



Accessing the Schema of your Students and the Subject Specialists (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences)

1. Philosophical and Conceptual Background



Wittgenstein: If a lion could speak, we could not understand him.

Nagel: What would be left of what it was like to be a bat if one removed the viewpoint of the bat?

2. The problem for ESAP teacher: lexis

- ❖ My experience: In-sessional law: needs analyses consistently show 'law **vocabulary**' one of top three needs of students.
- ❖ ESAP teacher should understand conceptual structure of subject (Dudley Evans, 1993); arguably there is need to teach 'carrier content' (see Hyland, 2002).
- ❖ Social Science lexis: Objects in our world have more fixedness or less fuzziness than **concepts** (Aitchison, 2010).

Reading

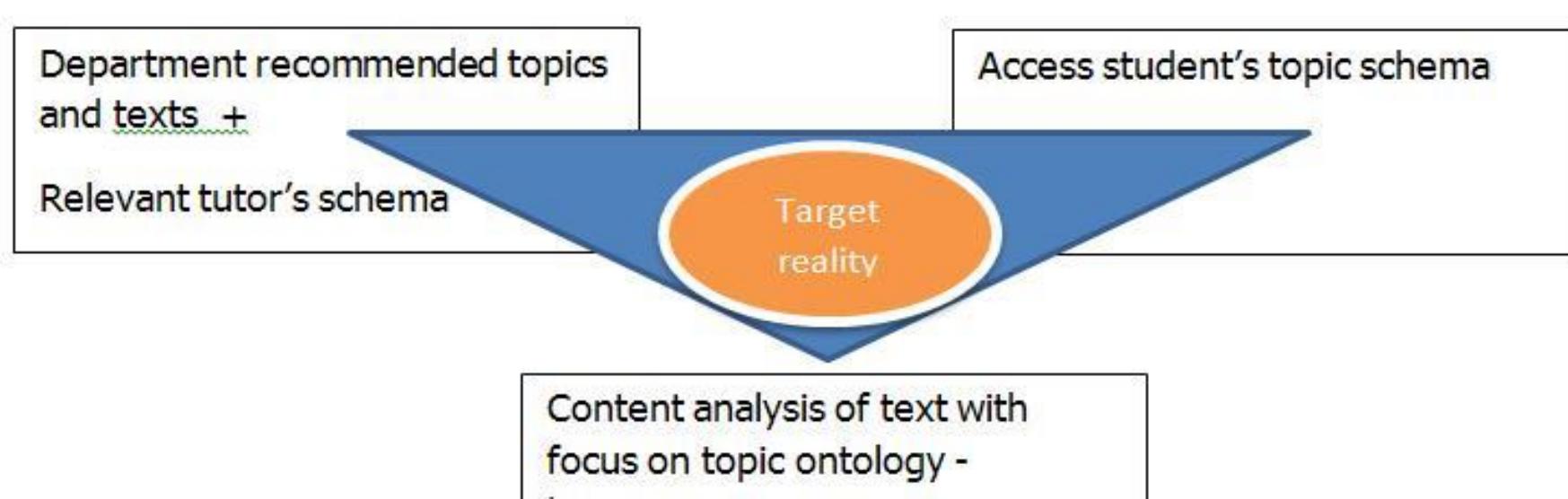
- ❖ We all teach students **formal schema**
- ❖ It is our responsibility to assist with **content schema**?
- ❖ Dictionaries are (ontologically) insufficient and are also a risk.

3. Aims

- ❖ Improve lexis development and reading comprehension by exploiting semantic fields (done by collaboration: **department - writer of the text (via reading strategies) – reader**)
- ❖ In other words, access what's in the head of the bat the lion the human – find a path between them.
- ❖ Challenge: schema conflict – the need to accommodate or assimilate, not reject, when there is mismatch

Activate schema x
Explicate schema ✓

4. Model of approach: collaborating on schema



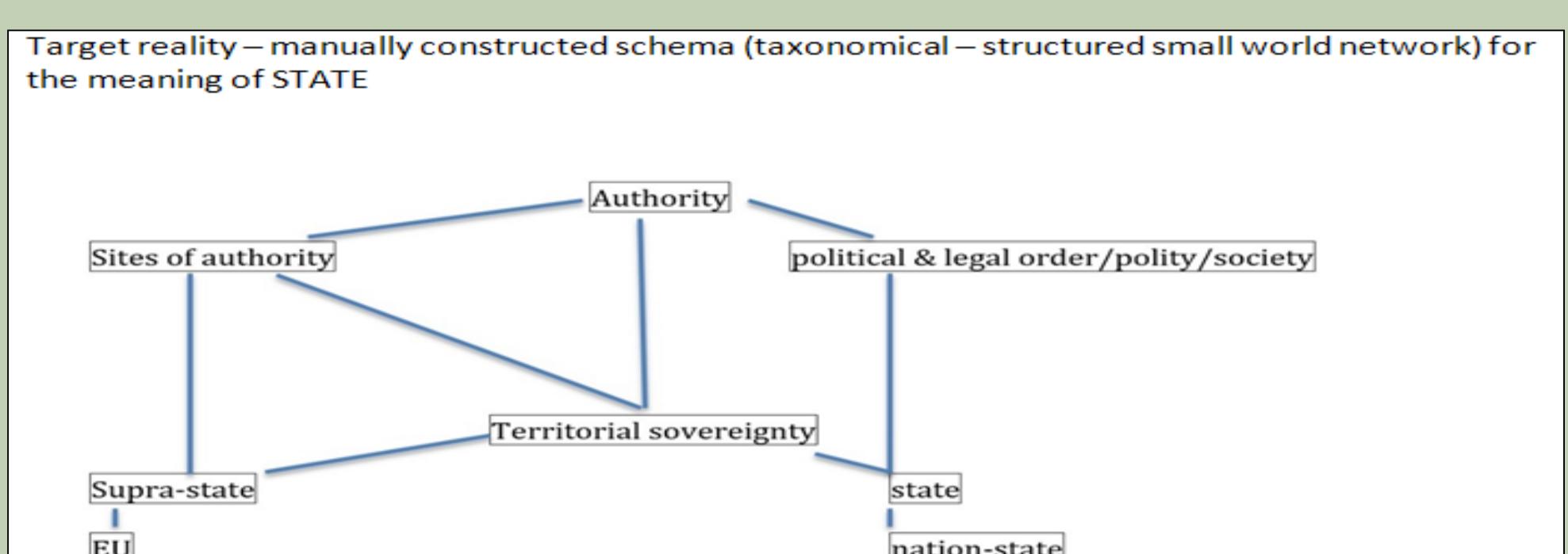
5. A worked example

Professor 1	Professor 2	Student A	Student B
Entities			
Territorial entities	Institution		
State	State	State	State
EU	Executive	Parliament/executive	nationality
UK		Party	Citizen
		Constituent/voter	

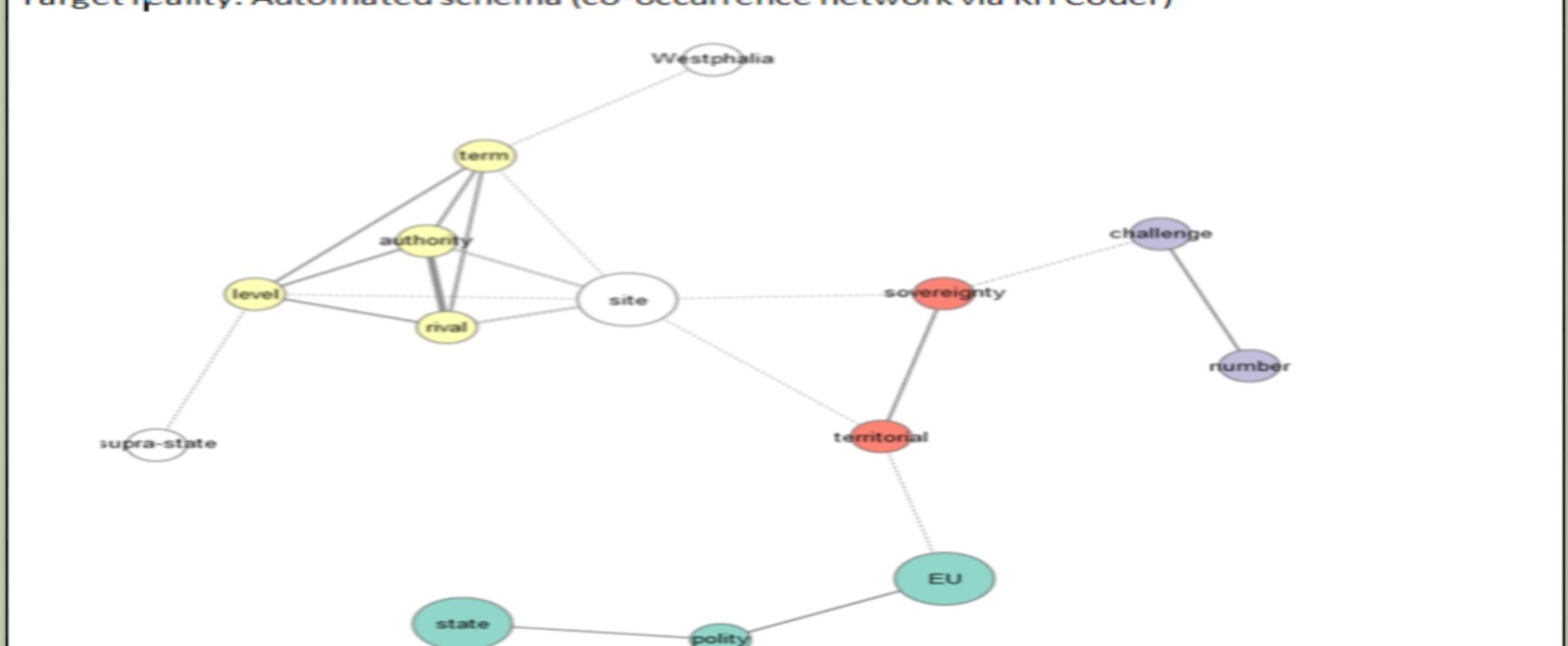
Text (International law/political science)

There are a number of contemporary **politicico-legal challenges** which presently exert themselves upon **States**, and which together call into question the very viability of the **nation-State**, at least in so far as the **State** is conceptualized to represent a **Westphalian model of absolute sovereignty**.¹² These 'challenges' are in fact rival **sites of authority** which in our time contest constructions of the nation-State as the pre-eminent, or according to certain positivists, the exclusive, **site of territorial sovereignty**; and which, in doing so, also offer alternative reference points for both the identity and the loyalty of the **citizen**. These rival sites of authority can be categorized in terms of **levels**, of which, a number of commentators agree, there are three. First, and in Europe at least the most topical, is the emergence of **supra-state political and legal orders**—most prominently the **European Union**. Although operating at the supra-state level, entities such as the EU remain territorial in their remit. For example, the EU has been described as a 'post-**State**' polity in that it operates above the **State** but remains a fully territory-based polity.¹³ Certainly the EU is unique in terms of the sophistication of its institutional infrastructure, and other entities such as the North American Free Trade Agreement could certainly not be described as 'post-State'; however, even in the context of NAFTA, certain comparable issues concerning the transference of **State** sovereignty have arisen.

Reframing Sovereignty? Sub-State National Societies and Contemporary Challenges to the Nation-State S. Tierney *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*



Target reality: Automated schema (co-occurrence network via KH Coder)



Conclusion

Departments provide texts, teachers analyse texts; students produce network of relationships from head or dictionary; teachers assess suitability of text (do NOT rely on department) or design support needed for comprehension. Support options: change text ; scaffold key terms.

Problems and further work: Weaknesses in measures of semantic relatedness; improving access to suitable small world networks