin'--a daughter, about eighteen years old."

Q. --"Is she as white as you are?"

A. --"Oh yes; a great deal whiter." (25)

While generally opinion questions may facilitate the development of arguments and emotionally involved exchanges, fact questions frequently lead to short turns as the ones quoted here (Eggins and Slade 194). Examples like this one, where question and short answer quickly alternate are indeed numerous in the narrative (7f, 12, almost the entire Chapters 6, 7 and 10). Closed questions of the fact type may be seen as doubly restricting for the addressee; they suggest a proposition, which through the lack of modality and of other interpersonally assessing vocabulary, is, at least in the first instance, open only to a comment on its truth value. And yet, not all of Picquet's turns remain short. Some of them extend despite an initiating move of the closed fact type, as will be seen below.

The same restrictions apply in principle to Mattison's open questions. Modal verbs or adverbs are absent; questions initiated by *how many*, *how old, who*, and *where* predominate. So even in the supposedly open questions Picquet is restricted to providing factual information, such as ages, names, and places, for which hardly any form of modality or appraisal is required. Such is the case in the following example.

5.9.17   Q.-- "How old was he?" A. --"He was over forty; I guess pretty near fifty. . . ." (18f)

There are only a few truly open questions which do not demand measurable quantities or defined qualities, such as "How came he to run off?" (8) or "How came they to part?" (26). In terms of ideation and transitivity, these questions are not restricted to relational processes, where typically one participant of the process or an element qualifying or quantifying the participant is missing and must be supplied by the addressee in order to complete the proposition. These open questions, often also with initial *how*, demand circumstantial elements or even a completely new proposition as in "What happened next?" (11). There are about 10 questions of this type, such as "How do the slaves get married?" (26), in which Picquet is asked to provide circumstantial information. At this point, the network of initiating speech functions as suggested by Eggins and Slade (193) may require an additional level of delicacy in order to determine the relative openness and closedness of demanding speech roles further. A categorization according to which elements in the transitivity system are expected to be supplied by the addressee seems to be a useful approach. The centrality of potentially missing participants versus rather marginal circumstances might play a role in a hierarchization according to the relative openness of a demanding speech function. In the context of the present study such an elaboration of the concept can only be sketched as a suggestion; a larger corpus of material would be required for additional levels of delicacy based on empirical data. The present text with heavy editing is only of limited use as a basis for such a model, which could probably better be developed with a corpus of unedited spoken present-day language.

Picquet is a cooperative interviewee. Notwithstanding the restricted character of Mattison's questions, Picquet provides more information than her counterpart initially demands. Even polar questions are rarely answered with a simple *yes* or *no*; usually Picquet adds further details, as the following, by no means exceptional, example illustrates.

5.9.18   Q. --"Is that child yet living?"

A. --"Oh yes; she is livin' with us in Cincinnati, and the smartest one we got too. She is about thirteen or fourteen." (27)

It is these answers that betray how much Picquet knew what was expected of her role as interviewee, as Barthelmy points out (xli). He compares her situation with that of a slave on the auction block, ironically a situation that Picquet's interlocutor does not understand at all. They have been discussing Picquet's sale at a slave auction.

5.9.19   Q. --"Where was that? In the street, or in a yard?"

A. --"At the market, where the block is?"

Q. --"What block?"

A. --"My! don't you know? The stand, where we have to get up?"

Q. --"Did you get up on the stand?"

A. --"Why, of course; we all have to get up to be seen." (17)

Typically, in the terminology of Eggins' and Slade's system network, Picquet's reacting moves are of the responding type (cf. Figure 5.9.2 below). This means that, irrespective of whether the initial proposition is contradicted to (confront) or not (support), it is accepted as the topic of negotiation for her next move. In a responding reaction thus the suggested proposition still remains under negotiation. This is linguistically evident in the potentially

elliptical character of the initial responding clause: [that was] "at the market." Example 5.9.19 above is the only incident where Picquet reacts with a rejoinder, where she rejects the suggested proposition and introduces a new one of her own. A rejoinder "tend[s] to set underway sequences of talk that interrupt, postpone, abort or suspend the initial speech function sequence" (Eggins and Slade 207). Other than confronting responses, where confrontation is "on the terms set up by the other speaker" (201), a rejoinder sets up new terms of negotiation, where the initial proposition will not automatically be led towards completion. Picquet's rejoinder above is a probing move that does not reject Mattison's initial proposition; it merely checks his understanding and thus delays the completion. Although, for the time being, it introduces new propositional material, completion of the initial incomplete proposition is eventually delivered with the explanation ("The stand, where we have to get up?"). It finally leads to another supporting move.
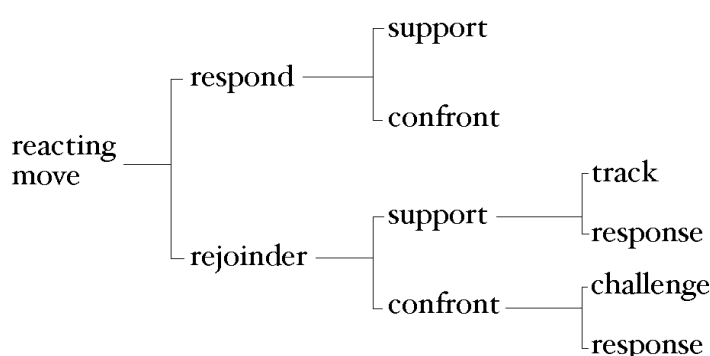
Figure 5.9.2: Reacting moves (Eggins and Slade 202, 209)

Strong forms of resistance against Mattison's prying investigation are extremely rare, if not absent. Within the entire text only two instances in which Picquet openly rejects the inquisitive gaze are to be found. Both of them appear in Chapter 5 in the context of Picquet's sexual molestation by her owner in Mobile, Mr. Cook. He lives at a boarding house and orders the thirteen-year-old narrator to look after him day and night. Although the female owner of the boarding house tries to protect the girl, she is harassed and scared.

5.9.20   Then he order me, in a sort of commanding way (I don't want to tell what he said), and told me to shut the door. At the same time he was kind a raising up out of the bed; then I began to cry; but before I had time to shut the door, a gentleman walk out of another room close by, picking his nails, and looking in the room as he passed on. (11)

The second instance belongs to the same chapter; the situation between Picquet and Cook worsens as she continues to resist. This is the second time that Picquet describes a whipping by Cook. It is quoted in the following way.

5.9.21   "Then he came to me in the ironin'-room, down stairs, where I was, and whip me with the cowhide, naked, so I'spect I'll take some of the marks with me to the grave. One of them I know I will." [Here Mrs. P. declines explaining further how he whipped her, though she had told our hostess where this was written; but it is too horrible and indelicate to be read in a civilized country.] Mrs. P. then proceeds, "He was very mad, and whipped me awfully. That was the worst whippin' I ever had."

Q. --"Did he cut through your skin?"

> A. --"Oh yes; in a good many places. (14f)

Whatever Picquet's confronting move within this longer turn may have been, in the printed version it is sacrificed by the editor, supposedly for the sake of propriety. And yet, the interruption of Picquet's speech is rather another indicator of the editor's power over the text than a genuine display of decency, because the very next question (closed: fact) not only betrays Mattison's voyeuristic intentions, but also Picquet's compliance with the rules set up by her interlocutor. Picquet is indeed on the block again, whether willingly – after all, her explicit aim was to generate money with this narrative – or not remains a matter of speculation. Although both incidents receive different editorial treatment, they have in common that in both cases Picquet's refusal to share particular events occurs embedded within a longer turn. The refusal is in neither case an immediate confronting rejoinder to a move made by Mattison. At these points it is not so much resistance against inquisitive questions but Picquet's own sense of where to draw protective boundaries for herself that keeps the voyeurism at bay.

Picquet's first-person narrative is carefully guided, framed, and commented upon by the interlocutor, whose way of questioning generally limits her power over the expression of her own experiences. This has become clear in the editor's presumed treatment of Picquet's dialect as well as in her reactions to Mattison's initiating moves. In no case does she challenge her counterpart's position by non-compliance. In linguistic terms, she typically reacts to Mattison's moves with a responding move instead of a rejoinder. By suggesting the propositions to be negotiated and determining the form of how information is demanded, Mattison keeps the power over the narrative firmly in his hands throughout. Picquet's role as a respondent is to accept these terms; the only confrontation she offers are the sixteen negative reactions to polar questions. But even here she remains within the initially suggested proposition and therefore within the discursive limits set by Mattison. This does not mean that she is powerless, far from it. As has been indicated before, her tendency to supply more information than originally demanded puts her in a position, especially in longer turns, to develop her contribution according to what she considers fit. The last two examples have shown that she occasionally uses this power also to exclude her audience from particular events. Due to their content as well their visualization in the text, these gaps, however, are so salient that they spur the reader's curiosity and imagination rather than keeping them in check for the sake of decency and decorum. In the overwhelming majority of cases, however, she is a cooperative and compliant interviewee.

The second part, in which Picquet's voice is presented only through Mattison's filter, deserves more attention than can be given in this context. Especially a detailed comparison of the linguistic characteristics between Picquet's direct speech in the first part and Mattison's reports in the second one would be highly revealing in terms of the latter's editorial intrusions. And yet, the fairly comprehensive analysis of the shortest narrative in the corpus, if only Picquet's speech is taken into account, has yielded a number of fresh results that are worthy to be compared with the other eight narratives of the corpus. Notwithstanding its completely different character and some substantial idiosyncrasies, the text displays a number of similarities with other narratives, which will be addressed in the final summary.

5.9.2 Louisa Picquet's use of transitivity

Similar to Jacobs, Louisa Picquet selects mental processes more frequently than material ones; moreover, the share of verbal processes is comparatively large, too. A closer look at the various subcategories, however, reveals that the differences between the two texts by the only female authors in the corpus are greater than the initial similarities.

Table 5.9.4: Selection of process types in Picquet (in percent)

ch.	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I
2	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	23.810
3	0.00	0.00	37.50	62.50	0.00	21.448
4	14.29	14.29	42.86	28.57	0.00	21.705
5	2.70	35.81	28.38	21.62	11.49	58.614
6	3.92	23.53	41.18	23.53	7.84	38.549
7	0.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	40.00	25.316
8	11.11	25.00	22.22	22.22	19.44	58.728
9	2.17	30.43	21.74	32.61	13.04	61.911
10	0.00	60.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	26.042
11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.000
12	6.06	28.79	33.33	18.18	13.64	62.857
13	0.00	23.53	17.65	17.65	41.18	47.753
17	5.26	21.05	42.11	5.26	26.32	39.095
19	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	13.986
all	4.47	28.24	30.12	23.29	13.88	46.171

After Jacobs, Picquet has the second smallest share of material verbs (28.24%); Brown's share as the next higher one lies at 33.1%. The two female narratives indeed occupy the extreme low end of the scale. And yet, they differ considerably as to their internal distribution of the material verbs. Picquet's narrative features the largest share of intransitive material processes (57.5%). The verbs *come*, *go*, and *get* in its locomotive sense make up almost three quarters of all intransitive verbs. *Get* reappears as a ranged verb in the repeated construction *get religion*, which alone occurs five times in connection with the *I*-pronoun.

Get is typically a multi-purpose verb. It can realize a number of different processes, most notably material ones as in "I wanted to go back and get the dress" (18) and relational ones as in "I begin to get sorry" (22). In most instances it is synonymous with processes such as *fetch*, *receive*, *have*, *be*, or *become*. Moreover, it is used as a stand-in for *have* as the auxiliary in the passive voice or in a construction such as *have something done*. While the verb's ubiquity in Picquet's narrative (*rf* 8.039) does not exactly indicate stylistic originality, a few instances deserve further analysis nevertheless. *Get*, as a frequent synonym of the material verb *receive*, signifies an exchange of goods & services. These received items may be concrete tangible entities as in the following example.

5.9.22   After that, I got a couple of letters from her, returning thanks to us all for helpin' her on her way. (29)

Alternatively, they may also be doings as in "I was gettin' a whippin'" (12), which is rare in Picquet. It is remarkable that in Picquet's narrative *religion* is the article that is received

most frequently (*rf* 0.978). Although it is abstract and uncountable and therefore an unlikely candidate to be exchanged, the term is treated as if it were a concrete transferable entity like money or something abstract but well-definable and countable like an idea. The majority of instances occur in an episode in Chapter 8 ("Octoroon Life in New Orleans") that was quoted at the beginning of this chapter (example 5.9.1, p. 238 above). Picquet describes how her master Mr. Williams tries to prevent her from going to church and exercise her belief. She prays that her sick master might "get religion" and then die so that she is free to "get religion" herself. The notion that religion is something that can be *got* like a blood transfusion implies a very simplistic view of the individuality and ephemeral character of religious belief. And yet, it reflects once more the symbiotic relationship between the interviewer Mattison and Picquet. She knows that the Reverend's main aim is to expose the corrupting effects of slavery rather than commending her as an individual. Thus Picquet seems to be aware that, having addressed adultery and morality, she also needs to confront the issue of religion, or rather the lack of it as a direct consequence of being enslaved. In this instance she does not require sophisticated theological considerations, because she knows that in this simplified worldview the slaveholder has to figure as the obstacle to her religiousness. He can be removed by prayer, but not before he has acquired belief himself, so that he does not have to die as a sinner. In this context, the monolithic concept of *having religion* is similar to having rights rather than a way of living piously or submissively. The expression *getting religion* as an exchange of goods & services illustrates quite well that, like a right, religion can be granted or withheld by slaveholders at their own discretion, which is exactly what Mattison wanted to denounce. A more differentiated picture would only blur the exact and clear lines Mattison aims to draw. And thus he does not comment on, or call into question Picquet's statement that she prayed for her master's death. The corrupting effects of slavery on slaves and slaveholders alike have been made sufficiently clear; a conception of what *getting religion* means in detail beyond being allowed to go to church is not necessary. It is the act that counts, not the state of being religious or pious.

Unlike in most other narratives, Picquet does not provide an account of a spectacular flight from slavery. When her master Mr. Williams dies eventually, she is left free. While the heading of Chapter 9 promises the "escape of Louisa," the *I*-narrator presents her way to freedom simply in the following words.

> 5.9.23   Then Mr. John Williams [her late owner's brother] sent the things I had to a second-hand furniture store, and sold them all; and I took the money and my two children, and went to Cincinnati. I had just money enough to get there, and a little bit over. (24)

The long and dangerous road to freedom with several futile attempts to escape, which is an integral part of the majority of narratives and provides an opportunity for material activity, is simply missing in this text. Picquet's narrative is not an adventure story in Bibb's or Northup's vein, neither is it a story of growing mental awareness and physical resistance like Douglass'.

Mental verbs are more frequent than material ones in this narrative, but their distribution among the three subtypes reveals the lack of stylistic variation. Verbs of affection and perception are both comparatively rare (10.9% and 15.6% respectively), so that 73.5% of the mental verbs are cognitive. Of these, about two thirds are realized by *know* and *think*. Other processes such as *believe*, *suppose* and *make up one's mind* occur only sporadically; mostly individual instances of further processes contribute the rest. The high proportion of cognitive

verbs suggests that projection plays an important role in this text. This impression is corroborated by the small number of simple Phenomena, while projections of the following kind are more frequent.

5.9.24   Then I knew he was drunk, but it surprise me so that I didn't know what to think. (13)

5.9.25   I thought it was a sin if I did not go up in the right way. (28)

The projections are syntactically and experientially dependent on the first-person narrator. Picquet makes herself the focus of these dependent activities or states, all of which could have been expressed equally well as independent (cf. also 5.9.26 below: 'he took the button off for an excuse'). But the cognitive processes are expressly mentioned and so introduce the narrator as a sort of filter through which all of the projected processes must pass.

Picquet's narrative is also the one with the highest relative frequency of expressions of probability. This applies to objective and subjective forms alike. The former, expressed by *probably* and *certainly*, have a relative frequency of 0.652; the latter (projecting instances of *I think, believe, know*, etc.) have a relative frequency of 1.738. More remarkable than the relative frequencies is the fact that in Picquet's narrative a larger proportion of the occurrences of the *I*-pronoun are used to express probability than in any other text. Expressions of subjective probability together account for 3.76% of all occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun, while the average in the corpus is 1.7% (Table A.1.10, p. 282).

5.9.26   I suppose he just took the button off for an excuse. (14)

With such expressions, the dependent clause itself, the modalized proposition, always has an additional interpersonal element. The frequency of such expressions emphasizes the narrator's evaluation of the likelihood of an event or a state, irrespective of whether it is a past or present one, and thus the narrator herself becomes more salient in a co-text in which she otherwise would not necessarily occur. In addition to the psychological effect that the narrator appears to dominate her text, it is also a way of exercising power over the propositions stated – and of making this power explicit. On the other hand, this explicitness opens up the possibility for challenge, which the absence of such devices would make difficult (Leckie-Tarry 41). In effect, the presence of such expressions diminishes the interpersonal distance between herself and the interviewer and so possibly the reading audience, too.

The few instances of processes of perception are restricted to only a handful of verbs, most notably *see* and *hear*. Processes of affection are even rarer, the majority is realized by *want* and *wish*, that is, desiderative verbs. Emotive verbs are absent from the narrative except for one singular instance when Picquet speaks about a black man she liked.

5.9.27   He wanted me to marry him, and I liked him very well, and would have had him if he had not run off. (8)

Apart from this, emotive verbs do not occur. This seems remarkable for a narrator who has lived many years as a concubine for a white man, has born four children to different men, has gained her freedom, and is married now. She does not express fear, desperation, or loathing for the white men who buy her for their own pleasure. Neither does she express love for her present husband. Due to this gap, the emotional and interpersonal quality that characterizes Jacobs' narrative is completely missing in this text, notwithstanding the fre-

quency of subjective probability. Only a few instances found among the relational processes where the narrator admits to have been "afraid" represent some emotive reaction to her situation as living under a white man's will.

5.9.28   He want to know what I was afraid of--if I could not sleep as well there as anywhere else? Of course I told him, yes, sir; and that I wan't afraid of any thing. At the same time, I was afraid of him; but I wouldn't tell him. Then he let me go. (12)

The relational processes are clustered here and represent the closest that the narrator comes to expressing her feelings about her masters. A few further instances characterize them in relational terms, such as "he was a real good man" (7) and "he was always so jealous" (19), but these do not involve the narrator as participant in the process.

In Picquet's text relational verbs are more frequent than in other narratives. The share of relational processes is the second largest after Northup (23.29%), while the rf_{rel} of 10.755 is more than twice as high as the average in the corpus. The large proportion of possessive processes is remarkable here. Unlike in many other texts, these possessive relational processes are genuine processes of owning instead of metaphorical ones as in *have a view*. Only occasionally does Picquet express mental processes or states in this relational form. In contrast to these few instances of "I had sense" (13), "I had great faith" (32) or "I had this trouble" (22), there are eight instances alone of "I had (no) money" or nearly synonymous expressions. Apparently, *having* is used predominantly for concrete, tangible items. Metaphorical ways of expression, as was already indicated in the discussion of nominalization and nonfinite constructions earlier, are rather rare in Picquet's language. It is thus a real sense of ownership (or the lack of items to be owned) that this narrative, whose main aim is the accumulation of money, foregrounds.

The share of verbal processes is the largest in the corpus (13.88%, rf_v 6.410). Unlike in Jacobs, however, where a large quantity of direct speech contributes to a high proportion, Picquet uses verbal processes to present her own words as indirect speech, occasionally even as free indirect speech. Nonetheless, in both narratives the frequency signifies a great deal of verbal interaction between the narrator and other persons in the text. Ball's text may figure as a counterexample with the smallest share of verbal processes (4.79%; rf_v 1.117) in a narrative that for a large part presents the *I*-narrator as an isolated fugitive. Picquet presents a great number of conversations and arguments between her, her masters Mr. Cook and Mr. Williams, and several other characters.

Particularly frequent is *tell* (9.234 for all forms and all persons), which optionally takes a Receiver, whereas *say*, which does not, occurs only three times. Both can occur with an additional functional role, the Verbiage, which can be the content of what is said or the name of the saying (Halliday 1994: 141). Ergatively, it acts as a Range. However, examples like "I told him the reason" (11) or a hypothetical 'I told him the truth' are very rare in Picquet. Many of those, if they existed in this narrative, would have been counted non-metaphorically among the material verbs in any case as they tend to appear with empty verbs in constructions such as *make a reply*, where the Range-character becomes even more apparent. More frequent in Picquet are sentences with hypotactic projection, where the projected clause is not Verbiage because it is not part of the matrix clause. This is the case in the following example with the verbal processes *tell* and *pray*.

5.9.29   I told him I had great faith in the Lord; and I would pray that his last days might be his best. (32)

This observation about the predominance of projected locutions connects with the frequency of hypotactic projection of ideas in the area of mental verbs. Verbal as well as mental processes of cognition can be used to report; the former project wordings, that is, locutions, while the latter project meanings, that is, ideas (Halliday 1994: 250ff). For both processes it has been observed that projection is the preferred mode in Picquet. Simple nominalized Phenomena as well as simple Verbiages, which are often nominalized locutions with varying degrees of abstraction, such as *the truth* or *lies* are rather rare. The overwhelming majority of Picquet's verbal processes indeed project a locution in indirect speech without a condensation of information. This provides additional support for the impression that Picquet's text leans towards the concrete and particular rather than the abstract and general.

The frequency of both of these types of projection is remarkable. The projection of wordings and meanings is qualitatively different from the presentation of simple activity through material and behavioural verbs. Projection creates meanings into existence; the semiotic potential, the possibility of making meaning is of a different order. According to Halliday, in projection "a clause comes to function not as a direct representation of a (non-linguistic) experience but as a representation of a (linguistic) representation" (1994: 250). This means that the frequency of such expressions, be they cognitive or verbal, helps to foreground the symbolic over the direct and the narrator as the maker of (symbolic) meanings in this narrative. Events are not left standing as seemingly objective; they are expressly made dependent on the narrator, who thus acquires a more central position in the text.

The experiential centrality of the narrating self may also be the reason why Picquet's narrative is the one with the smallest number of passive voice occurrences. It is just a sporadic phenomenon. Only 2.3% of the processes that depend on the first-person singular pronoun feature the passive voice; it is only Roper's text that has a comparably low value at 2.38%. Even the rf_p of 1.086 is among the lowest in the corpus. The few instances in the narrative are restricted to a number of material processes describing the essence of slavery: being born, hired, and, most notably, sold. That these activities are presented from the Picquet's point of view is only natural, considering the central position of the narrator's slave experience. Moreover, the fact that the share of passive forms is significantly smaller in Picquet and in Roper than in all other texts may serve as a further indicator of their rather oral orientation.

More than in other slave narratives, the presentation of Picquet's life seems to be guided and framed by a white interlocutor with abolitionist ambitions, while the actual subject of the text is in a rather powerless position. The analysis of their conversation and the use of AAVE indeed support Barthelmy's claim that "[t]he minister failed to recognize Picquet as an individual" (xxxix). And yet, we have also seen that Picquet is a compliant interviewee, who plays her role well and is willing to provide the information that Mattison seeks to extract. On the one hand, she supplies more information than requested, on the other hand, the gaps in her narration are (made) so salient that they provide information for the reader, too. Eventually, Mattison's and Picquet's aims do not clash. The Reverend has predefined conceptions and intends to portray slavery as fostering moral corruption, which is done most effectively by depicting sexual exploitation of women. As this formula is one that sells, Picquet's objective, namely to generate money, presents no conflict.

Due to the different character of Picquet's narrative, the linguistic analysis stressed a number of aspects that were not taken into account in the analysis of the other texts. The

openly dialogic character as well as the traces of spoken language and African American English made it necessary to shift the analytical emphasis from the almost purely logical and experiential analysis of syntax and transitivity to more interpersonal aspects. The analysis of the conversational structure as well as of the treatment of AAVE, which is almost absent, and casual spoken language, which is strongly featured in the text, suggests that Louisa Picquet was not in a position to control the text. Her interlocutor Mattison controlled the course of the conversation as well as the way it would be committed to paper. Picquet is thus presented as a compliant interviewee, who does not challenge Mattison's moves, and who due to her illiteracy cannot take part in the editorial process at all.

Picquet's use of the first-person singular pronoun, of nonfinite constructions and of nominalization contrasts sharply with all other texts in the corpus. Her narrative has the highest rf_I, the lowest rf_{nom}, and the smallest share of nonfinite clauses, all of which, according to Leckie-Tarry, are indicative of spoken language. The same applies to the fact that events are almost invariably presented in their natural, that is, supposedly observable, temporal order, an impression that is supported by Picquet's use of temporal conjunctions, listings adjuncts and *and*. The use of finite clauses as well as the scarcity of nominalizations and passive forms also contribute to the impression that, unlike in Northup's narrative, social actors, most notably Picquet herself, do not become backgrounded (van Leeuwen 39ff). Picquet's life is thus represented as central to the narrative, although Mattison occasionally aims to generalize from the particular incidents, which Picquet herself does not afford.

Although in Picquet's and Jacobs's narratives the share of mental verbs exceeds that of material ones, the effect is completely different. Where Jacobs tries to appeal emotionally to the reader and balances fear and hope, Picquet uses mental verbs to a much higher degree to introduce subjective modality, which may be interpreted as a further characteristic of spoken discourse. Jacobs' emotional appeal to the readership and the bond that she creates and that provides her with a power position does not emerge in Picquet, although both narratives share the topic of sexual exploitation of female slaves. Picquet herself cannot form her text into a gothic tale oppression and liberation, because in the end it is not her own text. While she is the central character, she does not control the course of the interview and is restricted as to what kind of information she is asked to provide. After two thirds of the narrative her voice is lost completely and she has become a third person in Mattison's account.

5.10 Summary

In the previous chapter nine slave narratives published between 1837 and 1861 have been analyzed as to how the respective *I*-narrators construct their texts, their experiences, and therefore themselves. This included the questions where the narrators are present in their texts and what they present themselves as doing. A number of the previous observations need to be summarized and contrasted.

In the beginning stood some scholars' claims that, due to its simplicity and the foregrounding of supposed "material facts" (Butterfield 34), the language of slave narratives does not deserve attention as an object of study in its own right. The previous quantitative analyses and the qualitative discussions of numerous selected examples have shown that this claim is untenable. It has become clear that, notwithstanding the scarcity of traditional stylistic devices in some of the texts, the narratives differ widely as to the selection of a number of linguistic characteristics. The relative frequencies of the *I*-pronoun range from about 15 in Northup to over 47 in Picquet. The selection of nonfinite constructions varies between 8% of all clauses in Picquet and Grandy to 25% in Brown. The relative frequencies of nominalizations range from 2.4 in Picquet to more than 18 in Douglass. The same variation applies to the selection of the individual process types and their respective subcategories. Thus, while the majority of narratives share some stock ingredients (cf. Olney 1985), a "master plan" for the linguistic realization does not exist. These linguistic differences create various effects in the individual narratives, which a synopsis of the results will illustrate.

The majority of the linguistic devices examined are part of the ideational metafunction of language. One of its dimensions is the logical component, to which sentence length, finiteness, and the hierarchization of processes through subordination and coordination belong. Explicit forms of connecting propositions leave fewer gaps to be filled by the reader and put the narrator in a position that affords stricter control over the meanings in the text. While some narrators such as Douglass, Northup, and Jacobs use syntactic complexity sparingly, and usually effectively, others such as Roper and Ball, display a rather meandering, iconic way of connecting their ideas. And yet, through the selection of direct addresses, direct speech, as in Jacobs, or the presentation of events through the narrator's eyes as in Brown and Bibb, other forms of control are also possible. The latter two narrators, for instance, use a clever combination of selected process types associated with the first-person singular pronoun, while in Picquet's text the reader, as well as Picquet herself, are controlled by Mattison's guiding questions.

Moses Roper's narrative is characterized by a high relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun, which increases as the narrator moves towards freedom. The *I*-narrator dominates the text, but his way of narrating the events creates distance. Despite torture and pain, Roper refrains from expressing emotional involvement. Mental processes are rare; oftentimes they appear as adjectives, or they are nominalized, as are expressions of modalization. The absence of the emotive element plays a crucial role in the creation of distance in the narrative. Moreover, Roper's narrative is the one with the smallest share of effective material processes. The narrator's preference for intransitive structures prevents his activities from extending, so that he oftentimes appears to be lacking interaction. By way of analogy, this pattern may be said to apply to the appeal to the reader, too; the text does not appear to extend to or interact with the reader.

Nominalization, nonfinite clauses, processes expressed as adjectives, and agent and beneficiary deletion lead to what Van Leeuwen has termed "suppression of social actors" (38ff). However, complete suppression, that is, the absence of references to social actors altogether, does not occur in any of the narratives. What is recurrent is the milder form of backgrounding, where social actors are "not so much excluded as de-emphasized" (39). The reference to social participants is recoverable from the cotext, but the suppressing devices in combination with ellipsis require the reader's mental effort to reassociate the transcategorized process-participant configurations. Backgrounding is often a local device because the de-emphasized participants occur elsewhere in the text, but there is also a cumulative effect, as the results from the narratives with a high tendency to background actors suggest.

In Roper, although nominalizations and nonfinite clauses are not overly frequent, a number of these backgrounding devices contribute to the impression of distance, the elimination of introspection and self-reflection. Roper predominantly relates many of his outer physical experiences, his doings in the material world, which are typically presented in long, complex sentences. His inner experiences, however, remain unexpressed and thus inaccessible for the reader. Mental: emotive processes, for instance, are often nominalized or expressed as adjectives. The human factor with anger, hatred, and desire for revenge on his brutal master Gooch is nonexistent. While this renders the narrative unemotional, the absence of retribution and rebellion is also reassuring for the white readership. Apparently, this fugitive slave does not aim to undermine or overthrow the ruling social order. Fundamental values of white society are in no way challenged. Roper's display of Christian forgiveness at the end of the narrative clearly supports the assimilationist attitude: "I bear no enmity even to the slave-holders, but regret their delusions" (89). Thus Roper, being only the second fugitive slave to write his own narrative after William Grimes in 1824, eventually affirms the values of diligence, piety and forgiveness. But while Grimes expressed his bitterness at the abuse and was thus ignored by abolitionists (Andrews 1986: 78), Roper nearly effaces himself and therefore the narration of his life appeared not only tolerable to the reading audience but also stood the chance becoming commercially successful.

Moses Grandy's narrative, on the other hand, is characterized by the scarcity of many of the backgrounding devices Roper uses. His clauses are to more than 92% finite, the relative frequency of nominalization is lower than in Roper, and his material verbs are to over 30% effective and overwhelmingly active. Moreover, although mental verbs are generally scarce, too, more than 26% of the mental verbs are of the affective type. And yet, although social actors are not backgrounded to the same extent, Grandy's narrative, too, fails to appeal emotionally. This is the case because Grandy predominantly relates materially observable events, preferably concerned with the exchange of goods and services. The ubiquity of economic vocabulary supports the impression that the narrator foregrounds his diligence and economic success, and so displays, according to Andrews, his "class consciousness of the bourgeoisie" (1986: 112). He does not provide abstractions from his concrete slave experience, nor does he generalize. Thus, while he presents himself in a favorable light in terms of material achievement, he cannot assign significance to his life beyond the processes that are actually related. In consequence, he fashions himself as successful, but not as a role model to be emulated. Despite the comparatively large share of affective verbs, Grandy does not present his inner life, either. Especially the near absence of emotional reactions, such as bitterness about his several setbacks on the way to freedom, result in distance, too. And yet, like Roper, Grandy does not antagonize his readership by calling into question

their values. Supposed American ideals, such as self-made (economic) success and perseverance despite obstacles eventually prevail in this text. In this sense, Grandy's narrative, too, serves to denounce the horrors of slavery by relating the material experiences of one individual, but in no way does the text ideologically unsettle the dominant worldview.

Challenging the dominant order was reserved for Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*. In his text the relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun increases considerably with increasing autonomy up to eventual freedom, too, but his narrative is the first one in which this quantitative increase reflects personal development. Unlike Roper and Grandy, Douglass uses nominalizations as well as mental and relational verbs to construct his world for the reader and to construct a significant, dramatized plot out of what were singular events in the previous narratives. Moreover, he allows the reader access to his inner world, notwithstanding a number of gaps. The relationship with his future spouse Anna Murray, for instance, is entirely omitted from his text. His repeated disruptions of the temporal order support the effect of dramatization and illustrate Douglass' development from observer into an autonomous and self-reflective individual. But while the *I*-narrator's growing awareness is a central topic of the narrative, Douglass displays group solidarity, too. Moreover, he provides abstractions from his particular experiences. This enables him, by way of using nominalizations and relational processes, to label and categorize activities and events and therefore to create additional meanings. In this way the brawl with Covey becomes a "triumph." Like Grandy, Douglass presents self-made success and thus embodies ultimately American ideals, but in Douglass this is echoed by a self-confident use of language. Douglass' activities are characterized by a development towards effective material action, including the fight, as well as increased cognitive activity, which culminates in his desire to be free. Remarkable is the repeated association of mental with material processes, which serves to emphasize that Douglass perceives education, awareness, and material freedom as interdependent. Douglass is not only self-confident enough to sacrifice in the description of the actual flight a unique selling point of his narrative; he also dares to challenge the hypocrisy of white Christianity. This self-confidence is indeed also linguistic. Apart from the characteristics examined, the narrative features classical rhetorical devices, which Douglass combines for a powerful attack on slavery, and with which he also openly exhibits his literary training. Through his use of language Douglass explicitly characterizes himself as exceptional. Therefore, within the corpus, he marks the entry of a distinctive and occasionally egocentric voice of the fugitive slave.

William Wells Brown continues this movement towards a distinctive voice which places the *I*-narrator's character into the fore and which does not shy away from displaying moral transgressions of his former self as a slave. Linguistically, Brown's narrative is "average," that is, most characteristics are distributed evenly, so that neither tension is created, nor is mental development reflected. The absence of syntactic variation leads to a lack of dynamics in the text – most sentences are complex, often with a nonfinite component, but not long. It is mainly the increased relative frequency of the first-person singular pronoun that marks the transition from witness to would-be fugitive after six chapters, but this point is not particularly foregrounded by additional linguistic means as are selected episodes in Douglass' *Narrative*. Nominalizations are very rare in the narrative; the *I*-narrator never retreats from his text to leave extended space for generalization and abstraction. If such instances appear at all, they are invariably embedded into his first-person experience. Neither does the narrator illustrate his personal development by assigning meaning to the events in

his life, with the exception of his apology for having deceived a fellow slave. Unlike Douglass, Brown hardly uses particular linguistic devices to reconstruct his past so as to make it significant for his personal development. This impression is supported by the fact that the chronological order of the narrative is unbroken. Personal development, that is, Brown's increased awareness, illustrated by his involvement in reform movements, and his role as a conductor on the underground railroad, is only made explicit in the linguistically distinct final chapter, which was not part of the original edition of the narrative. The final display of social responsibility is, similar to the apology for his deception, a linguistic act that separates the retrospecting, narrating William Wells Brown from his former slave self Sandfort. While the narrative itself is dominated by the chronicler and trickster Sandfort, it is the reformed William Wells Brown who explicitly declares that Sandfort's moral corruption must be seen as a consequence of his enslavement. It is necessary for William Wells Brown to create distance between himself and the trickster, which he does by presenting his reformed self as linguistically different and, in Chapter 12, as part of a first-person plural group. The fact, however, that this final chapter does not appear in the initial editions of the narrative but was appended later may indicate that the narrator felt it necessary to provide an additional sense of closure to display more of his development than he did in the previous shorter editions. This strategy enables Brown to achieve several aims at the same time. His role as witness lends credibility to the description of slavery, but the danger of appearing unreliable is held in check by the elaborate linguistic act that transfers the blame for Sandfort's transgressions to the institution of slavery. So the trickster's deeds are Sandfort's but the retrospecting narrator is the reformed and reliable William Wells Brown, who nevertheless includes Sandfort's antics because they help to sell the book. In the end, William Wells Brown can thus cater to the supposed sensibilities of his readership without having to sacrifice marketable disruptions in his own character.

Henry Bibb, too, is a trickster character, who is confronted with the problem of having to justify moral transgressions as well as leaving behind wife and child in slavery. But much more than Brown, Bibb varies the use of linguistic devices according to his situational and textual needs. Backgrounding devices, such as nominalization and nonfinite clauses serve to de-emphasize most other characters except the narrator himself; however, the presentation of emotionally difficult topics, such as his remarriage in freedom are characterized by a backgrounding of his own role as well. This is remarkable because the *I*-narrator is typically eager to present himself as the central character in his narrative. He displays pride, re-sourcefulness, and individuality, and focalizes the majority of events through himself, not only through the use of mental verbs, but also through strategic use of the passive voice and clause complexes, which hierarchize processes according to the narrator's needs. Even his generalizations about slavery, for instance about the slaves' superstitions, are rooted in and made dependent on his personal experience. Bibb's preference for material verbs often serves to foreground the active, adventurous element in the narrative, which is certainly one of Bibb's unique selling points. This is done at the cost of downplaying the mental component whenever it appears safer for his position before the readership to do so. Then the otherwise linguistically self-assured *I*-narrator becomes formal, as the defense of his flight from slavery without his wife has shown. Eventually, his desire for individual freedom gains the upper hand over loyalty and must be defended in what Andrews has identified as a "declarative act" to solve the narrator's dilemma and lend the text a sense of closure (1986: 104, 153).

In contrast to the self-effacing narrators before Douglass, we now find tricksters with a more egocentric position. These narrators control their texts and guide their readership's perception carefully. They are not loath to present their slave selves with what might be perceived as moral flaws. Moreover, despite their sufferings in slavery, they also introduce humor, often with a cynical strain, into their narratives. Instead of being guided by self-restraint and self-effacement, these narrators exercise their power over text and audience and thus, according to Andrews, from Douglass onwards are able to prioritize "truth to the self . . . over what the white reader may think is either probable or politic to introduce into discourse" (1986: 103). The linguistic means used in Douglass, Brown, and Bibb are diverse. Douglass presents himself as exceptional by reassigning meaning to specific events; Brown uses variation in his language principally to point out the distance between the writing self and the slave self, and Bibb varies his language according to whether he displays his desire for freedom or the costs that he has to bear. Notwithstanding the fundamental differences in the selection of linguistic devices, the linguistic resourcefulness of these three narrators illustrates the new self-assuredness in this phase of the slave narrative very well.

Arguably, the development of using increasingly varied language, which allows narrators to express their true selves as well as to background their own and other roles whenever the need arises, finds its – sometimes linguistically absurd – culmination in the language of Solomon Northup's narrative. But here, the overdone use of devices that Wilson ostensibly considered appropriate occasionally distracts the reader from the life story and suffering of the actual main character. The extremely high density of backgrounding devices, such as nonfiniteness and nominalization, and the use of noneffective processes lead to a foregrounding of the description of slave life and the adventure itself, which of course did not impede the sales of the book. And yet, Northup emerges as a self-assured narrator with pride in his resourcefulness and diligence. The use of subjectivity and of attribution as well as the open display of his own rage and violence support this impression. In the end, however, the language is supposed to reflect the extraordinary character of the story, but it cannot present the *I*-narrator as an exceptional heroic being like Douglass or as a trickster like Bibb.

After these adventure stories with distinctive, occasionally egocentric voices, the success of *Fifty Years in Chains* in 1859 may be surprising. The position of the first-person narrator is closer to the self-effacing voices at the beginning of the corpus and therefore reflects the earlier origin of the text. The lack of affection, the impression that the environment acts upon the narrator rather than vice versa, and the often iconic, meandering character of his syntax support this view. His narrative is one of perception. The supposed Charles Ball is first and foremost an observer and chronicler, which is illustrated by the extremely high frequency of verbs of perception, but he is not presented as personally and mentally developing. While the presentation of the horrors of slavery that the narrator has to endure is characterized by the self-restraint typical of earlier texts, Ball, in contrast to Roper and Grandy, is able to display his own morally transgressive behavior. When the text was republished in 1859, the audience had become sufficiently used to nonconformist *I*-narrators. Still, Ball is far from being a subversive character. Although he does not elaborately justify his transgressions, such as whipping fellow slaves, lying, and stealing food, he does not display desire for revenge on cruel masters, either. He is brutally abused several times, but he does not strike back. Despite their almost unspeakable cruelty, he remains loyal to his respective masters, which makes him a relatively safe free black individual in the eyes of

the dominant white society. He does not develop, he does not reconfigure and reinterpret his past, and he does not attribute meaning to specific events, either. Backgrounding devices are not particularly frequent; in fact, the narrator does not present himself as close to other characters, who could have been backgrounded. About one fourth of the text describes his lonely flight. Nonfiniteness here rather illustrates the naturalization of the first-person perspective, while the predominance of hypotaxis reflects the large amount of detail, which is often related to the main idea through association rather than explicit logic. It is this vast amount of additional, often anecdotal information, including gothic horror, crime, and cruel punishment, that serves as the selling argument for this narrative, it seems, rather than an egocentric and distinct first-person voice. The success of this text even without additional authenticating material supports such an interpretation.

Harriet Jacobs' narrative as the first one in the corpus written by a female fugitive slave, continues the lineage of the *I*-narrator's increasing power over the text. Through direct speech and an often omniscient position she controls and guides her readers' perception. There is a strong mental: affective element, through which Jacobs balances her fears and her hopes throughout the narrative. While the evil character of Dr. Flint is stressed over and over again, the linguistic backgrounding of Sands and the complete omission of romantic attachment to him, enable the narrator to present herself as a strong individual who is not only a victim but able to act and control her environment to a certain extent. Allusions to Sands' broken promises suggest that it would have been easy for Jacobs to present herself as exploited by him, too, had she chosen to do so. Instead, she presents herself as not relinquishing control over her life to the males that seek to take advantage of her. As this control is strongly associated with self-determined sexuality, Jacobs faces the problem of having to present to the readership her moral conduct, which was likely to be perceived as questionable. Her direct addresses serve to facilitate the readers' identification with the narrator and help Jacobs to justify her behavior while at the same time making it plausible that her experience of sexual harassment was shared by a large number of female slaves.

In Jacobs' narrative the presentation and justification of what the white reading middle-class presumably considered moral transgressions reaches a new dimension. The slaveholders' sexual exploitation of their female slaves is addressed in a number of texts, but this is the first time that this topic is presented in a first-person perspective (cf. Andrews 1986: 241). Interestingly, however, despite her claims to truth and the linguistic devices she employs to win the trust and empathy of her readership, Harriet Jacobs found it necessary to publish her narrative under the pseudonym "Linda Brent."

The publication of Louisa Picquet's story by the Reverend Hiram Mattison finally marks a culmination in exposing the exploitation of the female slave. It may be argued that the publication itself represents a form of additional exploitation; in fact, Mattison's tight control over the text and his desire to extract some of the more savory details support such a reading. After all, as the analyses have shown, his questions direct the conversation and predefine what kind of information Picquet is supposed to supply. And yet, it has also been shown that Picquet is generally a willing and compliant interviewee, who occasionally provides more detail than was asked for. Her conversational behavior is nonconfrontational, and even the few gaps that she leaves are so salient as to stimulate the readers' imagination sufficiently. On an editorial level, the oral traces and the near absence of AAVE in Picquet's language suggest, too, that Mattison controlled the production of the narrative tightly enough so as to fabricate a marketable product that would appeal to the readership.

In contrast to Jacobs, however, the appeal was not a personal, emotional one leading to the readers' identification and solidarity with the abused slave. Mattison's text is one that puts the female slave on the auction block for the second time in order to denounce what he perceives as the horrors of slavery. The individual voice that characterizes the narratives between Douglass and Jacobs is gone; similar to Roper and Grandy, the subject of the narrative becomes to a certain extent effaced. Some tendencies to select similar linguistic means such as intransitive processes, of which Roper and Picquet have the largest number, or the scarcity of nominalization, make this interpretation plausible.

The presence of the first-person singular pronoun in the various texts served as a first point of orientation for a detailed text analysis. The relative frequency of the pronoun was an object of investigation itself but also a useful indicator for several further linguistic phenomena such as finiteness, nominalization as well as interdependency and logico-semantic relations. Each of the narratives has been found to feature its own idiosyncrasies and different foci. While all narrators are central in their texts, some leave more space for general observations and abstractions from personal experience than others. This is reflected in the oscillations of the rf_I as well as in the frequency of nominalization and other abstract terms. The narratives of Douglass and Northup have been found to be exceptional in this respect, albeit with completely different consequences. Douglass, on the one hand is able to restructure and reorder his own experiences, and so assigns new significance to them and draws abstractions and conclusion. Northup, on the other hand, is a main character whose position as a first-person narrator is frequently sacrificed for his ghostwriter's penchant for extravagant devices. And yet, both Douglass and Northup occasionally retreat from their own texts to provide general information about slavery. This is not the case in Brown, who remains central even in these more general episodes. All observations are embedded in and focalized through his own experience. He and Bibb present themselves much more as trickster figures, who cherish their individuality and freedom, which is linguistically reflected in this particular way of presenting events through the narrator's focus. Most narratives are structured in straight chronological order as a progression from the protagonist's birth to freedom. Particularly Roper and Grandy restrict themselves to a sequential narration of the observable events and neglect the emotional dimension, which is hardly developed at all in their texts. In contrast to Jacobs, who achieves mastery in this category through her direct addresses to the reader and the use of direct speech to control her readers' perception, Roper and Grandy fail to establish an emotional bond between themselves and their readership.

Picquet's narrative finally represents a special case, and its different, dialogic, character provides a useful foil for the other texts. The guidance through the interviewer and Picquet's difficulties to offer resistance have been examined quite in detail as has been the restricted use of AAVE in this particular text. An interesting point for speculation is the question in how far this interview renders visible a stage in the production process that is no longer there in other dictated slave narratives such as those by Grandy, Northup, and Ball. It may be hypothesized that a similar form of editorial guidance helped to steer these narrations towards marketability. And yet, there is no linguistic evidence to support such a hypothesis except the general absence of African American dialect in the narrators' speech.

Notwithstanding the individual character of each of the texts, it is possible to group narratives according to their narrators' creation of the self. Roper, Grandy, and, to a lesser

extent, Ball are clearly narrators whose language serves first and foremost to display the materially observable events of slaves to their readership. Their language is dominated by material action. This also applies to Ball and even Picquet, although the very high frequencies of perceptive and cognitive verbs respectively skew the quantitative result towards the mental side. These narrators do not experiment with language to express their inner selves to their readers; they also refrain from challenging society openly. Running away from their masters is displayed as an individual act, but it is hardly associated with increasing mental awareness. The values that the three male narrators display are easily compatible with the American mainstream, as they endorse Christian forgiveness, individual material success, and self-reliance. Through their language they neither expose their sufferings and anguish, much less do they use emotionality for a general attack on the system of slavery. Self-restraint, also in a linguistic sense, was the main principle for these slave narrators.

This does not apply to Douglass, Brown, Bibb, and Northup. Their self-confidence is displayed linguistically. Their linguistic resources, together with an increasingly abolitionized readership, enable them to present behavior which earlier narrators needed to omit. These narrators now are able to use their linguistic capacities to transform their own moral transgressions into attacks on the system of slavery. They appear sophisticated, eloquent, and self-confident enough to create distance between their behavior as a slave and their retrospecting selves; thus they can present their own acts of disloyalty, theft, abuse, deception, and violence not as flaws that might be interpreted as inherent in the African American character, but as induced by the inhumanity of the slave system. This culminates in Jacobs' narrative, where the alleged transgression is a consequence of sexual taboos. Here, the double discrimination as an African American and as a female requires an additional level of justification, which Jacobs provides, also linguistically. Using devices from the sentimental novel, she is able to control her readers and bond with them at the same time. In this way she appeals to an explicitly female audience for support in order to achieve identification with the lot of the female slave in general and with her position in particular.

The question remains whether the quantitative results can support the division into rather restrained narrators on the one hand and the extroverted ones on the other. The groups are too small and too diverse to warrant validity in a statistical sense. Long texts lekewown s onemex associated with i Lo3j-1.311390 -1.nd u. The a lediae thegainnroo84ee fb78 TD4iand as a fheir s;

the results in any of the categories taken into account. Very generally, earlier narratives tend to have a material orientation, whereas later ones lean towards the mental side. This generalization, however, does not apply to Bibb's narrative, which is clearly dominated by material verbs; neither does it take account of to the large share of mental verbs in Ball's narrative. Later narratives, particularly the four male ones beginning with Douglass tend towards nonfiniteness, nominalization, and the use of the passive voice, all of which are capable of rearranging process-participant configurations. Jacobs does not quite fit into this group because her values for these devices are generally low. But so is, for instance, Brown's relative frequency of nominalization, which is closer to Grandy's than to the narratives from his period.

Table 5.10.1: Division into early "restrained" (group 1) vs. later "egocentric" (group 2) narrators

group 1	number of words	process types in percent					rf_I	passive (%)	rf_{nom}	lexical dens.	finite (%)
		b	mat	men	rel	v					
Roper	17111	3.32	42.72	20.25	23.26	10.44	39.215	5.81	9.935	0.5930	82.43
Grandy	13098	5.41	39.49	23.25	20.70	11.15	25.195	4.85	7.177	0.5655	92.31
Ball	105665	6.74	39.10	30.69	18.68	4.79	24.284	4.01	11.868	0.5766	85.97
Picquet	9205	4.47	28.24	30.12	23.29	13.88	47.257	2.30	2.390	0.6299	92.31
average		5.82	38.52	28.30	20.11	7.25	27.585	4.20	10.615	0.5809	87.40
median		4.94	39.29	26.68	21.98	10.79	32.205	4.43	8.556	0.5850	89.14
group 2											
Douglass	36281	4.31	36.85	32.33	20.15	6.36	27.232	6.07	18.274	0.5459	80.25
Brown	22900	5.39	33.17	29.74	22.88	8.82	28.428	5.99	7.860	0.5681	75.97
Bibb	48187	2.76	41.84	28.57	18.78	8.05	31.025	7.76	11.331	0.5722	78.74
Northup	77744	5.77	33.82	26.59	25.56	8.26	15.860	5.76	16.168	0.5158	76.22
Jacobs	81495	7.43	27.43	31.45	20.65	13.04	27.597	4.85	10.945	0.5590	83.41
average		5.42	33.79	29.87	21.30	9.63	24.816	5.97	13.270	0.5478	79.32
median		5.39	33.82	29.74	20.65	8.26	27.597	5.99	11.331	0.5590	78.74
all	411686	5.57	35.59	29.27	20.85	8.27	25.792	5.30	12.335	0.5595	82.63

One further grouping needs to be presented because it is tied to one of the initial questions. In Table 5.10.2 below the narratives have been ordered according to whether they were written by the fugitive slave him- or herself or committed to paper by another person. In fact, the only difference between 5.10.1 and 2 is that Roper's and Northup's narratives have switched places. The most obvious difference between dictated and self-written narratives can be found in the rf_I and the proportion of finite clauses. Irrespective of whether the average or the median is chosen as the basis for comparison, dictated narratives appear to have a significantly lower rf_I than texts authored by the slaves themselves. The share of finite clauses in their texts, however, is much larger in dictated narratives. In the majority of the other categories the differences are not so great as to warrant valid conclusions; but there seems to be a tendency of dictated texts to feature fewer forms that reconfigure process-participant relations, such as passive voice, nominalization, or nonfinite clauses.

Table 5.10.2: Dictated vs. self-written narratives

	b	mat	men	rel	v	rf_I	passive	rf_{nom}	lex. dens.	finite
dictated										
Grandy	5.41	39.49	23.25	20.70	11.15	25.195	4.85	7.177	0.5655	92.31
Northup	5.77	33.82	26.59	25.56	8.26	15.860	5.76	16.168	0.5158	76.22
Ball	6.74	39.10	30.69	18.68	4.79	24.284	4.01	11.868	0.5766	85.97
Picquet	4.47	28.24	30.12	23.29	13.88	47.257	2.30	2.390	0.6299	92.31
average	6.16	36.66	29.01	21.10	7.06	22.186	4.38	12.770	0.5553	84.95
median	5.59	36.46	28.35	22.00	9.76	24.740	4.43	9.522	0.5710	89.14
self-written										
Roper	3.32	42.72	20.25	23.26	10.44	39.215	5.81	9.935	0.5930	82.43
Douglass	4.31	36.85	32.33	20.15	6.36	27.232	6.07	18.274	0.5459	80.25
Brown	5.39	33.17	29.74	22.88	8.82	28.428	5.99	7.860	0.5681	75.97
Bibb	2.76	41.84	28.57	18.78	8.05	31.025	7.76	11.331	0.5722	78.74
Jacobs	7.43	27.43	31.45	20.65	13.04	27.597	4.85	10.945	0.5590	83.41
average	5.11	34.77	29.47	20.65	10.00	29.392	6.00	11.987	0.5636	80.47
median	4.31	36.85	29.74	20.65	8.82	28.428	5.99	10.945	0.5636	80.25
all	5.57	35.59	29.27	20.85	8.27	25.792	5.30	12.335	0.5595	82.63

The events in all of the narratives are presented in chronologically. The only narrators who upset this principle on a macro level, that is, who interrupt the narrative flow of events, are Jacobs and Douglass. A number of narrators, most notably Picquet, Roper, Grandy, and Ball typically follow the chronological principle even in the micro structure of their texts, that is, in the way they construct clause complexes, as the use of *if*, *then* and *after* illustrates. The majority of narrators, particularly the early ones, do not rearrange the chronology of their story so as to assign additional significance to some events while denying it to others, as Douglass does. For Picquet's narrative this chronological sequentiality was shown to apply to the majority of conditional clauses. The strict adherence to chronology may be interpreted as a symptom of linguistic iconicity. Hodge and Kress illustrate that this iconic principle applies more globally to relations of cause and effect (1979: 18ff), but it can be developed further. Whenever an event is linguistically realized in what Halliday considers a most congruent structure, that is, in terms of a process, its participants, and circumstances, this realization may be interpreted as iconic in the widest sense, notwithstanding the fact that one and the same action or event in real life can occasionally be represented through various verbs. As the linguistic realization moves away from the concrete and specific towards abstract and general concepts, iconic meaning is gradually replaced by symbolic meaning (Halliday 1998: 200f, Leckie-Tarry 77ff, Hodge and Kress 1988: 21ff). This is the case when processes lose their participants, become nonfinite, nominalized and eventually lexicalized as nouns. Halliday illustrates this progression with the following sequence: "planets move – the planet is moving – a moving planet – the planet's moving – the movement of planets – planetary motion" (1998: 200). What Halliday observes in the context of scientific discourse applies in principle all kinds of texts and is discussed by van Leeuwen in the context of suppression or backgrounding of social actors,

which was applied in some of the previous analyses. Leckie-Tarry links this phenomenon of increasing symbolicalness to her distinction between spoken and written discourse and claims that "registers at the oral pole are characterized by concrete meanings. [. . .] Phenomena and events tend to be classified according to chronological principles" (90f). She examines a number of corpus-based studies and concludes that oral texts are characterized by a "bonding of linguistic and non-linguistic events," where language is concrete, set in actual time, propositional, and verb-centered (161f). In oral texts propositions tend to be linked sequentially by "nextness" or explicit conjunction (169); they may also be semantically hierarchized by subordination (Halliday 1994: 350). Written texts, on the other hand, lean towards the abstract, nominalized, and non-iconic. Linguistically, this is reflected by higher lexical density, more passive forms, more reduced and nonfinite clauses, and a disposition to present phenomena as products, that is, to nominalize them (Leckie-Tarry 95ff). Propositions that are expressed as clauses in oral registers are bound to be semantically condensed into nominalization, which in turn can be modified in complex ways (160). It is claimed that when "the clause ceases to have an identity as clause proper and becomes lexicalized, . . . that the process of [semantic] hierarchization merges with the process of lexicalization" (ibid.). In this way "literate thought [. . .] divorces phenomena from chronological sequence, analyses events and reclassifies them into new patterns" (Leckie-Tarry 79), and, according to Ong, thus "restructures the human lifeworld" (Ong 1980: 2).

These new patterns involve hierarchization, rearrangement and recategorization of specific process-participant configurations. As such, logico-semantic relations between clauses, the use of the passive voice, nominalization, and nonfiniteness have been discussed with variations in the rf_I as a point of departure. According to Leckie-Tarry, these features can be linked to a cline between orality and literacy, a claim which is in essence supported by a number of authors (Givón, Kress, Halliday 1994: 349ff). It is claimed that nonfiniteness, nominalization, and passive forms tend to appear more frequently in written discourse, whereas spoken discourse is typically characterized by finite active voice clauses. In sum, written language is associated with nominal structures whereas spoken language "realizes meanings congruently or iconically, as processes, primarily by means of verbs" (Leckie-Tarry 116). Moreover, Leckie-Tarry claims that coordination is more typical of the oral medium while subordination is associated with written discourse (90ff). Subordination as a form of hierarchization assigns prominence and independent status to some information and dependent status to other information. However, in this area the distinction is more complex because reduced clauses and nonfinite clauses, which are by definition subordinated, are more frequent in written language (102). Lexical density is listed as a further criterion, but it has been addressed only marginally in the present study (Table A.1.4, p. 278). Halliday as well as others claim that written texts tend to have higher lexical density because they contain fewer function words in relation to content carrying words (1994: 350f).

In Table 5.10.3 below the narratives in the corpus are ordered according to their position on this proposed cline between the oral and written pole for the following linguistic features: voice, density, finiteness, nominalization, coordination, sentence length, and rf_I. Thus a remarkable picture emerges. Apparently, Douglass', Northup's and Jacobs' narratives clearly tend towards the written pole whereas Grandy's, Ball's, Roper's and Picquet's texts are oriented towards the oral end. While the position of Picquet's oral narrative concurs with the claims the authors have made and supports them with empirically sound data, with this method Grandy's, Roper's, and Ball's narratives, too, can be placed among

texts in which the oral mode dominates. Grandy's unemotional and linguistically simple narrative thus appears as a kind of transcript similar to Picquet's interview. Not much is known about the production process of this particular text, apart from what the introduction to the narrative tells us, which is that, apparently, George Thompson committed to paper what Moses Grandy told him (Grandy iv). Bearing in mind the power Mattison exercised over Picquet's narrative, it is interesting to speculate whether Thompson's writing sessions with Grandy were conducted in a similar manner. After all, Thompson is likely to have asked for clarification or additional detail for particular events. If so, these interruptions were edited out of the final version of the narrative, but the interlocutor's guidance and the limitations these intrusions may have put on the expression of the fugitive slave are still in the text. Of course, this is highly speculative, but the characteristics of Picquet's narrative and its position near the oral pole should make the scholar wonder as to the "authenticity" of the slave's experience in narratives such as Ball's, where nothing is known about the source, or even Northup's, which is generally accepted as "authentic," although it marks high scores on the literary side and the production process with Wilson as the actual writer is known and accepted.

In Table 5.10.3 the narratives have been ordered according to their respective rank in the various criteria. Characteristics associated with the written pole are located in the top row while the oral pole is at the bottom of the table. In many categories the same narratives appear in similar positions, especially the narratives that occupy the extreme poles. This in part reflects the fact that the variables are not entirely independent of each other. For instance, the length of sentences, the frequency of subordinators and coordinators, and finiteness interact in a number of ways. The same applies to nominalization and lexical density. And yet, other variables such as voice, lexical density and rf_I are sufficiently independent of each other that at least tendencies should be acceptable, even though statistical validity cannot be claimed for these results. We find that Northup, Douglass, and with limitations, Jacobs typically occupy more literary positions, whereas Roper and Picquet occupy the oral end of the continuum. These positions do not coincide with a distinction between self-penned and dictated texts. Northup's and Picquet's tale, both of which were not committed to paper by the *I*-narrators themselves occupy the opposite ends of the scale here, while Douglass' narrative is in many respects more similar to Northup's, or rather Wilson's opus than to Roper's self-written text, which, according to the criteria listed, yet appears as if it were a transcript of an oral narration.

Eventually, the various readings that have been given to the statistical results must always be interpreted with the proviso that it is only the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches that can take into account local distributions, variations, and absences and connect them with more global observations about the individual narrators' position within the respective discourses. Drawing generally valid conclusions from these global quantitative results, and trying to associate them with either periods of narrative production, with a narrator's position, or with the genesis of a text, cannot be successful without the prior detailed qualitative analysis. Therefore, the following conclusion will not present further interpretations of the quantitative results; instead, it will tie the observations made about the individual narratives and their linguistic peculiarities to the superimposed questions of discourse and a more general critique of the analytical model chosen.

Table 5.10.3: Linguistic characteristics of narratives according to an oral/literate cline

rank	passive	high lexical density	nonfinite clauses	nomina-lization	few coordinators	few subordinators	short simple sentences	low rf_t	average rank
1	Bibb	Northup	Brown	Douglass	Northup	Northup	Northup	Northup	Northup 1.875
2	Douglass	Douglass	Northup	Northup	Douglass	Douglass	Douglass	Ball	Douglass 2.75
3	Brown	Jacobs	Bibb	Ball	Jacobs	Douglass	Bibb	Grandy	Jacobs 3.714
4	Roper	Grandy	Douglass	Bibb	Roper	Ball	Jacobs	Douglass	Bibb 4.625
5	Northup	Brown	Roper	Jacobs	Douglass	Grandy	Douglass	Brown	Brown 5.250
6	Jacobs	Bibb	Jacobs	Roper	Brown	Bibb	Grandy	Jacobs	Grandy 5.375
7	Ball	Ball	Brown	Ball	Bibb	Brown	Picquet	Bibb	Ball 5.750
8	Grandy	Roper	Picquet/Grandy	Grandy	Ball	Ball	Ball	Roper	Roper 6.500
9	Picquet	Picquet	Picquet	Picquet	Picquet	Picquet	Roper	Picquet	Picquet 8.500
	active	low lexical density	finite clauses	congruence	high coordination	high subordination	long complex sentences	high rf_t	

6.   Conclusion

This conclusion briefly retraces the outline of this dissertation, summarizes the results, and points to a number of possible areas for future research in this field. Moreover, it offers a few critical considerations about the underlying theory and methods of the approach adopted here.

The present work examines the language of nine African American slave narratives and consists of two parts. The first part comprises Chapters one to four. The first two chapters contain a general introduction and an introduction of the historical context. The following two chapters retrace the development of the narrative genre and its ties with political activism and thus, after a number of theoretical observations, lead to the conclusion that a critical linguistic analysis will most effectively serve the purpose of examining how the individual narrators' discoursal selves are constructed. Systemic functional grammar was found to serve as the best possible analytical tool for this aim. In the second part, Chapter 5, each of the narratives was analyzed separately in a quantitative and qualitative way, before a comparative reading of the results was presented in the summary (Ch. 5.10). Eventually, each of the narratives was found to feature an individual linguistic profile with different effects for the construction of the narrator. Notwithstanding the scarcity of what are traditionally considered rhetorical devices in many texts, with the notable exceptions of Douglass and Jacobs, and the presence of a typical structure, there is no such thing as one linguistic formula for the slave narrative that could be said to apply to all texts and thus render their *I*-narrators virtually identical.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses was able to disclose a number of issues. First and foremost, the empirical data collected helped to answer Ivanic's questions about the narrators' discoursal selves (cf. Chapter 2). Through the linguistic analysis, it was possible to reveal

- where the individual *I*-narrators are present in their texts and what they present themselves as doing,
- who else is involved or backgrounded
- how activities and events are presented as related and
- to what extent the narrators associate themselves with certain events and activities.

As these questions suggest, the main emphasis lay on the ideational metafunction of language with its logical and experiential components. The analyses began with a relatively rigid framework. For each text the first-person singular pronoun served as a point of departure, from which the different process types as well as further linguistic means, such as clausal relations and grammatical transcategorizations, were examined. These linguistic analyses revealed a plethora of individual linguistic characteristics within each narrative, such as differences in the density and distribution of the *I*-pronoun, unique transitivity profiles, and differences in syntax, in particular sentence length and the relationships between clauses. Moreover, in a few narratives particular features such as direct address of the reader, the use of dialect, and conversation structure were examined. The individual results were summarized in the sections of Chapter 5 and the beginning of the summary (5.10). Earlier narratives were shown to foreground the *I*-narrator's material doings instead of personal, mental development, whereas in some later ones the narrative voices became increasingly self-confident, self-reflective and even egocentric.

Through their narratives the individual discoursal selves are positioned differently in relation to the readership. Andrews (1986) presents the progression from self-effacing narrator to an increasingly distinct and occasionally egocentric voice in a lucid way. This progression is reflected in, as well as created by, the use of distinct linguistic means. The increasing degrees of self-confidence and self-reflection are displayed in various ways. The use of particular mental verbs, breaks in the narrative flow, as well as linguistically sophisticated justifications for alleged immoral behavior are only a few examples of this development. The analyses have shown that it is not one isolated singular feature alone that could be held responsible for a particular effect. The increasing display of awareness, personal development and sometimes independence from the readership is a consequence of even more linguistic characteristics than were investigated here. While Roper, Grandy, and Picquet focus on their material progress to freedom, Douglass, for instance, attributes meanings and reorders and thus interprets his life. Mental progress is emphasized. Brown and Bibb comment on their transgressive behavior in stretches that are linguistically distinct from their respective co-texts, while Jacobs seeks to control even those events of her narrative in which she does not figure. This means that there is no one linguistic formula that narrators apply with varying density in order to present themselves as more or less aware, in control, or responsible. While this variation may pose a problem for an empirical linguistic analysis that aims to examine each text according to one rigid pattern to make the results comparable, it also illustrates the individuality of the narratives. The emphasis of this study was set on the ideational metafunction of language. In the previous analyses the individual characteristics of the texts, however, resulted in occasional shifts of emphasis; particularly the female narratives required some additional analytical tools in order to examine the use of the second-person pronoun, the conversational structure, or the use of forms associated with spoken language. The results these enquiries yielded should justify this mild form of methodological eclecticism. Particularly the explicitly oral character of Picquet's narrative provides a basis for comparison with the rest of the corpus and will thus provide a starting point for the final reading of the quantitative results.

The summary in Chapter 5.10 has shown that the quantitative results are suitable as a starting point for a comparative approach. Thus a picture emerged where, in addition to the progression from effacing to egocentric narrators, the narratives could be assessed in how far they feature characteristics associated with self-written vs. dictated and oral vs. written texts. For some texts the position on these clines results in a number of questions about authenticity and the *I*-narrators' authority over the construction of their discoursal selves. It is known which texts were composed by amanuenses and which ones were written by the fugitive slaves themselves. The more intriguing question here is one of editorial intrusions which are no longer directly visible in the text. Grandy's dictated text, for instance, occupies a position near the oral end of the cline suggested by Leckie-Tarry. But this does not automatically indicate that the text of the narrative is the exact transcript of Grandy's oral narration, which the editor was "resolved to commit . . . to the press, as nearly as possible in the language of Moses himself" (vi). Picquet's narrative as a foil reveals the immense power the interrogator and editor exerted over the course the narration would take. The question follows in how far these in most narratives invisible but effective intrusions into the narrative flow affect authenticity. Does editorial treatment per se entail a loss of authenticity of a text?

Authenticity is a controversial and contested concept for many slave narratives. Northup's narrative may serve as an example. According to Eakin and Logsdon's introduction to the narrative, a comparison of other works by Wilson, Northup's amanuensis, shows that the "prose style of the narrative clearly belongs to Wilson" (xiv). And yet, they also add that the story must be considered authentic because "[a]t every point where materials exist for checking [Northup's] account, it can be verified" (xvi). Clearly, the authors separate linguistic expression from content and prioritize the latter over the former. Apparently, in their view, expression does not affect authenticity. *Fifty Years in Chains* is another case in point. The anonymous preface of the 1836 edition states that "[t]he narrative is taken from the mouth of the adventurer himself; and if the copy does not retain the identical words of the original, the sense and import are at least faithfully preserved" (Taylor 264). Are they? The preface continues thus. "Many of his opinions have been cautiously omitted, or carefully suppressed, as being of no value to the reader; and his sentiments upon the subject of slavery, have not been embodied in the work" (ibid.). This gap, however, certainly contributes to the way the discoursal self is constructed through the text. In the 1837 edition the publisher's introduction even admits the following.

> The author [i. e. Mr. Fisher] states, in private communication, that many of the anecdotes in the book illustrative of Southern society, were not obtained from Ball, but from other and creditable sources; he avers, however, that all the facts which relate personally to the fugitive, were received from his own lips. (qtd. in Taylor 262)

In the critical discourse on slave narratives, content and expression have been regarded as separate entities for most of the time; between the publication of Ball's narrative and Eakin's and Logsdon's comment lie more than 130 years. But given the emphasis that has been put on authenticity, it is peculiar that the questions where exactly fictionalization begins, and what linguistic expression means for the construction of the narrators' discoursal selves, have never been sufficiently considered in the history of the slave narrative. The apparent equation of content with historical truth may be explained with a naïve belief in the transparency of linguistic signifiers. This underlying paradigm apparently did not change significantly although, within the development of the discourse of abolitionism, the concept of authenticity stretched. In the late 1830s, when Charles Ball's narrative was originally published, it was attacked for being fictitious. And yet, it was an instant success and, unlike James Williams' *Narrative*, not withdrawn from the market.[32] In fact, according to Andrews, it "established important precedents for the slave narrative tradition" (1986: 82). Its lack of expressives, a "kind of speech act designed to express one's psychological state" (Andrews 1986: 85), is echoed, and thus intertextually present, in Roper's and Grandy's narratives. For a later text, such as Jacobs', the integration of expressives no longer hampered a narrative's authenticity in the eyes of the readership.

The preoccupation of abolitionists, anti-abolitionists, historicists and literary critics with authenticity rests on the binary distinction between true and false and the belief that all texts could eventually classified within one of these two categories. With the addition of a number of preliminary conditions, such as authenticating documents, signs that express the slave's material doings were originally accepted as authentic whereas those pertaining to emotions and the psyche were not. Generally, it was assumed that a completely truthful

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[32] Cf. also Chapter 4 in Starling, particularly from p. 226 onwards about the "trustworthiness of the narrative" and the discussions around Ball's and Williams' narratives and the *Memoirs of Archy Moore* (1836)

linguistic reflection of the real world was indeed possible.[33] As soon as the linguistic expression became too extravagant in the eyes of the critics, however, authenticity was no longer taken for granted. This became initially problematic for those who began to express the slave experience not from a submissive perspective but with a self-confident voice. They represented a challenge. Douglass, for instance, was criticized by even well-meaning critics like Ephraim Peabody for his way of expression.

> But while our sympathies go strongly with him, and because they go with him, we are disposed to make a criticism on a mode of address in which he sometimes indulges himself, which we believe is likely to diminish, not only his usefulness, but his real influence. [. . .] When men are profoundly in earnest, they are not apt to be extravagant. The more earnest the more rigidly true. (*The Christian Examiner* 47 (July 1849): 61-93; qtd. in Andrews, W., ed. 1991: 26f)

Yet Douglass' *Narrative* was eventually accepted as true so that the text was able to stretch the boundaries of what was considered authentic for the genre. Not least through its potential for reassigning meanings it became what Andrews called "the great enabling text" (1986: 138). The progression from the effaced or more restrained expression of the self towards the admission of ever increasing transgressions signified a widening of the discourse around slavery. While earlier narrators such as Roper and Grandy were tied to their mimetic mode in order to be accepted as telling the truth, later ones did not only choose topics that had previously been taboo but were also able to choose ways of linguistic expression that had not been available within the discourse before. Douglass is not only able to present his fight with Covey, he is also able to reassign to the event significance as a triumph in a battle with a white man and thus as a turning point in his life. Jacobs' manner of presentation enables her to appeal to her readers' emotions in order to present her fate as typical and to retain her dignity and individuality at the same time. The fact that both of these narratives were initially dismissed by anti-abolitionists as "not true" or at least not written by the ex-slaves themselves (cf. McFeely 117) illustrates that the texts were originally placed at the margins of the discourses around slavery. They were too different, also in their linguistic self-confidence, to be accepted as productions of a runaway slave and thus as "true" without being challenged.

We have addressed two layers of problems here that are related to each other via the same underlying ontological principle. Like black and white, slave and free, North and South, both the priority of content over expression as well as the dichotomy between authentic and fictional rest on binary distinctions. Yet, if we accept, as has been done in the present study, that linguistic expression is not separate and separable from content but constitutive of it and if we also accept that there are usually several valid, but not synonymous ways to express content, the question whether the linguistic expression of some activity or event is authentic or not can no longer be asked in this absolute way. Truth and reality, to speak in the terms of Hodge and Kress, become "categories, from a semiotic point of view, which mark agreement over or challenge to the temporary state of the semiotic system" (122). It follows that texts can no longer be classified in such a hard and fast way as true or not because the dichotomy does not apply in this absolute sense any more. Truth is relative to (in a dialectic relationship with) the contemporary sociohistorical context.

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[33] Cf. also Andrews' discussion of the "direction of fit" between signs and signifieds (1986: 82ff).

What remains is the text itself and its characteristics, which are open to examination. Like other kinds of writing, autobiographical texts are subject to processes of selecting, ordering and expressing the material. All of these processes are meaningful and contribute to the way the narrators' discoursal selves are presented. So far, however, scholarly interest in the pre-war slave narrative has for the most part been restricted to historical and literary disciplines and to the question of *what* is presented, while the *how* has been neglected, with the few exceptions noted in Chapter 3.1. In order to overcome the difficulties associated with the dichotomies of form vs. content and truth vs. falsehood, a reversal of the priorities needs to take place. Instead of emphasizing the supposedly verifiable content, the semiotic system itself, the language as used in a given text must be examined. In order to understand the processes of making meaning, in the study of the slave narrative the priority of content over a semiotic perspective on linguistic expression cannot be maintained. In a disciplinary context it is curious that the African American slave narrative, despite (or because of) its political background, has so far been exempt from systematic critical linguistic study.

In the present study this prioritizing of language has been realized (occasionally excessively so) in order to be able to appreciate the full meaning-making potential of slave narratives beyond the simplistic label "artless tale." And yet, this dissertation cannot claim to be more than one of the first steps in this field of study. More areas of research may open up from here. More individual narratives need to be analyzed for their linguistic potential and the meanings the language provides for the construction of the respective narrators' selves. Also, a number of comparative approaches on both the synchronic as well as the diachronic dimensions are possible. The diachronic dimension may not only yield insights about the development of the genre as a whole, it could also provide fresh results, for instance, for a comparison of Douglass' various ways of linguistically constructing alternative pasts. More linguistic research is also needed in the area of gender studies. Are there specific male or female styles of autobiographical expression? Furthermore, linguistic characteristics of pre- and postwar narratives may be compared as to how the emphasis on economic achievement is reflected in the language, for instance in Elizabeth Keckley's *Behind the Scenes*. An additional possible area concerns those narratives that were withdrawn from the market due to their allegedly questionable origins such as James Williams' *Narrative* and the *Memoirs of Archy Moore*. As the analysis of Louisa Picquet's story has shown, much more research may also be necessary to isolate and understand traces of oral as well as dialectal features in narratives.

Further studies in the vein of critical discourse analysis may also take into account more than only the ideational metafunction. The interpersonal as well as the textual dimensions are likely to provide insights into the construction of the relationship between narrator and reader as well as the construction of the text and the way readers are guided through it. However, as this present investigation has shown, a rigid application of the framework suggested by Fairclough yields an extremely unwieldy amount of quantitative data. Despite its length even this dissertation could only handle a relatively small selection of characteristics quantitatively; none of the texts could be covered in its entire linguistic complexity, nor was it possible to take into account the complete bandwidth of extratextual, sociohistorical context.

This problem is more than a methodological issue; it is also theoretical. Fairclough's concept of CDA recommends systemic functional grammar as a powerful analytical method, yet CDA cannot explain which level of sophistication in the linguistic analysis is

necessary in order to grasp the ideological dimensions of a given text as fully as possible. This problem carries over to the method of analysis itself. Transitivity may serve as an example. CDA emphasizes the importance of an analysis of the transitivity structure of a text (Fairclough 1992: 177ff). However, at which level of delicacy the analysis can be considered "complete" is difficult to determine. Whether it is sufficient to work with the three primary types, material, mental, and relational, whether six types are sufficient, or whether it is necessary even to distinguish between perceptive, emotive, and desiderative mental verbs, as has been done here, is largely due to the intuition of the researcher and less to unified theoretical considerations. This criticism is not new. In fact, CDA and related concepts have repeatedly been criticized for being "unprincipled and inconsequential" (Widdowson 1998: 149) and "resolutely uncritical of its own discursive practices" (150), that is, its own alleged theoretical shortcomings. Hammersley, too, criticizes CDA for its lack of unified theoretical underpinnings that could explain and tighten the methodology. He concludes that CDA's aims are eventually too ambitious, so that too many methodological problems of the kind described above arise (244f).

This may indeed appear as a theoretical weakness of CDA. However, as Flowerdew claims in a recent paper, this may also be seen as one of the advantages because the concept is friendly to revisions and linguistic ambiguity. According to Flowerdew, CDA does not deal with facts, it is reflexive, open to multiple readings, aims to be plausible, and eventually "subject to the same limitations of linguistic communication as any other discipline" (1999: 1090). This means that CDA "accepts indeterminacy in linguistic message production and reception" (1091) and aims to take it into account in textual analysis and interpretation. It should be added here that CDA, as a method combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, must be prepared to reveal the criteria according to which a given analysis and interpretation of a text is carried out (cf. Edge and Richards 1998). As a result, the collection of data and the conclusions drawn remain transparent, verifiable and open to discussion. In the present study I hope to have achieved this goal, first by providing a sound empirical basis for my analyses and then by introducing a plethora of examples from the texts. Contrary to Tyrwhitt-Drake's claim that in CDA some authors work backwards from preconceived ideas and dogmas (1083), in this present study the conclusions were developed from the combination of observable quantitative data and qualitative analyses. This method is initially cumbersome because not all of the data collected prove to be useful in the analysis; however, if such claims about CDA as made by Tyrwhitt-Drake or Widdowson are to be refuted, especially for enquiries across larger corpora, there is no other way to conduct this kind of research than an initial rigid empirical collection of data.

While the debate around methodology and theory, or the lack thereof, would require – and deserve – at least one book of its own, the question whether the results justify the immense means should be the final issue here. Almost twenty years after Andrews pointed out the usefulness of a linguistic approach to the slave narrative (1986: 25), still not many scholars have worked in this field. Particularly critical discourse analysis, while recognized in Europe and Australia, has yet to gain acceptance among North American scholars and fields of research. In view of the fact that this dissertation is the first of its kind, I would like to argue that on a macro level, despite potential theoretical and methodological shortcomings, it provides a basis for future research in this area, which may help understand the meaning of the slave narrative for American literature and African American history better. After all, in light of the near absence of slave revolts in the United States, the slave nar-

rative and therefore the use of language must be considered as *the* empowering device for African Americans. Here, the dissertation has been able to show that the language of the slave narrative is far from simple, boring, or representational, and therefore worthy as an object of study in its own right. As suggested above, however, a lot more work needs to be done. On a micro level, it has been possible to demonstrate the individuality of each text, in how far different linguistic devices are used to achieve effects and what these effects are. As a result it was possible to characterize the individual discoursal selves that were created through the language, trace a diachronic development in the genre, and align the quantitative results with other linguistic areas, which might prove useful for further studies that aim to examine additional details of the narratives' production and the involvement of the texts' editors. But, as already mentioned, these were only a few initial steps, which, however, may serve as a motivation for future research. William Andrews' words still hold true today:

> I see no reason not to affirm my conviction that freedom is not just the theme but the sign of Afro-American autobiography. To realize this is to open one's eyes to the formal, stylistic, and rhetorical richness of black narrative tradition. (1990: 89)

Appendix 1: Quantitative results

Table A.1.1 (4.13): Absolute observed frequencies of process types without passive voice and direct speech

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal	sum
Roper	21	270	128	147	66	632
Grandy	17	124	73	65	35	314
Douglass	40	342	300	187	59	928
Brown	33	203	182	140	54	612
Bibb	38	577	394	259	111	1379
Northup	67	393	309	297	96	1162
Ball	166	963	756	460	118	2463
Jacobs	159	587	673	442	279	2140
Picquet	19	120	128	99	59	425
all	560	3579	2943	2096	877	10055

Table A.1.2 (4.14): Proportional distribution of process types (in percent)

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal
Roper	3.32	42.72	20.25	23.26	10.44
Grandy	5.41	39.49	23.25	20.70	11.15
Douglass	4.31	36.85	32.33	20.15	6.36
Brown	5.39	33.17	29.74	22.88	8.82
Bibb	2.76	41.84	28.57	18.78	8.05
Northup	5.77	33.82	26.59	25.56	8.26
Ball	6.74	39.10	30.69	18.68	4.79
Jacobs	7.43	27.43	31.45	20.65	13.04
Picquet	4.47	28.24	30.12	23.29	13.88
all	5.57	35.59	29.27	20.85	8.72

Table A.1.3 (4.15): Relative frequencies of process types (without passive voice)

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal	sum (=rf$_I$)
Roper	1.227	15.779	7.481	8.591	3.857	36.935
Grandy	1.298	9.467	5.573	4.963	2.672	23.973
Douglass	1.103	9.426	8.269	5.154	1.626	25.578
Brown	1.441	8.865	7.948	6.114	1.441	25.808
Bibb	0.789	11.974	8.176	5.375	2.304	28.618
Northup	0.862	5.055	3.975	3.820	1.235	14.946
Ball	1.571	9.114	7.155	4.353	1.117	23.310
Jacobs	1.951	7.203	8.258	5.424	3.424	26.259
Picquet	2.064	13.036	13.905	10.755	6.410	46.171
average	1.360	8.694	7.149	5.091	2.130	24.424

Table A.1.4: Lexical density

	words	observed frequencies of 100 most frequent function words	quotient of function words / words
Roper	17111	10147	0.5930
Grandy	13098	7407	0.5655
Douglass	36281	19804	0.5459
Brown	22900	13009	0.5681
Bibb	48187	27574	0.5722
Northup	77744	40100	0.5158
Ball	105665	60924	0.5766
Jacobs	81495	45555	0.5590
Picquet	9205	5798	0.6299
all	411686	230318	0.5595

Table A.1.5 Relative frequencies of linking devices

	Roper	Grandy	Douglass	Brown	Bibb	Northup	Ball	Jacobs	Picquet	all
words	17111	13098	36281	22900	48187	77744	105665	81495	9205	411686
and	33.078	31.761	34.040	33.624	33.453	32.568	36.247	30.861	40.521	33.640
but	6.370	4.581	5.016	6.463	7.409	2.971	5.868	5.387	7.279	5.375
or	2.279	4.657	3.032	3.581	4.462	4.103	3.492	2.037	2.716	3.367
sum	41.728	40.999	42.088	43.668	45.323	39.643	45.606	38.285	50.516	42.382
after	4.734	2.519	1.929	3.537	3.694	1.505	3.000	1.338	2.499	2.451
although	0.175	0.229	0.000	0.131	0.187	0.090	0.274	0.049	0.000	0.141
as soon as	0.468	0.305	0.110	1.266	0.125	0.154	0.312	0.294	0.217	0.296
because	0.175	0.382	0.469	0.306	0.374	0.180	0.237	0.258	1.521	0.301
before	2.922	1.756	1.516	1.790	2.262	1.801	2.423	1.338	1.630	1.938
if	2.571	2.978	2.177	1.572	3.901	2.071	1.921	2.798	7.061	2.533
once	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
since	0.292	0.153	0.248	0.655	0.104	0.309	0.379	0.307	0.435	0.313
so that	0.058	0.382	0.331	0.175	0.187	0.141	0.085	0.049	0.435	0.143
though	0.409	0.153	0.524	1.092	0.083	0.296	0.521	0.614	1.630	0.486
till	1.227	1.145	0.413	0.044	0.042	0.090	0.009	0.994	0.978	0.369
unless	0.000	0.000	0.193	0.000	0.021	0.090	0.123	0.135	0.109	0.097
until	0.409	0.382	0.276	1.354	1.494	1.145	1.902	0.196	0.000	1.047
when	3.974	5.573	3.059	3.493	2.905	2.804	3.899	4.037	5.323	3.595
whenever	0.058	0.229	0.055	0.044	0.042	0.077	0.038	0.135	0.435	0.083
whereas	0.000	0.000	0.028	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002
whereupon	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.000	0.039	0.009	0.025	0.000	0.017
wherever	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.062	0.064	0.038	0.074	0.000	0.044
while	1.286	0.993	1.213	2.009	1.951	1.158	0.142	0.883	0.869	0.981
whilst	0.234	0.000	0.221	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.558	0.000	0.000	0.172
sum	18.994	17.178	12.762	17.511	17.432	12.014	15.871	13.522	23.140	15.011
then	3.682	1.985	1.351	1.135	2.470	1.325	1.552	0.749	14.883	1.817
yet	0.117	0.229	0.634	0.437	0.664	0.566	0.596	0.442	0.326	0.525
as	6.487	6.413	8.351	7.074	5.956	8.091	9.341	5.338	3.476	7.360

Table A.1.6: Finite and nonfinite clauses

	length of excerpt (words)	% of narrative	sentences	words per sentence	clauses	clauses per sentence	finite clauses	percentage of finite clauses	percentage of nonfinite clauses
Roper	558	3.26	15	37.20	74	4.93	61	82.43	17.57
Grandy	678	5.18	29	23.38	91	3.14	84	92.31	7.69
Douglass	655	1.81	31	21.13	81	2.61	65	80.25	19.75
Brown	901	3.93	37	24.35	129	3.49	98	75.97	24.03
Bibb	1010	2.10	44	22.95	127	2.89	100	78.74	21.26
Northup	1252	1.61	63	19.87	164	2.60	125	76.22	23.78
Ball	2464	2.33	67	36.78	278	4.15	239	85.97	14.03
Jacobs	1498	1.84	79	18.96	229	2.90	191	83.41	16.59
Picquet	406	4.41	20	20.30	65	3.25	60	92.31	7.69
all	9422	2.29	385	24.47	1238	3.22	1026	82.63	17.37

Table A.1.7: Relative frequencies of interrogative and relative pronouns

	which	*who*	*whose*	*whom*	*where*	*when*	*sum*
Roper	8.474	3.799	0.175	1.227	2.864	3.974	20.513
Grandy	3.741	4.275	0.076	0.763	1.374	5.573	15.804
Douglass	4.245	2.040	0.331	0.524	0.910	3.059	11.108
Brown	3.275	4.410	0.306	0.524	1.747	3.493	13.755
Bibb	5.354	3.300	0.374	0.809	2.490	2.905	15.232
Northup	2.958	1.814	0.437	0.450	1.158	2.804	9.621
Ball	7.126	3.634	0.521	0.909	1.779	3.899	17.868
Jacobs	1.301	2.945	0.245	0.454	1.509	4.037	10.491
Picquet	0.217	0.978	0.000	0.000	2.064	5.323	8.582
all	4.304	2.985	0.364	0.653	1.652	3.595	13.554

Table A.1.8. Relative frequencies of selected lexical items

	pay	*dollars*	*price*	*sell*	*profit/able*
Roper	0,351	0,058	0,000	1,695	0,117
Grandy	1,069	3,436	0,076	3,665	0,305
Douglass	0,441	0,331	0,055	0,469	0,028
Brown	0,480	0,742	0,830	1,878	0,044
Bibb	0,975	0,623	0,104	1,764	0,000
Northup	0,232	0,270	0,141	0,360	0,103
Ball	0,322	0,426	0,284	0,483	0,019
Jacobs	0,601	0,405	0,196	1,055	0,025
Picquet	0,326	0,543	0,109	2,825	0,000
average	0,481	0,508	0,206	1,003	0,049

Table A.1.9: Relational processes and pseudo-passives

	rel. processes (*Of*)	*I was* (in percent of *Of*)	pseudo-passives (in percent of *Of*)	relative frequency of pseudo-passives
Roper	147	57,82	14,29	1,227
Grandy	66	48,48	10,61	0,534
Douglass	187	38,50	13,37	0,689
Brown	140	41,43	15,71	0,961
Bibb	258	46,51	15,50	0,830
Northup	297	55,22	22,90	0,875
Ball	461	45,55	14,32	0,625
Jacobs	441	45,80	7,71	0,417
Picquet	99	46,46	4,04	0,435
sum	2096	47,19	13,69	0,697

Table A.1.10: Relative frequencies of explicitly expressed probability

	(i) objective forms of probability			(ii) subjective forms of probability					share of subj. forms of the total occurrences of the *I*-pronoun (in %)
	probably	certainly	sum	I think	I believe	I know	I'm sure/certain	sum	
Roper	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.117	0.117	0.000	0.058	0.292	0.79
Grandy	0.000	0.153	0.153	0.000	0.305	0.229	0.000	0.534	2.23
Douglass	0.193	0.028	0.221	0.138	0.138	0.165	0.000	0.441	1.72
Brown	0.044	0.044	0.087	0.044	0.131	0.175	0.087	0.437	1.63
Bibb	0.000	0.062	0.062	0.166	0.062	0.187	0.000	0.415	1.45
Northup	0.103	0.129	0.232	0.116	0.013	0.180	0.026	0.334	2.24
Ball	0.057	0.132	0.189	0.104	0.246	0.047	0.009	0.407	1.75
Jacobs	0.086	0.074	0.160	0.074	0.061	0.184	0.025	0.344	1.31
Picquet	0.435	0.217	0.652	0.652	0.326	0.760	0.000	1.738	3.76
all	0.080	0.095	0.175	0.117	0.126	0.153	0.019	0.415	1.70

Table A.1.11: Negated process types in percent of the total of each individual process type

	behavioural	material	mental	relational	verbal	sum
Roper	4.76	5.19	14.06	9.52	13.64	8.86
Grandy	5.88	4.03	24.66	13.85		10.51
Douglass		8.19	16.00	10.16	5.08	10.56
Brown		8.37	15.38	9.29	12.96	10.62
Bibb	5.26	7.11	11.17	14.67	7.21	9.64
Northup	10.45	5.85	15.53	9.09	8.33	9.72
Ball	7.23	5.30	14.02	11.74	5.93	9.34
Jacobs	5.66	8.69	10.70	13.57	6.45	9.81
Picquet	15.79	19.17	17.19	11.11	6.78	14.82
all	6.25	7.07	13.73	11.69	7.30	9.96

Table A.1.12: Negated process types in percent of the total of each individual process type (split according to negation of verbal group or nominal group)

negated element	behavioural		material		mental		relational		verbal		sum		sum of all nega-tions
	verbal group	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	
Roper	0.00	4.76	3.70	1.48	14.06	0.00	6.80	1.36	12.12	0.00	7.28	1.11	8.86
Grandy	0.00	5.88	4.03	0.00	20.55	2.74	9.23	3.08	0.00	0.00	8.28	1.59	10.51
Douglass	0.00	0.00	4.39	3.22	13.33	2.33	5.35	4.81	5.08	0.00	7.33	2.91	10.56
Brown	0.00	0.00	8.37	0.00	14.29	1.10	5.71	3.57	12.96	0.00	9.48	1.14	10.62
Bibb	2.63	0.00	6.41	0.87	6.60	3.55	6.95	6.95	8.11	0.00	6.60	2.68	9.64
Northup	10.45	0.00	4.33	1.02	14.56	0.97	6.40	2.36	8.33	0.00	8.26	1.20	9.81
Ball	5.42	0.00	4.36	0.62	11.77	1.72	4.78	6.74	5.08	0.00	6.82	2.03	9.34
Jacobs	6.29	0.00	8.01	0.68	10.10	0.45	6.79	5.88	6.81	0.00	8.13	1.54	9.81
Picquet	15.79	0.00	19.17	0.00	16.41	0.00	5.05	5.05	6.78	0.00	13.18	1.18	14.59
all	5.36	0.36	5.95	0.95	11.82	1.50	6.11	5.01	7.30	0.00	7.79	1.84	9.96

Table A.1.13: Proportion of nominalizations without –nce in percent

		-(t)ion	-ment	-ness	-ity
Roper	17111	50.41	24.79	13.22	11.57
Grandy	13098	36.07	40.98	9.84	13.11
Douglass	36281	47.06	18.28	16.39	18.28
Brown	22900	56.91	24.39	7.32	11.38
Bibb	48187	57.64	20.37	8.10	13.89
Northup	77744	52.17	16.80	12.57	18.46
Ball	105665	50.61	19.63	10.37	19.39
Jacobs	81495	45.77	21.60	17.67	14.95
Picquet	9205	52.63	21.05	10.53	15.79
all	411686	50.46	19.90	12.76	16.88

Table A.1.14: Proportion of nominalizations formed with -ment, -ion, -ness, and -ity in different registers (Biber et al. 63)

	-(t)ion	-ment	-ness	-ity
Academic prose	68%	15%	2%	15%
Fiction	51%	21%	13%	15%
Speech	56%	24%	5%	15%

Appendix 2: Statistical methods

Three different hypotheses were tested as to how likely the observed distribution of process types in the individual narratives is not just coincidental within an expected range of results. The procedure for comparing the observed frequencies (*Of*) with a hypothetical result is the following. From the entire corpus an average distribution of process types can be computed, which in turn can be related back to the individual texts. If all narratives were alike in terms of their distribution of process types, the sum and therefore the average would have been the same. But as there is deviation to both sides, it is necessary to estimate how likely it is correct to assume that the deviations and thus the observed frequencies are not just coincidental. The basis for the procedure is a null-hypothesis (H_o). H_o in this case is the assumption that all narratives of the corpus behave in the same way, that is, their distribution of process types should be the same. Chi-square (χ^2) testing enables us to estimate how likely it is that we are correct when we reject H_o with the given observed frequency counts. Chi-square is arrived at in the following way. The frequencies must go into the calculation as raw data, that is absolute observed frequencies, not as relations or ratios. The difference between observed (*Of*) and expected frequency (*Ef*) is squared and divided by *Ef*. The sum of the results for the individual process types represents the chi-square value for the particular text. It is captured in the following formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(Of - Ef)^2}{Ef}$$

Five independent variables (process types) yield four degrees of freedom (*df*). The number of *dfs* determines the critical value for chi-square, that is, the value chi-square has to reach or exceed, so that H_o can be rejected with the highest possible likelihood.

There are five different process types that were observed. These process types form a logically related group, but the individual incidents are independent of each other and mutually exclusive. That is, one incident cannot simultaneously appear in two categories; either a process is mental or relational, it can never be both. If we hypothesize that all five process types can be expected to appear with equal frequency (H_{o1}), each column in Table A.1.2 (4.14) should contain 20 percent. A chi-square test for this hypothesis shows that the actual results measured against the expected outcome are extremely unlikely to be coincidental. The chi-square values for all narratives exceed 100, while the critical value for rejecting H_{o1} at a probability level of 0.001 lies at 18.467. This means that there is a likelihood of more than 99.9% in being correct when H_{o1} is rejected.

And yet, as in no narrative the process types come close to be evenly distributed, the hypothesis is indeed very unlikely to start with; therefore neither the individual *Efs* nor the χ^2- values have been presented here. As there exists no independent universally valid norm that might lead to a more useful hypothesis for the present corpus, there are two possibilities to arrive at one. For both, the nine slave narratives that have been reviewed in full constitute the corpus. The first norm is found in the following way. The individual sums of the *Ofs* in the corpus found in the last row in Table A.1.1 (4.13) were converted to percentages for each process type (bottom row in Table A.1.2 [4.14]). In this calculation the individual texts contribute unevenly to the corpus; that is, Ball's text constitutes almost one quarter of the corpus while Picquet's amounts to less than 5%. These average values were taken as the norm within the corpus and used as theoretically expected relative frequencies. These

relative frequencies were converted to the theoretical absolute expected frequencies (*Ef*) displayed in Table A.2.1. These *Efs* represent H_{o2}. The expected individual frequencies for a particular narrator and a particular process type (*Ef*$_{np}$) have been arrived at by multiplying Σ_n and Σ_p and dividing the result by N, that is, the number of all incidents.[34]

$$Ef_{np} = \frac{\Sigma_n \times \Sigma_p}{N}$$

Table A.2.1: Absolute expected theoretical frequencies of process types (uneven text weight)

	b	mat	men	rel	v
Roper	35.2	225.0	185.0	131.7	55.1
Grandy	17.5	111.8	91.9	65.5	27.4
Douglass	51.8	330.3	271.6	193.4	80.9
Brown	34.1	217.8	179.1	127.6	53.4
Bibb	76.8	490.8	403.6	287.5	120.3
Northup	64.7	413.6	340.1	242.2	101.4
Ball	137.1	876.7	720.9	513.4	214.8
Jacobs	119.2	761.7	626.4	446.1	186.7
Picquet	23.7	151.3	124.4	88.6	37.1

In order to test H_{o2} the above the *Efs* have been used to compute chi-square values for each individual process type (Table A.2.2).

Table A.2.2: Chi-square values for the individual narratives (uneven text weight)

	$(Of-Ef)^2/Ef$					
	b	mat	men	rel	v	χ^2
Roper	5.727	9.020	17.552	1.767	2.146	36.212
Grandy	0.014	1.339	3.889	0.003	2.116	7.361
Douglass	2.641	0.413	2.966	0.215	5.947	12.183
Brown	0.035	1.011	0.046	1.210	0.007	2.309
Bibb	19.603	15.122	0.229	2.817	0.716	38.488
Northup	0.081	1.026	2.845	12.387	0.282	16.622
Ball	6.058	8.498	1.709	5.558	43.640	65.463
Jacobs	13.301	40.075	3.473	0.038	45.691	102.578
Picquet	0.921	6.466	0.105	1.223	12.976	21.690

The resulting chi-square values derived from this procedure are significantly lower than those computed with the assumption that all process types must be evenly distributed, yet they are still, in most cases, unlikely to be purely coincidental. In order to reject H_{o2} the chi-square value (right column in Table A.2.2) must be equal to or greater than 9.488, if we base this on a probability level of 0.05, which is usually accepted in applied linguistics as sufficient (Hatch and Lazaraton 229). This means, wherever the chi-square value equals or

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[34] Lowercase *n* and *p* stand for *narrator* and *process type* respectively here.

exceeds the critical value of 9.488, there is a probability of 95% that it is correct to reject the null-hypothesis, or that the distribution of observed frequencies differs *significantly* from the mean. Grandy's as well as Brown's texts fall short of this margin; the distribution of process types in their texts is more likely to fall within the range of coincidence than that of the others. But, in Brown's case, this supports the feeling noted earlier that the text in fact embodies the quantitative average. Where χ^2 exceeds 13.277, the probability even rises to 99%. Douglass' *Narrative* is the only critical case that lies between the two margins.

It may be argued, as Hatch and Lazaraton do, that the chi-square test does not work properly in cases where one text contributes more than its "rightful share" to the entire corpus (ibid.). In order to rectify this problem a second norm was tested. Mean percentages were calculated directly from the percentages given in Table A.1.2, so that each narrative contributes exactly one ninth to the respective percentage of the individual process types. Here, it is no longer the case that the weight of Jacobs' text is almost seven times that of Grandy's, as it was before. From these mean percentages new *Efs* and χ^2-values for the individual narratives have been computed (Table A.2.3).

Table A.2.3: Chi-Square values for individual process narratives (even text weight)

| | $(Of-Ef)^2/Ef$ | | | | | |
	b	mat	men	rel	v	χ^2
Roper	3.794	8.320	13.879	0.857	0.700	27.551
Grandy	0.075	1.160	2.640	0.105	0.992	4.972
Douglass	1.048	0.260	5.872	0.843	9.245	17.268
Brown	0.128	1.227	0.577	0.499	0.232	2.664
Bibb	14.538	13.804	0.104	4.905	2.755	36.106
Northup	1.121	1.336	0.953	8.666	1.659	13.735
Ball	13.605	7.244	5.851	9.440	56.053	92.193
Jacobs	23.586	42.333	8.485	0.797	29.700	104.901
Picquet	0.298	6.876	0.609	0.600	8.977	17.360

The result, however, has no effect on the validity of the observations made before. As the raw data do not influence the degrees of freedom, the critical values remain constant. Grandy's and Brown's texts remain the only ones which do not reach the margin necessary to reject the null-hypothesis at a level of probability of 0.05.

A short comment on the use of quantitative methods is due. Calculations such as the ones presented are only tools to provide a first orientation and serve as a basis for further studies. Taken all by themselves they are too global. However, the aim of this particular study justifies the methods applied, especially the mixing of quantitative and qualitative methods. It is not an analysis of the characteristics of the slave narrative as a genre in its entirety or a comparison with other genres, for which it would have been necessary to choose different corpora with other text types. To my knowledge there exists no investigation into the distribution of the different process types in a large corpus of randomly chosen texts from various media, periods and genres or registers (cf. Matthiessen 1999: 12f). The design of such a corpus, if it aims to be representative, is a difficult task in itself. Yet, as Biber et al. point out, "[t]he appropriate design for a corpus . . . depends on what it is meant to represent. The representativeness of the corpus, in turn, determines the kinds of

research questions that can be addressed and the generalizability of the results of the research" (246). As the research questions here do not concern generalizability over an entire genre or a comparison of genres, it will not be necessary to conduct further research into and calculations for a possible control corpus taken from different texts. Neither will it be necessary to go beyond the statistical methods applied and described above.

Eventually, it is debatable whether the concept of statistical relevance is helpful in this context at all. First of all, to a large degree the results depend on the hypothesis chosen; that is, they depend on what is selected as expected frequency. This, in turn, depends on the corpus one chooses as the basis for the study and thus determines what one might expect as a norm. If we take only slave narratives as the corpus from which to derive the norm, as we have done in this particular case, the outcome is likely to be significantly different from a calculation with a mixture of texts from different genres and periods. Moreover, statistical relevance over a complete text, a corpus, or even an entire genre in no way reflects local distributions, which are frequently too small to be sampled sensibly in a quantitative way. Depending on their respective co- and context even single occurrences may be significant and must be analyzed in their individual environment.

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