A Pragmatic Reconstruction of M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar

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In memory

of

James Bradley

(1947 - 2012)

Declaration

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and that it has been written by myself alone. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research and the preparation of this thesis has been appropriately acknowledged. I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signed: 21 October 2019

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Acknowledgments

Abstract

M.A.K. Halliday's metafunctional functionalism, which forms the basis for the semantics of his grammar, is based upon a revision of Bühler's triadic functions of language. However, the more philosophical, classical American branch of the pragmatic tradition developed a likewise triadic understanding of experience, which also differs from Bühler's. Whitehead's pragmatic metaphysics provides the most comprehensive example of such a non-reductive philosophical system, crowned by an aesthetically-based general theory of value.

These different functional trajectories suggest the possibility of reconstructing Halliday's central functional notions, including his three metafunctions and subject notions (Theme, Subject and Actor), thereby radicalizing existing critiques advanced by McGregor, Martin, Bateman and others. On this view, the organic unity of language is based upon its expressive compositionality, grounded in the compositionality of value rather than independent metafunctions. An emphasis on action, motivated by the expression and realization of value, means that the underlying conceptions of language also differ. Although Halliday's grammar is amongst the more comprehensive, functional linguistic theories, his functionalism is based upon the system network formalism. On this pragmatic view, the contents conveyed by a grammar are not abstract, general categories as Halliday holds, but rather valuations intrinsic to the organization of language itself. These function to organize the now grammatically central activity of reference, understood not representationally, as language transcendent, but immanently. The content of the grammar, now understood as composed of indexicals or shifters, generalized beyond words to all forms of grammatical expression, is, then, essentially reflexive, relative and variable. Indeed, not just Halliday's textual metafunction, but the whole of the grammar provides language users with the means to jointly coordinate their linguistic activities by varying the valuations that form the organizational basis for their discourse.

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Pragmatics has long been taken to be a fragmented and peripheral, wastebasket sub-discipline within linguistics (Bar-Hillel 1971, Verschueren 1987). In this thesis, I want to argue that the greater unity claimed for grammars, whether formal or functional, is the product of their taking communication to be largely unproblematic. This means that such grammars, which dominate the field of linguistics, derive their unity from not confronting the fundamental problem that, I want to argue, grammars are supposed to address. This is the inherently reflexive task of organising communication itself, of coordinating linguistic activities. This is, I want to argue, an inherently situated and so pragmatic task, achieved through the communication of valuations which are essentially context dependent and so variable. However, the abstractness of the conceptions of grammar and of language in general which pervade linguistics has meant that functionalism, within linguistics, has taken an almost entirely structural functional form that is much weaker than this pragmatic view would suggest is required. It might be argued that functionalism within linguistics has amounted to an attempt to add a functional semantics to otherwise highly abstract grammars by endeavouring to clothe them in a layer of functional labels. Such accounts retain many essen-

tially formal assumptions and so cannot advance a truly pragmatic conception of grammar.

This type of criticism is, however, not entirely new; indeed it has a far longer history within the western philosophical tradition. The central philosophical criticisms of the broad outlines of the modern position have been known since at least the seventeenth century, when they were extensively discussed by the major early modern writers themselves. In particular, the modern period came to be known for its dualisms and attendant scepticism, giving rise to numerous sceptical problems, the problem of induction, the problem of other minds and so on.[1]

What this thesis aims to do is explore one possible, and admittedly rather ambitious, solution to this problem as it applies to linguistics in particular. It returns to the response that emerged within classical American philosophy to an underlying problem of unity. To this end, I want to argue that this problem of unity is deeper than the Western grammatical/linguistic tradition alone, having its origins in the metaphysics presupposed by this tradition, which has a largely philosophical origin.

So, in spite of pragmatics typically being characterised as fragmented and peripheral, the classical American philosophies that lie behind the emergence of philosophical pragmatism – and so behind the most pragmatic conceptions of language – were (perhaps not surprisingly, given their emphatically non-reductive metaphysics) acutely concerned with the problems of unity and coordination. However, since most of linguistic pragmatics has its origins in British rather than American empiricism, pragmatics in this more radical sense has rarely figured very prominently within linguistics.

To understand the nature of this problem, I want to argue, one needs to understand, in particular, Alfred North Whitehead's ([1929] 1978: 167) diagnosis of

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[1] For a history of philosophy with a good coverage of this period based upon a similar diagnosis to Whitehead's, see Harris (1954).

the state of modern philosophy: "The difficulties of all schools of modern philosophy lie in the fact that, having accepted the subjectivist principle, they continue to use philosophical categories derived from another point of view".

By the "subjectivist principle", Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 159) means:

> the principle, that those substances which are the subjects enjoying conscious experiences, provide the primary data for philosophy, namely, themselves as in the enjoyment of such experience. This is the famous subjectivist bias which entered into modern philosophy through Descartes. In this doctrine, Descartes undoubtedly made the greatest philosophical discovery since the age of Plato and Aristotle. For his doctrine directly traversed the notion that the proposition, "This stone is grey", expresses a primary form of known fact from which metaphysics can start its generalizations [...] But [...] Descartes [...] continued to construe the functioning of the subjective enjoyment of experience according to the substance-quality categories. Yet if the enjoyment of experience be the constitutive subjective fact, these categories have lost all claim to any fundamental character in metaphysics.

By the "substance-quality categories" or the "substance-property framework", Whitehead means the framework that "leads us to think of everything to which we refer as either a substance or a property of a substance". (Rorty 1967: 134). What is of particular importance here is the relationship of these categories to the subject-predicate categories which figure centrally in our understanding of linguistic expression. Particularly with the advent of the linguistic turn, it is these linguistic categories which have often taken precedence over the former. Yet, if Whitehead is right, both stem from a point of view which differs from that required by the subjectivist principle ushered in by philosophy's Cartesian turn. What is particularly striking about Whitehead's answer to the need to complete the subjective turn that Descartes inaugurated is that he argues that it requires an entirely new metaphysics.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Whitehead's claim is that the continued use of the substance-quality categories, since they derive from another point of view, has meant that modern disciplines have, in particular, not been able to fully develop the notion of activity which is implicitly central to this subjective turn. As we shall see, Whitehead's response to these problems is a re-conceptualisation of experience, a revised subjectivist principle, leading, in particular, to a revised conception of substance. I want to argue that this can form the basis for a revised, non-representational, since immanent or reflexive, conception of reference which forms the basis for a broader pragmatic conception of the grammars of natural languages.

Central to Whitehead's revised conception of experience is his complex, since non-reductive and non-representational, conception of perception, which also has a central role in his conception of action more generally, which I will outline in Chapter Three. This brings with it a much more triadic and so mediated organisation, which attempts to overcome the scepticism and incoherence argued to stem from the much more polarised and ultimately dualistic organisation characteristic of the substance-property framework and so modern philosophy. It also brings with it a much more pragmatic emphasis upon valuation and activity more generally, which are difficult to accommodate in a non-derivative way within the structure of modern philosophy.

Although Whitehead did not use these expressions, subsequently, this type of metaphysics has come to be known as a 'process metaphysics' of momentary events to be contrasted with the 'substance metaphysics' of enduring substances which has characterised modern philosophy. As we shall see, these are not entirely felicitous labels, since they suggest that Whitehead rejects the notion of substance. Moreover, when extended to the subject-predicate categories, they, suggest that these two positions cannot even talk the same language, and so are destined to talk past (and so are largely discouraged from engaging with) one another. As we shall see, this is one difficulty which arises from the 'traditional interpretation' of Whitehead's philosophy which, by adding this further division, has led many to quite reasonably doubt the relevance of his philosophy subse-

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quent to the linguistic turn (e.g. Rorty (1963), R.T.F. (1980)).

One reason why this diagnosis of modern philosophy may also be less evident for linguistics is that it could be argued that linguistics has not, with certain exceptions (such as Langacker (2008)), really attempted to embrace this subjective turn. Indeed, I will argue that even so-called functionalist accounts of language within linguistics remain too abstract to accommodate activity and so the situated acts of individual language users. Chomsky's ([1966] 2009) Cartesianism, for instance, seems confined to Descartes' rationalism, being especially hostile to empiricism and, with it, to any reference to experience. Indeed, this may have been one of the principle attractions of the linguistic turn within philosophy.

Rather than attempting to criticise linguistics as a whole, I want to focus on one of the more comprehensive and functional of functional grammars, M.A.K. Halliday's systemic functional grammar of English, which in part draws upon the pragmatic tradition for its semantics. More importantly, this thesis presents a reconstruction of this grammar that attempts to address this problem of unity through a pragmatic conception of grammar. That is, it embeds a critique and reconstruction of Halliday's functionalism within a broader criticism of modern theories of language in general, from a general standpoint which is pragmatic rather than modern. An important feature of this critique is that it is, inherently, also a critique of many of the more general presuppositions that linguistics brings to language. It, therefore, inherently engages with presuppositions which are much broader than those which are particular to Halliday's account of language. Indeed, it attempts to engage with the metaphysical presuppositions of such accounts through an engagement with Halliday's particular grammar.

This thesis is, then, ultimately, a nested series of critiques, which can be understood on a number of different levels of generality. More broadly, it represents a speculative attempt to criticise and re-construct modern conceptions of language. However, these criticisms of a particular conception of language have a still broader background in criticisms of a still broader, metaphysical position presupposed by such conceptions of language which might be contrasted with

other philosophical positions.

This engagement with the organisation of a particular language and a particular linguistic theory of that language is important to the need to engage with not just the universality or generality of natural languages but also with their essential relativity and so individuality. In this chapter, I want to attempt to outline some of the historical background and general features of Whitehead's critique and reconstruction of modern philosophy, before attempting to introduce Halliday's account of grammar and its relationship to it. Towards the end of this chapter, I will outline the scope of the thesis including the areas of Halliday's grammar which I will be attempting to reconstruct on a pragmatic basis.

1.2   The linguistic division of labour

Whitehead's critique is essentially concerned with the "bifurcation of nature into two systems of reality" by the natural sciences. "[O]ne is the conjecture and the other is the dream [...] namely into the nature apprehended in awareness and the nature which is the cause of awareness".[2] However, as Harris (1996) has suggested, conceptions of language have their own particular bifurcations which fragment them such that an analogous position has developed in modern conceptions of language. If the fundamental problem is one of unity, then an important subject matter of this study will be the unresolved divisions which are incorporated into the very structure of modern conceptions of language. I therefore now want to turn to some important disciplinary divisions (which form an important backdrop to this study) which, I want to argue, are not properly resolved

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[2] "What I am essentially protesting against is the bifurcation of nature into two systems of reality, which in so far as they are real, are real in different senses. One reality would be the entities such as electrons which are the study of speculative physics. This would be the reality which is there for knowledge; although on this theory it is never known. For what is known is the other sort of reality, which is the byplay of the mind. Thus there would be two natures, one is the conjecture and the other is the dream. Another way of phrasing this theory which I am arguing against is to bifurcate nature into two divisions, namely into the nature apprehended in awareness and the nature which is the cause of awareness" Whitehead (1920, 30-1).

within the current disciplinary landscape. I want to focus in particular on those divisions which are central to the subsequent resolution of this problem of unity through a revised conception of grammar which will, in turn, provide the beginning of an answer to the question of how language is unified. I want to argue that the failure to resolve or overcome these divisions is ultimately indicative of incoherence within the conceptions of language which support these divisions.

Natural languages are particularly challenging because they, at once, combine both a high degree of comprehensiveness or generality of use along with considerable expressive detail which is inherently relative to a particular language (or indeed to a particular occasion of use). That is, a theory of language must somehow combine both universality and relativity. Theories of language have typically tended to address either one or the other of these poles or extremes. They have, therefore, been typically too reductive to avoid either ignoring one of these poles or conflating one with the other. Semantic theories have tended to err on the side of universalism, while linguistic theories have tended to err on the side of relativism. It is not difficult to see why, when attempting to combine or unite such a semantics with such an account of the forms of expression that express it, that a division opens up between these two very different types of theories. (Willems 2011)

This, along with the preference for abstract conceptions within both disciplines (which I shall turn to shortly) has driven the emergence of a disciplinary division of labour whereby semantics has tended to fall to philosophers, while the description of linguistic expression and so production has fallen to linguists. The empirical orientation of linguistics has meant that it has tended to adopt an expression or production bias, while the theoretical orientation of philosophy has meant that the reception and interpretation of language has fallen to it. This is one of a number of factors which threaten the very coherence of such investigations into language since they have become inherently fragmented. Neither discipline has been inclined to develop expressivist conceptions of language which might begin to bridge this gap and thereby address the problem of linguistic

relativity as it manifests itself on both sides of this division. On the one hand, there is the variety, heterogeneity and complexity of linguistic expression; on the other, there is baffling variation and relativity of the indexical content of the same expressions. Linguistics has tended to treat language as an essentially observable phenomenon, while philosophy has, on the other hand, attempted to develop, typically representational, accounts of meaning, largely independent of their particular modes of expression. Moreover, the shared presupposition that signs are fundamentally arbitrary has only served to facilitate the development of this division, one which it is itself reinforced by.

This division, like the bifurcation of nature, is symptomatic of modes of thought and so of thinking which for Whitehead are processes of abstraction that give rise to abstractions. "You cannot think without abstractions; accordingly, it is of the utmost importance to be vigilant in critically revising your *modes* of abstraction" (1927: 73, original emphasis). Such divisions cannot, then, be traced to a single assumption or a particular thing but rather are the product of particular modes of thought. Particularly exemplary of the modes of thought behind the bifurcation of nature for Whitehead are Newton's scientific materialism and Hume's ([1751] 1975) sensationalist empiricism, which have provided the most influential paradigms for how the two sides of this bifurcated conception of nature are to be filled out (Whitehead 1938: Chapter VII).

Whitehead's disagreement with Hume centres upon their differing conceptions of perception which, in Whitehead's case, is (as we shall see, when we return to his conceptions of both in Chapter Three) also central to his account of symbolism. In particular, Hume's conception of perception is considerably narrower, reduced to the sense-data of sense perception, that is appearance "effected by the mediation of qualities, such as colours, sounds, tastes, etc" (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 21). Whitehead's conception of perceptual experience is both considerably broader and more complex than this, since, for him ([1929] 1978: 113), in any act of perceptual experience, "the datum includes its own interconnections", such that these 'qualities' or universals, which (as we shall see, he also calls

'objects') can only be treated in isolation through the above mentioned "modes of abstraction". In this way, Whitehead attempts to restore the essential "relatedness of nature" which Hume had undermined. (Shaviro 2017)

1.3 Objects and events

One way of understanding the significance of Whitehead's philosophy is in terms of its inversion of the traditional relationship between objects and events. Traditionally, those features of experience which might be called 'objects' or 'universals', along with the permanence that they manifest, have been granted a certain primacy. 'Events' have, on the other hand, therefore been taken to characterise such enduring objects. Such a conception, however, Whitehead (1920: 141) argues tends to have dualistic consequences, such as the bifurcation of nature discussed earlier, because it leads to a conception "of nature as a mere aggregate of independent entities, each capable of isolation".

Whitehead reverses this relationship, arguing that objects are better understood as characters of events. Whereas the former, traditional conception made objective reality complete in itself, the latter conception takes it to be essentially characterised by relatedness. For events inherently internalise the circumstances of their occurrence, these internal relations being what distinguish events from objects.[3]

For Whitehead (1925: 62), "[o]bjects enter into experience by way of recognition" as "the permanences recognized in events". As such, they manifest the self-identity of elements which are permanent, can re-occur and, therefore, can be recognised as such. Whereas an event is a unique happening here and now which is "lived through" and "apprehended" (1925: 63-64) rather than recognised. Objects are what they are, while events become. Moreover, existence is

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[3]As Murphy (1927) demonstrates, there is a similar inversion at the base of John Dewey's philosophy, the most developed of the later, classical pragmatist philosophies, with similar consequences, although there will not be space to consider Dewey's philosophy or indeed his quite similar philosophy of language here either.

not a character of objects, as much as they are characters of events that do exist. (Mohanty 1957: 48)

As Murphy (1927: 132-3) observes "Objects are temporally and spatially irrelevant, that is their differentiating feature. The nature of an object is not altered by its locus. It transcends time and space in the sense that they do not make a difference to its intrinsic nature".

For Whitehead (1927: 203), the concreteness which characterises events (which he would subsequently call 'occasions') means "through and through togetherness"; whereas, by contrast, the abstractness which characterises objects means isolation, although in neither case is this absolute (Mohanty 1957: 58, 88). It is this abstractness, as well as, as we shall see, his desire to distinguish such objects from the more traditional theory of universals that leads Whitehead to call them 'eternal objects'.

> Eternal objects are thus, in their nature, abstract. By 'abstract' I mean that what an eternal object is in itself – that is to say, its essence – is comprehensible without reference to some one particular occasion of experience. To be abstract is to transcend particular concrete occasions of actual happening. But to transcend an actual occasion does not mean being disconnected from it. On the contrary, I hold that each eternal object has its own proper connection with each such occasion, which I term its mode of ingression into that occasion. Whitehead (1927: 148)

This latter 'mode of ingression', is an eternal object's 'relational essence', providing it with a double sided nature. This is where Whitehead most clearly departs from the traditional theory of universals, in that they also form an important aspect of his conceptions of value and action or process, notions which are neglected in the traditional distinction between universals and particulars.

What will particularly concern us is that an event or occasion is not only a happening here and now but is also the centre of a standpoint, of a perspective on its

broader environment. This perspective is the product of the self-constitutive activity by which it internalises that broader environment according to its relevance for its unique, finite standpoint.

Such a perspective bears out the fact that the essence of an event is interaction. This means that the objects or characters which qualify it do not do so simply, are neither mere instantiations of such objects nor do they stand to events in a two term relation (like the subject-predicate relation). Rather, as I noted, they 'ingress' and so do so in a relational way through a prehensive relationship that involves multiple relations. That is, such objects – for instance, a colour – functions in a double way in perception, as both a character possessed by a perceived event (independently of its being experienced) and as a quality sensibly experienced as a feature of a percipient event as a sense-object. In the latter case, they are graded for their significance according to their relevance to the perspective in question. In this way, objects are not just universal but also particular to events, so we see a blurring of the traditional distinction between universals and particulars in that both are now involved in the variation that Whitehead argues is inherent in life more generally.

For, as Vlastos (1937: 254-5) observes:

> To describe life [Whitehead ...] finds it necessary to introduce the concept of "rhythm." The peculiar thing about this concept is that it will not fit into the clear and painstaking differentiation of objects from events. "The essence of rhythm is the fusion of sameness and novelty." But sameness has been assigned to objects, and novelty to events. Rhythm cuts across the separation. Thus "a rhythm is too concrete to be truly an object [...] is a unique type of natural element, neither a mere event nor a mere object as object is here defined." The author is trying to express "the specific recognizable liveliness" of living things; and he can only do it by bringing his categories of object and event into dynamic interconnection [...] which requires such dynamic contrasts.

As we shall see, Whitehead's subsequent aesthetic account of value is a development of this latter notion of contrast. In this way, in Whitehead's account of value as the motivation for action in general and, as we shall see, of perception in particular, these two fundamental entities, and so the two sides of his philosophy, are brought together through the relatedness of nature. This blurring is then not just an attempt to overcome the dualistic consequences of the traditional distinction between universals and particulars but also serves to provide an account of activity and of "nature [that] includes life" (1925: 195). Moreover, it indicates how Whitehead's philosophy, in attempting, like the pragmatists, to overcome the dualisms of modern philosophy (such as the bifurcation of nature) is essentially non-reductive.

What is significant here about Whitehead's rejection of the traditional way of understanding the relationship between objects or universals and events, is that traditionally language has been understood in terms of the traditional conception of objects or universals. In the next section, I want to begin to argue that the conception of communication that this leads to (on account of its reliance upon objects and so high levels of abstraction) results in a similar bifurcation of nature to that which Whitehead argues occurred in the natural sciences and which, ultimately, presents particular difficulties for functional theories of language. Just as Whitehead's metaphysics requires a different conception of nature, I want to argue that it also requires a different conception of communication and language.

1.4   Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL)

Having introduced Whitehead's philosophy through his critique of modern philosophy, which I will develop further in Chapter Three, I now want to turn to M.A.K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and in particular his systemic functional grammar (SFG) as a particular example of a comparatively comprehensive functional grammar. Among the attractions of Halliday's account of grammar is that it is one of the more ambitiously comprehensive func-

tional accounts within linguistics, both in terms of its reach and so coverage of aspects of the grammar and its attempt to build a functionalism into the very structure and organisation of language itself. Moreover, it offers an analysis of the grammar of English which is relatively easy to apply to texts, making it very attractive for various forms of applied linguistics. And, indeed, in most of these respects, it has very few competitors.[4]

It is, however, not without its weaknesses which I want to broach through a brief consideration of its, rarely recognised, failure to achieve the synthesis implicit in its historical origins. For another potential attraction of Halliday's theory is that, at least superficially, it seems to present a natural line of development from earlier, clearly less comprehensive, functional or notional theories of grammar, which share with it a broadly triadic structure such as those of Jespersen (1924) and Pike (1971) in particular and, more obliquely, the still more pragmatic, although less developed, accounts of Malinowski (1923) and Gardiner ([1951] 1963).

Since, during its development, Halliday's account of language has, at a number of points, intersected with representatives of the pragmatic tradition, it will be helpful to introduce it somewhat historically. In the development of the London school, beginning with Firth and clearly accelerated by Halliday, there is a clear turn towards heightened abstraction, particularly in relation to the context of language use, which cuts the more Hallidayan trajectory of development adrift from the premises which underpinned the much more directly pragmatic conception of grammar and language more generally that we find in Malinowski and in Gardiner.

So, although there is little recognition and so discussion of it, I want to argue that the London school was always implicitly split between two broad positions on language and grammar: on the one hand, the positions of Firth and then Halliday, favouring increased abstraction and, on the other, those of Malinowski and

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[4] For a summary of these strengths see Hudson (1986: 791-94).

Gardiner, favouring a more naturalistic and pragmatic position with a greater emphasis, in particular, upon situated notions of importance. Although the initial relationship between these positions was far less clear, the subsequent trajectories of development have, I want to argue, increasingly borne out this tension.

Firth in particular was clearly familiar not only with Malinowski's views but also with those of Whitehead and the pragmatists, who were his contemporaries (Butt 2008, Nerlich and Clarke 1996: 361-2). However, it is ultimately difficult to see an effective integration between those views and his own linguistic views. Malinowski's highly situated and pragmatic conception of language and grammar, would seem to have been much more sympathetically and enthusiastically received by the later classical pragmatists, such as Dewey (1924: 205-7). By contrast, Firth (1968: 143) understood his conception of grammar as somehow merely "traditional".

Moreover, particularly in Halliday's development of Firth's position, we find something much closer to a Saussurean conception of language as a system, favouring a much more abstract conception of language. Although Halliday appropriates Malinowski's notion of 'context of situation', it recurs only in a radically revised and more abstract form, something which is already apparent in Firth's reworking of the notion.

Halliday's account is of language understood as a system interpreted through the formalism of system networks. This is reinforced by his preference for a predominantly dyadic organisation, understanding language in terms of complementarities or oppositions (Halliday 2008). In this, Halliday's account is part of the tremendous upsurge of abstract conceptions of language that dominated linguistics particularly during the last half of the twentieth century. In keeping with this, the primary theoretical notion behind his account is an abstract formalism, the system network, which I will briefly review in the next chapter. Nonetheless, in spite of this, Halliday always strives to present himself as not a formalist, but a functionalist, claiming not unreasonably that:

the structure of language as a whole has been built up in such a way that it reflects the demands that are made on language and the functions it is required to serve. ([1970] 2005b(7): 165)[5]

So, I want to suggest that although Halliday's account of grammar is both extensive and ingenious and his observations perceptive, often relating seemingly unrelated phenomena, the metafunctions do not provide it with a fully coherent, overarching functional organisation. In part, this is because Halliday's metafunctional functionalism tends to partition and fragment his grammar rather than unify it. That is, Halliday's is ultimately a very different type of functionalism from the more organic, synthetic and ultimately aesthetic functionalism that we find in the classical pragmatic philosophies.

This is because Halliday's account is based upon a comparatively traditional, abstract conception of language, one which I want to argue is comparatively ill suited to articulating such a functional or purposive organisation. In this, it bears out Whitehead's ([1929] 1978: 167) diagnosis of modern philosophy that "having accepted the subjectivist principle, they continue to use philosophical categories derived from another point of view".

The predominant conception of language within linguistics, such as we find in Saussure, is cast in terms of the traditional theory of universals or objects. In this way, Halliday seeks to understand a language in a Saussurean fashion as a system. That is, a language is understood comparatively abstractly as an abstract object shared by the speakers of a language. What the abstractness of such universals or objects bring to such a conception of communication is that, since

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[5] In the case of references to volumes of Halliday's *Collected Works*, the citation begins with the original publication date of the article/chapter in square brackets, followed by the publication date of the volume of the *Collected Works* that the page reference refers to, followed by the volume number in parentheses. Although, where possible, references will be to volumes in the *Collected Works*, the original publication may also appear in the bibliography and will often be identifiable by its original publication date. So, for instance, Halliday ([1970] 2005b(7): 165) refers to Halliday's 'Functional diversity in language as seen from a consideration of modality and mood in English', first published in 1970, the page reference being to the location of the reference within seventh volume of the *Collected Works* published in 2005.

they are repeatable and transcend space and time, in the sense of not varying in their intrinsic nature, they make such a system shareable. This sharing makes this conception of communication workable in spite of the, again Saussurean, claimed arbitrariness of the sign which indeed in large part motivates this very conception of communication as sharing.

However, a shared object conception of language brings with it the limitations of a shared object semantics. That is, it brings with it a semantics which also seems largely limited to shareable, that is, abstract objects. Precisely because it relies upon these features of objects to make meaning shareable, variation in particular presents a significant problem for this conception, in which language is not, other than in a weak sense, expressive.

So, although the abstractness of the shared object conception allows the possibility of communication within a language to not be undermined by the differences *between* languages arising from their relativity, at the same time it also threatens to undermine the recognition of more subtle forms of relativity *internal* to particular languages. If, for instance, variation occurs not just at the level of languages as a whole but on other scales of organisation (for instance, at the level of individual acts of expression as, for instance, would seem to quite clearly be the case in reference) then this would seem to require an alternative conception of communication. In this way, I want to suggest that the shared object conception is not entirely compatible with more relativistic, functional approaches to language. That is, its abstractness is more of a holistic feature than a relativistic and so functional one, although these two aspects are not unrelated to one another.

Since the claimed arbitrariness of the sign is a central motivation for adopting the shared object conception, its dominance also invites confusing the arbitrariness of the sign with its relativity. Relativity, unlikely arbitrariness, which is by definition unmotivated and so not expressive, can be argued to be motivated and so expressive. It is not a mere fact, which has to be taken as simply given, but something which seems open to explanation – as has long been attempted in philosophy and the social sciences, where it has often particularly been associated

with the relativity of experience.

The most striking case of such relativity and the variation associated with it arises in the case of indexical expressions, whose meaning manifests a relativity to the different occasions on which an expression is used. So, for instance, the word "I" refers to a person, but one that varies according to who utters it. So to sustain the same signification, one has to vary the expression to suit different occasions of use. So, I refer to the same day by my use of "today" today, as I do by "yesterday" tomorrow. Other standard examples of such indexicals include "here", "that", "now", and "left".

Such indexical variation has historically been explained in two ways, either contextually or perspectivally; however, these two approaches are not incompatible with one another and so can overlap. The approach that I want to adopt is predominantly perspectival, thereby emphasising the activity of language users while allowing context dependence to enter into this conception more indirectly. Reference has also been understood predominantly representationally, just as how I have framed the examples of indexicality that I have just presented. By contrast, a more functional or pragmatic conception allows such expression to have a non-representational content and so be more than just a way of referring to or representing a referent, where the latter is taken to be its meaning on a given occasion of use. Such a non-representational conception, I want to argue, is able to provide a functional account of the relativistic variation which, otherwise, makes reference so problematic theoretically.

In this thesis, I will tend to focus upon the content of reference, as one of the more obvious examples of such variation in the content of expressions, although the more fundamental problem is the more general one of such indexical variation more generally. Indeed, I want to argue that such variation pervades the grammar of a language, because, on the pragmatic view that I am advancing, a grammar is essentially indexical in its operation. Indeed, I want to argue that reference cannot be understood in isolation but rather only in in the context of an ecology of other expressions. In particular, I want to argue that it requires an ex-

pressive conception of communication which is able to communicate valuational and so variable content.

Whitehead is a central figure in the American tradition's development of a re-formed conception of experience in opposition to the classical modern conception of experience that one finds in the classical or British empiricism, especially of Hume ([1751] 1975) who, most famously, exhibited the sceptical consequences of this conception. In the latter British conception, experience is analysed into universals or objects. This is a position not unlike that towards which modern linguistics is pressed by a similarly abstract conception of communication. What Whitehead and the classical pragmatists provide is a theory of experience and so subjectivity, centred on activity understood as organised around valuation. I want to argue that a pragmatics based upon such a view suggests that the grammar of a language is essentially involved in the communication of valuations necessary for the coordination and so unification of language itself as a dynamic, distributed and situated activity.

As we have seen, Whitehead rejects the notion of 'self-contained activities', that is, conceived of as objects. In its place, he develops an account of activity which bridges the traditional distinction between universals and particulars, which his account suggests is otherwise too dualistic. In the light of this, both sides of this traditional distinction need to be revised to incorporate their relationship to activity.

This is one basis for the emphatically triadic organisation found in these more pragmatic theories. That is, the pragmatist's emphatic denial of the reducibility of triads to dyads, which I want to argue finds its basis in the centrality of their theories of value and so action. However, comparatively few functional theories of grammar, most notably those of Jespersen (1924), Pike (1971) and Halliday, have attempted to understand the grammar of a language as having an essentially triadic organisation. Of these, Halliday's account, the most successful to emerge from the London School, offers perhaps the best prospect of unifying or bridging the structuralist and pragmatist traditions. That is, it offers the prospect

of combining the comprehensiveness and detail of the linguistically predominant structuralist tradition with the motivation of the much more experientially oriented pragmatic tradition. Indeed, Halliday, somewhat like Roman Jakobson, seems to attempt to establish a blend of the abstract and the functional/pragmatic traditions in linguistics. Perhaps, Gardiner ([1951] 1963) represents the most notable outline of a pragmatic conception of grammar to emerge from within the, far less grammatically productive, pragmatic tradition.[6]

However, I want to argue that the more abstract form of organisation turns out to always be the more basic, as this triadic structure only arises in Halliday's account at the level of his three general functions of language, the metafunctions, which, in part, derive from the more pragmatic position of Bühler, the relationship to which I shall discuss further in Chapter Two (see page 76). That is, I want to argue that Halliday's synthesis is achieved largely though subordinating or even reducing the pragmatic to more abstract, holistic structural features. In the process, Halliday effectively retreats from the potentially, richer pragmatic conception of experience such as that which emerged with the classical American philosophical tradition. On Halliday's view, language is communicative in virtue of its being a shared, abstract social object rather than in virtue of its being expressive of the individual, situated standpoints of language users. I want to argue that his bold attempt to draw his accounts of grammatical form and of semantics from two different traditions, therefore, ultimately fails because it attempts to unite two incompatible conceptions of the sign and of communication.

However, Halliday's implicit depreciation of a pragmatic semantics suggests the possibility of reversing his priorities, thereby retaining a less abstract, pragmatic semantics, which has as its focus the activity of the language user, rather than the more abstract, structural and so impersonal functionalism that he adopts. That is, it suggests reconstructing Halliday's grammar on the basis of a richer,

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[6] More recently, Wedgwood (2005) has applied notions from relevance theory to aspects of grammar, while Langacker's cognitive grammar does have certain affinities to a pragmatic grammar and tends to diminish the distinction of pragmatics from grammar.

pragmatic conception of experience and an allied, expressive conception of communication. Indeed, this thesis attempts to do just this by reversing Halliday's privileging of an abstract conception of the grammar of a language implicit in the claim that it is a system, a shared object, by re-interpreting many of the notions that he employs in a more pragmatic and so expressivist light.

Such a revised synthesis is, however, considerably complicated by the fact that the direction of development of Whitehead's and Halliday's theoretical positions are very different. Whitehead's is based upon a very broad and general, indeed metaphysical or cosmological conception of reality, in which language both occupies a very particular place and is highly dependent upon this broader background, which is typically largely implicit in linguistic theories, yet was clearly the overwhelming focus of Whitehead's attention. By contrast, Halliday's focus is inherently much more linguistic and indeed Whorfian.

Because of these very different starting points, the positions are, at least potentially, comparatively complementary. However, this means that they are also the product of two very different theoretical vantage points or methodologies which give rise to them. In particular, for this reason, the relationships between these two domains, which comprises their respective accounts of symbolism, threaten to diverge. Whitehead's more philosophical emphasis means that he more clearly articulates just why his theoretical position leads to this particular emphasis on, what would otherwise be background, cosmological and indeed metaphysical concerns, whereas the grounds for Halliday's orientation are much more implicit. For instance, Whitehead would seem to be considerably more explicit about his account of symbolism than Halliday is. For this and other reasons stemming from it, rendering a conception like Halliday's more pragmatic ultimately requires a considerable amount of reconstruction. It also means that the two different accounts have quite different strengths and so, ultimately, objectives and consequences. Many of these consequences, including even the more obvious, such as its application to figurative expression, will be at best merely implicit as within these thesis and at this early stage of the development of the

present pragmatic conception.

At its simplest, pragmatics, and by extension a pragmatic conception of language, as Morris (1938: 6) observed, centres on "the relation of signs to interpreters". That is, the language user, particularly as understood as a source of agency, is central to this conception of language, leading to a particular concern with action. This concern with action is what tends to unite and distinguish pragmatic philosophies which are, otherwise, comparatively diverse, having a much broader range of concerns than language alone. Classical pragmatism, the foundational movement of the broader philosophical movement of pragmatism, was founded by and is typically associated with four classical American philosophers, initially Charles Sanders Peirce and William James and, somewhat later, John Dewey and George Herbert Mead.[7]

Alfred North Whitehead and his philosophy, which will be more central here, although contemporaneous and closely related, is typically distinguished from the classical pragmatists.[8] Indeed, Paul Grice (1989), in spite of being the central figure in the more recent revival of pragmatics as a field is considerably more distant from the classical pragmatists still. Whitehead's represents the most developed metaphysics of the classical American period and arguably of the Twentieth Century (Hartshorne 1984: 103), bringing with it, his very distinctive, epochal theory of action.[9] However, in spite of the centrality of Whitehead's philosophy to the position being advanced, I have called it a pragmatic one on account of both its dependence upon a much broader range of pragmatic (and other) writers than Whitehead alone and its being more descriptive of – and familiar as – a

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[7] For an introduction to these philosophies and an interpretation which is indicative of what is particularly significant in them see Smith (1963, 1978).

[8] Although, there are important differences between the two, it is important to recognise not only the largely shared historical context but also the many features and causes shared in common by this admittedly diverse group of philosophies. For discussions of the relationship between Whitehead's philosophy and that of the classical pragmatists, see, for instance, Neville (2004) and Lucas (1983, 1989).

[9] Indeed, Whitehead's epochal theory of action marks one of the points of difference between his position and that of the pragmatists who tend to be closer to European phenomenology in this respect. For a discussion of these differences see Rosenthal (1996, 1997) and Ford (1996).

broad theoretical position (particularly within linguistics) that it aims to advance, if in a rather radical form.

These pragmatic classical American philosophies are characterised by a conception of experience which, as centred on action rather than representation, provides a distinctively non-representational conception of experience and so a phenomenology within which valuation has a central role. The closest that one might come to a similarly first person or subjective conception of grammar within contemporary linguistics may be Langacker's (2008) cognitive grammar, since it is, likewise, centred on the language user. Although there are important differences, the most obvious being its Saussurean presuppositions that wed it to a much more binary or dyadic conception of the sign. Unfortunately, I will not be able to consider in detail this, in some respects, potentially quite complementary conception of grammar here. By contrast, Halliday's is a comparatively public functionalism which tends to centre more on contexts of language use than on the experience of language users.

In Chapter Two, I will discuss how the classical American pragmatic tradition, in its development of general theories of value, implicitly departs from Bühler's pragmatic account of the functions of language, which, in a revised form, forms the basis for Halliday's metafunctional semantics. These two different starting points, both falling within the pragmatic tradition, provide two different trajectories to the two different functional conceptions of language. However, since both conceptions lead to quite systematic claims and share a somewhat similar or analogous starting point and triadic structure, it is possible, in spite of their differences, to contrast these two different conceptions across a range of claims which follow from them.

An unfortunate feature of most discussions of functionalism in linguistics, also reflected in surveys such as Nichols (1984) and Silverstein (1987), is that there is usually not much discussion of the nature of the notion of function or purpose itself, although this is admittedly a difficult topic. We have seen that the dominant conception of communication in linguistics is based upon presupposing

stable, context independent meanings, so there is a natural tendency to require that purposes, likewise, be objects. In keeping with this, surveys of functionalism typically discuss the types of purposes. But surely, the purposes which animate activities are not objects or universals. This view applied to ends is akin to Aristotle's (1984: 1112^{b}12) view that we deliberate "not about ends but about what contributes to ends". Dewey (2008: 37) explicitly argued against this view, for "the thoroughly reciprocal character of means and ends", since, for instance, the means used to achieve an end is a cost of realising that end and so is internal to it. (Tiles 1988: 154-158)

And, as we shall see, Whitehead, likewise, sees the ends, the values realised by actions, to be essentially variable. If activity is essentially purposive, is a striving to realise value, that is, is functional, and is, as we have seen, interactive, then the ends of activity are likely to be essentially variable. Indeed, as we shall see, for Whitehead, importance tends to coincide with variability, not stability.

Van Valin (2001: 331-2) has rightly argued that Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), in terms of Nicols' (1984) classification of functional theories, falls "somewhere between moderate and extreme functionalism", at least within linguistics, since it "takes a strongly discourse-oriented view of language, but which nevertheless does not deny either the reality of structure in language nor the Saussurean foundations of modern linguistics". Indeed, I take Halliday's account of discourse to be a particular strength of his grammar, an aspect that the present pragmatic account will, nonetheless, attempt to radicalise considerably.

This, naturally enough, suggests that the pragmatic account is closer to what Nichols calls "extreme" functionalism on the criteria, of abandoning "the basic Saussurean conception of language as a structural system" as, for instance, Hopper's (1987, 1998, 2012) emergent grammar does. And, indeed, this is probably more true of it than emergent grammar, for, in spite of Hopper's attempts to place a greater weight upon the role of discourse, it would still seem to remain divided between a largely traditional representational conception of the content of the parts of speech and a conception of discourse which is still insufficiently

revisionary to break the hold of that conception.

However, as we have seen, the pragmatic position does not, as Nichols presumes, therefore deny the reality of structure. Rather, just as we have seen the organisation of Whitehead's metaphysics is essentially non-reductive, so too is this conception of language. Therefore, as we have already begun to see, Whitehead's eternal objects or structure have a continuing role to play within a broader non-reductive, since interactive, conception of activity or purpose. Likewise, the shared object conception of communication is, therefore, not completely abandoned but, rather, encompassed, and so incorporated as more appropriate as a conception of the lexicon rather than the grammar of a language. That is, both stability and variability each find their place within the one broader account, based upon its capacity to also incorporate more than one conception of communication.

Given the prominence within the discipline of linguistics of theoretical positions which deny the need to closely associate a grammar with a semantics, any grammatical semantics, whether it be formal (in the sense of being highly abstract in nature) or not, tends to be contrasted with these so-called 'formal' theories as 'functional'. This makes it comparatively easy to equivocate between quite different types or meanings of 'functional', since comparatively abstract positions regarding the content or semantics of such grammars can still bear this label, without making any sustained reference to the purposes and agency of language users. In this way, Halliday's rhetorical claims would often seem to be facilitated by the very weakness of the term 'functional' within linguistics.[10] I therefore

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[10] As Hudson (1986: 805) has likewise observed of:

> the meaning of 'functional' [...] it seems to me that this is little more than a slogan for eliciting favorable reactions from a particular kind of person - the kind of person who is struck by the truism that language is a tool for communication, rather than an abstract and pointless formal system. S[ystemic]G[rammar] seems to appeal to many people who find more formal approaches harder to connect with their day-to-day experience, but this may have just as much to do with the method of presentation (with real-life examples and so on) and with the selection of areas of language to be discussed as it does with the actual theories concerned.

want to distinguish the notion of a pragmatic functional grammar from the comparatively structural functionalism that one finds in Halliday's metafunctional functionalism and many other so-called functional grammars. Indeed, the notion of the 'formal' or of 'formalism' is also ambiguous between referring to the 'superficial' features of language (language as an observable appearance) and the 'abstract' features of language (language understood as an abstract object, understood structurally in terms of universals, patterns or high order abstractions). This may be because, especially within linguistics, these notions are often found together or conflated when, for instance, an appearance or expression is analysed in terms of universals or patterns. I will attempt to avoid this ambiguity by using 'formal' and 'form' primarily in the sense of the superficial, relating to appearance, while using 'abstract' to refer to the abstract, repeatable or universal aspects of such descriptions. I will therefore also have comparatively little use for 'formal' in its use of contrasting functional and formal schools of linguistics, since I will be primarily focused upon radicalising Halliday's functional position. Although Halliday's metafunctional functionalism is often regarded as one of the bolder functional approaches to the grammar of a language, a pragmatic functionalism aims to be functional in the much stronger sense of rejecting both the formal and abstract biases which stand in the way of placing language users, and so situated agency, at the centre of a grammatical theory.

It is important to note that this is not a condemnation of more 'formal', in the sense of abstract, schools of linguistics. Indeed, I will argue that the pragmatic views that I am advancing are very complementary to neo-Gricean views which form the basis for a comparatively abstract, since inferential, pragmatics (See page 308). As I have stressed, Whitehead's position is not opposed to either abstraction or abstractions, but rather is concerned with recognising both their strengths and limitations.[11] Whitehead is, if anything, the most Platonic of all

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(Similar remarks could be directed, incidentally, at the various other linguistic theories whose names include the word 'functional' [...].)

[11]See page 8.

the process philosophers, although his philosophy in general and conception of language in particular, cannot be reduced to this particular aspect of it, as much as it is a very distinctive feature of his broader philosophy in relation other, and especially other process, philosophies (Lucas 1991: 520-1).

Many of his somewhat idiosyncratic features mean that Halliday can hardly be described as entirely representative of functionalism within linguistics. Nonetheless, his position clearly does attempt to incorporate features of pragmatic standpoints. Yet, like other linguistic theories, continues to bear out quite starkly the puzzles occasioned when such abstract and so questionably functional theoretical positions are pressed into the role of providing a comparatively comprehensive theory of language.

1.5 Substance and Whitehead's metaphysics

The notion of substance is central to any conception of experience. Indeed, Whitehead is quite emphatic about the significance of enduring entities in our experience.[12] Given this centrality, it is important that a pragmatic or process metaphysics should not only be able to provide an alternative ontology of events to substance ontologies, but also a compelling alternative to established accounts of experience and the role of perceptual and other experiential objects; that is, of substance within experience. In this respect, it might be argued that the case for a process or pragmatic metaphysics has, to date, not been especially compelling, since such an alternative conception of substance has been largely lacking. Rather, the emphasis upon the ontological primacy of events has meant that substance has been either largely ignored or taken to be a high order abstraction.

This has led to the, not unreasonable, charge, made by for instance Wallack (1980) and Siebers (2003), that what is sometimes called the 'traditional interpretation' of Whitehead's metaphysics (which has defined what has come to be

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[12] "Our lives are dominated by enduring things, each experienced as a unity of many occasions bound together by the force of inheritance" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 280).

called 'process metaphysics') has also encouraged an implicit return to a type of scientific reductionism – that Whitehead would have opposed – in which processes or events are now substituted for substances. This denial of substance, implicit in its failure to advance a reformed conception of substance, is based upon a false dilemma between these two positions that Whitehead never advocated (Siebers 2003: 63). For instance, Whitehead's ([1929] 1978: 18-9) own remark to the effect that in his philosophy "the notion of 'substance' is transformed into that of 'actual entity'" or actual occasion reflects ontological concerns, that is, the nature of the final real existents. Elsewhere, he ([1929] 1978: 79) is more sympathetic to the pragmatic utility of the notion:

> The simple notion of an enduring substance sustaining persistent qualities, either essentially or accidentally, expresses a useful abstraction for many purposes of life. But whenever we try to use it as a fundamental statement of the nature of things, it proves itself mistaken. It arose from a mistake and it has never succeeded in any of its applications. But it has had one success: it has entrenched itself in language, in Aristotelian logic, and in metaphysics. For its employment in language and logic there is [. . .] a sound pragmatic defence. But in metaphysics the concept is sheer error.

I want to argue that the pragmatic and axiological features of Whitehead's philosophy, which have tended to be neglected in the traditional interpretation's preoccupation with his ontology and epistemology, actually make it ideally suited to provide not just a critique of certain traditional conceptions of substance but also the justification for a prominent role for a reformed conception of substance.

Before turning to the traditional interpretation, it will be useful to first clarify the relationship of substance to Whitehead's conception of the relationship between objects and events that we encountered earlier. For Whitehead, objects are possible, not actual, demarcations or forms of definiteness. The factor of discrete demarcation or definiteness enters only with actualisation. Actuality is of this

or that character to the exclusion of all else. Only with actualisation is a precise demarcation made.

This forms the basis for the contrast between the continuity of the possible constituted by objects and the abruptness or discreteness of the actual constituted by events, which forms the basis for his epochal conception of action, one of the more distinctive features of Whitehead's philosophy. Continuity characterises potentiality; discreteness, actuality. Continuity pertains to actuality only in the derivative sense in which it incorporates actualised objects. Hence, Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 61) warned that:

> [i]t cannot be too clearly understood that some chief notions of European thought were framed under the influence of a misapprehension, only partially corrected by the scientific progress of the last century. This mistake consists in the confusion of mere potentiality with actuality. Continuity concerns what is potential, whereas actuality is incurably atomic.

For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 35, 18), "there is a becoming of continuity but no continuity of becoming", since events or occasions are indivisible, atomic unities or wholes, "are drops of experience, complex and interdependent". As the fundamental unit of process, the becoming of an individual occasion is inherently transitory and so momentary. An occasion becomes and, in this, is what it is, but does not *change*. This is because, as we shall see, the concrescence or process of an individual occasion's becoming is clearly distinguished from the succession of such events or becomings that is *change*.[13] Upon ceasing to become, an occasion's function changes, in that it realises value as it becomes, but, having become, constitutes one of the given, irrevocable and unchangeable facts which constitute the past inherited by the becoming of subsequent occasions which succeed it. Occasions are constituted by their very becoming, so their process

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[13] As against the view that occasions (and so actuality) are entirely momentary and so not atomic, indivisible wholes or unities, Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 68-9) takes the side of Zeno against the mathematicians. For these arguments, see Code (1985) and Sipfle (1969).

of becoming cannot be change, which is confined to societies of such events, which, as constituted by more than one occasion, can thereby endure through time and so change. The only enduring entities, then, are the societies which such occasions or events form together, so there is no traditional enduring agent of action to which acts can be attributed. In this way, enduring things are understood as societies of events and we can see how this notion of the individual enduring thing and so substance is more abstract than an individual, concrete event and so needs to be distinguished from it. (Leclerc 1958b)

However, the traditional interpretation of Whitehead's metaphysics tends to press the view that substance is abstract further, suggesting that it is a mere abstraction, thereby depreciating its significance and importance.[14] This is because the traditional interpretation tends to focus upon the self-determination of actual occasions through their internal process of becoming or 'concrescence'. This is ultimately too one sided an emphasis, since it is at odds with Whitehead's claim that two contrasting processes, not only that of concrescence, but also of 'transition', are involved in the constitution of every actual occasion. This contrast between two different types of process underpins the contrast between the two different types of causes in Whitehead's philosophy, teleological or final self-causation and efficient other-causation. These in turn underpin the two currents of significance which form the basis for the balanced interplay which is fundamental to Whitehead's inherently transactional or interactive conception of value. Hence, the traditional interpretation tends to exaggerate the freedom of self determination of individual actual occasions, while depreciating the role of their inheritance from their antecedent context of occurrence and so the realistic or naturalistic side of Whitehead's philosophy. (Nobo 1979, Shaviro 2008)

The traditional interpretation cannot therefore find the same balance between these idealistic and realistic elements within a broader, systematic interpretation, such as Nobo's (1986), which I shall return to shortly, can. In this it not only misconstrues the broad outline of his metaphysics, but also misunderstands those

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[14] For the latter view, see, for instance, Hartshorne (1951).

aspects of his philosophy which are dependent upon this deeper, more extensive synthesis such as his conceptions of value and experience. For it undermines the balance that I want to argue is also central to Whitehead's phenomenology, since value is central to his account of experience, and, with it, his conception of the experience of substance or enduring things. Given the centrality of the appeal to experience in Whitehead's philosophy, like others of this period, the significance of this is difficult to overstate (Reck 1961: 166). This will become clearer when I discuss his conceptions of these notions in greater detail in Chapter Three.

The reformed conception of substance that I want to develop here is a specifically symbolic and axiological conception, situated within a broader pragmatic conception of experience within which substance retains its central role. That is, I want to argue that a pragmatic metaphysics such as Whitehead's, in spite of its characteristic emphasis of process or activity, need be in no hurry to abandon or depreciate the significance of the notion of substance. Indeed, it might be argued that it is precisely the mistaken depreciation of the notion of substance that has set back the engagement of such pragmatic with more orthodox positions in which substance is often taken to be central, although as an ontological or metaphysical notion. What is required is a revised conception of substance, for the significance of this notion is, on this view, a corollary of rather than than contrary to the significance of action within a pragmatic metaphysics, once an ontological conception of substance is abandoned.

Substance is the predominant feature in experience precisely because it is prominent or salient within experience. This salience is inherently variable. It is not simply a feature of the dependence of the perceiver's perceptions on their perceptual environment, nor of their freedom and so independence of that environment, but the integrated combination and so coordination of the two. In Whitehead's symbolic account of perception, symbolism fundamentally involves the attribution of importance as a guide for subsequent action. The "liveliness of living things", as we saw earlier, and of experience, as a paradigm of activity, is the joint product of a tension or contrast between the two poles which lie at its base

that Whitehead (1925: 98) called the "two sides to nature". Substances are, on this view, not modelled on objects as "independent entities, each capable of isolation", but are loci of significance or importance that form the basis for the coordination of activities within an environment.

Indeed, it might well be argued that only in this way can the significance of the event ontology for a pragmatic conception of experience be fully appreciated. For, an event ontology, on account of being essentially temporal and active, has the potential to inject agency into the heart of appearance in a way which a substance metaphysics cannot. Appearance is, on this view, not a given but rather the product of agency. Likewise, substance, in so far as it is the predominant content of appearance, is both a product of activity and of fundamental relevance to activity itself as the basis for its coordination. In this, it is a comparatively reflexive conception of substance.

Like substance, communication and, with it, coordination are not central features of Whitehead's philosophy as much as his event ontology renders these latent issues. They are also implicit in his conceptions of value as grounded in harmony and of art and linguistic expression as emotional in content (Whitehead 1938: Chapter II).

Ironically, it is the notion of substance (and with it, reference) that I want to argue ultimately demands an especially pragmatic conception. This will, however, require developing Whitehead's accounts of both symbolism and of linguistic communication beyond the outlines of these that we find in his philosophy. In this respect, the more socially oriented, pragmatic philosophies of Mead and Dewey and the micro-sociology of Goffman are perhaps more indicative of its significance.

Whitehead's philosophy is best understood as a response to the problems raised by philosophy in the seventeenth century, problems which re-emerged with the revolutions in the physical and formal sciences during the first half of the twentieth century. His philosophy, therefore, reflects the experiential emphasis of

seventeenth century philosophy rather than either the nineteenth century's concern with man and society or the linguistic turn of the twentieth century.[15] For this reason, the consequences of Whitehead's philosophy for both language and the social sciences are much less clear and so more conjectural.

Indeed, like his precursor Henri Bergson, Whitehead was ambivalent towards ordinary language, likewise decrying its inadequacy in disclosing those fundamental realities which consist in the "larger generalities".[16] For this very reason, for Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 11), "philosophy redesigns language in the same way that, in a physical science, pre-existing appliances are redesigned." "[W]ords must be stretched beyond their common meanings in the marketplace" (1938: 16)

However, these remarks also disclose the fact that Whitehead's pragmatic conception of language is, in fact, very different from Bergson's – that language is an instrument of the intellect – being, in fact, closer to Bergson's notion of intuition. That is, while Bergson's intellectualistic account is closer to the modern understanding of language, Whitehead's is much more pragmatic. So the grounds for his ambivalence towards language are, in fact, entirely different from Bergson's.[17]

The focus of this thesis is, then, not upon the momentary events or occasions that make up Whitehead's ontology, although the conception of substance and its ex-

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[15] For instance, Rorty (1967: 153) makes use of this to sideline Whitehead's metaphysics by arguing that "Whitehead's attempt to break free from the substance-property framework [...] was the last, and the most important attempt to perform this task prior to the "linguistic turn." But once this turn is taken, new methods of carrying out this task become available."

[16] Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 11) accepts that:

> It is true that the general agreement of mankind as to experienced facts is best expressed in language. But the language of literature breaks down precisely at the task of expressing in explicit form the larger generalities the very realities which metaphysics seeks to express.

[17] On the paradoxical relationship of Bergson's view of language to his philosophy in general, see Mullarkey (1999: chapter 7). For the mistaken view, that Whitehead's ambivalence towards language has roughly the same basis as Bergson's, see Urban (1938, 1951).

pression advanced here is one which presupposes just such an underlying event ontology. That is, the final real things are still taken to be momentary events. But what natural language is fundamentally concerned with is appearance, which Whitehead takes to have an essentially axiological or functional organisation. So it is Whitehead's phenomenology, which is in many ways as distinctive as his underlying metaphysics, which will be my primary concern in developing the capacity of his philosophy to address the nature of natural languages in a novel, highly pragmatic way.

1.6 Interpretations of Whitehead's philosophy

In this thesis, I am advancing an interpretive position closer to Nobo's (1986) 'systematic' interpretation of Whitehead's metaphysics than the (at least historically) more orthodox 'traditional' interpretation. This thesis is not the place to attempt a detailed comparison of these two interpretive positions; however, the differences between them are sufficiently marked and significant to warrant some discussion.[18]

What is most attractive about Nobo's interpretation is that it presents a much more comprehensive interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy at its most encompassing and so challenging, both in terms of the scope of the philosophy itself and the interpretation's coverage of Whitehead's works. In particular, I have adopted this interpretation because it facilitates an understanding of Whitehead's aesthetics and so his theory of value and phenomenology in particular. It is worth noting, however, that Nobo's position does not especially concern itself with these topics so much as his:

> most fundamental vision of the ultimate nature of reality. The vision
> in question is the vision of universal solidarity: that the entire uni-
> verse is somehow to be found within each of its ultimate concrete

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[18] For discussions of the comparative merits of these positions see Lucas (1989), Nobo (1998) and Ford (1987, 1998).

> components or, equivalently, that the final real actualities of which
> the universe is composed are each in all and all in each. (Nobo 1986:
> xiv)

However, it is important to note that this vision and the synthesis which follows from it which is Nobo's fundamental concern forms the basis for, and so is presupposed by the aesthetic synthesis which is most evident in the later and so more advanced phases or stages of experience, of which language is one part.

The traditional interpretation, by contrast, has focused particularly upon certain sections, especially within the third part, of *Process and Reality* thereby tending to depreciate the significance both of Whitehead's other writings and even of other parts, particularly the second, within this very work.[19] One source of this style of interpretation may lie the distinctions between pre-systematic, systematic and post-systematic statements introduced in Christian's (1959: 3) influential interpretation of Whitehead's metaphysics, which aimed to avoid confusing these three different types of statement by taking them to be quite distinct from one another.[20] More recently, this style of interpretation has been reinforced by Ford's hypothesis that Whitehead's works can be divided into genetic layers corresponding to stages in the emergence of Whitehead's mature philosophical position.[21] In this way, Ford (2005: 118) attempts to justify the fact that Chris-

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[19] See the exchanges between Nobo (1998) and Ford (1998).

[20] Christian (1959: 3) attempts to justify the need for these distinctions as follows:

> In some passages Whitehead is evoking and describing the concrete experiences he takes as his basic data. This we might call presystematic language. In others he is constructing and developing the concepts which compose his categoreal scheme. This we might call systematic language. Elsewhere he uses these systematic terms to interpret sense experience, the order of nature, art, morality, or religion. Here he is applying his scheme, and we might call this postsystematic language. These phases of his exposition correspond to the three phases of an airplane flight, with which he compares speculative philosophy. It begins on the ground; it rises into the air; and it returns to earth. Many blunders can be avoided if we do not mistake nonsystematic remarks for systematic ones.

[21] Ford (1998: 334) describes his approach and its relation to traditional interpretation as follows (1998: 334):

tian's commentary "mostly ignores part two". He proposes:

> that the mature theory, which we may designate as the prehension
> theory, is basically located in part three. Part two contains another
> preliminary theory, the datum theory. [...] While efficient causation
> is prominent in this initial theory, it all but disappears in the final
> theory.

As Nobo (1998: 58) observes, one of the more striking difficulties with this
interpretive strategy, like the traditional interpretation that it reinforces, is that it:

> is diametrically opposed to the one required by Whitehead's many
> statements to the effect that his books are intended to supplement
> one another's omissions and compressions and that, consequently,
> his system of thought, including his basic metaphysical system, must
> be carefully gleaned from all his philosophical works.

Following Nobo's basic thesis and developing it, I want to argue that the tra-
ditional interpretation has not only tended to oversimplify Whitehead's meta-
physics but also, in the process, to have rendered less intelligible Whitehead's
less directly metaphysical, for instance phenomenological and aesthetic claims
that (contrary to Christian's distinctions) implicitly depend upon them. That is,
as we shall see, since Whitehead's aesthetic account of experience comprises a

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The scope of the unit of interpretation suggests how apparent conflicts and anoma-
lies in the text are to be handled. If all the texts together constitute a single unit
of interpretation, there should be few if any real conflicts. Thus the systematic
approach hopes to find some way in which the various texts can be harmonized.
The traditional approach will also use harmonization to some extent, but minor
inconsistencies can be dismissed as "pre-systematic" passages. My genetic ap-
proach expects any one layer to be self-consistent, but in many cases it can use
these inconsistencies and discrepancies as clues by which to differentiate genetic
layers, thereby enabling us to reconstruct Whitehead's development. [...] My ap-
proach has primary importance for what it tells us about how his philosophical
system emerged.

microcosm of his broader philosophy, the problem of value is, in turn, a micro-cosm of the broader problem of the solidarity of the universe as a whole, since as Whitehead himself notes, the notion of value is central to his metaphysical synthesis.

Other more recent interpretations, such as the 'ecstatic' interpretation of Jones and Henning, have also emphasised the axiological import of Whitehead's views more than either the traditional interpretation or Nobo's does.[22] However, they have also sought to do so by abolishing many of the distinctions which would seem to be central to the very contrasts that form the basis for Whitehead's account of value. This interpretation would, therefore, also seem to undermine the account of value which it, quite rightly, attempts to make central by neglecting other features of Whitehead's philosophy.[23] It would therefore seem to make the most sense to develop Nobo's interpretation, in which the fundamental features of Whitehead's broader philosophy and so his account of value can be preserved and developed.

Whitehead's philosophy is an inherently complex, controversial and demanding one, being a complete re-valuation of the presuppositions of modern philoso-phy.[24] It will therefore not be possible to present it in anything like its entirety here. However, while there is much that is revolutionary and demanding about Whitehead's philosophy, I want to argue that the appeal of his vision does not necessarily hinge upon its more arcane or scholastic features. Nor do I think that, at least in its broad outlines, it is a vision entirely limited to Whitehead's phi-

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[22] For introductions to the ecstatic interpretation see Henning (2005a) and Jones (1999).

[23] Indeed, Nobo (1999) implicitly makes this same point in criticising the way in which Jones' ecstatic interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy grants a particularly prominent place to Whitehead's notion of intensity but only at the expense of many others. That Henning (2005b) uses Hartshorne's rather than Whitehead's theory of value may also be indicative of this being a potential problem for this interpretation.

[24] As Stephen David Ross (1983: vii) has observed: "No one willing to submit to the rigors of a system of novel metaphysical categories can remain untouched by the power of Whitehead's vision. Yet few works of philosophy place such extraordinary demands upon their readers. Few philosophers demand that their readers so completely re-evaluate their prior commitments and preconceptions".

losophy. In particular, an emphasis upon the importance of communication and of valuation has long been championed by the social sciences. Indeed, the influence of pragmatism and pragmatic forms of thought has been significant in these disciplines. While the social sciences are not necessarily any less arcane than Whitehead's philosophy, they do at least provide a comparatively sympathetic perspective on the same phenomena.

The social sciences, by their very nature, stress the distributed nature of social activity and so take communication seriously both as an activity in its own right and as a condition of successful action. Within these disciplines, communication has an essential and complex role in the coordination of activities. Given their particular emphasis upon agency, it is then not surprising that it is in these sciences that valuation is also taken most seriously. This is perhaps most striking in the case of economics, as the most theoretical of the social sciences.

Indeed, Harris and Taylor (1997: 223) argue that Saussure's use of the term value (*valeur*) for the relations between signs was "deliberately chosen because of its economic implications. For Saussure, any *langue* operates very much the same way as an economic system". However, Saussure emphasises system rather than agency. So, just as he (like Durkheim) tends to neglect the individual members of society, he, likewise, breaks with the economic tradition's emphasis upon the central role of valuation in the practical rationality of economic decision making and activity in general. Moreover, Saussure's emphasis upon binary oppositions is also at odds with the centrality of valuation and leads to an implicit dualism at odds with the emphasis on pervasive interdependence within modern economics.

Whitehead's position is, likewise, not predominantly representational, being much closer to the pragmatic view that language is an activity essentially concerned with the organisation and coordination of other activities.[25] This is congruent

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[25] "Language was developed in response to the excitements of practical actions. It is concerned with the prominent facts. Such facts are those seized upon by consciousness for detailed examination, with the view of emotional response leading to immediate purposeful action" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 163). Also see Fortescue (2001: 224).

with the content which he takes it to communicate, importance, which is, as we shall see, central to his reconceptualisation of experience and so subjectivity. Its basis is, therefore, more pragmatic than the great majority of linguistic theories since it centres on a type of content which linguistic theories on account of their abstractness rarely emphasise.

On the pragmatic view, the grammar of a language is best understood as being the vehicle for the communication of inherently variable valuations in the manner of a price mechanism rather than being a shared and so inherently static system of classification, which has has proven to be overwhelmingly popular in linguistics. Such variability is essential to the task of both motivating and coordinating activities of a multiplicity of diverse social actors in diverse circumstances. In this way, economics is non-representational in a much more pragmatic and so functional way than structuralism. Prices, for instance, are not understood representationally or impersonally but as motivations to both buyers and sellers in markets to adjust their activities to equilibrate the market as a whole.

However, for our purposes, the social science with the most immediate interest in language in particular as a medium of communication is sociology, which is also where pragmatism has been most influential. Although the classical American tradition in philosophy produced a number of distinctive and indeed influential accounts of language, unfortunately, it failed to produce anything like a fully developed account of language as action.[26] Indeed, some of its most articulate exponents may well be found subsequently in other disciplines influenced by it – such as Erving Goffman's influential micro-sociology.

Goffman's pragmatism is particularly apparent from the central role that the notion of 'face', a reflexive conception of self-worth felt by participants, plays in motivating and, thereby, regulating their activities. Such an account of social

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[26] For instance, Peirce's semiotics which, although clearly neither dualistic nor nominalistic compared to Saussure's, nonetheless pre-dates the development of the theories of value and so action of the later classical pragmatists (Mead and Dewey).

agency, therefore, centres on a conception of the self understood primarily in terms of agency and so valuation, rather than of categorisation or knowledge. That is, as a product of agency, language is, on this view, an activity inherently expressive of face and so reflexive valuations rather than an impersonal system which can be studied independently of its users.

A pragmatic conception of grammar, therefore, sees the expression of values as intrinsic to the organisation of linguistic activity. Such activities are organised hierarchically such that these values, intrinsic to the organisation of activities themselves, are distinct from, although not independent of, the more extrinsic values more overtly or explicitly expressed by such activities. In this way, the grammar of a language can be understood to organise the conduct of linguistic activities in much the same way in which Goffman (1967: 12) understands face to face interactions to be organised through the maintenance of face:

> Ordinarily, maintenance of face is a condition of interaction, not its objective. Usual objectives, such as gaining face for oneself, giving free expression to one's true beliefs, introducing depreciating information about the others, or solving problems and performing tasks, are typically pursued in such a way as to be consistent with the maintenance of face. To study face-saving is to study the traffic rules of social interaction; one learns about the code the person adheres to in his movement across the paths and designs of others, but not where he is going, or why he wants to get there. One does not even learn why he is ready to follow the code, for a large number of different motives can equally lead him to do so.

So, central to such an account is an account of activity, central to which will be a conception of the self. This is because language – and grammar in particular – is not just a means of representation but also of expression. Indeed, within this pragmatic conception, grammatical expression is predominantly expressive as the predominant means of coordinating linguistic activity itself.

The fundamental claim of this thesis is that language in general and the grammar of languages in particular is concerned with communication as a solution

to the problem of coordinating actions and so of concerted action. Since the primary means of coordinating actions are, on this view, values and not categories, a satisfactory account of grammar hinges upon an account of the nature and communication of values rather than of categories. The grammar of a language concerns dynamic and situated problems of coordination involved in the organisation of discourse rather than of static schemes of thought.

Whitehead's conception of value, which only emerges clearly in his later writings, is diffused throughout his writings. The same has to be said for Whitehead's views on language. However, if language is central to coordination, then it offers the prospect of being an ideal domain for value inquiry. Indeed, I want to argue that an axiological conception of substance, which breaks down the distinction between so-called substance and process metaphysics, may well be most effectively argued for in terms of the case for an axiological conception of reference. Indeed, its linguistic analogue, nominal expression, will be central to this study.

Whitehead's philosophy, like that of the pragmatists, provides a metaphysics and so philosophical foundation for the social sciences. However, it will not be possible to directly address these disciplines here. And although the theoretical stance adopted here is much closer to that of the social sciences than that predominant within linguistics, its subject matter falls largely within the scope of linguistics and philosophy.

One way to approach these interpretive differences is to consider the earlier attempt to relate Whitehead to linguistics by Michael Fortescue. Fortescue (2001: 1) denies the need for a Whiteheadian linguistics, seemingly accepting the current range of positions within linguistics. The position argued for in this study is, in this respect, quite different, since it argues that the development of functional accounts of language within linguistics has been comparatively limited due to the overwhelming acceptance of the shared object conception. Although it is appropriate for Fortescue to emphasise the contrast between more formal, in the sense of abstract, and more functional positions within linguistics, I want to argue that

as it stands, linguistics as a discipline does not present the full range of potential theoretical positions that might be adopted towards natural languages. In particular, the functionalist orientations which Fortescue (2001: 3) himself confesses to be more sympathetic towards are far too weakly functional to be particularly representative of a fully contrastive functional position. More particularly, I want to argue that a highly pragmatic position like Whitehead's is simply nowhere to be found within contemporary linguistics on account of its being more radically pragmatic. This is why a theoretical position like Whitehead's provides far more than the broader meta-theoretical position on the existing range of theories within linguistics that Fortescue tends to deploy it as.

A Whiteheadian linguistics is required, then, because, although something like it might be present in certain other disciplines, it represents, as far as I can see, a fundamental challenge to all contemporary theoretical positions within linguistics. The problem is the comparative absence of functional accounts in a strong (what I am calling a 'pragmatic') sense in linguistics. This tends to undermine Fortescue's otherwise not unreasonable attempts to relate Whitehead's philosophy to the interplay between formalism and functionalism within linguistics. For I want to argue that Whitehead's account of language has to be understood as more pragmatic than those found in linguistics, in which case it is a position which does much more than simply span the formal/functional divide within the discipline. That is, from this point of view, Fortescue's survey fails to appreciate just how radically different Whitehead's position is. However, it has to be recognised that Whitehead's theoretical position on language is presented, at best, only in outline, while anything like a linguistics is entirely absent.[27]

But such a position has, all the same, I want to argue (if developed, largely on the basis of Whitehead's other claims concerning, for instance the nature of experience and symbolism) the potential to be critical of but also transformative of

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[27] Indeed, Rorty's (1963) interpretation of the significance of the linguistic turn in allowing the need for a metaphysics such as Whitehead's to be bypassed would seem to presume that Whitehead's account of experience does not form the basis for an account of language.

the presuppositions of contemporary linguistics. However, it is not Fortescue's aim to develop such a theory of grammar or linguistics. Instead he presents Whitehead's views largely within the confines of a survey of existing linguistic theories.

Like most interpretations of Whitehead's philosophy, Fortescue's tends to focus on the eternal objects and occasions. Given this tendency to focus upon this level of momentary events, it can be difficult to recognise just how radical Whitehead's vision is in other respects. Moreover, while foundationally useful, this inevitably creates the problem of how to engage with the more everyday entities that dominate, for instance, natural language discourse. As we have seen (see page 26), this is a significant problem, not just for Fortescue but for all interpretations of Whitehead's philosophy. It is central to problems such as the treatment of experiential notions like substance within such a *process* philosophies, since they have often, if unfortunately, defined themselves in opposition to a so-called *substance* metaphysics.[28]

1.7 The aims of this thesis

Many of the more fundamental problems that I am attempting to address within this thesis arise from the attempt to integrate the concerns of different disciplines and, indeed, different types of discipline. I will not have space to consider Whitehead's conception of the relationship between philosophy and the sciences here, as much as it clearly invites it. Much as Whitehead's philosophy attempts to, I have attempted to integrate comparatively macro scale or big picture disciplines such as metaphysics and the social sciences, on the one hand, with comparatively micro or smaller scale disciplines such as linguistics on the other. These two types of discipline tend to have quite different outlooks and so points of focus and emphasis, the former being comparatively motivational and explanatory,

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[28]I am certainly not the first to argue that Whitehead's metaphysics cannot be understood in this reductive way. See Feibleman (1974).

the latter seemingly being much more descriptive and abstract.

The contrast with Halliday's account would seem to particularly exemplify this. At one extreme, metaphysicians typically provide comparatively few examples, focusing instead upon issues of coherence, intelligibility and explanation.[29] At the other extreme, Halliday in particular tends to present an abundance of examples without the same explicit attempt to articulate an explanatory theory.

The former emphasis upon coherence implies a different pace and direction of development which allows the emergence of more complex theories in which theoretical concerns predominate. In particular, such theories are likely to be more coherent, comprehensive and explanatory since they attempt to confront a multitude of different issues simultaneously rather than in a more piecemeal fashion. Such an account, built upon Whitehead's complex metaphysics, would seem to be able to sustain a more complex and subtle account of communication based upon a less reductive conception of the content communicated than its more conventional linguistic competitors. Indeed, American metaphysicians have long been critical of Saussure, especially for his nominalism and the binary organisation of his semiotic with its implicit dualism.[30]

The very ambitiousness of Halliday's account raises questions concerning how

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[29] Some reasons for these characteristics are well articulated by Neville (1981: 67-8):

> [C]osmology begins by attempting to define new basic categories that promise philosophical advancement precisely because of their novelty and their escape from patterns defined by familiar categories. Strictly speaking, if a set of categories is abstract enough to be a cosmology, it is illustrated by everything and, therefore, not significantly by anything. Explanatory examples distort the cosmology by being more specific than is warranted. [...] The rhetorical development of cosmological categories moves from the initial abstract statements to greater application to various aspects of thinking. [...] The long-range usefulness of the cosmology is that when it has provided descriptions of many specific matters, the coherence of its categories allows comparison of specific areas. In turn, this helps identify what is fundamental or most important in all the areas studied.

[30] For recent examples see Bradley (2009) and Grange (1993). In a related way, Shapiro (1989) and Short (1989) discuss Roman Jakobson's failure to come to grips with Peirce's broader philosophy and semiotic in spite of its influence.

it comes together to form a coherent unity, a point on which Halliday is largely silent. An aim at comprehensiveness brings with it the need to address the inherent heterogeneity and internal diversity of natural languages. Halliday's very analytic and so structural functionalism would seem to be his implicit response to this problem. That is, his response to the potential for conflicts between the diverse components of his grammar would seem to be to draw upon his functionalism as a source of divisions with which to isolate and so neutralise them. This means that it can be difficult to know what to make of his more problematic or conflicting claims, which are often isolated from one another only by being placed within different metafunctions and so parts of his theory. Moreover, at the same time, he thereby suppresses the interdependence and unity that is central to pragmatic conceptions of both experience and communication.

The cost of the emphasis of the big picture disciplines upon coherence and motivation is, however, a slower path of development and comparatively less emphasis upon empirical exemplification. One of the clear inadequacies of this thesis, then, might be felt to be the the comparative lack of exemplification relative to what is usual for linguistics. For instance, the examples in this thesis are comparatively limited in number, simple, rather manufactured and only really begin to emerge comparatively late. Nonetheless, even at this early stage, the discussion of individual examples, although still very partial, incomplete and limited in number, tends to be more extended than we find in Halliday. Halliday's account has, by contrast, clearly benefited from what is a wealth of empirical application and so exemplification.

An important aim of this thesis is to begin to construct a fragment of a grammar of English that is intended to be sufficiently detailed to provide some guide as to what the detailed consequences of its subsequent development might look like, so as to invite its further extension and criticism. In terms of language typology, this thesis will be largely limited to a discussion of contemporary English. In retrospect, what I feel I have been most able to provide is a pragmatic vision, focusing on certain key elements of such an account. It is contrastive and

indicative rather than making any real attempt to test the account empirically.

Given the absence of the anything like a developed and so detailed position on linguistic issues within Whitehead's account, it was necessary to begin, at least as a starting point, by appropriating views from a theoretical position which does look at least somewhat similar to the envisioned pragmatic one. The thesis was therefore not initially intended as a critique and it is certainly correct to say that the position developed (or outlined) is too early in its development to be largely focused on providing one. Rather it was an attempt to develop a position in relation to others, in this case, drawing in large part upon Halliday's work.

The critical aspect emerged out of the fact that although there are many broad similarities between these two positions, the details turn out to be, in crucial places, quite different. Halliday, especially in respect to the central subject notions, which I will discuss in Chapter Five, places contents in quite different locations, being the inverse, of where Whitehead would seem to require them. Moreover, I have argued that reference, as indexical, has the most variable content, while Halliday, as we shall see in Chapter Six, takes it to have the most stable content. In this way, the two positions would, in certain important respects, seem to actually turn out to be the reverse of one another and so could hardly share the same justification. What would seem to allow this to happen is that Halliday's conception of communication remains far less expressivist in orientation, still relying upon an essential arbitrariness of the sign. In this respect, it remains far less functional in terms of its conception of communication than the admittedly very functional, pragmatic position which has significant consequences for both the content and the form of grammatical signs. As such, something needed to be said about these differences and their sources or origins, which I am inclined to trace the very different starting points which bring with them a very different emphasis and focus in each case.

It would have, of course, been ideal if the two positions had proven to be entirely complementary and so could have easily been combined into a single, more encompassing conception broader that either alone. However, as I shall argued,

I do not think that this was possible given both the more general and the more particular points of incompatibility between the two positions.

What I have particularly stressed are the tensions between Halliday's functionalism and his structuralism, although these are not the more usual criticisms made of Halliday's account. This is, no doubt, in large part due to the comparative weakness of functionalism within linguistics, which, as I have noted, has not been pursued very aggressively within this discipline compared with, for instance, the social sciences. Since Halliday's critics have typically been linguists, they have tended to share many of the same presuppositions which are characteristic of the discipline as a whole. This has meant that the majority of criticism to date has tended to be much more detailed and empirical than of the broad theoretical type of criticism advanced here. Moreover, Halliday has not been especially open to criticism, so the account has been little altered by it. Because of this, I want to argue that, although often compelling, these criticisms have not led to the development of a sufficiently radical alternative vision capable of addressing many of the more basic or fundamental criticisms that might be made of Halliday's and other functionalist accounts of grammar.

Unlike Halliday's account, which has been comparatively little affected by this critical literature, the present account owes much to Halliday's critics. In a way, it presents a broader critique and reconfiguration in which it is hoped that many of these, often more detailed, criticisms can find a new home which better enables them to be coordinated with one another.

However, by the same token then, this thesis is not intended to be a survey or discussion of this now large and various critical literature, as excellent surveys of it already exist.[31] Rather, it represents a very specific constructive response to a confluence of fundamental issues. That is, while drawing on this literature, it nonetheless endeavours to develop one particular line of response in some detail. The aim of this thesis is, therefore, essentially constructive as opposed to

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[31] See especially Butler (1985, 2003a, 2003b). For a brief criticism of the more general practices surrounding SFL see the preface to McGregor (1997).

merely exegetical or critical. This requires that criticism occur at sufficient distance from Halliday's account so as to engage with it without thereby becoming completely embroiled in its details. I mainly want to focus on a few crucial points of difference, rather than attempt to deal too directly with and so get too tied up in the difficult task of attempting to determine precisely what Halliday might actually mean, which is likely to divert us from the more central task of understanding language itself. This will mean addressing many points in a comparatively stylised way.

The important points of disagreement which I want to raise, then, are not especially minor ones, although they clearly do have detailed consequences. Nonetheless, Halliday is often not particularly explicit and so clear about the fundamental premises of his theory. This is particularly true of the premises which underlie his functionalism and so his functional semantics. Hence, this critique is drawn, by its subject matter, to focus on regions about which Halliday is not particularly explicit and so are likely to require some sort of reconstruction, if they are to be addressed at all. It will therefore be necessary at points to attempt to construct and draw out the consequences of what is left largely implicit in Halliday's account.

1.8   Chapter outline

In this chapter, I have attempted to establish in very general terms the problematic of the modern period and its consequences for modern theories of language. This has served to establish the background to a basic contrast between the comparatively abstract modern theories of language that threaten to repeat the bifurcation of nature in a bifurcated conception of language and an expressivist, pragmatic alternative which will be developed in outline in the subsequent chapters as follows.

In the next two chapters, I will lay out the foundations of the two theories being contrasted, with a particular emphasis on the respective conceptions of func-

tionalism in each. Since both forms of functionalism are quite unusual, this groundwork takes up much of the early part of the thesis.

In Chapter Two, I therefore provide an overview and preliminary critique of Halliday's metafunctional functionalism, which arises from his preferred formalism, the system network. This functionalism is based upon three very broad, independent groupings of the linguistic forms that make up the system networks that describe English. He attributes functional meaning to these broad groupings, based on a triadic account of the purposes of language use, which can be understood as a revision of those of Bühler, a more pragmatic figure. In this respect, it is very significant for the pragmatic view that I am advancing that the classical American pragmatic tradition, in its more philosophical turn towards general theories of value, also breaks with Bühler's position, only in a different direction from Halliday. It is these contrasting functional starting points that most clearly establish the different functional trajectories of the two theories, which, nonetheless, on account of their shared triadic structure, stand in quite systematic relationships to one another.

In Chapter Three, I develop Whitehead's comparatively neglected accounts of symbolism and aesthetics jointly, particularly through the shared notion of contrast. I begin by outlining his account of experience and of perceptual experience in particular, which forms the basis for his account of symbolism. I argue that his account of the perception of material objects can form the basis for a symbolic and axiological conception of substance in general. This, in turn, forms the basis for an account of reference.

In particular, I argue that the relativity and reflexivity of reference, as manifest in its indexicality, can be understood in terms of the relativity of the valuations that form the basis for its selectivity. Whitehead's comparatively complex conception of the sign is, unlike, for instance, Saussure's dyadic conception, inherently functional. I therefore argue that Whitehead's aesthetic conception of value can provide the content that figures in more advanced, reflexive forms of symbolism such as language. In particular, I outline a comparatively overtly functional con-

ception of the grammar of a language as essentially consisting of different types of reflexive and so indexical expression. Their role is to coordinate the expression of more language transcendent (e.g. lexical) content by functioning in terms of the values immanent to the organisation of language itself as an activity.

In Chapter Four, based on the way Whitehead's epochal conception of action shapes his conception of experience and language, I attempt to reconstruct Halliday's three metafunctions, his groupings of the different types of grammatical expression. In this way, the three metafunctional threads that Halliday understands to run through the clause are reconstrued valuationally on the basis of Whitehead's theory of value as currents or sources of significance. Since such currents are interdependent aspects of experience, understood as a unity rather than as comparatively independent and so isolated from one another (as Halliday takes the metafunctions to be), they lead to a more interdependent and expressive conception of the relationship between the content and form of grammatical expression.

In Chapter Five, I turn to the more specific issues of how these two different conceptions of functionalism can be implemented in an account of the grammar of a language, focusing on the three different subject notions (grammatical Subject, Actor and Theme) that Halliday identifies in contemporary English. These have central although very different roles in these two accounts. Within Halliday's account they function in a comparatively analytic way, indicative of the way the metafunctions divide or partition the grammar into independent functional regions. Within the pragmatic account, on the other hand, these comparatively abstract forms of expression allow language users to freely express or generate values and thereby regulate the direction of their own discourse. In this way, they function more jointly and synthetically to allow language users to reflexively coordinate their linguistic activity.

In Chapter Six, I turn to Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor which addresses the fundamental challenge posed by grammatical variation, the great plasticity and fluidity of the formal makeup of natural languages, that makes a

multiplicity of expressive forms or paraphrases available to their users. Halliday's account, which tends to focus on the ideational, his more representational metafunction, is particularly helpful in understanding Halliday's conception of reference.

In Chapter Seven, I present a pragmatic, expressivist approach to grammatical expression and variation in which variations in and so the plasticity of linguistic form is the natural counterpart of the plasticity and relativity of meaning. In particular, I attempt to explain the behaviour of grammatical variations such as those which function to reorder lexical items, taking as examples the grammatical voices. These can be understood in terms of processes of thematisation and de-thematisation, building upon the earlier account of the Theme and the other subject notions. In this way, such constructions vary the values expressed or projected onto lexical expressions.

The pragmatic account of reference that I develop throughout this work is, at this stage, incomplete, being more of an outline of a discourse oriented account of reference. What it provides is one of the more primary components of a broader discourse oriented, since reflexive, conception of grammar of which it is just one part. Although the development of this conception of reference is the most obvious line of further development, this is, in itself, a major undertaking, requiring engagement with a large, predominantly philosophical, literature. The inherent complexity and ambitiousness of the broader pragmatic conception of discourse, of which it forms one part, means that providing something like a complete theory of discourse along these lines probably lies a considerable way off. Indeed, many of the consequences of this more overtly functional and pragmatic conception of language are largely a matter of conjecture at this point.

This thesis contains comparatively little discussion of the relationship of this particular pragmatic conception to other conceptions besides Halliday's, although a range of contrasting and complementary positions suggest themselves. These include other grammatical theories with a subjective emphasis (such as that of Langacker), other contemporary pragmatic approaches to language (such as Rel-

evance Theory) and micro-sociological pragmatic theories (such as that of Goffman). I will also not be able to discuss the relationship to later classical pragmatist figures such as Dewey, although, as I have already suggested, his views might be argued to be similar to Whitehead's. The exception to this is the very brief discussion in the concluding chapter (Chapter Eight) of the relationship to Gricean and, in particular, neo-Gricean accounts of pragmatics. This is because this relationship is particularly decisive both as an extension and so consequence of the broader thrust of the thesis, while also presenting one the more obvious routes for the development of this position.

Chapter 2

Halliday's metafunctional functionalism

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I want to briefly introduce Halliday's systemic functional grammar before turning to his distinctive form of structural functionalism which will be its main focus. Halliday's functionalism is built on top of what could be interpreted as a generalisation of the word and paradigm formalism, the system network, which most immediately provides a means of representing grammatical paradigms. This forms the basis for many of the features of Halliday's grammar including his functionalism which inherits from it both its abstract structure and its comparatively formal empirical basis. Groupings within these paradigms or system networks allows Halliday to partition the grammar into different functional regions which he calls metafunctions, which will be the focus of this chapter.

In this chapter, I will, therefore, largely be concerned with how Halliday's functionalism emerges out of his method of describing the organisation of linguistic expression. We will begin by way of a consideration of certain binary oppositions or what Halliday prefers to call 'complementarities', such as that between

the grammar and the lexicon, which structure Halliday's account. I want to suggest that these raise the spectre of dualism, one of the central metaphysical issues of the modern period involved in the development of pragmatic philosophies. In this respect, one of the more interesting features of Halliday's functionalism, apart from its formalism, is its characterisation of functionalism in terms of divisions.

The very analytic nature for Halliday's functionalism means that it can be readily analysed into a number of distinct components associated with comparatively independent groupings of systems within the system network that represents a language as a whole. The functional interpretation that Halliday introduces by way of attributing a functional content or semantics to these groupings or metafunctions, however, comes from another quite different set of sources including those much closer to the pragmatic tradition such as Bühler's functions of language. For the different forms of expression that Halliday claims the different metafunctions take as their means of expression, Halliday draws on a different source, in this case, the work of Pike.

Finally, I will attempt to consider the relationships between these different components before presenting some criticisms which might be made of this functionalism based upon this preliminary understanding of it. Most of these can be traced to the tension between Halliday's comparatively abstract, formalistic starting point, which is characteristic of many linguistic theories, and his semantics, which draws on quite different, often more pragmatic traditions, which is, by contrast, less developed within his work. A fundamental issue would then seem to concern how the semantic interpretations, sourced as they are from quite different traditions from the underlying formalism, are reconciled and so rendered compatible with it.

This very analytic emphasis differs from pragmatic theories which have a much greater, philosophically based, concern for the organic unity of experience. In this chapter, I will also introduce criticisms that classical American pragmatic philosophies might make of other, European pragmatic thinkers, such as Bühler

who Halliday draws upon for his functional semantics. I want to suggest that the functions of language of these earlier pragmatic writers, such as Bühler, are replaced, in later philosophical pragmatism, by more general, theories of value which offer the prospect of a broader, organic and more explicitly articulated account of the interdependence of purposes and so of the functions of language and their functional unity, based upon an account of the language user and the role of their activity in the constitution of an expressive unity. Indeed, this compositionality of value can, ultimately, form the basis for an account of the functional compositionality of grammatical expression.

2.2 Word and paradigm and the system networks

Although Halliday does not himself present his views in this way, his systemic approach to language is clearly analogous to that of word and paradigm (WP) in the realm of morphology. WP is particularly suited to describing complex relationships between meaning and form, at the scale of morphology, between morphs and the morphemes expressed by them them which jointly make up words and the content they express, especially when they depart from a comparatively simple one-to-one correspondence between the two. In particular, it can address both the multiple exponence of a single morpheme by a number of (potentially discontinuous) morphs or the cumulative exponence of a number of morphemes by single portmanteau morphs. (Robins 1970, Bauer 2003: 196-99)

As we shall see, cumulative exponence assumes particular importance because, for Halliday, the functional structure of the grammar of a language is organised as it is "in order that we can mean more than one thing at a time when speaking" (Halliday and Martin 1981: 101, Halliday 1975). Indeed, this is one of the features of Halliday's account which I will be attempting to further generalise and so radicalise.

Halliday's conception of language as system is predominantly explicated through two formalisms: system networks and the metafunctions, of which the system

network is the more basic. The system networks further formalise and generalise WP by generalising it to other scales of linguistic organisation than the internal constitution of words and so beyond the linguistic subdiscipline of morphology. It also attempts to generalise it beyond the two dimensions of a traditional tabular paradigm while preserving the essential relatedness of paradigms. That is, the system network formalism represents an attempt to generalise an essentially paradigmatic conception of language.

An important feature of WP is its holism which sees it prioritise the word as a unit of expression over its component parts, morphs. In systemic functional linguistics (SFL), the holism implicit in WP's prioritisation of the word over the morph in morphology is generalized towards conceiving of the whole language as a holistic system. Thus a distinctive feature of SFL is the introduction of an independent element of holism, countering the view that wholes are entirely constituted by their parts. Moreover, the generalisation from WP to SFL is far from trivial because whereas in WP the central division is between the lexical and grammatical formatives involved in the holistic treatment of individual words and paradigms of words, SFL generalises this treatment to a language as a whole and so must introduce simultaneous relations spanning multiple strata, ranks (or scales of expression) and types of meaning. This ultimately raises a great many issues of far greater complexity that are, at best, only implicit in WP given its acceptance of the traditional disciplinary subdivisions which serve to distinguish its explicit concerns from those of, for instance, syntax or phonology.

By privileging systemic description, Halliday prioritises the paradigmatic, whereas for Firth, his immediate precursor in the London school, the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic, were roughly equally important.

> [T]he primary organizing concept is the system, and structure is derivative from it. The basic mode of representation is paradigmatic, and the paradigmatic options are represented simply as features in a system network; they have no structural shape. The process of instantiation, of selecting among these sets of options, is simply the

> accumulation of a list of such features, the building up of a selection expression by movement through the network. The realization process involves the formation of structures. (Halliday and Martin 1981:14-5)

A system network is, then, a paradigmatic way of describing the relationships between linguistic features understood as options or possible choices which can find expression through a structural representation, which is a product of tracing a route through a broader system of system networks.[1] Like other grammars, it has been very much concerned with the generative consequences of such systems, their being related to syntagmatic patterns through realisation rules. Indeed, the emphasis upon the generation of well formed sentences combined with this paradigmatic bias brings with it a production bias, since, as we shall see, the process of interpretation cannot simply be the reverse of this process (Bateman 2008).

2.3 The grammar and the lexicon

The view that Halliday presents of the organisation of the system networks is that they can be read as moving from grammatical to lexical expression as one moves from left to right through the network. That is, the content of the networks becomes more lexical as they increase in delicacy, the dependencies within a system network being taken to describe the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon. Given the static nature of the system networks, this means that the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon is taken to be an essentially stable one.

Halliday defines the fundamental distinction between grammar and lexis, which allows them to be independently identified, formally as follows:

> grammar deals with closed system choices, which may be between items ('this/that', 'I/you/he/she/we/they') or between categories (sin-

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[1] For an example of such a system network, see Figure 2.2 on page 71

> gular/plural, past/present/future); lexis with open set choices, which
> are always between items ('chair/settee/bench/stool', etc.) (Halli-
> day, McIntosh and Strevens 1964: 23)

Since Halliday's definition of grammar is comparatively formal, we have to glean its function from the content that he takes it to convey which he claims is 'general and systemic', in contrast to that of the lexicon which is 'specific and openended [...] as particular' (Halliday 2008: 48). That is "the guiding principle in language is that the more general meanings are expressed through the grammar, and the more specific meanings through the vocabulary" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 5).

This provides us with a broad characterisation of the contrast between the meaning or content expressed by the grammar and the lexicon. Nonetheless, Halliday holds, much as his interpretation of the organisation of the system network suggests, that there is no sharp division between the grammar and the lexicon of a language. Rather, he (2008: 30) claims to "have always argued for the unity of grammar and lexis, as a single unified stratum of lexicogrammar." The grammar and the lexicon are seen as standing in a complementary relationship to one another both having a comparatively language transcendent meaning or content. Where they differ is in the type of object they take, in the case of grammar, an abstract one, in the case of the lexicon, a particular one, thereby mirroring the traditional distinction between universals and particulars.

Halliday favours the generality he claims for the grammar as a basis for explanation, while the lexicon, being understood as lacking this generality is understood in more negative terms. As Butler (1985: 128) observes, the view that the meaning of the grammar is essentially general and so concerns abstract categorisation has been a very attractive one for linguists in general:

> In grammar we are able to make powerful statements, in that we
> can generalise about a large number of possible language events, ab-
> stracting properties which are common to particular language events,

and which thus allow the classification of those events. Because of this, linguists try to describe as much as possible in terms of grammatical patterning.

This forms the basis for the attractiveness of Halliday's notion of the grammarian's dream – the view that this same organisation of the grammar might be extended into the lexicon as well. Moreover, at the same time, it would provide an account of the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon as described by the relationship of 'delicacy' (left to right movement within a system network), the more rightward items being more delicate, lexical and particular in content. That is, the dimension of delicacy is indicative of the depth of a system network and so its reach into the lexicon. So there is a complementarity or dyadic and so fundamentally one dimensional relationship between the grammar and the lexicon. As we shall see, this is independent of Halliday's metafunctions and so is not, in that sense, a functional relationship. That is, for Halliday, the functions of language, described by his three metafunctions which I shall turn to in the next section, are taken to be independent of the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon.

Just how far this conception of grammar can be advanced into lexicon, the later proponents of the grammarian's dream, primarily Hasan (1987) and Tucker (1998), have sought to demonstrate. What they, like Halliday, have tended to not ask is whether this conception of a grammar, which hinges on the notion that the grammar of a language consists in a system of generalisations, is really tenable. That is, as Butler (1985: 128) also notes, "we need to ask whether all formal patterning can be accounted for in terms of grammar."

Indeed, it is far from clear just how Halliday's two views regarding the form of the grammar and the content expressed by it, respectively, relate to one another. Even at this very general level, he provides no account of the basis, whether it be functional or not, of the relationship between the form and the content of grammatical and lexical expressions. Rather, this formalism places very few

restrictions on this relationship and so, in itself, provides little in the way of a motivation or explanation for such relationships.

Indeed, this view of delicacy would also seem to be little real guide to the interpretation of rightwards movement through many system networks, for example, within the Mood network, describing the grammatical system of mood, since rightwards movement within it does not obviously seem to take one any closer to the lexicon. It probably makes more sense, at least in these cases to say that the system networks are *derivationally* organised. Understood in this way, movement through the networks in a rightwards direction tends to occur through the development in the direction of increasingly formally marked, in the sense of less formally economical, forms of expression. So, while the system network formalism has the capacity to describe certain connections between expression types, in particular those relating to dependency within such a network, it does not attempt to motivate these apart from this formal requirement and others deriving from network internal considerations (Martin 1987: 26). That is, system networks would seem to be more descriptive of certain formal relationships between expression types than of semantic relationships.

Nor do Hasan (1987) or Tucker (1998) address the more fundamental issues that I will raise concerning whether this is a coherent understanding of this relationship. Both of these studies relate to the experiential component of the ideational metafunction, verbs in the case of Hasan (1987) and adjectives in the case of Tucker (1998). This tends to confirm, what I have already suggested, that this relationship does not seem to be convincingly borne out by other networks; for example, the Mood network. Given Halliday's focus on the grammar and the limited, exploratory scope of these studies, it looks like we are, for the most part, only presented with case studies in areas where its application is more optimistic.

Another feature of Halliday's conception of the grammar of a language is that is about choice, not necessity. Grammar is a "meaning potential" (what *can* be said) rather than a set of rules (what *must* be said) (van Leeuwen 2008: 23).

Given this, Halliday's conception of grammar tends to be very syntactic and distributional with variation in expression being taken to be indicative of choice.

Since Halliday denies that grammar should be understood in terms of rules which he associates with necessity, this means that his account tends to be at odds with a, perhaps more traditional, morphological conception of grammar in which such notions tend to predominate. So it contrasts with, for instance, Boas' conception of grammar. As Jakobson (1971: 489) observes:

> Grammar, according to Boas, singles out, classifies, and expresses various aspects of experience and, moreover, performs another important function: "it determines those aspects of each experience that *must* be expressed." Boas astutely disclosed the obligatoriness of grammatical categories as the specific feature which distinguishes them from lexical meanings[.] (original emphasis)

This emphasis upon choice, and in particular freedom of choice, also accords with the production bias, which I observed earlier (see page 57). As Harris (1996: 40-41) has argued, any theory which exaggerates the significance of choice ignores the fact that choices can look very different from the point of view of different participants. As he (1996: 41) observes, "'Choice' theory is in effect an attempt to put the speaker in control of communication and ignore the hearer" since the interpreter's task is often more concerned with what is given to them and so with necessity rather than choice.

In these ways the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon bears out the way in which Halliday's conception of language and so grammar, like many others, tends to be polarised, being organised around binary oppositions or what he calls complementarities. Indeed, in much the same way, he ([1977] 2003(3): 99-100) distinguishes two grammatical traditions:

> We can identify, broadly, two images of language: a philosophical-logical view, and a descriptive-ethnographic view. In the former, linguistics is part of philosophy, and grammar is part of logic: in

> the latter, linguistics is part of anthropology, and grammar is part of culture. The former stresses analogy; is prescriptive, or normative, in orientation; and concerned with meaning in relation to truth. The latter stresses anomaly; is descriptive in orientation; and concerned with meaning in relation to rhetorical function. The former sees language as thought, the latter sees language as action. The former represents language as rules; it stresses the formal analysis of sentences, and uses for purposes of idealisation (for deciding what falls within or outside its scope) the criterion of grammaticality (what is, or is not, according to the rule). The latter represents language as choices, or as a resource; it stresses the semantic interpretation of discourse, and uses for idealisation purposes the criterion of acceptability or usage (what occurs or could be envisaged to occur).

It is far from clear that this division is very coherent. For instance, normativity falls on the philosophical-logical side of this divide, and action on the descriptive-ethnographic side of it, yet it is unclear how action can be explained in terms that are not normative. However, such divisions or complementarities do seem very symptomatic of Halliday's conception of language. So, although he ([1977] 2003(3): 99-100) claims that these "two views are in no way contradictory", he clearly tends to adopt and side with only one of these positions, the descriptive-ethnographic one of language as a resource. Significantly, his ([1977] 2003(3): 95) justification for doing so is the seemingly dualistic claim that they "impinge on each other scarcely at all."

This polarisation makes it difficult to achieve balance within such an account. In this respect, Halliday, like Firth before him, never seems able to integrate the competing demands of holism, on the one hand, and context dependence, on the other. That is, while Halliday has used a generalisation of WP to develop Firth's holistic views concerning the prosodic features of language, he has, at the same time, tended to compromise Firth's other concerns, in particular, the development of a contextual account of meaning. So while WP clearly excels relative to other approaches to morphology in addressing complexity arising from certain complex forms of exponence, the primary criticism levelled against it being that

it is too powerful (Bauer 2003: 210-1), it remains the case that these forms of complexity are by their nature essentially static.[2] Nor is it obviously functional and so explanatory. And, because of this, it should be noted that WP, in spite of its sophistication, in its essentials still presupposes what is a comparatively simple, broader conception of language, which I called the 'shared object conception' (see page 15), in which a language consists in a static arrangement of mappings between meanings and linguistic forms which realise them. It, therefore, remains a comparatively abstract conception of language in which activity and the context of expression are both comparatively absent.

This suggests that Halliday has not succeeded in finding the right balance between holism and contextualism because there is comparatively little room for balance within his account. Rather, he would seem to have exaggerated the significance of freedom in linguistic activity at the expense of the element of necessity and so of the role of the given historical context to language use. This is also echoed in his (1985: 76) depreciation of relevance of the truth to language in his claim that "[s]emantics has nothing to do with truth." Firth himself would

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[2] Carl Bache (2008: 196-197) makes a similar criticisms of Halliday's account of tense, when he reflects that:

> I was bothered by the basic design of the IFG tense category in terms of a simple tripartite system generating a large number of tenses by means of recursion. This design strikes me as very similar to early transformational models with a too powerful generative component and a number of largely ad hoc constraints or filters (corresponding to Halliday's stop rules) – models long since abandoned, and with good reason. Another thing that really puzzled me was the large number of tense forms which I had never come across before, and which the native speakers I consulted found strange, unnatural or contrived. It was as if Halliday's category was designed more with a view to describing a very broad meaning potential to be realised by a very broad potential range of tense forms than with a view to capturing the essentials of actual tense usage. A final problem, in my view, was that although IFG grants paradigmatic relations a central place in SFL, in fact gives them a certain priority over syntax, the tense description seemed to be aimed more at devising a technical model for the derivation of an inventory of tense forms than at determining the exact nature of the choice relations involved as they present themselves to the Performer. There was too little focus on what motivates the Performer to select a given tense form in a particular context.

never seem to have resolved these same conflicts within his own views, which may explain in part why they are so often regarded as paradoxical. There is little indication that either Firth or Halliday adopted the more pragmatic response to these problems that they were at least in part exposed to in the views of Malinowski's, the pragmatists and indeed Whitehead which Firth seems to have been familiar with, since this requires a much more developed conception of activity.

Halliday (1984b: 4) defines his views on action in opposition to those of

> [the] philosopher of language [who] is, by design, a purist, one whose conception of language demands a polarisation between the ideal and the actual; this allows him to confine his linguistic pursuits to the study of the ideal, since anything too far removed from this is intractable to the very rigorous demands of his own conception of a theory.

By contrast, he (1984b: 4) favours the opposite extreme of following

> ethnographic or descriptive grammars, which tend to minimise the gap between the ideal and the actual. [...] Ethnographic linguistics [...] does not set up any opposition between the system and its use, but instead attempts to handle code and behaviour under a single rubric.

So, for Halliday, action tends to be identified the instantiation of the abstract potentials present within a system. It thereby tends to reduce situated acts of communication to instantiations of an inherently context independent, shared social object. That is, he tends to equate the inherently context-dependent use of language with the pre-established order of an abstract system, thereby seemingly committing himself to the same type of idealisation that he criticises in the so-called 'philosopher of language'. In this way it assumes that the pre-established or ready-made harmony provided by a system of abstract objects can be transferred to the situated and dynamic process of communication itself.

The organisation of language itself, therefore, on Halliday's view, tends to transcend the activity of language itself. The need for the process of communciation to be managed in a situated way is diminished, since language is understood as an inherently context independent, since abstract, system. Likewise, the need for it to be directed and so for coordination and so communication within the process of communication itself is inherently attenuated by this conception.

I therefore want to argue that the process of communication itself is inherently much more problematic than Halliday would seem to implicitly take it to be, if communication is required for its own operation. If so, the process of communication itself needs to be reflexively organised, this reflexivity being the defining feature of the grammar of a language rather than its abstractness or generality.

This diminution of the process of managing the process of communication itself and so, as I noted earlier, of the audience, is likely to be one reason for the comparatively poor performance of systemic functional grammars as parsers, since it means that the search problems confronted by the audience, who must traverse the system networks in the opposite direction to the speaker, are not managed either (Bateman 2008).

Indeed, as we have seen, Halliday (1984b, 4) would seem to adopt the view that a functional grammar is inherently less demanding and so less disciplined than a formal grammar (see page 64). For instance, he (1996: 12) emphasizes the comparative simplicity of the system network as a mechanism for both the generation and the parsing of texts, noting that:

> the number of choice points encountered in generating or parsing a text is actually rather small - in the network of the verbal group it took only 28 systems to produce some 70,000 selection expressions, and in any one pass the maximum number of systems encountered would be even less, probably half the total, in a representative network. In other words, in selecting one out of half a billion clause types the speaker/listener would be traversing at the most about forty choice points

But as Bateman (2008: 28-29 original emphasis) observes of this claim:

> Actually the claim being made holds *only* for generation - where it is indeed the case that very few of the actual possibilities produced by a network need to be explored when generating a clause. Possible feature selections become relevant only when they are revealed to be relevant by prior paradigmatic choices and it is only those alternatives that need to be considered. During analysis, the situation is different. [...] We do not know which features from a systemic network are relevant and which not. This gives rise to the radical asymmetry of the generation and analysis tasks: in generation, the simple traversal of the network can only find compatible combinations of features because that is what the network leads it to. In analysis, we do not know which path to follow through the network in advance: our task is to *discover* which features apply for the utterances heard or read. We have then to consider *any* of the features that utterances or context suggest might be relevant[.]

In this, Halliday seems to greatly under estimate the complexity of the process of communication itself, even if it is taken to have this abstract form. Moreover, it supports the view that Halliday's metafunctional semantics seems mainly intended to support his theory of linguistic form and so production.

Bateman's computational search task is probably not quite the same as the coordination problem that gives rise to the pragmatic need for expressivism but they are similar in that both invite the organisation of the language to guide the language user in interpreting the content of utterances. The form of the grammar needs to be expressive, if it is to assist the language user in the interpretation of expressions, particularly if their content is inherently variable. The latter is much closer to the pragmatic conception of the grammar in which its content is immanent and central to the coordination of the internal organisation of the communication itself.

As we shall see, pragmatic theories have a pronounced tendency towards a triadic organisation. This contrasts with the structuralist tendency, so evident in Saus-

sure ([1916] 1974), to develop an organisation around binary oppositions which threatens, as we have seen, to, at least implicitly, degenerate into dualisms. Perhaps the most immediately relevant, potential dualism to discuss in relation to these contrasting theoretical responses is that between the context independent and the context dependent features of language, in Hallidayan terms between system and context that I discussed earlier. This contrast is also implicit in the traditional distinction between universals and particulars that I discussed in the introduction (see page 9). As we saw there (see page 11), for Whitehead, activity is understood as a 'dynamic contrast' that allows the preservation of the context independence of context independent content, of 'objects', precisely because they do not stand in a direct relationship to the context. Rather this relationship is mediated by their mode of ingression into this activity, thereby avoiding a collapse into a vicious dualism.[3] In this way, activity, as interactive, is creative and something over and above its interactants, and so inherently resists being reduced to or represented in merely oppositional terms.

The rejection of such unmediated oppositions and so dualisms lies at the heart of the pragmatic conception of experience as an activity of coordination and unification rather than of fragmentation and compartmentalisation. Dualism, on this view, leads to an inability to specify the relationships between oppositions involved and so to scepticism. More contentiously, it undermines the prospects for functionalism, by undermining the prospects for an account of value and so of functional content, a topic which shall be central to the next chapter.

2.4 System networks and Halliday's metafunctional functionalism

WP tends to not directly address and so remains largely neutral with respect to the functional dimension of language. In SFL, as we have seen, greater abstrac-

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[3] I am not aware of Halliday discussing this sort of issue as much as the context of language use is clearly very significant for his conception of language, much as it was for Firth.

tion is introduced by replacing the notion of paradigm with that of system which emphasises and facilitates investigating the relatedness of paradigms. Systems and so paradigms, on this view, form connected networks on the basis of implicit dependencies between the choices they articulate. This allows the dependence and independence of grammatical options of different types to be investigated. That is, such systems can be understood as forming groupings of systems which can, at the same time, be seen to be comparatively independent of other groupings of systems, allowing clusters of systems or paradigms to be identified.

This allows Halliday to introduce functionalism into his system network based conception of language by attributing a functional significance to the broader, independent groupings or clusters that these networks form. In particular, three broad groupings of system networks which he calls the 'metafunctions' based upon the relationships within such system networks, revealed by the greater expressive power of the system network formalism, form the basis for his attempt to provide a functional interpretation of the system that makes up a whole language. These groupings then form the functional basis for attributing three concurrent strands of meaning which he attributes to the clause.

For now, I only want to consider the comparatively abstract structural and formal features that form the basis for these groupings within the system networks before considering the functional semantics that Halliday attributes to them in the next section.

Martin (1984) is the outstanding critical discussion of the paradigmatic basis for the metafunctions, particularly of the criteria used to distinguish them. His main conclusion is that the metafunctions have not been distinguished consistently. Although this finding is not encouraging, I will be more concerned with the fundamental nature of the metafunctional functionalism itself, rather than whether it has been or can be implemented consistently.

It will be helpful to begin with the stylised introduction to the grouping of system networks into metafunctions that Martin (1984: 38-40) provides as a review of

Figure 2.1: Three representative clause systems (Martin 1984: 38)

the nature of the argument motivating the systemic basis for a metafunctional interpretation of the clause.

In Figure 2.1, three stylised fragments from three representative clause systems TRANSITIVITY, MOOD and THEME from the three major groupings of systems are presented as standing in a particular relationship to one another. Each of these systems is simultaneously selected from so they are related by a "both . . . and" relationship, represented by a curly bracket. The immediately subsequent choices within these stylised systems are between alternatives and so consist in a choice between options standing in an "either . . . or", relationship represented by the subsequent square brackets in the same figure, as we move from left to right, the direction of increasing delicacy discussed earlier.

Each of the subsequent six systems can be illustrated by an example sentence (1) to (6) which illustrate an aspect or feature (in parentheses) characterised by the system network in question (Martin 1984: 39).

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(1)   Malachi plays the bass.   (transitive)

(2)   Don plays well.   (intransitive)

(3)   Lester plays the trumpet.   (declarative)

(4)   Does Lester play the trumpet?   (interrogative)

(5)   Does Lester play the trumpet?   (marked Theme)

(6)   Roscoe and Joseph handle the reeds.   (unmarked Theme)

Besides the initial division, the important feature of the development of these networks is that, when further systems are added and so the network as a whole is developed and thereby expanded, as in Figure 2.2 on the facing page, these systems can be seen to sub-classify rather than cross-classify their features. For instance, only interrogative clauses can take polar or wh- forms within the system of mood and only marked theme clauses can be cleft or uncleft. That is, the initial divisions are maintained, rather than being broken down by dependencies which span the different groupings that were initially established. Again, each of these six additional systems is illustrated by an example sentence (7) to (12)(Martin 1984: 40).

(7)   Malachi plays the bass.   (active)

Figure 2.2: Six additional representative clause systems (Martin 1984: 39)

(8)   The bass is played by Malachi.   (passive)

(9)   Does Lester play the trumpet?   (polar)

(10)   What does Lester play?   (wh)

(11)   Its the reeds Roscoe and Joseph handle.   (cleft)

(12)   The reeds Roscoe and Joseph handle.   (uncleft)

Thus, the initial grouping into three comparatively independent networks arising from the initial branching at the level of the clause is sustained throughout the subsequent addition of further systems. What is interesting about this argument is that, in a number of respects, it is more in the way of a demonstration than an argument. The first step, which introduces the three fundamental divisions, which will become the subsequent metafunctional divisions, is not argued for. Rather, it is a consequence of the organisation or presuppositions of the system networks themselves, which are simply taken for granted by it. The paradigmatic criteria for distinguishing different metafunctions are, therefore, primarily articulated in terms of the conditions which govern branching within the system network formalism itself. That is, the metafunctions are very much the outcome of the implicit infrastructure provided by the system network formalism itself. To understand them, we, therefore, have to turn to the presuppositions of the system network formalism itself.

As Martin (1987: 26) observes, the overwhelming criterion motivating features within system networks is a reflex in form. In part, this reflects Martin's own somewhat austere position. But, at the same time, he (1987: 38) is clearly correct to note that comparatively little has emerged in the way of semantic networks, whatever one's attitude might be to this application of this type of formalism. Moreover, if grammatical content is to be described by such systemic semantic networks, then this surely just confirms the suspicion that Halliday's semantics is no more contextual or dynamic than is his conception of grammatical form is, since it is far from obvious how to incorporate contexts or dynamism into system networks. So what would seem to implicitly dominate the system network formalism is the presupposition of a coding conception of language, where

meanings must above all be encoded and so have an immediate reflex in form. Although, as we have seen, WP allows these relationships to be complex ones.

So the basis for the system networks would seem to be predominantly formal and this is what gives rise to the different metafunctions, beginning with the initial division which is claimed to be sustained throughout the network. The branching, which gives rise to the metafunctional groupings, is fundamentally the product of divergences in expressive form. So, these groupings and so Halliday's functional claims are based directly upon formal behaviour of the grammar of a language and so have a largely formal basis. Moreover, the claim that the metafunctions are independent of one another is a claim sufficiently abstract as to suggest that it could well simply be the product of abstraction arising within the system network formalism itself. Nonetheless, it forms the basis for a fundamental presupposition of Halliday's account, that the metafunctions are independent of one another.

At this point, it will also worth noting some other important qualifications and limitations, some of which I will expand upon later in this chapter. As Martin (1984) notes, these divisions are descriptive of a very specific scale of organisation, that at the scale, or what Halliday calls the 'rank', of organisation of the clause. Such groupings do not occur on other ranks such as for instance the phrase, or what Halliday tends to call the 'group'. Moreover, they arise in the description of a particular language, Modern English which has a comparatively fixed or, at least significant, word order. All these factors tend to favour Halliday's rather distributional or analytic conception of grammar. At the same time, each of these points of emphasis functions to depreciate other features of the grammar, which occur on other scales, in other conceptions of grammar or in other types of language. However, these very significant qualifications have only rarely been the object of discussion, in spite of the fact that they would seem to dramatically shape the course of Halliday's account. Rather, what has been taken to be of the greatest significance is a certain semantic interpretation of these divisions, which is the first point at which there is any real suggestion

that these divisions might be interpreted functionally.

2.5   Halliday's metafunctional semantics

In this section, I want to review the functional interpretation that Halliday attributes to the metafunctional groupings and how they relate to a similar constellation of functions to be found within the pragmatic tradition. Halliday's attempts to interpret groupings of system networks functionally would seem to begin in his work on the development of grammar in the language of children. In Halliday (1971), what would later come to be called the metafunctions, which are deployed jointly within an adults language, emerge out of more numerous functions which are deployed individually in what Halliday calls the child's 'protolanguage'.[4] However, Halliday only ever attempts to, somewhat indirectly, argue for the existence of such functions through a very brief survey of accounts of the functions of language in Halliday ([1985] 1989: 15-17). Three broad functions are selected from this survey, seemingly on the basis of their being suggestive of a semantic interpretation applicable to the dominant representative system or systems within these groupings of systems that their content is attributed to.

Halliday (1978: 112) suggests that the first, which he calls the ideational, which he uses, for instance, to characterise the system of Transitivity, concerns the speaker's representation of their experience, in particular, the types of processes and participants involved.

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[4] The contrast between this 'protolanguage' and what Halliday regards as a 'language' give rise to Halliday's ([1985] 1989: 10-1) most explicit discussions of compositionality, an issue that will assume considerable importance in later chapters.

> A [protolanguage] system of this kind is subject to various limitations, the principal one being that it is impossible to mean more than one thing at once. To do that, it is necessary to be able to take the elements of a message apart and recombine them in all sorts of different ways [...] into a single integrated output. [...] It may be possible to *use* tools, with only a protolanguage; but it is certainly not possible to *make* them. To become toolmakers, we had to have language.

> The ideational function represents the speaker's meaning potential as an observer. It is the content function of language, language as 'about something'. [...] It expresses the phenomena of the environment: the things, creatures, objects, actions, events, qualities, states and relations of the world and of our own consciousness, including the phenomenon of language itself.

The second, the interpersonal, exemplified, for instance, by the system of Mood, concerns the relationship of the speaker to their audience.

> The interpersonal component represents the speaker's meaning potential as an intruder. It is the participatory function of language, language as doing something. This is the component through which the speaker intrudes himself into the context of situation, both expressing his own attitudes and judgements and seeking to influence the attitudes and behaviour of others. It expresses the role relationships associated with the situation, including those that are defined by language itself, relationships of questioner-respondent, informer-doubter and the like. (Halliday 1978: 112)

The third, the textual, exemplified by the system of Theme, concerns the way in which the text unfolds and how the two earlier functions relate to one another and the context.

> The textual component represents the speaker's text-forming potential; it is that which makes language relevant. This is the component which provides the texture; that which makes the difference between language that is suspended in vacuo and language that is operational in a context of situation. It expresses the relation of the language to its environment, including both the verbal environment - what has been said or written before - and the nonverbal, situational environment. Hence the textual component has an enabling function with respect to the other two. (Halliday 1978: 112-3)

Now this arrangement of functions is not unlike that we find at places within the pragmatic tradition, one of the more obvious being those of Bühler ([1934]

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1990), which tend to align with the grammatical persons. Halliday's ideational metafunction, for instance, clearly shares some resemblance to Bühler's representation function which presents a third person perspective. In addition to this, there is a more reflexive, first person or expressive function and a comparatively second person or conative function concerned with address and so which shares features with Halliday's interpersonal metafunction.

Halliday's clearest account of the relationship of the metafunctions to Bühler's and so to the pragmatic tradition would seem to be provided in his response to a question by Parret (1974: 94-6):

> My own ideational corresponds very closely to Bühler's representational, except that I want to introduce the further distinction within it between experiential and logical, which corresponds to a fundamental distinction within language itself. My own interpersonal corresponds more or less to the sum of Bühler's conative and expressive, because in the linguistic system these two are not distinguished. Then I need to add a third function, namely the textual function, which you will not find in Malinowski or Bühler or anywhere else, because it is intrinsic to language: it is the function that language has of creating text, of relating itself to the context – to the situation and the preceding text.

These two positions are contrasted diagrammatically in the top half of Figure 2.3 on the next page. The lower half introduces a third position more representative of classical American pragmatic position which I shall introduce shortly.

Halliday (1974: 95) makes little of this marriage of traditions itself, seemingly taking his primary innovation to have been to have added the textual function, "which you will not find in Malinowski or Bühler or anywhere else." He (1970: 166) claims that his functionalism is distinct from that of the classical pragmatic theories of Malinowski and Bühler because it is intrinsic to language itself while theirs are extrinsic to it in the sense that in their work:

Expression (Ausdruck)

A: Bühler's
Functions

Vocative/Address (Appel)   Representation (Darstellung)

Textual

B: Halliday's
Metafunctions

Interpersonal   Ideational
(Logical/Experiential)

Peirce: Firstness 'immediacy'
Whitehead: Symbolic reference

C: Peirce's Categories
& Whitehead's
Modes of Perception

Thirdness 'generality'   Secondness 'opposition'
Presentational immediacy   Causal efficacy

Figure 2.3: Bühler's functions of language contrasted with Halliday's metafunctions, Peirce's categories and Whitehead's mode of perception

> the functions of language are being investigated from an ethnographic
> or a psychological viewpoint, and so the categories that are set up
> are validated on other than linguistic grounds, and will vary accord-
> ing to the particular psychological or sociological theory.

The difficulty with this is that Halliday never addresses the differences between these two traditions concerning just what language *itself* is, simply taking it for granted that a language is an abstract system. So, his claim that the standpoints of Malinowski and Bühler are more external to language than his own seems to be little more than symptomatic of his own presuppositions. What if the pragmatic tradition was, in fact, correct in recognising the centrality of language users themselves in the functional organisation of a language? Then, the textual metafunction could be understood to be, in fact, anticipated by Bühler's expression function as the most reflexive and, indeed, expressive of the functions of language. Indeed, it might be argued that Halliday must implicitly dismiss precisely the more reflexive features of such accounts, when he takes the grammar of a language to be an impersonal system. As we shall see, the textual metafunction turns out to be comparatively problematic for his account, precisely because his account tends to lack an explicit account of the internal workings of language itself. In particular, Halliday's presuppositions concerning the theory of the sign, although possibly the most important in terms of the contrast between the two traditions, are not discussed by him. What Halliday would seem to overlook is just how radically different these two conceptions of language might be.

The development of the pragmatic position within the philosophical tradition also provides grounds for doubting Bühler's particular organisation of the functions of language. However, the revisions that it suggests differ from Halliday's. For instance, Peirce's categories, which stand in a close relationship to his semiotic, make for another, perhaps equally interesting, point of comparison. What these, like Whitehead's philosophy, suggest, is that Bühler's mistake, in his distinguishing a vocative function, of address, from the expression function, was that he, thereby, failed to adequately distinguish abstract expression. This ab-

stract, general and continuous aspect of experience is captured by Peirce's category of thirdness and Whitehead's perceptual mode of presentational immediacy. As we shall see, it is a central feature of the pragmatic critique of modern conceptions of experience that they exaggerate the significance of this abstract aspect relative to the more qualitative, immediate and valuational features of experience represented by Peirce's category of firstness and Whitehead's mode of symbolic reference. Indeed, it may well be the case that Halliday's position is subject to this very criticism, although his position concerning the nature of subjectivity is never very clear. These three broad positions are contrasted diagrammatically in Figure 2.3 on page 77.

Halliday would, then, be correct in claiming that Bühler's expression and the vocative functions are not sufficiently distinct from one another. But the latter pragmatic philosophies would not concur that Halliday corrects this when he collapses Bühler's expression into the vocative rather than his vocative into the expression function. For, doing this means that his account fails to recognise either the distinctiveness of abstract expression or the inherent immediacy and reflexivity of the expression function. That is, the effect of Halliday's reordering of the functions would seem to be to subjectivise what the pragmatist takes to be abstract expression by asserting that it is interpersonal, while de-subjectivising his own textual metafunction and so rendering it less reflexive and so expressive than both pragmatist camps take it to be.

Although Peirce's phenomenological, or in his own terms, phaneroscopic, categories are not central to this thesis, they are, as I have suggested, in many respects similar to Whitehead's, likewise inherently experiential, modes of perception and will also be useful in explicating the contrast between the account of indexicality that I will be advancing and Peirce's.[5] In introducing Whitehead's

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[5] For a comparison of Whitehead and Peirce's metaphysics, whose similarity in views, in spite of the absence of influence, has often been remarked upon, see Lowe (1964) who, however, tends to emphasise their differences. Peirce's metaphysics is more logically based, while Whitehead's has a more experiential and, ultimately, aesthetic basis. For a discussion of Peirce's categories with some reference to to Whitehead's philosophy, see Hartshorne (1884: chapter

modes of perception, which are central to this thesis, at this stage, I am anticipating my discussion of them in the next chapter (see page 98), which I will not attempt to do here.

2.6   The relationship between form and content

Up until this point, we have not considered the nature of the relationship between the functional content that Halliday attributes to the metafunctions and the form that their expression takes. In Halliday ([1979] 2002(1)), he would seem to have been prompted, in part, by Pike's ([1959] 1972) speculative exploration of three different ways in which linguistic expression might be characterised, to attempt to relate these three forms of expression to the metafunctions. In particular, Pike, draws on the analogy for physics of how physical phenomena have been conceived in terms of particles, waves or fields. He attempts to use this triad of notions as the basis for a classification of the alternative forms that linguistic expression might take. Given the three concurrent strands of content within Halliday's metafunctions, it is perhaps not entirely surprising that he should attempt to relate this classification of types of expression, adapted somewhat, to the metafunctions; that is, how each metafunction is associated with, not only a particular characteristic type of functional content, but also a characteristic type of expressive organisation.

Indeed, this venture is in many ways similar to Halliday's likewise seemingly brief and tentative incorporation of functions of language through his engagement with figures like Bühler. Pike's development of these three forms of expression is more sustained, but, at the same time, it is not associated by him with a semantics, let alone a functional semantics. Nonetheless, Halliday's function-

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7, 1964). The notion of synthesis, which is of particular importance for both their respective conceptions of the sign, is associated by Peirce with thirdness, whereas, as we shall see, Whitehead associates it with symbolic reference which is more akin to Peirce's firstness. Whitehead has nothing to compare to Peirce's extensive semiotic, his (1928) principle work on symbolism, which I shall discuss in the next chapter, being, in large part, concerned with the problem of induction.

alism would seem to attempt to bring these two independently developed views together within his own account, attempting to wed the Pikean notions describing the possible types of form of expression, with a semantics deriving in large part from figures like Bühler. Moreover, this is also suggestive of the possibility of a more syntagmatic, as opposed to the paradigmatic or system network based, account of the metafunctions, which, as we shall see in the next chapter, McGregor has attempted to develop further.

Pike (1982: 12-13 original emphasis) summarises these three different 'perspectives' on the form that a language user's activity might take as follows:

> On the one hand, he often acts as if he were cutting up sequences into chunks-into segments or *particles* [...]. On the other hand, he often senses things as somehow flowing together as ripples on the tide, merging into one another in the form of a hierarchy of little *waves* of experiences on still bigger waves. These two perspectives, in turn, are supplemented by a third - the concept of *field* in which intersecting properties of experience cluster into bundles of simultaneous characteristics which together make up the patterns of his experience.

There is most agreement between Halliday and Pike concerning the 'particulate', 'elemental' or 'constituent-like' form of expression, that this is representational and static. For instance, Halliday claims that the ideational and, in particular the experiential subcategory or component of this metafunction, is elemental consisting of "a configuration, or constellation, of discrete elements, each of which makes its own distinctive contribution to the whole" ([1979] 2002(1): 203). Unsurprisingly, he (ibid.: 211-2 original emphasis) claims that "[i]n the experiential mode, reality is represented more concretely, in the form of constructs whose elements make some reference to *things*." Yet, another important aspect of the transitivity system which falls within the experiential subcategory, the role played by verbal expression, which Halliday takes to express processes relating

such things, is, by comparison, backgrounded, although not entirely. For instance, in other places, such as Halliday (1973: 39), this emphasis on *processes* is much more prominent than this emphasis on *things*. So, he would seem to mean that something like the mereological or part/whole organisation associated with constituency representations of linguistic structure is characteristic of this representational function.

However, Halliday (([1979] 2002(1): 212) would seem to concede that the other major subcategory of the ideational, the logical, is both abstract and comparatively unrelated to *things*, when he says, in it "reality is represented in more abstract terms, in the form of abstract relations which are independent of and make no reference to things." It is less clear then how such expression to be regarded as particulate. Indeed, Halliday's conception of the logical would seem to be somewhat unrelated, seemingly focusing on the feature of recursivity.

By contrast, he (ibid.: 205) claims that the interpersonal metafunction is realised by expression that is "prosodic", "strung throughout the clause as a continuous motif or colouring" occurring throughout it, "since the meaning is distributed like a prosody throughout a continuous stretch of discourse." The attribution of a prosodic mode of expression to this metafunction clearly makes reference to the prosodic features of a phonology like Firth's and, indeed, includes intonation, for instance, involved in the expression of the Mood system, central to this metafunction.

There are two aspects to what Halliday (ibid.: 206) takes to be the functional rationale for this prosodic mode of expression. The first is its holism:

> The essence of the meaning potential of this part of the semantic system is that most of the options are associated with the act of meaning as a whole. Even when the meaning is realised in a single word or a phrase, this can be interpolated at more or less any point in the clause; and even when two or more such elements are present at the same time, they still do not go together to form constructions.

The second, is that such forms of expression are somehow especially subjective/intersubjective, which, as we have already seen (see page 78), at least hints at a different conception of experience from the classical American pragmatic position.

> The interpersonal component of meaning is the speaker's ongoing intrusion into the speech situation. It is his perspective on the exchange, his assigning and acting out of roles. Interpersonal meanings cannot easily be expressed as configurations of discrete elements. They may be attached, as connotations, to particular lexical items, like *bastards* above meaning "people" plus "I'm worked up"; but connotations do not enter into constituent-like structural relations. (ibid.: 206)

Halliday (ibid.: 205) is here referring to an earlier example:

> Swearwords and obscenities, also, may occur at any or all points in the clause; it does not matter what segments they are attached to - many writers have noted that such elements readily occur even in the middle of a word. The speaker who says
>
>> Christ they beat the hell out of those bastards
>
> is in fact using a very regular and well-established resource for the expression of meanings of this kind.

So, for Halliday, it is as if valuations must take the form of abstract connotations which seems to have been taken up by the functional systemic literature on appraisal (see page 173).

Halliday ([1979] 2002(1): 211) pairs the interpersonal metafunction with Pike's notion of a *field* of expression. But, since Pike understands the field as a matrix which he, in turn, understands as a generalisation of the notion of a paradigm, it is probably most akin to Halliday's underlying system network formalism, which, as we have seen, shares a similar purpose. However, for Halliday ([1979]

2002(1): 216-7) the more abstract, paradigmatic, system network representation underlies all of the other modes of realisation rather than being just one of them, so Pike and Halliday's two broader conceptions actually part quite considerably at this point.[6]

Finally, expression within the textual metafunction is 'culminative' or 'periodic' and so, echoing Pike's 'wave-like', comprised of:

> 'culminative' structures. [...] What the textual component does is to express the particular semantic status of elements in the discourse by assigning them to the boundaries; this gives special significance to 'coming first' and 'coming last', and so marks off units of the message as extending from one peak of prominence to the next. ([1979] 2002(1): 208-9)

In this case, prominence is associated with, for instance, initial, thematic elements, and the final elements of units, seemingly with the functional rationale of distinguishing the associated unit from others.

Halliday's examples seem somewhat selective, a few paradigmatic and so high profile examples being presented as illustrations. One of the more important set of representatives of the different metafunctions which I have not discussed here are the three subject notions, Subject, Actor and Theme, which I will discuss, including their relationship to the metafunctions, at considerable length in Chapter Four. Given their decisive yet contrasting role in both accounts, they bear out in much greater detail some of the more important consequences of Halliday's metafunctional functionalism, which are felt throughout his grammar.

The functional rationales that Halliday provides for these different forms of expression are also rather limited and have not been developed subsequently either. This, I will suggest, is related to the fact that there is no general explanation spanning all the metafunctions, besides the claim that there are three separate

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[6] This is probably related to the comparatively low significance of morphological forms of expression within Halliday's conception of grammar as compared to Pike's.

functions to be performed, such that they also tend to lack a grounding in a broader functional vision. This bears out his view that the metafunctions and so the expressions within them are comparatively independent of one another, in spite of the fact that all three strands of meaning are held to be jointly present within each clause.

The absence of a unified explanation is also apparent from the different modes or forms of expression not being related to one another, much as the contents of the different metafunctions, discussed earlier (see page 74) were not related to one another either. Just as the forms of grammatical expression are not characterised in such a way as to relate them to the content expressed, the content expressed is not clearly articulated either, especially as a functional content. Indeed, Halliday (1978: 112) claims that the metafunctions are not functions in the sense of 'uses of language', yet they are largely articulated in relation to just such accounts (Halliday [1985] 1989: 15-17).

Another important feature of these functional divisions is that they would seem to leave us with complex entities at both ends of these relationships, both complex forms of expression and complex contents expressed by them. For this reason, both the forms of expression and the content which fall under each of the separate metafunctions would seem to remain very heterogeneous. For instance, both of the largest two metafunctions, the ideational and the interpersonal, seem to include expressions from all the major parts of speech. This has very significant consequences for such a functionalism's capacity to form the basis for an expressively compositional semantics.

There have been a number of attempts to revise Halliday's metafunctional functionalism. Most, such as Martin (1996), following on from Matthiessen (1988) and, indeed, Halliday's ([1979] 2002(1): 209-16) lead, have attempted to reduce the dominance of constituency as the form of expressive realisation, particularly in describing the realisation of the interpersonal and the textual metafunctions.

There have also been two more extensive attempts to reconstruct the metafunc-

tions to date, those of Fawcett (1980) and of McGregor (1990, 1997). Fawcett (1980) takes Halliday's basic system network formalism with its prioritisation of the paradigmatic further, in effect, towards its logical conclusion, leading to the dissolution of the three metafunctions into a multiplicity of such groupings. With this, Fawcett would seem to have to ultimately pushed Halliday's basic formalism in a direction in which the metafunctions as general, abstract groupings, break down. As we have already seen, the metafunctions are not presented by Halliday as having a great deal of unity either formally or semantically. This would seem to reinforce my earlier point that the metafunctions are a construction, in large part, reliant upon a semantic model provided by the pragmatic tradition. Fawcett's position therefore tends to break this link to the pragmatic tradition and so to a pragmatically derived semantics.

Of greater interest here, however, because it preserves the basic triadic structure which is central to a pragmatic functionalism, is McGregor's (1990, 1997) attempt to reconstruct and develop the metafunctions, by attempting to step away from their paradigmatic basis in groupings within system networks. This allows him to revise the formal groupings on the basis of commonalities of form instead. However, McGregor does not do this with the aim of establishing a stronger connection with an alternative semantics, whether pragmatic or otherwise. Indeed, many of McGregor's arguments would still seem to be shaped by Halliday's metafunctional semantics. That is, although rightly critical of Halliday's formal groupings, McGregor is, ultimately, far less revisionary of Halliday's semantics, making his revisions less radical than they might be.

So, although Fawcett (1980) attempts to interpret Halliday's system networks more consistently than Halliday does, which raises similar issues of justification as those raised by Martin (1984), again, my aim here is not so much to render Halliday's system networks and so his formalism more self-consistent. Rather, in the next chapter, it will be to further radicalise McGregor's break with the system network formalism and so with its associated semantics.

2.7   The role of the metafunctions

I now want to attempt to summarise the role of the metafunctions within Halliday's account. A striking feature of Halliday's metafunctions is how abstract they are, being much more abstract than even the system networks that they are based upon. This gives a marked abstract bias to Halliday's account due to both the generality of the metafunctions and their only being constructable at the level of the clause.

Indeed, since the metafunctions arise from the grouping together of related system networks and so are built directly on top of this formalism, as another even more abstract layer, they attain their unity only at the cost of considerable abstraction.

Another important feature of Halliday's functionalism stemming from its abstractness is its reliance upon analogy. For this reason, as much as he has only pursued an account of grammatical form and behaviour that passes beyond its collocational basis in system networks that I discussed in the last section in a comparatively half hearted way, it nonetheless, would seem to assume considerable importance within his overall account all the same. In particular, because, as Martin has noted (see page 73), the collocational account of the metafunctions does not scale well, that is, to ranks either above or below the clause, it is the characteristic forms of expression attributed to the metafunctions which have been used to scale to these other ranks. That is, analogy forms the only real basis for the extension of the metafunctions to other scales or 'ranks' of linguistic organisation. This unstated dependence upon analogy is in spite of the fact that, as we have already seen (see page 61), Halliday rejects the philosophical-logical conception as 'analogist'.

So, although the extension of Halliday's functionalism by analogy to other levels is not unreasonable, it is also not without its own implicit presuppositions. It hinges on the presupposition that functional relationships are comparatively abstract such that they can be extended by analogy and that the other ranks do not

have their own functional organisation. That is, Halliday has no explicit account of how his functionalism adapts to other scales of organisation.

Another important consequence, that I will only be able to discuss in Chapter Four, where I consider the subject notions at length, is the way in which these scaling problems tend to undermine the compositionality of the semantics of Halliday's grammar.

I now want to review the principle limitations and criticisms that might be made of Halliday's functionalism so as to provide a clearer indication of what might be desirable in a reconstruction of the metafunctions. Firstly, one rank, the clause, is privileged over all others due to the metafunctional groupings not scaling particularly well to other ranks. This is arbitrary and greatly limits the scope of the theory, requiring that it be extended on the basis of analogy alone to other ranks. This inability to scale well is one of the more important reasons for why, in spite of being, what looks like a generalisation of WP, the morphological side of Halliday's account is not developed. An important consequence of this is that it undermines the integration of syntax and morphology within his account as they are inherently defined by and function on different scales of organisation, leading to the polarised views regarding the nature of grammar that we have already seen (see page 61). Indeed, it is an excellent example of how the organisation of grammatical expression differs on different scales of organisation.

Secondly, the metafunctions are, seemingly, too heterogeneous in their symbolic contents, both form and behaviour wise, to allow of any consistent explanation of the relationship between the meaning or content and the form or behaviour of individual expressions. This stands in the way of Halliday's metafunctional functionalism contributing to an account of grammatical expressivity and of expressive compositionality, as much as having three independent strands of meaning within the clause does contribute to its capacity to address issues of functional compositionality.

Thirdly, the relationships between the behaviour and form of grammatical ex-

pressions and their content do not seem to be functionally explained or motivated. Rather they are presented as largely arbitrary correlations between types of content and forms of expression.

Although Halliday's attempt to develop a paradigmatic functionalism is ingenious, it remains the case that this represents an attempt to assimilate functionalism to an essentially abstract and formalistic conception of language. Like word and paradigm, it is clearly sophisticated in terms of its capacity to address complex forms of exponence. However, it remains comparatively static and is not inherently functional in orientation. One important ramification of this is its commitment to a coding conception of language. Coding conceptions, by emphasising the observable, tend to marginalise the activity of the language user, since this is not very directly observable.

Before I conclude this chapter, I want to indicate how Halliday's metafunction can, nonetheless, be seen to anticipate a more radically pragmatic conception of grammar. In particular, the pragmatic account might be understood as radicalising Halliday and Martin's (1981: 101) claim that the metafunctions demonstrate how "a grammar evolves in order that we can mean more than one thing at a time", that the grammar of a language allows language users to perform a number of actions at the same time (Halliday 1975).

That the grammar allows language users to do more than one thing at once means that all three different strands of meaning can be present at once. For Halliday, this means that grammaticalisation must involve stratification, in order to allow the different strata to remain independent of one another. However, this is drawn into question by the economy of grammatical expression. Indeed, in spite of the claimed redundancy and so extravagance of Halliday's grammar, multiple functions can, nonetheless, be expressed by a single expression, in which case, it is also able to capture this important aspect of the economy of grammatical expression. In particular, different grammatical functions, situated within different metafunctions, can be realised by a single expression, through cumulative exponence. We shall see examples of what I shall call a 'horizontal' alignment, where

there is a conflation of functions from different metafunctions within the one expression, enhancing the economy of grammatical expression, in the introduction to Chapter four (see page 201).

Such cumulative exponence is implicitly functional because it increases the capacity for heightened economy and so efficiency of communication. Indeed, the reflexivity of a pragmatic account of expression makes economy of expression one of the more important features of grammatical expression. For, it is not just a virtue in itself, particularly if the need for coordination and so communication within the activity of language itself is as pervasive as it claims. For it is then also a necessary and pervasive requirement for efficient and effective communication in general. But, if economy of expression is a pervasive feature of grammatical expression, then this draws into question the presupposition that the metafunctions are independent of one another. For surely this renders the expression of the different metafunctions interdependent. Their claimed independence would seem to simply be a product of the abstractness of Halliday's conception of language. It is then also a comparatively small step to recognise the content of the different metafunctions to also be essentially interdependent, especially if understood to be valuational, since it concerns the coordination of the expression of such content.

Halliday has, however, been reluctant to develop this more pragmatic line of explanation. As we have seen, he has developed a comparatively holistic or paradigmatic functionalism which organises grammatical functions into broad and abstract metafunctional groupings, in keeping with his conception of language as a system shared by language users. But this distances his functionalism from the inherently variability of purposes and intentions of language users, the localised nature of coordination and the concrete circumstances in which particular acts of communication occur, making it comparatively abstract and impersonal.

The pragmatic account, by contrast, takes this more reflexive and relativistic, coordinating role to be the dominant function of the grammar as a whole. Based

upon an organic theory of value, which I will turn to in the next chapter, it stresses the *interdependence* of the functions of language rather than their *independence*. Moreover, since it attempts to articulate the relationship between individual components of expressions and the composite wholes that they form as having a functional basis, it is also more compositional.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an outline of Halliday's metafunctional functionalism as it emerges within his systemic functional grammar. In the process of doing so, I have begun to indicate how, although semantically related, the more philosophically inclined, classical American pragmatic position has tended to diverge from the path that Halliday has taken.

The metafunctions emerge in an interesting way from the system network formalism when applied to English. Halliday chooses to attribute a functional significance to these divisions, but this does not seem to shed much light on their basis as a product of the system network formalism. Throughout, I have stressed that, on account of the largely formal nature of the system networks, the metafunctions would seem to have an essentially formal origin, while the very generality attributed to them suggests that they have an essentially abstract content.

The metafunctions are most significant for Halliday's semantics, but, as we have seen, his semantics seems to play a comparatively minor role within his theory as a whole, which, like most linguistic theories, has a predominantly formal basis. So, as much as his functionalism would seem to be the source of much of his semantics, this is also where his formalism is particularly evident, since it provides the underpinnings of his functionalism. That is, since his semantics derives from the formal features of his functionalism, if anything, Halliday's functional semantics would seem to function to support his account of linguistic form rather than than being independent of it. This bears out his very linguistic starting point, which, as I have emphasised, contrasts from Whitehead's commencing

from much more background concerns, which are comparatively independent of language..

In this chapter, we have also seen that through his functionalism Halliday attempts to combine a series of rather general yet fragmentary theories of form and content in a comparatively loose way without really attempting to articulate the relationships either within or between the semantic and formal components involved. Indeed, Halliday's functionalism would seem to be in large part characterised by the claimed independence of the metafunctions. I will argue that this is only likely to be reinforced by the need to keep the metafunctions isolated from one another on account of tensions between them, which I shall attempt to demonstrate in subsequent chapters.

Within this chapter, we have begun to see the emergence to two very different conceptions of functional organisation. One emerges from an account of the formal features of languages, the other, from an account of, as we shall see in the next chapter, the heterogeneous contrasts unified with experience. Halliday's is more abstract and so uniform in its understanding of functional organisation, while the later takes it to be inherently more heterogeneous, relativistic and plastic, demanding a much more involved and localised process of coordination and unification.

Indeed, these two types of organisation would, therefore, seem to be attempting to address or resolve two very different types of problem. The former is based upon the vision of a language as a largely uniform system or system of systems functioning to generatively construct expressions where problems of coordination both within the organisation of linguistic activity itself and between language users are taken to be comparatively limited. This favours a more abstract, holistic conception of language, which is anticipated by Firth's holistic, prosodic phonology, and WP.

In this way, Halliday's metafunctional functionalism is very broad and general, forming the basis for a holism rather than necessarily functionalism. That is, it

tends to treat functionalism universalistically rather than relativistically. Relativity and difference is taken to only occur at the level of languages, such relativity and difference occuring *between* rather than *within* languages themselves. That is, relativity is both taken to be not be truly general and is not theorised.

The present pragmatic conception, by contrast, is more reflexive, since the relativity of the content and expression of a grammar is, as an activity, also *internal* to the operation of a language. On this view, the role of the grammar of a language is grounded in a vision of language as concerted action, although not without its own measure of constructivism and holism. The task for a pragmatic account of language given its commitment to a revised conception of experience, will be to develop an expressivist account of the formal features of the grammars of languages such that they are able to convey such an explicitly relative functional content. These two different conceptions of language, then, commence from two quite different starting points, the one comparatively formal, the other comparatively experiential and so semantic, which begin to explain, in spite of their similarities, their different priorities and theoretical trajectories.

Chapter 3

A pragmatic conception of symbolism

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I want to begin to present the basis for a more pragmatic alternative to Halliday's systemic functional account of grammar, based upon the divergence between the later classical American pragmatic tradition and Halliday's metafunctional semantics that I began to discuss in the last chapter.

In this chapter, I want to jointly develop Whitehead's accounts of symbolism and aesthetics expressly in relation to one another. These have both been comparatively little developed and are rarely considered together. In the process, I want to attempt to develop a functional and so practical basis for relativity *internal* to a language; indeed, in the case of the grammar *internal* to the organisation of language itself, modelled on the relativity or indexicality of reference.

I want to begin by outlining Whitehead's conception of experience, which centres on his complex account of perception. It is the centrality of the qualitative or valuational features of experience that particularly distinguishes Whitehead's conception of experience (and the classical American tradition in general). I then want to attempt to situate a Whiteheadian and pragmatic reconceptualisation of

substance within this broader conception of experience, as providing the basis for the more focal or significant features of experience.

I will then turn to Whitehead's account of value, which underpins this account of experience. This is organised around the central notions of contrast and balance, both of which arise naturally enough within the organisation of Whitehead's broader philosophy, in which value forms the basis for his metaphysical synthesis.

I will then present an outline of a pragmatic conception of language in which value or significance is the fundamental content communicated by the grammar of a language. This content inherently requires a very different conception of communication from the comparatively abstract conceptions which have traditionally been proposed for the grammar within linguistic theories. This content requires the grammar to be expressive of significance rather than standing in either a merely conventional or an iconic relationship to its object. Moreover, this greater significance immanent to the organisation of language itself forms the basis for a hierarchy of significance, in which the grammar stands in a hierarchical relationship to the lexicon of a language.

3.2 Whitehead's conception of experience and of substance

A central feature of the classical American tradition in philosophy was the development of a conception of experience based, in large part, upon criticisms of the conception of experience to be found in the classical or British empiricism of, for instance, Locke and Hume. Within the classical American tradition, experience is not an isolated event in the mind of an individual but is constituted by interaction between the experiencing self and its environment. Moreover, it is not a passive reception of data from that environment but rather an active, interpretive response to it. Since it is the product of such an interplay, and so not simply a direct correspondence with anything external to the self, it is also a predominantly non-representational conception of experience. Within this tradi-

tion, it is the valuational or intensive features of experience that are particularly central to experience on account of their capacity to motivate action, of which experience itself is a paradigm example. (Neville 1997, Smith 1978)

Whitehead's account of experience embodies all these features along with one of the more complex accounts of value (and so of the qualitative features of experience) within this tradition – embedded within the most ambitious metaphysics of the classical American period. Within this broader philosophy, the place of value is decisive, since "the values of nature are [...] the key to the metaphysical synthesis of existence" (Whitehead 1920: 5).

Values are the key to this synthesis because they mediate between what Whitehead (1925: 98) identifies as the two sides of his conception of nature.

> There are two sides to nature, as it were, antagonistic the one to the other, and yet each essential. The one side is development in creative advance, the essential becomingness of nature. The other side is the permanence of things, the fact that nature can be recognised.

Now, for Whitehead, perception is, likewise, dependent upon both sides of nature. "Perception fades unless it is equally stimulated from both sides of nature" (ibid.: 98). This being the case, there is a need to integrate and so achieve a balance between both sides of nature in spite of their potential antagonism. Perception, then, depends upon both the process of nature and the permanence of nature. That is, it is dependent upon both the apprehension of other concrete events in their particularity and the recognition of objects, the recurrent abstract features of such events. On account of this bipolar nature of action in general and of perception in particular, perception cannot be an essentially simple activity, but contains potentially incompatible and so antagonistic modes which have to be integrated with one another. And, since it essentially concerns the reconciliation of the two sides of nature, perception cannot be passive but, rather, is essentially active. For Whitehead (1925: 14), "perception is always at the utmost

point of creation. [...] We essentially perceive our relations with nature because they are in the making".

It is this essential creativity of perception which gives rise to the contrast between appearance and reality. It is, however, only in conscious experience that the contrast between appearance and reality becomes dominant and, so, of decisive importance. The analysis of conscious experience concerns only the final, higher stages of the development of experience in Whitehead's analysis. Here, I will only be able to provide a brief account of these, comparatively late, conscious stages of experience.

It might be argued that perception is the key to Whitehead's philosophy in general. However, I want to focus here upon the way that it is also foundational to Whitehead's account of symbolism. Since, as we shall see, he understands conscious perceptual experience symbolically, perception provides his account of symbolism with both a non-linguistic foundation and its most basic and ubiquitous application. As he ([1928] 1958: 4) observes of the perception of physical bodies: "Symbolism from sense-presentation to physical bodies is the most natural and widespread of all symbolic modes". Moreover, his conception of symbolism is also inherently functional, since, as we shall see, valuation is fundamental to his very conception of the sign.

Whitehead provides an inherently complex account of perception, based upon three modes of perception, the two pure modes of causal efficacy and presentational immediacy and a third, mixed mode of symbolic reference. I first introduced in their relationship to Peirce's categories and Halliday's and Bühler's functions of language in Figure 2.3 on page 77. Conscious experience is largely confined to the mixed mode of symbolic reference, in which the two pure modes are combined. That is, in symbolic reference, the mode of causal efficacy is united and integrated with the mode of presentational immediacy.

The two pure modes manifest "Concrete Facts of Relatedness" ([1929] 1978: 22), the fundamental, pre-conscious relation between occasions or events that

Whitehead (1925: 72) calls 'prehension' which also forms "the essential unity of an event". "[P]rehensive unification" (ibid.: 69) is an activity or process of appropriating some thing, either already constituted actual entities in the past, or eternal objects. The terms 'physical prehension' and 'conceptual prehension' are used to distinguish prehensions in terms of their objects of appropriation, actual entities or eternal objects respectively.

Of the two pure modes, causal efficacy is the more primitive or primary. In this mode, the world is experienced as inhabited by:

> controlling presences [..., having] the contrary character [to sense-data, being ...] unmanageable, vague, and ill-defined. But for all their vagueness, for all their lack of definition, these controlling presences, these sources of power, these things with an inner life, with their own richness of content, these beings, with the destiny of the world hidden in their natures, are what we want to know about. (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 67)

For Whitehead, perception is always of the past, since only the past is settled and so can be definitely prehended. Physical prehensions are therefore relationships of asymmetrical temporal dependence or conformation. This forms the basis for Whitehead's perspectival realism by which he understands the past realistically without having to be committed to an entirely realistic conception of the experience of the present. This is because, conscious experience is also suffused with the other pure mode of presentational immediacy that is also felt along with the past in the present. Presentational immediacy is (in contrast with the inertia and obstructiveness of causal efficacy) clear, distinct and artificial.

> [T]he disclosure of a contemporary world by presentational immediacy is bound up with the disclosure of the solidarity of actual things by reason of their participation in an impartial system of spatial extension. Beyond this, the knowledge provided by pure presentational immediacy is vivid, precise, and barren. (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 27)

Chapter 3. A pragmatic conception of symbolism

In *Symbolism*, Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 168) is particularly concerned with the possibility of error rather than the sceptical possibilities of traditional epistemology. This is because, owing to the metaphysical grounding of his account of perception in the essential relatedness of nature, "the two pure perceptive modes are incapable of error". Thus error must arise from the additions of higher experience, that is, within the synthetic or impure perceptual mode of symbolic reference. My fundamental concern, on the other hand, will be with the expressivity and so creativity of symbolism as founded upon the creativity of perception, which we have also seen Whitehead stresses, that is the creative side of this capacity for 'error'.

In symbolic reference, in the perception of physical bodies, precise but trivial sense-data such as colours are used as symbols for vague yet important (since efficacious) causal events within the broader environment. However, "[t]here cannot be symbolic reference between percepts derived from one mode and percepts from the other mode, unless in some way these percepts intersect" and "identify them as schemes of presentation of the same world" Whitehead ([1928] 1958: 49, 30). So, for symbolic reference to be possible, there must be an aspect of each mode that plays a dual role and so functions within both modes, only in a different role in each. For "[t]hese modes do not repeat each other; and there is a real diversity of information" (ibid.: 30).

On the one hand, the sense-data are not simply given within presentational immediacy, but derive in part from the active conditioning event within the environment and so from the mode of causal efficacy:

> The sense-data must therefore play a double role in perception. In the mode of presentational immediacy they are projected to exhibit the contemporary world in its spatial relations. In the mode of causal efficacy they exhibit the almost instantaneously precedent bodily organs as imposing their characters on the experience in question. We see the picture, and we see it with our eyes [...]. (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 50)

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On the other hand, the sense organs, likewise, have a dual role, in that they must not only be efficacious in giving rise to the experience of the sense-data, but also lend their organisation to the abstract system of interpretation that is presentational immediacy, as "[t]his environment includes the bodily organs" (ibid.: 52).[1]

The perception of enduring physical objects, then, turns out to be one of the more basic and pervasive instances of symbolism, in which we use superficial sense-data as signs for influential elements in our environment. The sense-data form a contrast with these influential controlling factors in which we use them predictively in order to "adjust our actions towards those other elements" (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 4). The "common factor in experience", which unites the two modes of perception, also recurs in higher forms of symbolism - only now in a transformed, aesthetic form:

> In every effective symbolism there are certain aesthetic features shared in common. The meaning acquires emotion and feeling directly excited by the symbol. This is the whole basis of the art of literature, namely that emotions and feelings directly excited by the words should fitly intensify our emotions and feelings arising from contemplation of the meaning. (Whitehead [1928] 1958: 83-84)

Now consciousness is essentially dominated by comparative feelings in which these two pure modes are bought together in such a way that there is a complex comparison of a "fact" (a nexus physically felt) and the "supposition about a fact" (a related propositional feeling). The aim of such complex feelings is at intensity of or worth in experience. For, although consciousness is characterised by 'intellectual' feelings, "[t]he main function of [intellectual] feelings is to heighten the emotional intensity accompanying the valuations in the conceptual feelings involved, and in the more physical purposes which are more

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[1] See Mattingly (1968: 40-47) for an excellent elucidation of these fundamental relationships underpinning the mode of symbolic reference.

primitive than any intellectual feelings" ([1929] 1978: 272-3). That is, thought is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to the end of heightening the intensity of feeling. The organisation of the higher and so later phases of experience is, therefore, motivated by an aim at the realisation of worth within experience.

So the datum given to experience is transformed by the activity of the mental pole, in the higher stages of thought, in the process of its being rendered as an appearance. It is transformed because conflicting values can be reconciled by transforming them into contrasts that enrich the final harmony rather than detracting from it. Appearance emerges as means of preserving the intensity and so worth of experience in the face of the potential for incompatibility arising from the need to integrate the two (potentially antagonistic) pure modes of perception, grounded in the two sides of nature.

Appearance, then, necessarily involves emphasis and distortion, however, distortions which are not unmotivated. Appearance, deriving from the mixed mode of symbolic reference is a product of:

> the occasion so directing its mental functionings as to introduce a third system of prehensions, relevant to both the inharmonious systems. This novel system is such as radically to alter the distribution of intensities throughout the two given systems, and to change the importance of both in the final intensive experience of the occasion. This way is in fact the introduction of Appearance, and its use to preserve the massive qualitative variety of Reality from simplification by negative prehensions. (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 260-1)

An appreciation of the need for balance, for contributions from both the causal or efficacious as well as the presentational or recognitional mode of perception, is, then, required, if the inherent need for such distortion is to be appreciated. Appearance needs to be understood as a subtle and complex response to the problem of incompatibility which would otherwise, in more primitive forms of experience, be met through sheer truncation, by the exclusion and so elimina-

tion of data from experience by "way of mere negative prehension" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 259).

Moreover, appearance inherently involves the introduction of valuations on the

> principle, that a re-adjustment of the relative intensities of incompat-
> ible feelings can in some cases reduce them to compatibilities. This
> possibility arises when the clash in affective tones is a clash of in-
> tensities, and is not a sheer logical incompatibility of qualities. Thus
> two systems of prehensions may each be internally harmonious; but
> the two systems in the unity of one experience may be discordant,
> when the two intensities of their subjective forms are comparable
> in magnitude. There may be a discordance in feeling this as much
> as that, or in feeling that as much as this. But if one be kept at a
> lower intensity in the penumbra of feeling, it may act as a back-
> ground to the other, providing a sense of massiveness and variety.
> This is the habitual state of human experience, a vast undiscrimi-
> nated, or dimly discriminated background, of low intensity, and a
> clear foreground. This third way of eliminating discordance may be
> termed the method of 'reduction to a background'. Alternatively, it
> can equally well be termed the method of 'raising to a foreground'.
> (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 260)

In this way, valuations, through their functioning to raise certain features into the foreground of experience while backgrounding others, have an important role in the regulation of societies of acts. It is apparent, then, that there is a close relationship between Whitehead's account of appearance and his account of value, both of which are central to his account of the figure-ground organisation of experience in which this organisation directly contributes to the realisation of value within experience. The realisation of value in appearance as harmony (realised through coordinative activity) provides a motive for and so explains why conscious perception and so appearance is organised around valuations, since they are involved in its very organisation as an activity.

The paradigm of activity is, on this view, perceptual rather than the more conspicuous and for our purposes, less central, motor activity. This is because it

shifts the whole locus of activity and agency into the present - which is the only place it can be situated, if all agency is accomplished through the inherently transitory becoming of momentary events. So, the traditional conception of a prior agent causing a later or subsequent effect is replaced by agents coming into being through their activity of appropriating their antecedent context of action which, as settled, is given to them. In this sense, they are self-creative and their activity is inherently reflexive. Occasions which have, on the other hand, completed and so have ceased becoming and so now form the past of currently becoming occasions, are, nonetheless, still causes, although they are not agents. For, as settled and so completely definite, they define the environment out of which subsequent occasions must emerge and so are efficacious for those occasions.

Whitehead's criticisms of traditional epistemology emphasise the prominence of presentational immediacy and the neglect of causal efficacy in traditional theories of perception, which factors, as we saw, he traces to dominant modes of thought and so of abstraction (see page 8). This neglect of "our intuitive modes of understanding" (and with it of "any discrimination of the fundamental activities within Nature") leaves only "a system of interpretation devoid of any reason for the concurrence of its factors" - with attendant sceptical consequences which gained prominence particularly in the writings of Hume (Whitehead 1938: 185, 210, 184, Desmet 2005). However, my concern here is with the fruitfulness of the conjunction and, indeed, integration of these two pure perceptual modes within the (by comparison) neglected mode of symbolic reference, which is central to Whitehead's account of conscious experience, symbolism and so language.

Just as perception is not to be understood as passive but as an active process of selection and rejection, of inclusion and exclusion, likewise, substance, as the primary content of experience, cannot be understood as passively given either, but rather as actively constituted in the process of perception itself. Substance is not the locus of stasis, but is the product of activity which concerns the unifica-

tion and coordination of permanence and change.[2]

Whitehead's philosophy, starting from the essential inter-relatedness of events, has to somehow account for substantiality, whereas a philosophy which starts from the notion of isolated substances has the converse difficulty of accounting for inter-relatedness in any genuine sense (Bright 1958). Whitehead (1927: 155) attempts to account for the reality of the individuality of events – as something over and above their being constituted prehensively by their relations to other things – by attributing to each their own synthetic activity.

> The conception of internal relatedness involves the analysis of the event into two factors, one the underlying substantial activity of individualisation, and the other the complex of aspects - that is to say, the complex of relatednesses as entering into the essence of the given event - which are unified by this individualised activity. In other words, the concept of internal relations requires the concept of substance as the activity synthesising the relationships into its emergent character.

So, in Whitehead's conception of the notion of substance, we find the same two-sidedness of, and so a microcosm, of perception and of nature. Substance in appearance brings together both sides of nature in a complex activity of integration. Conceived of axiologically (and so motivationally) and of direct relevance to action, substance is a locus of significance rather than of either causal efficacy or spatial position alone. Substance consists in more than a mere region. This location must also be coordinated with a causal route of inheritance which provides it with its efficacy. Moreover, together, as a causal route ascribed to a spatial region, a substance has significance that is the joint product of both its location and its efficacy.

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[2] See Basile (2017: esp. Chapters 3-5) for a discussion of the relationship between traditional and Whitehead's conception of substance. However, its emphasis is ontological rather than phenomenological and so, while seemingly not at odds with my position, does not draw the axiological conclusions that I have.

Substance is, then, neither merely the region that it occupies nor its efficacy alone. Rather, it is the product of the contrast and interplay between the two, which forms the basis for its importance. That is, as a locus of significance, it stands at the interplay of two currents of significance, one causal, born of efficacy, the other abstract born of location. Whitehead, therefore, rejects the doctrine that a substance is a thing which requires nothing other than itself in order to exist, as most famously argued for by Descartes. And the interdependence that follows from this also forms the basis for his ([1929] 1978: 29) rejection of its "vacuous actuality", that is, that it is "devoid of subjective immediacy". Rather, "value is inherent in actuality itself", since no actual occasion is without value (1926: 87).

As I stated in the introduction (see page 26), I want to argue that, as much as he clearly rejects substance as an ontological notion, Whitehead does not need to abandon substance in experience as an axiological notion. That is, he not only rejects certain central features of the modern conception of substance, but also provides the basis for a revised conception of substance in which it, nonetheless, retains its centrality within experience. So its centrality must again be explained, only now on new grounds.

Traditionally, substance has been associated with permanence, but as much as Whitehead's philosophy has come to be seen as synonymous with 'process' philosophy, he never claims that permanence is subservient to process or change. Rather, as we have seen in his account of perception, he argues that both notions are *equally* insistent in experience. Substance is central to experience because it bears out the same bipolarity as experience in general does.

What Whitehead rejects, then, is not permanence, but the notion that substance can be conceived of as a stuff enduring self-identically amidst spatial and qualitative change. In particular, the notions of endurance and of strict self identity are not intrinsically related to one another and so can come apart.[3] What is required, then, is a reconceptualisation of the notion of substance which will allow

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[3] As Leclerc (1953: 227-8) argues:

the relationship between endurance and enduring individual self-identity, which does characterise the notion of substance, and strict (that is, ontological) self identity to both be explained as independent of one another. That is, the ontological identity of momentary events, whose identity consists in their transitory becoming, needs to be distinguished from the enduring identity of substances. The latter endurance, Whitehead ([1928] 1958: 80) explains axiologically rather than ontologically as the persistence of importance "effected by symbolic transference".

What distinguishes Whitehead's philosophy is the recognition that it gives to process or activity as a basic metaphysical feature of actuality, not the denial of a role for permanence. What Whitehead does, however, decry is the way in which modern science in particular encourages what he calls the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness', in which abstractions are mistaken for concrete actualities. For Whitehead, the only truly final, that is ontological, existents are momentary events or actual occasions. Saving the notion of substance as experienced, therefore, requires reference to the activity of actual occasions. Whitehead can do this by appealing to the pragmatic significance and so justification for the notion of substance, which he never denies.[4]

> When the nature of substance is conceived to be that of stuff, it is tacitly assumed that the endurance of the substance is implicit in its very nature as a stuff; a stuff simply remains what it is, and that constitutes its endurance. A stuff endures by virtue of its inertness; its endurance is conceived to be the retention of its self-identity. This conception, however, is not acceptable: the endurance of an entity is not implicit in or derivable from its self-identity as such. For the notion of duration involves a transition, a 'before-after,' a passage from present to future, and this character of passage is not contained in the concept of the self-identity of a stuff as such. The self-identity of a stuff is irrelevant to any temporal passage; the stuff is what it is quite irrespective of any transition. Since the self-identity of a stuff does not account for its endurance, its endurance has to be explained independently. In fact, being fully itself quite irrespective of its endurance, it has inherent in its nature no reason why it should endure at all, and accordingly the fact that it does endure requires explanation. And further, since duration consists in an asymmetrical passage, a transition, and since any transition is wholly irrelevant to the being of the stuff, it means that stuff cannot endure.

[4] Likewise, Whitehead ([1928] 1958: 30-31) observes that:

If the organisation of experience, including the central role of substance, is axiological and so purposive, it will be useful to further explicate this organisation in terms of Whitehead's broader account of value. As I have already noted, there are close relationships between Whitehead's accounts of perception, symbolism and value. I will then attempt to present the outline of a pragmatic account of the communication of such valuations in language as a development and so extension of these inter-related conceptions.

3.3 Whitehead's theory of value

The inspiration for Whitehead's account of value is primarily aesthetic. Likewise, his broader metaphysical synthesis is an essentially aesthetic one.[5] Art, as the paradigm of aesthetic value, provides immediate and vivid enjoyments in which comparatively final values are particularly prominent and so accessible. The account is, however, generalised to form a theory of generic value, which forms the basis for Whitehead's broader metaphysical synthesis.

For Whitehead, there are both types and gradations of beauty. I shall begin with beauty in its most basic and what Whitehead calls its minor form, harmony. Harmony is the chief principle of beauty. If the data of an experience include many elements that are mutually incompatible, then they will frustrate one another in their role as objects, resulting in a lowering of the intensity of the experience. This frustration is a positive evil. Harmony (that is beauty in its minor form) exists when there is no mutual inhibition of the subjective forms deriving from the objective datum perceived, where the 'subjective form' is how the subject

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symbolic reference leads to a transference of emotion, purpose, and belief, which cannot be justified by an intellectual comparison of the direct information derived from the two schemes and their elements of intersection. The justification, such as it is, must be sought in a pragmatic appeal to the future.

[5] The metaphysical doctrine, here expounded, finds the foundations of the world in the aesthetic experience, rather than – as with Kant – in the cognitive and conceptive experience. All order is therefore aesthetic order, and the moral order is merely certain aspects of aesthetic order. Whitehead (1926: 91)

feels that datum. "Beauty is the mutual adaptation of the several factors in an occasion of experience" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 252).

However, an emphasis upon harmony or the absence of conflict does not address variations in the depth or "strength of experience", which comprises a further aim. A central notion in Whitehead's aesthetics, and indeed his cosmology more generally, is that of contrast. These are "Modes of Synthesis of Entities in One Prehension" (Whitehead [1929] 1958: 22).[6] A contrast is the integration of two different entities into an aesthetic unity in which the identity of the original entities is preserved rather than submerged. "The elements retain their separate identities but lend their diversities to the novel unity[...] The unity is the third element to which they both contribute and from which they both receive enhanced intensity" (Spencer 1966: 168). For strength or intensity of experience, what is required is that the objects of the prehensions united within a contrast should also objectively contrast with one another.

A clear exemplification of such a contrast (where neither of the two fundamental entities within Whitehead's philosophy, objects and events, alone are sufficient to characterise its nature) is Whitehead's conception of rhythm (which I discussed earlier – see page 11), which is the product of such a contrast. Indeed, Whitehead's notion of 'rhythm' is the antecedent of the subsequent 'actual occasion' which, likewise, shares with it an essentially aesthetic organisation.

For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 280) "All aesthetic experience is feeling arising out of the realization of contrast under identity". The complex datum provided by the process of transition – which is the basis for an occasion's perspective on its past, made up of settled and so completely determinate antecedent actual occasions – forms the basis for the occasion's physical pole. Given "the supremacy of fact over thought", this inheritance cannot be ignored, as this physical pole provides the ground of the occasion as an entity. (Whitehead 1929: 80, Spencer 1966: 133-4)

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[6] Prehension is a central notion that I introduced earlier (see page 98).

Its mental pole is, on the other hand, much more indeterminate. It represents the free conceptual valuation of possibilities which provide the novel eternal objects that enable not only the integration of the past but also, in the case of higher grade actual occasions, the enhancement of the intensity of experience. In this way, the occasion's process of self-becoming fulfills the demand for "contrast with the ground in respect to the same identity of character" ([1929] 1978: 279). The physical pole is, then, the ground against which the mental pole provides a contrast, all within the identity of the becoming of a given actual occasion.

Whitehead's conception of contrast is then central to understanding his conception of beauty in its major form. At this point, what I want to emphasise is that balance is, implicitly rather than very explicitly, a central notion within Whitehead's aesthetics. This stems from the bipolar nature of the notion of contrast which is central to his aesthetics and – as we have seen – his conception of activity in general.[7]

Beauty has a certain centrality and finality. This is not on account of its purity but rather its comparatively balanced and active integration of the mental and physical poles of activity – and so the two sides of nature. What I particularly want to develop are the relationships, which I have already emphasised, between Whitehead's account of perception (which introduces his account of symbolism) and his theory of value.

To do this and provide more differentiation within this conception of value, I want to take the balance present within beauty central to (and as the basis for introducing) two other less balanced values which reflect the bipolar nature of

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[7] The most explicit occurrence of the notion of balance in Whitehead's philosophy is his notion of 'balanced complexity' which is less general, since it applies mainly to the abstract side of value or what Whitehead calls 'width' (notions which I shall discuss shortly) and, moreover, seems intended to mean something like 'harmony' i.e. 'non-inhibition' rather than the proportionality suggested by the notion of balance. Such an emphasis on balance is much more explicitly articulated in Hartshorne's (1987) view that beauty is a mean between extremes, which might be viewed as a generalisation of Aristotle's rightly famous claim concerning virtue, although Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 339) does note his view is an application of this same generalisation (Dombrowski 2004: 27).

activity and the actual occasion. Each pole is a product of the essential related-ness of activity, each having its own predominant object of appropriation. These values, since they reflect the value of a particular type of fact of relatedness, are less balanced (or heterogeneous) and so more pure. So, truth, as a value, is a value of the truth relation. Whitehead himself does not distinguish between different types and sources of value; however, doing so will facilitate drawing parallels between his conception of value and his conception of perception (and so symbolism), while also facilitating the subsequent analysis which attempts to extend and develop these views in relation to natural language.

That is, paralleling the two pure modes of perception, I want to introduce two comparatively pure and so less balanced forms of value, freedom and truth, which form the basis for a third mixed and so more balanced mode, beauty. If we consider the two comparatively pure or unbalanced values, on the one hand, there is the depth and germaneness of the truth, deriving its significance from the efficacy of the perceptual mode of causal efficacy; while, on the other hand, there is the significance deriving from the comparatively abstract artificiality of free-dom, of mere pattern, corresponding to the perceptual mode of presentational immediacy. These relationships are outlined diagrammatically in Figure 3.1 on the following page.

Whitehead's most sustained, although admittedly compressed, discussion of aes-thetics is in his comparatively late *Adventures of Ideas* where he discusses the notion of beauty and its relation to truth in particular. The notion of freedom, at least in its relation to beauty, lacks the same prominence within this work, so this value is more of a conjecture upon my part, although, as we shall see, neither claims for the significance of freedom within Whitehead's works nor its being attributed by others are entirely without precedent.[8]

So, to fill out Whitehead's conception of valuation, I now want to turn to the relationships that underpin these two less balanced values, that tend to coincide

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[8] There is a Chapter on freedom in *Adventures of Ideas*, Chapter Four, although it is detached from the discussion of aesthetics later in the book.

Beauty

A: Types of value

Freedom   Truth

Symbolic reference

B: Whitehead's
Modes of Perception

Presentational immediacy   Causal efficacy

Figure 3.1: Proposed relationship between the major forms of value and modes of perception in Whitehead's philosophy

with the two poles of activity, now paying particular attention to their contribution to the nature of the interactions which constitute the values realised in the becoming of occasions. I want to begin with freedom, which, as I have already noted, is the more conjectural of these two values.

3.4   The value of freedom

Whitehead's failure to provide similar prominence to freedom may well be related to the absence of discussion of the eternal objects in Whitehead's final works. As Halewood (2010: 234) has conjectured, Whitehead may have ulti-

mately found the term to be unhelpful given – in his ([1937] 1967: 199) own words – the tendency of "everyone [... to] misconstrue" his "doctrine of *eternal objects* [...] a first endeavour to get beyond the absurd simple-mindedness of the traditional treatment of Universals [... which] is the root of all evils".

Indeed, it is perhaps ironic then that the most significant and extended attempt to develop a Whiteheadian aesthetics to date – Sherburne (1970) – by a leading exponent of the traditional interpretation, has just this abstract emphasis (and, I would suggest, bias) which, as I have already noted (see page 29), is a feature of that interpretation. Moreover, Sherburne's interpretation of Whitehead's aesthetics, like the traditional interpretation in general, also tends to be centred on the earlier *Process and Reality*.

Propositions play the central role in Sherburne's account of Whitehead's aesthetics as "lures for feeling". However, in order to better situate this account, I want to begin with the role of the eternal objects, which is more fundamental. As we saw earlier, the contrast between the different types of objects of prehensions is a contrast between determination and indetermination, between ground and contrast, where eternal objects are indeterminate as to their realisation and so provide the most fundamental object of the freedom exhibited by the mental pole of an occasion.

The essence of objects or qualities, as one of the pure components of experience, is that they are abstract rather than concrete. Action is the process whereby such general potentiality is realised by being brought into actuality, while actuality presupposes form, since there can be no actuality without its being the realisation of a definite form of some kind or other. (Leclerc 1961: 190)

These eternal objects are introduced into perceptual experience through the mode of presentational immediacy, which, as I noted earlier, is the higher but also the more artificial of the two pure modes of perception in that it:

> illustrates the contemporary world in respect to its potentiality for extensive subdivision into atomic actualities and in respect to the

> scheme of perspective relationships which thereby eventuates. But it gives no information as to the actual atomisation of this contemporary "real potentiality." Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 123)

Whereas eternal objects are completely indeterminate as to the possibility of their ingression, propositions are, by contrast, less general and more determinate hybrid entities standing between eternal objects and actual occasions. This greater determinacy arises from a proposition being "a complex entity, with determinate actual entities among its components [... that] afford a reason determining the truth or falsehood of the proposition" (Whitehead [1929] 1978: 257). Nonetheless, they are not fully determinate. They are still a potentiality, that is, a limitation of general potentiality, rather than an actuality. (Mohanty 1957: 106-7)

For Sherburne, then, a work of art is a proposition, whose "primary function [...] is to be relevant as a lure for feeling" (Whitehead [1929] 1978: 25). While this is consistent with Whitehead's ([1929] 1978: 259) view that "in the real world it is more important that a proposition be interesting than that it be true", it remains the case that, for Whitehead, propositions (in spite of being hybrid entities) remain more abstract than, for instance, conscious feelings which, as we have seen, contrast a propositional feeling with a fact (see page 101).

Propositions introduce intellectual freedom into the world (Spencer 1966: 173). However, for Whitehead, at its most fundamental level, freedom is primarily concerned with an actual occasion's capacity to construct itself; that is, for its self-construction. The more advanced forms of freedom (such as intellectual and, even more so, social freedoms which make reference to and so involve the activities of others, and indeed are often conceived in comparatively negative terms as 'freedom *from*' oppression, censorship etc.) are complex developments of this more basic, positive form of freedom. This stance enables him to situate freedom within nature itself, rather than outside and in opposition to it (understood deterministically). (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 66, Durand 2002: 167)

For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 33), "Mental experience is the organ of novelty". As a response to the given datum of an actual occasion's actual world, novelty of conceptual reversion is an occasion's response which provides possibilities to be entertained as possible sources of contrast. In this way, freedom is part of life's "offensive, directed against the repetitious mechanism of the universe" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 80, Rose 2002: 75).

Moreover, this also means that, although freedom is based upon indetermination, it is not itself merely indetermination but rather a mode of determination that is internally or self-caused. That is, it consists in an actual occasion's capacity for self-determination. The self-determination of an actual occasion is based upon the self-determination of its aim, which Whitehead calls its 'subjective aim'.

The subjective aim, which is the final cause within every occasion, qualifies every prehension of the later stages of becoming of that occasion, through which it unifies itself. For this reason, the process of becoming that constitutes an actual occasion is holistic and so indivisible, both its unitariness and individuality being a function of its aim. Many prehensions or feelings can only belong to the one and the same subject if that one aim characterizes every feeling of that subject. In this way, the subjective aim, as a proposition, has a generality that is conducive to strength of contrast. However, as a contrast, it lacks the generality of a pattern or dominant order. (Sipfle 1969)

A contrast is a patterned entity, since it is the product of the feeling of a contrast between entities – either eternal objects or actual entities – into which eternal objects ingress. A pattern, on the other hand, is an eternal object which is "a manner of relatedness between other eternal objects" (Whitehead [1929] 1978: 114). So, while contrasts are constituted by a process of feeling and so come into being, patterns, as eternal objects, are given to prehensions or feelings and so do not. (Lango 2003: 44-48)

A dominant order serves to integrate the diversity of elements unified within an experience, thereby contributing to its significance. If, at the same time, the

dangerous, inconvenient and trivial aspects can be suppressed or altered, then this can also increase the resultant aesthetic enjoyment. For Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 235), "[e]ven the dim apprehension of some great principle is apt to clothe itself with tremendous emotional force". Moreover, for this reason, he ([1933] 1967: 213) argues that "[i]t is a mistake to suppose that [...] the role of mental functionings is to add subtlety to the content of experience. The exact opposite is the case. Mentality is an agent of simplification". That is, it implies the retreat of disorder, usually through simplification. However, such processes of selection and simplification often need not destroy the significant truths of the original experience. (Leclerc 1958: 214)

Finally, I want to briefly turn to criticisms of Sherburne's interpretation, since these tend to reinforce the claim that balance is a fundamental feature of Whitehead's aesthetics, and that therefore a consideration of other sources of value is required. That is, while for Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 272) "the secret of art lies in its freedom", art, nonetheless, as we shall see, also aims at "truthful beauty".

We saw earlier that propositions are comparatively abstract, although less so than the eternal objects. I therefore want to suggest that Sherburne's focus on propositions is too one-sidedly abstract and so that his interpretation of Whitehead's aesthetics is overly intellectual. As Aldrich (1962: 327) observed: "surely, one hangs works of art on the wall, not propositions or aesthetic objects? Then, one sees something "in" them or sees them "as" something, and the work of art prehended this way would be the aesthetic object or "proposition"".

Indeed, this is also borne out by the irony of Sherburne's (1961: 194) dissatisfaction with Whitehead's own claims, stemming from what he sees as their:

> backward-looking character. Whitehead has a system in which the emphasis is on the dynamic surge into ever fresh novelty, and one would expect from such a system a more dynamic account of the function of art.

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For it is far from clear that Whitehead has not provided just such a dynamic account of art. Rather, as Aldrich (1962: 328) asks of Sherburne's (1970: 197-8) claim that the purpose of "art is the mode of entrance par excellence into the imagination of ends worthy of attainment":

> Two questions about this: how then do we distinguish art from philosophical and moral utopianism, as in The Republic of Plato? And what happens to the greatest works of art of all time, such as Hamlet? Must these, for the sake of the theory, be shown either really to be utopian [. . .] or to be inferior works of art?

That is, may we not ask whether Sherburne's interpretation is, in fact, by contrast, too forward-looking? As Hall (1973: 93) has observed of it:

> part of the difficulty which Sherburne, and others, have in accepting Whitehead's unapologetic naturalistic bias results from a misconstruing of the delicate balance Whitehead seeks to maintain between idealist and realist elements in his philosophy. [. . .] Such a lack of emphasis upon the physical basis of aesthetic experience distorts Whitehead's theory by emphasising the idealist over the realist elements in the Whiteheadian philosophy.

It is not surprising, then, that this abstract, idealistic bias which is also sustained by Sherburne's broader interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy, has also been criticised by Nobo (1979: 266) for construing the processes of 'transition' and 'concrescence' (and so, with them, of 'other' and 'self-causation') as one and the same process.[9] I therefore want to again stress the importance of Nobo's more

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[9] Nobo (1979: 266) writes:

> The second misinterpretation is primarily associated with Donald Sherburne, who first introduced it in his well-known *A Whiteheadian Aesthetic*. Sherburne also equates the whole of an occasion's becoming with its process of self-realization. But he manages to construe transition as a creative process by the simple expedient of taking transition and concrescence to be the self-same process of self-realization viewed from two different angles. As Sherburne understands it, there is only one creative process involved in the becoming of an occasion, but White-

'systematic' interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy to the interpretation of Whitehead's aesthetics and, with it, of his account of value (as much as Nobo has not remarked upon this himself). As Hall has rightly emphasised, restoring the naturalism of Whitehead's philosophy is central to restoring the balance to his aesthetics (an overall balance that Whitehead admittedly did not particularly emphasise himself). The achievement of significance through an aim at balance, explains the organisation of Whitehead's phenomenology, his account of conscious experience and of symbolic reference within it, all of which have been comparatively neglected within the traditional interpretation (for example, Schmidt (1967)).

This naturalistic side of Whitehead's aesthetics is most evident in his realism, which, on the other hand, Whitehead did tend to emphasise and which underpins his conception of truth and its contribution to beauty to which I now want to turn.

3.5   The value of the truth

Whitehead's ([1933] 1967: 241) conception of truth is closely related to his account of perception (and so symbolism), as a symbolic relation, since:

> Truth is a qualification which applies to Appearance alone. Reality is just itself, and it is nonsense to ask whether it be true or false. Truth is the conformation of Appearance to Reality. This conformation may be more or less, also direct or indirect. Thus Truth is a generic quality with a variety of degrees and modes.

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head alternates between calling it 'transition' and calling it 'concrescence' according to which of two major aspects of that process he wishes to emphasize. 'Transition' refers to the production of novelty, the novelty of the occasion that has come into being. 'Concrescence' refers to the production of togetherness, the togetherness of the past occasions within the experience of the new occasion. But the production of togetherness and the coming into being of the new occasion happen simultaneously. The becoming of the novel occasion is the production of togetherness. Hence, transition and concrescence, as Sherburne construes them, are one and the same process.

It is then a form of correspondence or realistic conception of truth that bears out Whitehead's realistic conception of the past as given, while activity, and perceptual activity as productive of appearance, is situated within the present.[10]

The truthfulness of appearances is ultimately desirable because of the necessity that all acts relate to a causally efficacious, antecedent context, out of which they emerge and which is independent of their agency. No experience can escape the element of conformity to antecedent conditions that this implies. That is, all acts are responses to a complex objective datum. Through its truthfulness, experience remains germane to its origins, individual elements referring back to their respective pasts. The significance of the truth derives from the fact that, as much as the appearance of things is clear and distinct, the causally efficacious world out of which it emerges is dim, massive and interconnected. As I noted earlier, this is the deliverance of the more primitive perceptual mode of causal efficacy, underpinned by the basic prehensive interconnectedness of events. While appearances are superficial and manageable, the unchanging background that forms the context of action is vague, efficacious, definite and obstructive. Truthful appearances are, therefore, felt with a greater sense of security than would otherwise be the case.

This essential dependence of experience upon a given background of prior events means that the adaptation which gives rise to harmony can occur not only within the subjective response of a subject to such an objective datum or background, but can also be already present within the datum to which it is responding. So Whitehead accepts that certain objects can be called 'beautiful' because experiences that conform to them will tend to re-enact their beauty. However, beauty is not absolute, for this is strictly relative to the ends of the experiencing subject in question. That is, the realisation of beauty is always conditional upon the response of the subject as well as the objective datum. Hence, it is, as I have stressed, essentially interactive or transactional.

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[10] "Reality functions in the past, the Appearance is perceived in the present" Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 247)

To conclude, in the mixed value of beauty, we find together the aspects which predominate in each of these less balanced values, only now integrated with one another. That is, beauty draws upon the two pure modes of perception as the sources of two different sources of potentiality, much as symbolic reference does. To the extent that it is bound by conformity, it is dependent upon the datum to which it is a response. On the other hand, to the extent that it is free and so creative, bringing into being novelty, it can draw upon the unrealised general potentiality of eternal objects.

3.6   Hierarchy and enduring things

We have seen that for Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 35-6), atomism is "the ultimate metaphysical truth", but this "atomism does not exclude complexity and universal relativity. Each atom is a system of all things". Moreover, he aims to establish a proper balance between atomism and continuity through a complex account of social organisation or 'societies'. I now want to return to the broader types of social organisation that an aim at strength of experience encourages. Whitehead discusses this in terms of two fundamental sources of significance, 'balanced complexity' and 'intensity'.

In both cases, Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 282) emphasises the depth of experience and so the fundamental relatedness of appearance and reality in conscious experience. We should not trust "a mere composition of qualities. In that case it becomes tame and vapid". Instead, it should "appeal to the deep recesses of feeling".

The depths of experience contribute to the strength of experience through both the inheritance of significance from the past and the development of hierarchies of contrasts. This notion of hierarchy is understood particularly in terms of two sides to the aesthetic dimension of experience, what in *Process and Reality* Whitehead calls 'width' (subsequently in *Adventures of Ideas* 'massiveness')

and 'narrowness' (subsequently, 'individuality').[11]

'Narrowness' refers to individual elements in their individual intensity indifferent to their position within a hierarchy. In this respect, Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 280) emphasises the contribution of the individuality of 'enduring things' as societies of occasions, "each experienced as a unity of many occasions bound together by the force of inheritance". The shared history of such occasions has the cumulative effect of enhancing the mutual adaptation and coordination of such occasions in respect to one another. "[E]nduring individuals evoke[...] from Reality a force of already harmonized feelings which no surface show of sensa can produce" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 281-2). They also gain intensity of experience at the most basic level from the rhythmic vibratory character that is pervasively manifest in physical nature.

> Thus an enduring object gains the enhanced intensity of feeling arising from contrast between inheritance and novel effect, and also gains the enhanced intensity arising from the combined inheritance of its stable rhythmic character throughout its life history. It has the weight of repetition, the intensity of contrast, and the balance between the two factors of contrast. (Whitehead [1929] 1978: 279)

Width, by contrast, concerns the breadth or spread of inclusion within an experience. The conceptual prehension of a complex eternal object allows the construction of a hierarchy of component elements. In this way, width allows the introduction of complexity through the construction of hierarchies of contrasts. Hierarchies of contrasts allow the retention and, indeed, enhancement of the strength of experience through the coordination of such contrasts. Each level of contrasts serves to coordinate levels below it within the hierarchy, thereby ensuring that they are not dismissed through negative prehensions as incompatible.

> The dimension of width arises out of the higher levels of coordination, by which the intensities in the dimension of narrowness be-

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[11] For simplicity, I have not discussed the related notions of triviality and vagueness.

> come subordinated to a coordination which depends upon the higher
> levels of comparison. The savouring of the complexity of the uni-
> verse can enter into satisfaction only through the dimension of width.
> The emotional depths at the low levels have their limits: the func-
> tion of width is to deepen the ocean of feeling, and to remove the
> diminutions of depth produced by the interference of diverse emo-
> tions uncoordinated at a higher level.

A strong experience, then, is one with a figure-ground organisation, in which the
foreground is dominated by a few enduring individuals or societies of occasions
that allow detailed discriminations and contrasts on account of their narrowness
or individuality. Upon these individuals are concentrated emotional depths aris-
ing from either inheritance deriving from their past or width built up of both
balanced contrasts (and their being set against a massive systematic background
provided by a dominant order).

Having analysed the internal organisation of the becoming of occasions or events
in terms of the notion of contrast and developed this through his conception of
the organisation of societies of such events, we are now in a position to under-
stand Whitehead's conception of Beauty.

> Appearance is beautiful when the qualitative objects which compose
> it are interwoven in patterned contrasts, so that the prehensions of
> the whole of its parts produces the fullest harmony of mutual sup-
> port. By this it is meant, that in so far as the qualitative characters
> of the whole and the parts pass into the subjective forms of their
> prehensions, the whole heightens the feelings for the parts, and the
> parts heighten the feelings for the whole, and for each other. ([1933]
> 1967: 267-8)

Beauty combines the significance of both the truth (with its reference to the
definiteness of the past) with freedom (with its reference to the openness of the
future) within the finitude of the present. Whitehead sees the origin of art as lying
in the craving for re-enactment. The higher forms of art are sublimations of the

simple craving to enjoy freely the vividness of life, which first arises in moments of necessity. Yet, as much as we might trace the origin of art to repetition, in art there is a freedom from the necessity of exact or complete repetition. So, at the same time, freedom is of the essence of human art, since it allows for the selection of the important or desirable aspects of experience to be repeated. Central to Whitehead's account of value is this balance or harmony between these two tendencies, towards germaneness and freedom. (Hall 1973: 92-4)

3.7 Harmony, discord and growth

Whitehead's account of value is, then, largely consonant with the view that the primary source of value is harmony, however his account is perhaps most interesting in its qualifications of this view. So, for instance, interactions can be either harmonious and so accommodating or discordant. These harmonies or discords most obviously derive from the two more pure currents of significance which underlie value in general. Here I simply want to very briefly discuss how these two tendencies, towards germaneness and freedom, are also a source of productive discords.

Truthfulness can not only give rise to greater security and so harmonious experience but can also be the source of productive discords. The value of discord, in this case, arises from the forceful and significant individuality of details. It serves to enhance an experiential whole, when it serves to highlight and substantiate the individuality of its parts (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 262-4). Such discords rescue a whole from the tameness and predictability of a harmony confined to a merely abstract system of relationships by sustaining the independent significance of its individual parts (ibid. 364). For the same reason, the false is a potent source of discords often, for instance, exploited by figurative language.

Moreover, the freedom provided by the abstract or mental pole of activity is also a potential source of discords. For, Whitehead insists that discords can not only be introduced into experience by the physical datum deriving from the context

given to an occasion's becoming, but also by subjects themselves through the spontaneous variation of their own aims.[12] That is, discords can also be introduced by the mental or conceptual pole of action, underpinned by perception in the mode of presentational immediacy. For instance, such abstract objects can also function as ideals or perfections to be striven after, even though they may not necessarily be realised or even realisable. Ideals represent patterns of order or contrast of which there are higher and lower grades, according to the values they give rise to. Realised perfections of an inferior rank may, therefore, fall below the frustration of an aim at a higher perfection. That is, even the discord of frustration may be preferable to a slow relapse into general anaesthesia. For this reason, as lures or ideals, they need not necessarily be revised, even if not realised, as predictions might be expected to be, since their function and force is internal to a subject's immediate experience. (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 263-4, Belaief 1984: 86)

These different types or modes of interaction introduce further complexity that has no obvious analogue in shared object conceptions of language. For instance, pragmatic theories of metaphor (e.g. Richards (1936), Black (1962)) often make reference to interaction between different components of content expressed within a metaphor. Unfortunately, such accounts have tended to become increasingly abstract (e.g. Kittay (1987)) as the broader theoretical landscape has, although they do not really favour treating meaning as consisting in abstract and so independent 'objects'. There will not be much scope within this thesis to develop this important aspect of this account, even though it is very distinctive of it.

Whitehead, then, provides us with an account of value which is to be understood predominantly in terms of harmony, although in a highly qualified form. The necessity that harmony be qualified by discords makes the higher forms of

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[12] As Whitehead ([1933] 1967: 259) writes "The result is that the concerns of the actual world are deflected from harmony of feeling by the divergent tonalities introduced from the mental poles".

beauty, and so value, broader and more inclusive than harmony alone. Activity, as productive of value, is predominantly a process of harmonisation. But it also consists in the introduction of further discords to be harmonised, thereby fostering growth through their subsequent harmonisation. Growth in the value or intensity of experience is associated with growth in importance, stemming from decisions becoming increasingly inclusive and far reaching. As Rorty (1983: 83) observed, "superior actuality consists [...] for Whitehead [...] in making more and more important and far reaching decisions".

The balance distinctive of aesthetic value exemplifies the balance between the idealistic and the realistic elements in Whitehead's philosophy. There needs to be both sufficient artificiality (in order that appearance may transcend its physical basis and so take on novel forms) and, at the same time, sufficient germaneness to reality such that it can also meet real needs. Too much artificiality leads to a mere play of ideas which address no real need, since they do not then adequately express their derivation from the causal past. Without regard for the causally efficacious world at the base of experience, we are set adrift in the pursuit of shallow aims never likely to address the depth of actual experience, since an organism's responses need to be not only novel but also relevant to the conditions that confront them. However, without the activity of the mental pole, experience risks becoming merely conformal. (Hall 1973: 93)

For Whitehead, values are not subjective in the sense of being confined to mere appearance, understood as cut off from nature. They are constituted by their relations to natural events and so extend into nature. This forms an integral part of his (1922: 62) rejection of the bifurcation of nature:

> Nature is thus a totality including individual experiences, so that we must reject the distinction between nature as it really is and experiences of it which are purely psychological. Our experiences of the apparent world are nature itself.

The greater autonomy and novelty of higher organisms, as exhibited by phenom-

ena such as language, requires an increase in the number of integrative phases within experience. But this development of selectivity within later phases of experience, such as consciousness, tends to obscure the underlying objective relatedness from which the subject originates. So, in spite of the fact of originating against a background of relations and so of objective relativity, this relatedness is suppressed and so concealed by the subjectivity of appearance.

For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 15), this provides philosophy with the task of recovering the totality behind experience:

> Philosophy is the self-correction by consciousness of its own initial excess of subjectivity. Each actual occasion contributes to the circumstances of its origin additional formative elements deepening its own peculiar individuality. Consciousness is only the last and greatest of such elements by which the selective character of the individual obscures the external totality from which it originates and which it embodies. An actual individual, of such higher grade, has truck with the totality of things by reason of its sheer actuality; but it has attained its individual depth of being by a selective emphasis limited to its own purposes. The task of philosophy is to recover the totality obscured by the selection.

The challenge that this presents for linguistics is that, as a semiotics, it tends to privilege the sign and so the deceptiveness of appearance, without necessarily possessing an account of the broader totality of which such appearances are a part and indeed a product.

3.8 A pragmatic conception of reference

I now want to introduce a pragmatic conception of communication and indeed of language based upon the Whiteheadian conceptions of perceptual experience, symbolism and value that I have just introduced and which seeks to generalise and develop their features. Whitehead does not provide a very explicit account

of language, reference or anything like an account of the grammar of a language. This is why this attempt to extend and develop his views on symbolism will use them to reconstruct another pragmatically-influenced grammar.

Whitehead's accounts of symbolism and of aesthetics have both been comparatively neglected, no doubt in part due to the fact that neither was greatly developed or exemplified by Whitehead himself. Nor are they presented as closely related to one another. His account of symbolism emerges comparatively early and, since *Symbolism* is centrally concerned with the problem of induction, has an epistemic emphasis. By contrast, the outline of his aesthetics emerges comparatively late in his writings, as part of his philosophy of civilisation.

Moreover, the understanding of both has also been undermined historically by the one-sideness of the traditional interpretation. Such interpretations, like Sherburne's (1970), tend to treat freedom as the fundamental value, such that, for instance, the interpretation of Whitehead's notion of creativity is limited to the self-determination and self-creation of occasions through their concrescence or becoming (Cloots 2001). However, if Whitehead's aesthetic account of value is centred on the notion of contrast then, as we have seen, freedom is too one sided to provide the same breadth of contrast that beauty does. As I noted in the introduction, it is Nobo's (1986) broader systematic interpretation that – by stressing the importance of giving full recognition to both of the processes of concrescence and transition, and so to both efficient and final causes – thereby reasserts these fundamental distinctions within Whitehead's philosophy, reinforcing the centrality of the notion of contrast within Whitehead's aesthetic phenomenology.

Just as I have focused upon the central notion of substance in experience, I want to focus upon reference as a central notion in this conception of language. And again, the emphasis will be pragmatic and so axiological, allowing reference to be understood as complex and multifaceted. I want argue for a reflexive and so comparatively language immanent or discourse-oriented conception that nonetheless attempts to incorporate features of more traditional representational

conceptions of reference.

For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 68), "Actuality is the decision amid 'potentiality'". Actual occasions – as relationally conditioned (constituted) and yet finite entities must, through their own process of concrescence or self-causation, decide (in order to include and so realize some other potentialities) to exclude certain other potentialities. In this way, action is understood as decision. 'Decision' is here used in the "root sense of cutting off" (ibid.: 68) rather than necessarily imply conscious choice, where the potentiality available to an occasion is either the 'general potentiality' provided by the eternal objects or the 'real potentiality' provided by antecedent actual occasions.

In this way, selection with its aspects of inclusion and exclusion is a fundamental feature of activity. It is the element not given to such activity, and yet it is very much dependent upon those features which are given to it as potentialities to be either included or excluded – the conditions given to it which are themselves not activities. That is, decision concerns *how* the occasion (subject) reacts to the complex datum given to it and *how*, in so doing, it unifies and so completes itself. It is 'reflexive' or 'immanent' and so self-determining, in that the one subject is both the agent and patient of this decision. That is, it is constituted by its own process of becoming.

If we look for a selective aspect to linguistic expression that is likewise indicative of activity in this reflexive sense, then surely it is reference. Reference is often regarded as one of (if not the most distinctive feature) of language. Moreover, it is typically taken to be central to representational and so realistic conceptions of language, in which its content is typically closely identified with some referent. But this is at odds with its selectivity. For, its selectivity, by contrast, suggests that reference is primarily indicative of purposiveness; in which case it should rather form the centre piece of a functional conception of language. However, as we have seen, the shared object conception seems comparatively poorly placed to do this. It should then not be surprising that it is also comparatively poorly

placed to provide an account of reference.[13]

We can distinguish three broad, stylised positions in the theory of reference according to their predominant tendencies, beginning from roughly the beginning of the twentieth century. Theories of reference initially adopted a conception of reference not unlike the shared object model. Frege's [1892] 1980 seminal account of reference took the referent of a name to be determined by its 'sense', a public abstract object or mode of identification. This formed the basis for subsequent description theories of reference, where the sense of a reference is understood as a definite description. Description theories of reference, like the shared object conception – since they are likewise cast in terms of abstract 'objects' – have particular difficulty dealing with both the variation and selectivity of indexical forms of reference.

An increasing awareness of these problems has, in part, been responsible for the shift within contemporary analytic philosophy away from the comparatively abstract description theories of reference (associated particularly with Frege) towards the more causal and contextual accounts of reference of Kripke (1980) and Putnam (1975). Peirce's comparatively causal account of indexicality, which I shall discuss in the next chapter, might be viewed as an important precursor to this shift.

The most celebrated instance of such an approach is Kaplan's (1989) logic of indexicals, based on the postulation of two different types of meaning, 'character' and 'content', which need to be distinguished from one another. Both are represented by propositional functions. The first, the character, represents the determination of the reference of the indexical by its 'context' of use. The second, the content, concerns its relationship to the various possible 'circumstances' under which the utterance is evaluated for truth or falsity. So, for instance, if I were to utter "I am not speaking now", the character determines the speaker and time with respect to the context of utterance, while the content allows its truth

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[13]For recognition of this in the specific context of SFL, see Martin (1985).

or falsity to be evaluated with respect to circumstances that also include those in which, in the same context, I am not speaking, since this would be required for the utterance to be true. (Kaplan 1989, Parret 1980: 106-8)

Such an account would seem to remain inadequate, since as an account of the character of indexical expressions, it would seem to be unable to explain their reflexivity. For, as Evans (1981) objected, this type of analysis would seem to be circular. Since this objection has been articulated most clearly by Yougrau (1987: 99 original emphasis), it will be worth quoting him at some length with reference to "now", in which he is also arguing against this position as reformulated by Perry.

> According to this theory, to call an event "now" is not to *say* anything about it - it is not to attribute any "property" or Fregean "sense" to it. Rather, the simple truth is given by the rule: at any time *t*, 'now' refers (simply, or "directly") to *t*. Since this rule obviously characterizes all times equally, no one time is ever "really" the one time that is now, or in the present: each time is now with respect to itself. [...] The Kaplan-Perry rule for 'now' if put precisely, would be: "For all times *t* and speakers *s*, if *s* employs 'now' correctly at *t*, he refers to *t*." Now a rule is no good unless you can use it, but, if you try to employ this rule, it becomes obvious that, in grasping it, you get a handle not on any particular time, but only on a universal conditional on times (and speakers). The problem is that to use the rule to get a time you must *instantiate* the universal quantifier, but to accomplish this instantiation, you must already have particular time *t* in mind. But how do you get to have it in mind? By describing it (e.g., as Saturday, 10.00 A.M.)? (This is vigorously denied by Kaplan and Perry.) By taking *t* to be the present moment - i.e. now? (This is circular; it is the rule itself that was supposed to show how we use 'now' to get to a particular time.) It seems, rather, that Kaplan and Perry have mistaken a necessary constraint on a mode of designation for a particular use of 'now' (that if 'now' is used at *t*, the mode of designation should determine *t*) for the mode of designation itself.

As this objection makes clear, what we still need to know is what makes one particular 'now' the 'now' designated by an utterance. Likewise, if 'I' means 'the speaker of the utterance', we still require an account of which speaker '*the* speaker' is, since this is, likewise, an indexical and so circular as an analysis of the indexicality of 'I'. So this account would still seem to be decisively underspecified when it comes to the nature of the relativity of indexical reference itself.

What this suggests is that the context itself is not sufficient to provide the selectivity required for indexical reference, even in the comparatively limited case of the so-called pure indexicals, the most reflexive of indexical expressions such as "I", "here" and "now". Just as objects and so universals are inherently repeatable and so located nowhere in particular, the context of language use is indefinite in extent, and so would seem to be ultimately defined by its relation to the speech event rather than providing a basis for this selectivity in itself. Hence, the comparative simplicity of the pure indexicals in particular, which nonetheless defies analysis, would seem to largely derive from their conflation of the context of speaking with the speech event itself.

So, although the context of utterance clearly varies and so might contribute to the problem of the variabilty of reference, the temporal context provided by the past, for instance, is nonetheless settled and unalterable. It is, therefore, not an activity and so is not in itself selective. Instead, the context would seem to be, in large part, defined by the speech activity itself. Indeed, as a number of Kaplan's critics such as Roberts (1993: 100-102) and Willard (1988) have noted, Kaplan does not specify the mechanism that gives rise to the function that, given a context, would determine the referent.

One of the more implicit, broader philosophical aims and achievements of context dependent accounts of reference is the naturalisation of reference. While not rejecting naturalism, the present pragmatic account is clearly more functional and pragmatic in orientation, having more in common with the more reflexive, egocentric and token reflexive theories of indexical reference of Russell (1948a,

1948b) and Reichenbach (1947) respectively. These are grounded in the activity of the language user, although only implicitly in Reichenbach's case. Indeed, Russell's (1948b:107) account returns us to the topic of perception:

> It is to be observed that "here" and "now" depend upon perception; in a purely material universe there would be no "here" and "now". Perception is not impartial, but proceeds from a centre [...] What is near in time and space generally gives rise to a more vivid and distinct memory or percept than what is far.

Since, as we saw, Whitehead understands perception as mediating the two sides of nature, his perceptual account of symbolism presents the prospect of providing a hybrid or mediating position between the descriptive and causal accounts of reference which we have discussed; which is, nonetheless, not simply a compromise between the two. It does so by being much more pragmatic than these accounts through an emphasis upon action. In this way, it also begins to address the important and fundamental theoretical limitations of these reflexive accounts, which have no doubt contributed to the decline in their influence. These include their lack of underpinning conceptions of action, of perception in particular, of an expressive conception of communication, and their narrowness, attendant upon a focus on pure indexicals on account of their greater tractability.

Many of the principal differences that this reflexive conception brings to these issues, I want to argue, arise from its implicitly centred on value – a content which has historically be neglected in theories of language and reference, much as it has in theories of experience. This change requires the addition of a broad, indeed metaphysical, pragmatic background to support the centrality attributed to both action and so valuation.

Not only is this metaphysical background required for the articulation of a more coherent account of valuation and action more generally, but also encourages the broadening of what might otherwise seem to be a comparatively narrow aspect of language and its operation. Traditional metaphysical presuppositions, by failing

to adequately accommodate the notion of activity in a non-derivative way, as we saw in the introduction, inherently resist both this broadening of the scope of activity and its being understood in a purposive and so functional way.

As we have seen, value is understood as a complex and non-representational content, yet it is not entirely divorced from representation. Moreover, since, for Whitehead, action is essentially bipolar, this allows it to emphasise the complexity of both the conditions and consequences of action. In this way, it attempts to internalise and so encompass many of the features of the two historically dominant philosophical, description (Frege) and historical/causal/direct reference (Kripke/Putnam/Kaplan) traditions within a broader conception of reference now centred on activity, which has been a far less significant feature of both these traditions.

This means that although this conception does aim to address the context dependence of indexical expression, it nonetheless places less emphasis upon this aspect, which is typically regarded as its fundamental feature. On this view, the influence of the context, although real enough, is both partial and indirect. That is, accounts which attempt to attribute the shifts in the meaning of indexicals to changes in the physical context alone fail to appreciate the significance of or provide an account of their reflexivity because they tend to neglect the fact that language is an activity. By contrast, as we have seen, Whitehead provides a reflexive account of activity in terms of the self-constituting activity of actual occasions.[14]

This account aims to address the problems arising from the selectivity and variability of reference as particular features of the more general purposiveness of activity. Because of this, it centres on value as a content, a content that is not isolated but essentially interactive and interdependent. If activity is essentially purposive, is a striving to realise value (that is, is functional) and is, as we have

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[14] I am not the first to note that Whitehead's philosophy as a whole, not just his views on language, have a fundamentally token-reflexive or indexical character. See, for instance, Hartshorne (1955) and Rorty (1963: 154).

seen, interactive, functioning to unify the two sides of nature, then the ends of activity will be essentially variable. They are essentially variable, since their task is the integration of two heterogeneous types of order, the freedom arising from the openness of the future with the necessity or conformity deriving from the giveness of the past.

Indeed, for Whitehead (1938: vii), importance coincides with variability, not stability.

> [F]actors in our experience are 'clear and distinct' in proportion to their variability, provided that they sustain themselves for that moderate period required for importance.

This suggests that the shared object conception's requirement that meaning be stable and independent means that it cannot address the communication of the ends of activity, much as it seems comparatively poorly placed to provide an account of reference.

Reference, on this view, expresses the priorities internal to the immediate organisation of language itself as an activity. That is, the direction of language as an activity is not simply given to its participants or something which can be taken for granted. Nor are the aims that they attempt to realise through it, harmonised prior to it in some pre-established harmony. Rather, language itself is both central to and must itself be centred upon the expression and so negotiation of the ends of its participants. As the most reflexively and so immanently oriented expression of a language, the grammar of a language is the site of this negotiation of valuations through their expression, and so must be inherently functional.

The centrality of reference makes this a very overt functionalism, whereas historically most functional accounts of language have been comparatively covert – on account of the difficulty of articulating just how purposes themselves are expressed. Of course, this does require rejecting a predominantly representational conception of reference and, indeed, of the grammar in general. Indeed, it also

requires not, in so doing, simply falling to the opposite extreme of embracing an abstract and so de-contextualised structuralism or constructivism. The reflexivity of reference derives from the reflexivity nature of activity, which forms the basis for its capacity to integrate the contrast between the two sides of reference, both its conformal and the abstract features.

What this pragmatic conception attempts to illuminate, then, is the complexity of the act of reference itself as a selective activity. In this, it stresses that reference is, like activity, inherently bipolar or two sided, allowing the development of contrast and balance within contrast. It is this balance which provides it with its importance, but also with its inherent variability and openness to influence from either of these two sides. Reference therefore cannot be either self-contained or, indeed, identified with either side of nature. Rather, it is open to both sides, both the abstract and the conformal, and so to the influence of either constructive or conformal forms of expression. This allows these priorities or valuations, as inherently variable, to be negotiated and so adapted to particular circumstances. It provides the basis for their practical rationality, their capacity to coordinate action through the direct expression and so coordination of the ends of language as an activity.

Reference is, then, not just contextual but ecological. Individual acts of reference have to be understood as situated within a broader ecology of expressive acts which contribute to a discourse inherently distributed across a multiplicity of acts and participants. Reference, understood as the centre piece of discourse, is not an isolated or self-sufficient act but rather is inherently open and so has duration. It both makes use of the significance carried over from and so already within a context and anticipates its continued significance into the immediate future. I will expand upon how reference needs to be understood in relation to other (what I want to argue are indeed also reflexive and so indexical) forms of expression in the next chapter.

Such a pragmatic functionalism then places the language user (as the source of agency and activity, as opposed to an impersonal linguistic system) at the centre

of such a conception of language by also placing reference and so valuation at its centre. That is, it has, at its centre, a conception of the self as a source of purposiveness and agency striving to realise and so enjoy value or self-worth through the pursuit of essentially variable aims within variable contexts or settings.

Moreover, this explains the prominence of reference, which is then not so much due to its content being representational, since this does not necessarily, in itself, carry the greatest significance, so much as its being important to the organisation of language itself as an activity, since importance is central to its motivation as an activity. That is to say, the importance of reference arises from the importance of its content to language itself as a purposive activity, as much as this will typically derive in part from relationships to factors external to language itself.

I have argued that, as we have seen, valuations form the basis of Whitehead's non-representational conception of the organisation of experience. That is, the organisation of experience predominantly reflects the organisation of action rather than of representation. Representation is a central feature of the context of activity rather than of its direction or purpose. Clearly, representational conceptions of reference, in placing greater weight on the language transcendent 'aboutness' of reference, are placing greater weight upon what, in the context of a reflexive conception of indexical expression.

This reflexive conception also shares features of salience based accounts of reference such as those found in McCawley (1979) and Lewis (1973), which are, however, comparatively underdeveloped. A similar, perceptual figure-ground conception of experience is central to the cognitive linguistics of, for instance, Langacker (2008) and Talmy (2000), who implicitly revive Russell's emphasis on perceptual acquaintance and salience, and, like Whitehead, argue that linguistic acts of reference have their origins in pre-linguistic episodes of joint attention (Sinha 1999). In this respect, cognitive theories of grammar have the potential to form the basis for more functional theories of reference than those found in philosophy. However, the development of this functionalism would seem to be limited by their dependence upon the notion of the 'image schema'. Johnson (2005:

16, 31, 17-18 my emphasis), one of the originators of the notion, claims that these form the basis for their attempt to "replace disembodied accounts of meaning", and thereby "bind together body and mind, inner and outer, and thought and feeling" with such image schema representations of the "recurring *patterns* of our sensory-motor experience". As he (2005: 27 original emphasis, 15) notes, and as this "exclusive focus on recurring *structures or patterns*" suggests, image schemas "do not adequately capture the felt, qualitative aspects" of such interactions.[15] Indeed, the interaction between an organism and its environment is not understood by Johnson (2005: 16, my emphasis) to be mediated by activity, but rather by "*[s]tructures* of perceiving and doing", which suggests that, on a pragmatic analysis at least, such accounts do not seem to have escaped the classical empiricist conception of perception and so its implicit dualisms.

Relatedly, cognitive grammar is interested in 'grounding', the relationship of a designated entity to the ground or speech situation including the speech event itself, its participants and circumstances (Brisard 2002a). However, here again the principle concern has been with grounding meaning in image schemas rather than in the role that the joint communication of valuations has in achieving or sharing of joint attention. In this way, it seems more epistemic than pragmatic or practical in its emphasis and concerns (Brisard 2002a, 2002b). That is, it is not so much concerned with the achievement or regulation of communication itself, with the requirement that it provide a common immediate purpose and so unity to the actions of otherwise independent participants, in the inherently transitory and shifting grounding provided by the speech event itself as an activity. Langacker's comparatively Saussurean presuppositions tend to reinforce these conclusions (Willems 2011).

Other important perceptual accounts of reference include those of Roberts (1993) in philosophy and of Hanks (1990) in Anthropology, although these tend to depreciate salience and subjectivity respectively. There are therefore similarities,

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[15]Indeed, Johnson (2005: 29-30) even recalls how "William James and John Dewey [...] never succeeded in convincing people to take seriously the role of feeling in thought".

although also differences, between the pragmatic account of reference being advanced here and these. What is distinctive about this account, as against all these accounts, is its much more explicit and developed account of valuation and its role.

One particularly important consequence of centring indexicality on reflexivity, rather than context dependence, is that it raises the prospect of context *independent* forms of indexicality. Indeed, it suggests ways in which to develop such a conception of indexicality beyond a focus upon reference itself and the representational presuppositions which are typically associated with it.

In this, I again want to emphasise its continuity with the shared object conception which, although clearly problematic as the sole basis for a theory of reference, is nonetheless, not without relevance to reference understood as expressive and so expressive of both freedom and the freedom of expression. Indeed, attributing a valuational content to reference suggests how the content of reference is to be differentiated from that of the more abstract predicates, without completely divorcing reference from these. For instance, we are seemingly able to refer to universal or abstract notions, thereby raising doubts as to whether the content of reference is essentially ontological. Jespersen (1924: 74-75), for instance, was struck by the difficulty he experienced in distinguishing the meaning of abstract nouns from their related adjectives, for which he would seem to have had no answer:

> An answer very often given is that substantives denote substances (persons and things), and adjectives qualities found in these things. [...] Whether the reader may be inclined to attach much or little importance to the arguments just presented, he must acknowledge the old definition is powerless to solve the riddle of the so-called "abstracts" like wisdom, kindness, for though these words are to all intents and purposes substantives and are treated as such in all languages, yet they evidently denote the same qualities as the adjectives wise and kind, and there is nothing substantial about them.

Likewise, more philosophically, there is also the question of how such an account can address cases of fictional names and of empty reference to which abstract objects are suited, since, as we have seen, they do not need to exist in the same sense that events do.

What I want to finally turn to, while continuing to emphasise the importance of the abstract side of reference, is its form of expression, and in particular its economy of expression. In George Herbert Mead's (1964) account of the significant gesture, salience or significance conveys the relevance of items to action, thereby forming the basis for the coordination of actions.

If reference is a reflexive activity, centred on the language user, then what is expressed is not so much a representation of a setting as a course of action through that setting, an organisation of intentions for concerted action within it. Reference is a paradigm example of Mead's notion of gesture, expressive of importance which forms the basis for the selectivity of language:

> [G]esture [...] is primarily an expression of emotion. But the gesture itself is a syncopated act, one that has been cut short, a torso which conveys the emotional import of the act. (Mead 1964: 102)

This syncopation is, again, due to the abstract side of reference, the fact that it implicitly makes reference to subsequent acts, to its consequences and so provides a guide to an open future.

> [T]he meaning of an emotion is dependant on the observer's interpretation of "what happens next." As truncated acts, gestures are used by the observer to infer the probable ends of those acts. That is, the observer infers what the expresser intends to do, how he will act toward some object. The gestures connote the ends of acts. The clearest implication of this, would be that "emotions", as manifested by expressions or gestures, are differentiated on the basis of the observer's interpretation of the likely acts of the expresser. (Ward and Throop 1989: 472)

The truncation of the act of referring is functional as productive of economy of expression. However, this same economy of expression makes such expression comparatively variable in content. This variability and indeterminacy can be overcome, if language is recognised to be purposive and so expressive, since, as we have seen, purposes and so the expressions which express them make implicit reference to the conditions within which they are situated.

Returning to the other pole of reference, context dependence is, likewise, functional because it allows expressions to implicitly draw upon salience within the environment of their use. This also means that less is required of overt expression itself, which can therefore be more economical in its form and behaviour, thereby enhancing the efficiency of communication in general.

Reference is, in this way, a high point of not only the selective of expression but also of economy of expression, precisely because it facilitates interdependence within a language. Selectivity and interdependence require one another. Selectivity is required to coordinate and so bring order to the over-determination arising from interdependence, while interdependence provides the content to be integrated and so unified within a process of selection. High levels of interdependence explain high levels of economy of expression and so the subtly and sophistication of reference and, as we shall see, of grammatical expression in general.

The basic variability and so instability of reference, its content being something over and above the objective content present, means that it has to be managed or organised by language users themselves. Indeed, if language users are to be able to reflexively organise and direct their own discourse, then language needs to be expressive of such individual valuations and so intentions. This indeterminacy and so variability amid interdependence allows them to do this in a highly economical and so subtle way.

However, what I want to particularly address when I return to the topic of reference in the next chapter is how a reflexive conception of reference is inherently

discourse oriented. As we shall see, this inherently requires the recognition of context independent forms of indexical expression, but also and equally transforms the very notion of context relevant to reference. Although I have and will continue to focus upon reference, both the grammar and indexicality are, on this view, much broader, concerned with the organisation of discourse in general. In this way, reference is a microcosm of the grammar and so of the organisation of discourse in general. These other aspects of the grammar will be addressed somewhat when I discuss the two outer functions in the next chapter.

3.9 Expression and grammar

If language is communicative of experience, understood as an activity, then this implies that it should have an essentially variable, and so shifting, perspectival content. That is, at least on the pragmatic conception of experience, it will convey the active, interactive and qualitative characteristics of experience. But it is far from clear how such a variable content is especially compatible with being communicated by language understood as a shared, abstract social object, conveyed by a fixed scheme of codings. This is not because this pragmatic conception of experience denies either the significance of universals. Rather, because Whitehead's stance towards the eternal objects is realistic, he refuses to reduce – and so reductively analyse – subjectivity in terms of such objects.

On account of the essential variability of the content communicated by language on this view, communication itself must be inherently more complicated than the shared object view takes it to be, although, as we have seen, that view is not entirely abandoned. Moreover, this more complex conception of communication makes the relationship between the content and the symbolic form and behaviour of grammatical expressions all the more central, since it now cannot simply consist in static mappings between content and form, whether these be taken to be essentially arbitrary or not. To communicate inherently variable and so relative content, grammatical expression must be inherently expressive. Indeed, it means

that there must be an emphasis upon the situated functioning of signs in relation to both their users and their contexts of use, in which contexts of use also need to be understood as expressive.

Whitehead's account of symbolism, which as I noted, is introduced to address epistemic concerns, does not venture an account of expressivity. Nonetheless, I want to argue that Whitehead's inherently complex, functional conceptions of perception and of the sign (although he does not articulate this this himself) places him in an ideal position to advance an expressivist conception of communication. This is at least implicit in his aesthetics, which, as we have seen, can be grounded in his account of perception. Moreover, I want to argue that the notion of expression that I want to develop here has a very real kinship with the expression theories of art of, for instance, Collingwood (1938), Santayana ([1896] 1988) and Dewey ([1934] 1959), which flourished during the first half of the twentieth century and have more recently be revived by Robinson (2005). These writers were:

> committed to the position that the artist, in creating the work [of art], is expressing something, which is then to be found 'embodied,' 'infused,' or 'objectified' in the work itself. For such theorists, the 'central problem of the aesthetic attitude' is 'how a feeling can be got into an object.' (Tormey 1971: 98)

This tradition has its weaknesses and limitations, in particular the need for a conception of emotion adequate to the task of supporting such an aesthetic. In this respect, pragmatism, with its sustained interest in emotion (Ward and Throop 1989), would seem more viable than, for instance, Collingwood's philosophy. It would also seem to benefit from Whitehead's very broad and complex account of valuation and feeling. Indeed, Ross (1982: 23-24) argues that a contrast conception of art such as Whitehead's is much broader than this one, and indeed art would seem broader than the expression of emotion.

This increase in the complexity and expressivity of the form and behaviour of grammatical expressions is motivated by the greater heterogeneity and interdependence of the content communicated, which contrasts with the structural functional presupposition (inherent in its presupposition that a language is a shared object) that the content of the grammar in particular is comparatively homogeneous, independent and universal. Grammatical expression, on the pragmatic conception, is not so much based upon analytic notions, although these are not irrelevant, as practical or aesthetic notions such as contrast, interdependence and so unity in variety. Grammatical expressions are heterogeneous and yet function jointly and so are essentially interdependent. Moreover, such an achievement requires coordination internal to the organisation of language itself, presenting problems of constrained decision making that are, on this pragmatic view, the central task of the grammar - but comparatively unusual since most grammars are not predominantly immanently and so discourse oriented.

On this pragmatic view, language is an essentially superficial and immediate activity. However, it is situated against a settled background of completed activities while running in parallel with other ongoing activities. Grammatical expressions in particular can only be understood in terms of their relationship to one another and their broader environment and so must be coordinated with one another. The depth of language consists in its relationships to a background of other activities and their broader circumstances that it serves to coordinate. What Whitehead's philosophy provides is not only an aesthetic appreciation of, for instance, the relativity of the superficial details of grammatical expression but also a broader appreciation of its relationships to the depths of a much broader background.

Language is particularly important in the realisation of the more general aims of linguistic actors, of harmonising their actions with one another and the contexts in which they act, because their contexts of action will often turn out to consist, in large part, and most significantly, of other actors. That is, the most important features of the context for participants are likely to be their co-participants, whose significance is recognised in their displays of ritual care towards them

(Goffman 1967). So the adaptation of acts to contexts also becomes the coordination of acts. If actions are motivated and so justified by the interests they realise, then this coordination of actions requires a coordination of the interests of an activity's participants. On account of its superficiality, language is inherently social and so is especially suited to the task of communicating values and so interests. Because of this, it is also suited to the coordination of activities. Language needs to be understood as an activity amongst other activities and as yet, at the same time, an especially social activity. If language is an instrument for the coordination of activities in general, it must be a vehicle for the communication of values, since the realisation of some value is the primary motivation to act in a given way. Indeed, if one sees the task of language as consisting primarily in the coordination of activities, non-linguistic as well as linguistic, then the communication of values will be the primary function of language. We then arrive at an essentially pragmatic conception of language in which, as Whitehead (1928: 62-3) claimed, "[t]he object of symbolism is the enhancement of the importance of what is symbolized".

We have seen that Whitehead has an essentially relational and interactive (or transactional) conception of value. This interactive account of value (in which it centres on the fundamental notion of harmony, admittedly understood in a qualified way) provides the basis for the centrality of coordination as a task within activities – if they are to be understood purposively and so functionally, as concerned with the realisation of value.

The realisation of value is not only the aim of activity but also the key to the co-ordination or adaptation of activities to one another and their environment, since it is also what motivates them and so allows their adaptation. Hence, activities must ultimately be reflexively organised. Whitehead's epochal conception of action (see page 28) indicates how this can be understood coherently, by analysing broader activities into societies of individual occasions or acts of becoming. That is, the grammar of a language, as, on this view, the organisational basis for such a comparatively superficial and so coordinative activity, is therefore organised

reflexively, by language users themselves. Such a grammar essentially concerns the expression of valuations immanent to the organisation of language itself precisely because activity more generally not only aims to realise value but is also motivated by the realisation of value, because the realisation of value inherently involves the harmonious adaptation of activities to one another.

Variation in the importance or decisiveness of activities invites understanding the relationships between activities in terms of a hierarchy of activities, certain activities functioning to coordinate and so organise other activities that are not coordinated by them (as portrayed diagrammatically in Figure 3.2 on the next page). Within this hierarchy of activities, comparatively fundamental or basic activities such as motor acts, at the base of the hierarchy, are organised or coordinated by more reflexive and superficial or symbolic, and so distributed, higher activities such as language, at its pinnacle. The higher an activity is in this hierarchy, the more interdependent it will be with other activities. The higher activities are, therefore, not independent of those below them. Rather, they are dependent for their existence upon the lower and more fundamental ones, which provide the context which sustains them, whereas the lower activities are reliant upon the higher activities for coordination. The higher activities are, therefore, not self-sufficient, although their increasing superficiality grants them greater freedom and autonomy than lower activities. Moreover, an activity, through its temporal organisation, involves the coordination of its comparatively abstract (since unrealised in the process of the act of becoming itself) consequences for subsequent events – as well as the entirely determinate context, made up of antecedent events, out of which it emerges. Such a hierarchy, therefore, has temporal width as well as hierarchical depth. That is, it is not simply a chain of activities related to one another in a dyadic fashion, but is inherently triadic in structure, activity in the present mediating between a given past and an open future.

We can then ascend such a hierarchy of activities starting from the most basic activities such as motor acts. Such activities can be coordinated with their environment through the further activity of perception, which has a greater reach and

Figure 3.2: The pragmatic account of the relationship between linguistic and other activities

so is more interdependent. The perceptual activity of different agents can, however, also be coordinated through the use of communication with, for instance, a shared language. Moreover, communication (and so language itself) is also a complex activity distributed in space and time across multiple agents. These linguistic activities or events can, therefore, also be coordinated by a further set of activities that comprise the grammar of a language, which is more reflexive or immanent in its orientation than its lexicon. The lexicon, on the other hand, since it is lower in this hierarchy, is more language transcendent rather than co-ordinative in its content and so orientation.

If, on the other hand, a grammar is understood more abstractly in terms of objects or universals, it is less apparent how grammatical expressions can be understood in terms of their interdependence. Value as a content is therefore comparatively absent and, owing to this, there is less of a coordination problem. However, because of this, as we have seen, it also becomes difficult to explain just how the grammar of a language is functional in organisation, how the context of expression could be important, the relativity of reference and, indeed, how the language user could be central to the organisation of the grammar of a language.

It is important to stress again at this point that Whitehead's views on language were little discussed by him and have, subsequently, been little discussed or developed by others. As I have argued, within such a pragmatic and so functional

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conception of language, the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon turns out to be very important. However, Whitehead's views on language never developed to the point where he discussed, for instance, the nature of the grammars of languages, let alone the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon of a language. Yet, as we have seen, the abstractness of modern conceptions of language makes these relationships difficult to articulate, at least in functional terms. What I will be articulating is, then, a conception of language (and of the grammar of a language in particular) built on top of Whitehead's pragmatic and inherently expressivist cosmology and conception of the sign, drawing on a broader range of sources than Whitehead alone.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that Whitehead's inherently functional theory of the sign can form the basis for a functional theory of language. I have particularly focused upon the development of a symbolic and so axiological conception of substance along with its linguistic analogue, a pragmatic conception of reference. Although neither is entirely divorced from more traditional representational conceptions of these notions, both are, on this view, to be understood primarily symbolically and so pragmatically in relation to action.

This suggests that reference, likewise, needs to be understood practically rather than ontologically, and indeed, reflexively as a key to the organisation of discourse itself rather than more representationally. The representational features of reference, along with its relativity, can nonetheless be retained because both are integrated with one another in its inherently composite nature. This makes the relativity of signs both fundamental and yet also inherently capable of emergent development, and so of taking increasingly complex symbolic forms such as we find in language. Saussure's more binary or dyadic and abstract conception of the sign is, by contrast, not only inherently more linguistic but is also lacking in the same capacity to inherently form the functional basis for a conception of

linguistic relativity.

In the next chapter, I will to turn to outlining such a conception of grammar in which the coordination of activities is understood to occur through the communication of valuations and so the grammar of a language takes an inherently expressive form. Moreover, this functional conception of the sign encourages a more fundamental compositionality of meaning than we find in Halliday's metafunctions and this has significant consequences for my attempt to reconstruct them in such a way that they can be understood in a more composite and expressive fashion.

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Chapter 4

A pragmatic reconstruction of the metafunctions

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I want to attempt to reconstruct the metafunctions such that they embody a more pragmatic vision of the content and expression afforded by the grammar of a language – on the basis of the conceptions of value and of the role of the grammar of a language outlined in the last chapter.

This reconstruction has a number of aims which involve attempting to address some of the criticisms made of the metafunctions in Chapter Two. As I suggested there (see page 78), the more classical American pragmatic position differs not only from Bühler's functions but also from Halliday's metafunctions. The primary difference is that the content of grammatical expression is explicitly argued to be valuational.

This introduces a relativity and variability of content that requires that the underlying conception of expression be more expressive, such that the forms and behaviours of expressions are more expressive of the values or contents that they thereby express. This, in turn, requires greater consistency of the form and behaviour of the expressions housed within the different functions. The form and

behaviour of such expression is then not simply arbitrary but, in an admittedly language-relative sense, expressive. Moreover, the content of the different functions, as valuational, is, as we have seen, interdependent such that the content and so expression of the different metafunctions are related to one another.

This interdependence of both expression and content means that the functions themselves are composite and so not uniform or homogeneous. There are no divisions, as the different forms of expression blend into one another and so are inherently composite, just as valuations (as their content) are inherently composite. As we have already (and will continue) to see with reference, the copresence of different forms of expression allows increased complexity of expression, which brings with it the possibility of heightened economy of expression. Thus, the enhanced functional efficiency that it brings to the operation of the grammar encourages the development of the mutual support that the different forms of expression can lend to one another.

Such an expressive conception of communication is also a more functionally compositional one, which requires that the modes of expression be more componential or elemental and so capable of combination and integration rather than independent, over-arching forms of order (as is provided by, for instance, phrase structure grammars and so the notion of constituency). Towards the end of this chapter, I will therefore turn to this important issue of the compositionality of expression and meaning, understood in a valuational and so functional rather than the more orthodox and representational truth functional sense.

Finally, I will attempt to discuss some of the more major differences which arise from the differences between more fundamental presuppositions of the two accounts, such as the differences between their respective accounts of communication and of subjectivity in particular. The differing starting points and so points of emphasis of the two accounts have an important role in shaping these central features of the way in which they conceive of functionalism which, as we shall see, have an important impact on their conception of the functions of language.

However, I want to start from the two different conceptions of the relationship between the grammar to the lexicon which I introduced over the last two chapters. Since that pragmatic conception of this relationship is in fact quite different from Halliday's and most probably most other linguistic theories. So in the next two sections, I want to move from the need to re-conceptualise this relationship to an overview of the need to reconstruct the metafunctions, which will conclude with a brief outline of a pragmatic 'parts of speech'. I will then attempt to generalise this in the subsequent sections, in which I address in outline how this conception suggests how each of Halliday's three metafunctions can be reconstructed in broad terms to provide a still more pragmatic conception of grammar.[1] As we shall see, this draws upon the simple typology of values that I introduced in the last chapter and Whitehead's reflexive, epochal conception of action in generalising the notion of activity beyond how it has traditionally been understood to relate to the grammar.

In the next chapter, the details of this reconstruction will be exemplified in greater detail through a discussion of the subject notions which provide a microcosm of these broader relationships. I want to begin with the reconstruction of the textual metafunction, on account of its centrality to the contrast between the two accounts.

4.2   A pragmatic conception of grammar

I have emphasised that the role of the grammar is fundamentally coordinative. This need for coordination arises from the fact that on the pragmatic view, both the grammar and the lexicon (in particular the latter) are both essentially heterogeneous in nature. In this, both parallel Whitehead's two sides of nature, in that both are essentially bipolar. Likewise, these two poles or sides of the lexicon in particular need to be coordinated and harmonised with one another.

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[1] As I indicated earlier (see page 85), I have found McGregor's (1990, 1997) earlier critique and reconstruction of the Halliday's metafunctions very suggestive, since it avoids Halliday's privileging of both the system network formalism and constituency as a mode of realisation.

However, grammatical and lexical expression are, nonetheless, also quite distinctive and so also differ from one another, although there is no sharp dividing line between the two. In this respect, they do not parallel one another but stand, as I have already suggested, in a hierarchical relationship. This is because, within this hierarchical relationship, the lexicon is the less reflexive and so more objective in both its content and its expression. The content of grammar is, on the other hand, essentially valuational and variable because the task of coordination is both context and purpose dependent, and so variable.

It is this fundamental heterogeneity, between these two different types of objective potentiality and so order at the base of this relationship (and the potential conflicts arising from it) that gives rise to the need for language users to manage the process or channel of communication – and, so, to the functional development of a grammar with which they are able to do this. The grammar functions as a more reflexive, superficial, coordinating stratum of expression that not only functions in terms of the expression of valuations but is itself productive of value, through the harmonisation that it introduces. This harmony is, then, not a pre-condition but rather a product of the operation of the grammar. In particular, language users use grammatical (that is comparatively relative, valuative or subjective expression) to guide and coordinate the comparatively objective content expressed by more language transcendent, lexical expressions. This means that the relationship between grammatical expression and lexical expression is essentially functional or pragmatic.

As we have seen, on this pragmatic view, action (in this case, the grammar of a language) involves the integration and coordination of the interplay of, on the one hand, general or abstract potentials (the eternal objects) and, on the other, real potentiality (the stubborn efficacy of events which have ceased becoming). That this is a dynamic contrast is evident from its presence in the temporal contrast between the definite particularity of the past and the open generality of the future within the immediacy of the present.

Yet this same contrast, between generality and particularity, for Halliday, de-

fines the unmediated relationship between the grammar and the lexicon. That is, for Halliday, the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon has a very different structure that does not seem to be a functional relationship (at least in anything like the same sense).

So, within the pragmatic account, the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon is understood in a more functional way. This is borne out by there being, in addition to the horizontal breadth or width of Halliday's metafunctions that jointly, span the grammar, also vertical alignments – internal to and so arising from heterogeneity – within each of the metafunctions, which provide depth and which run orthogonal to and so cut across this horizontal breadth. These two positions can therefore be contrasted diagrammatically, as in Figure 4.1 on the following page in which I have begun to recast the metafunctions as pragmatic functions (which I shall introduce very shortly). So, within the pragmatic account, not only is the grammar horizontally heterogeneous (in that different parts of the grammar function differently), but also vertically heterogeneous, in being hierarchical in organisation.

That is, vertical alignments structure the the hierarchical relationship between the grammar and the lexicon, which Halliday, by contrast, takes to be of equal parity – understood to be related to one another in terms of the notion of delicacy, as we saw earlier (see page 59). For Halliday, the grammar of a language is understood in terms of objects, as a system, a shared object. This system provides a pre-established harmony, which largely eliminates the need for coordination and so undermines the motivation for a functional conception of grammar. This explains the comparative half halfheartedness of Halliday's functionalism (like most linguistic grammars). We also saw, in the last chapter, how (largely philosophical) accounts of reference have also tended to either avoid or struggle to articulate functional conceptions of language.[2] It is the shared abstractness of

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[2] Moreover, this is not just a problem confined to Anglo-American analytic philosophy. For instance, the problem of dualism would seem to be at least as prominent in contemporary European or continental philosophy. See, for instance, Charles Taylor's (2016) distinction between constitutive and propositional meaning.

A: Halliday's metafunctions and
the relationship between the grammar and lexicon

Interpersonal	Textual	Ideational	Horizontal alignments

Grammar (general)	Lexicon (particular)

B: The pragmatic conception of the relationship between
the grammar and the lexicon imposed on the metafunctions

Figure 4.1: The contrasting relationship between the grammar and the lexicon in relation to Halliday's metafunctions

both these disciplinary positions that tends to preclude a more functional stance towards both the operation of signs and the internal organisation language itself.

For Halliday, the grammar is primarily understood in terms of choice within such a given system, rather than in terms of the motivation of choice; that is, the types of values realised by decisions. This forms the basis for his theoretical extravagance, where grammatical variation generates a comparative extravagance

or redundancy of expressions and contents, based upon a much more minimal role for the interdependence and so the inherent compositionality of grammatical expression and content than, as we shall see, we find within this pragmatic conception.

In order to illustrate these relationships, I want to briefly introduce what I will be calling the subject notions (Theme, Subject, Actor) in English, three types of phrases (typically nominal groups) that dominate the clause in English. I will be discussing these in greater depth in the next chapter. One feature of these notions is that, while they are distinguishable from one another, they can also be conflated within a particular expression. As I discussed in Chapter Two (see page 89), given that both of these conceptions entertain something like three different functional strands or threads of content or meaning running through the clause, it is possible and indeed very common for one constituent to express more than one of these strands or currents of meaning at a time, allowing, in word and paradigm (WP) terms, different types of exponence to occur.

Indeed, in simpler constructions such as the first example, in Table 5.2 on page 201, this will typically be the case, where their expression all coincides within the same initial phrase or group of the clause.

	The duke	gave	my aunt	this teapot
Textual	Psychological Subject (Theme)			
Interpersonal	Grammatical Subject (Subject)			
Ideational	Logical Subject (Actor)			

Table 4.1: Example of conflated Theme, Subject and Actor

This exhibits the sort of 'horizontal alignment' that allows the sort of cumulative exponence that Halliday's account draws attention to. However, it is equally important that they can also be separated and so distinguished from one another, as in the more complex construction in Table 5.3 on page 202 (Halliday 1985: 33). Indeed, there is a whole range of possible variations in exponence that lies between these extremes.

	This teapot	my aunt	was given by	the duke
Textual	Theme			
Interpersonal		Subject		
Ideational				Actor

Table 4.2: Example of distinguished Theme, Subject and Actor

As I have just suggested, what the pragmatic conception attempts to add to this are vertical alignments, running between the grammar and the lexicon, providing another source of different types of exponence. So the emphasis, in this case, is not so much upon the relation between different grammatical expressions as upon how grammatical and lexical expressions combine and interact.

I have particularly emphasised cumulative exponence as a source of economy of expression. An example of such cumulative exponence in a vertical alignment and so between grammatical and lexical expression is when words, functioning lexically, that is, expressing lexical content, occupy grammaticalised positions that express or convey grammatical content. Since it increases the economy of their joint expression, this encourages the development of the significance of and so grammaticalisation of word order. The subject notions are a good example of this, since, as we shall see in greater detail in the next chapter, they are largely (although not entirely) distinguished by their position. Likewise, these two types of expression can come apart as, for instance, when grammatical positions are marked by grammatical or function words such as empty or dummy forms that do not convey lexical content, which I shall also discuss in the next chapter.

In such vertical cumulative exponence, one and the same expression is composite and so is expressive of both a comparatively subjective or valuational (relative) and a comparatively objective content. The function of the grammar, on this pragmatic view, is to harmonise the language across these various alignments. The vertical alignments provide the integration between the comparatively subjective (relative) content of grammar and comparatively objective content of the lexicon, while the horizontal alignments integrate the diversity of types of value,

as we have seen, corresponding to the contrasts between the broad values of freedom, truth and beauty. As I have stressed, these potential alignments contribute to the functional development of a language through, for instance, the development of economies of expression.

A clause consists of lexical elements that have to be presented in some way, that is through some organisation. To claim that this is functional, a type of organisation relevant to purposive activity, is to claim that it is perspectival. Traditionally, the emphasis has been upon patterns as a type of order. As I have stressed, Whitehead does not deny the existence of this type of order and the point of such a non-reductive conception is in order to retain it. The problem is how to integrate this conception of order with a functional conception of order as the basis for, for instance, a figure/ground organisation. Introducing valuation as a basis for functional order attempts to do this.

4.3 Overview of the reconstruction of the metafunctions

This consideration of the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon has begun to provide our first clear indication as to why and how I think that the three metafunctions need to be reconstructed as three more pragmatically-oriented functions, which I will call 'pragmatic' or 'expressive functions' of the grammar of a language in distinction from both Bühler's functions and Halliday's metafunctions.

In this, the simple typology of values that I introduced in the last chapter is the most immediately relevant. There are two functions which are comparatively unbalanced or asymmetric and so pure and a third which is more balanced or symmetric and so mixed. The two comparatively unbalanced currents of significance which underlie Whitehead's theory of value are associated with the values of truth and of freedom. These are characterised by a predominance or bias in the direction of dependence and independence respectively. Since value is a product of balance, these two currents are, in turn, further integrated within a third

current of significance which, since it integrates and so corrects the respective imbalances in these two streams, is more balanced still. This third current, associated with the value of beauty, is, on account of this balanced interdependence, the most prominent or significant of the three currents or functions.

Given the greater emphasis upon value and coordination in the pragmatic account, the textual metafunction now assumes a greater prominence than in Halliday's account, since discourse features now tend to define the grammar as a whole. That is, the function of the grammar within a language is understood as concerned with the reflexive task of the organisation of language itself and so of discourse in general. The pragmatic counterpart of Halliday's textual metafunction is what I will call the 'expressive' or 'central' function on account of its being both the most prominent (as principal exemplar of the expression of importance) and its central positioning within the account, as the most balanced function. In particular, it attains its greater prominence by actively functioning to further integrate the two outer or less balanced or more pure functions. The arrangement of these three functions, the three broad types of values which underpin them and their counterparts in Halliday's metafunctions then can be contrasted diagrammatically as in Figure 4.2 on page 160.

I now want to turn to these two more pure functions which are integrated within the expressive function. As when I first contrasted the different conceptions of the functions of language in Chapter Two (see page 78), I will be arguing that the content of the interpersonal metafunction needs to be understood as abstract, based upon Whitehead's classical American conception of experience. I suggested there that it exemplifies Peirce's thirdness and, as we have seen, Whitehead's presentational immediacy. I shall therefore call this the 'abstract' function. This is the more Platonic or structural side of this conception. This concerns the coordination of more abstract, since potential, courses of action as most clearly exemplified by the system of Mood. Its content consists in comparatively abstract relationships which tend to be expressed by comparatively free, holistic and optional forms of grammatical expression.

On the other side of the expressive or central function, Halliday's representational, ideational metafunction will be reconstructed as what I will call the 'conformal' function. This function is underpinned by the truth relation which can come in different guises. In this way, this account attempts to accommodate the insights of representational conceptions of language. Truth functional theories of meaning typically provide the basis for representational theories of language by providing them with an account of representation. However, given that representation is less of a priority within this conception, as with reference, this is understood more contextually and, in particular, conformally. This function is grounded in the need for coordination with the given antecedent or historical context of expression. As we saw in the discussion of the value of the truth in the last chapter, for Whitehead, this is an important source of significance as felt within the present.[3] The grammatical expression within this function tends to be comparatively fundamental and obligatory. At the scales of organisation that we will be considering, this is provided in large part by morphology (the internal constitution of words) and morphologically mediated relationships such as agreement.

I now want to briefly return to the point that this is a discourse based conception of grammar and so, in a sense, is a generalisation of Halliday's textual metafunction. To date, such conceptions such as, for instance, Hopper's (1987, 1998, 2012) emergent grammar, do not appear to have been particularly successful. I want to argue that this is because most accounts of grammar, and so discourse based conceptions of grammar (such as emergent grammar), would seem to be based upon an insufficiently functional (typically an at least somewhat Saussurean) conception of the sign. If language is organised reflexively by language users themselves, then this requires that valuation be central. However, an overly abstract conception of the sign, implicit in the shared object conception of communication, rules this out, in which case there is no language internal content

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[3] "The creativity of the world is the throbbing emotion of the past hurling itself into a new transcendent fact" (Whitehead [1933] 1967: 177).

Textual

A: Metafunctions

Interpersonal

Ideational
(Logical/Experiential)

(Beauty)
Expressive

B: Pragmatic
Functions

Abstract
(Freedom)

Conformal
(Truth)

Figure 4.2: Halliday's metafunctions and the pragmatic functions

to build a notion of discourse around. Value is not communicable on this view, because language is not expressive, other than in a weak sense.

Such grammarians therefore end up, I want to suggest, like Halliday, talking about discourse without being able to attribute to it any unique content that could provide a rational basis for its organisation. Linguistic relativity, especially that *internal* to a language, then becomes a mere fact rather than explicable as the product of purposive activity. However, as we have seen, such a rational basis does not mean that it need be rationalistic. In the case of communication, that would just lead to a collapse back into the shared object conception. Rather, what is particularly distinctive about Whitehead's epochal conception of ac-

tion, as concerning the self-actualisation of occasions, is that action is rationally analysable (Bradley 1989). What is functionally important about Whitehead's conception of the sign is that it can directly support valuational content and so the hierarchical organisation needed to make room for and support this content as the basis of the operation of the whole of the grammar. Likewise, the triadic structure of the metafunctions is preserved because it had a pragmatic source in figures like Bühler and so, strictly speaking, does not come from Halliday. Indeed, as we shall see Halliday disavows any commitment to such an organisation (see page 195).

Having introduced the functions, we can now briefly return to the relationship between the grammar and the lexicon in Figure 4.3 on the following page. We can see how the truth, on a correspondence or realistic conception such as Whitehead's requires a given, stubborn reality and so is particular. Freedom is, on the other hand, comparatively indeterminate and so is an abstract and general value, increasing with the range of possibilities that are accessible. Action, including grammatical action or expression, involves both. That is, it involves a tension or contrast between freedom and necessity, it is inherently situated within a given, historical context and yet also free and so open (Ross 1983: 61).

The horizontal alignments trace out a continuum of different types of value which vary according to their composition; hence the importance of what I will be calling expressive compositionality. This concerns the compositionality of values and their expression as opposed to the more conventional and representational, truth functional sense of compositionality more typically used in semantics. The vertical alignments, on the other hand, trace out the hierarchical depth and so both the objective underpinnings of each of these values and the direction of coordination.

I now want to very briefly outline a conception of the 'parts of speech' or major groupings of grammatical word classes for English which is expressivist, in that it attempts to understand the relationship between the content of grammatical expression and the grammatical form (and behaviour) of the expressions that

Figure 4.3: The relationship between the grammar, the lexicon and the pragmatic functions

expresses it as an expressive one. This will provide a very stylised outline of this conception of grammar and the above functions that will be generalised and filled out somewhat in the subsequent sections. I have already emphasised the importance of valuational content intrinsic to the operation of language itself within this conception. This has also already been exhibited to some degree in the discussion of the way in which the selectivity and variability of reference was explained in terms of its inherently composite, valuational content at some length in the last chapter.

Here, I also want to bring in the two polar types of content and expression which underlie the two poles of reference, which (as I have suggested) can be distinguished from one another as the two poles which underlie the bipolar structure of action. Within the grammar, there is a contrast between the comparative abstractness of the content of, for instance, adjectives and adverbs, and the more concrete, conformal relatedness of the content of, for instance, verbal expression. Within modern English, these different types of content would seem to be expressed in contrasting ways. Abstract grammatical expressions manifest a high degree of positional mobility and low morphological complexity or variability, while verbal expression is characterised by comparatively fixed syntactic positions and higher morphological complexity or variability of form (through,

for instance, inflectional variation).

I have already argued that reference and so, typically, nominal expression is the most selective on account of its selective content. This is due to the fact that it lies at the interplay of the two currents of significance that I have already introduced: the one, abstract, the other, conformal. I have also already briefly suggested that reference and so nominal expression is especially economical as a form of expression (see page 139). This, I want to argue, is because not only does it serve to integrate these two currents of significance, but also to integrate the two types of expression associated with each of these currents.

That is, nominal expression combines features of the above polar types of expression, being both morphologically complex but also somewhat positionally mobile. This makes such expression more balanced and so central within the grammar, on account of, as we have seen, the centrality of balance to value. These two types of expression can combine in complex ways that allow them to support one another, such that nominal expression is inherently more complex, variable in content and economical in form than the other two more pure types of expression. I shall return to a more detailed discussion of these expressive features and their relationships to one another when I discuss the various subject notions that I introduced earlier and which, for instance, manifest them in various combinations, in the next chapter.

The expressive form of a grammar is then morphological and syntactic and so inherently two sided in addition to being hierarchical in organisation. However, I particularly want to emphasise that it is inherently morphosyntactic in that these two different forms of expression can combine to support one another, particularly within grammatical expression, and that this provides a basis for functional development or emergence.

A fundamental feature of the form of grammatical expression in general is its heightened economy of expression. Grammatical expression takes the form of closed classes of expressions because of its selectivity, which I have associated

with variability. Such inherently variable content is communicable because it can be managed by adopting more complex and expressive forms of expression, which can, on account of this, also be more economical and so subtle. While not all grammatical expression aims at economy of expression, it is nonetheless comparatively difficult to accomplish and so has a particular functional value, especially in virtue of the ubiquity of grammatical expression. It allows the grammar of a language to be decisive in managing the process of communication itself, while adding only a comparatively minimal overhead to that communication. Indeed, the economy and subtlety of grammatical expression reflects its place in the hierarchy of activities, whereby more complex and adaptable activities are used to coordinate less directly manageable ones.

The classical American philosophical position that I have been outlining leads to an understanding of human societies grounded in a functional and so practical relativism. Although I do not propose to discuss linguistic typology at any length, I do want to highlight the importance of this general theoretical stance – which would seem to be not at all unusual within the social sciences and, moreover, does not seem to be obviously at odds with the relativity of natural languages.

Different languages present differing ranges of different types of grammatical expression which, to varying degrees, form an integrated unity. Grammatical expression inherently depends upon the expressive capabilities and possibilities that a language presents to its users and so is inherently relative to a language. However, these capabilities and possibilities can vary greatly between languages and indeed evolve over time.

Certain languages such as Vietnamese and Chinese are highly analytic (and so involve sophisticated syntactic forms of expression based upon variations in word order), but have a comparatively limited range of morphological expression internal to the constitution of words. Other languages, such as the classical Indo-European languages (for example, Classical Greek, Sanskrit), for which word order is less significant, have comparatively limited syntactic forms of ex-

pression, but have comparatively complex morphological forms of expression. Then there are languages such as contemporary English and other modern European languages which present a more balanced combination for these two forms of expression.

My concerns within this thesis are not especially typological, so, unless explicitly said to be otherwise, should be taken to concern modern English. Clearly, a focus on contemporary English favours the stance being presented here, at least as a starting point. However, the primary aim of this thesis is to attempt to demonstrate the viability of a comparatively pragmatic and so more overtly functional grammar. Central to this is a functional conception of linguistic relativity not unlike that which one finds in the social sciences, which would seem to be rather more functional and language internal than that usually found in linguistics. However, these two conceptions are unlikely to be entirely unrelated, particularly as a significant part of this pragmatic conception of relativity is an emphasis upon conformation to the past and so upon relativity as an inherited fact.

4.4   Reconstructing the textual metafunction

The reconstruction of the textual metafunction is dominated by issues surrounding reference, which I already began to introduce a pragmatic conception of in the last chapter. In this section, I will be primarily concerned with how this conception can be understood as discourse based and how this introduces both similarities to and differences from Halliday's account of the textual metafunction that I introduced in Chapter Two. In particular, this conception of reference parallels in certain respects Halliday's conception associated with the textual metafunction. However, this is complicated by the fact that Halliday seemingly has more than one conception of reference. As we shall see in greater detail in Chapter Six, Halliday would also seem to have a more representational account of nominal expression, and so reference, which differs considerably from this

one in taking the content of reference to be both essentially stable and language transcendent (see page 254). Indeed, we saw earlier that the most agreement between Halliday and Pike concerned the characterisation of the expression within the experiential portion of Halliday's representational, ideational metafunction, that it is 'particulate', 'elemental' or 'constituent-like', mirroring its content as representational and static (see page 81).

However, this focal emphasis is also in keeping with the primacy of the selectivity of reference that I discussed earlier, which, as I stressed, meant that that reflexive account was therefore predominantly non-representational. In keeping with its aim at a more consistent conception of grammatical expression as expressive, the present pragmatic account also adopts a more unified stance towards reference.

As we have seen, on this pragmatic conception, reference, like action, is inherently bipolar or two sided. The expressive function which centres on reference is then also inherently two sided. I have stressed that the expressive, as the most balanced function is the most prominent or important, since it brings together and so integrates currents of significance from the two sides of the grammar. Just as substance is focal to the organisation of experience, as the locus of the interplay of the two sides of nature, so nominal expression is focal to the organisation of language as the locus of the interplay between the two sides of the grammar, between morphological and syntactic expression. That is, the centrality of substance to experience carries over to the centrality of nominal expression in language, on, as we shall see, similar pragmatic grounds. This makes it a useful entry point into this account, since it is the function which must inherently lead us into a consideration of the other two functions since it stands at their intersection.

I noted earlier (see page 23) that discourse, the focus of his textual metafunction, is a clear strength of Halliday's grammar. Nonetheless, within the present pragmatic conception, the whole of the grammar is understood in a similar light as concerning the immanent organisation of language itself as an activity. That

is, this is a task which extends beyond the textual metafunction, where Halliday situates and, indeed, tends to isolate it. Moreover, Halliday's comparatively spare account of this metafunction also needs to be both greatly expanded and populated in terms of the proportion of expressions which it covers. One of the central aims of this reconstruction is, then, to reclaim the textual metafunction as a major, if not the major, metafunction when reconstructing it as the expressive alignment.

How to achieve this seems clear, at least in outline, since Halliday has largely evacuated the vast bulk of nominal expression to the ideational metafunction, in particular within the system of transitivity, where such expressions are presumably understood to function representationally, in keeping with his above-mentioned representational theory of reference. Halliday's views regarding reference are then one of the more striking cases of a lack of a unitary account of the relationship between the form and content of expressions. This could explain why he prefers to characterise them in semantic rather than formal terms. However, he does not ever seem to be very clear as to just what the semantic content of the textual metafunction is either, because, as we shall see (see page 195), he would seem to deny that the content of it, and of the Theme in particular, is experiential. This would explain why Halliday has difficulty articulating a content and so basis on which to explain the organisation and operation of the textual metafunction, even though it is one of his more distinctive achievements.

I argued in the last chapter that the decisive feature of indexical expression is not its context dependence but its reflexivity. I therefore want to argue that, as much as Peirce's causal account of indexical reference would seem too contextual, nonetheless his both neglected and misunderstood insight that the grammatical subjects of sentences are indexical was a stroke of genius, which can be generalised across the grammar of a language as a whole. Peirce (1931: 1.372, 2.262. 2.296, 2.357, 3.419, 4.58) claimed that every sentence contains an index which is its subject. In his account of the functioning of statements or assertions, he took the subject, in cases where the subject does not need to be explicitly marked

(as for instance, in languages such as Greek and Latin) to be implicit and so understood. Unfortunately, it is less clear as to why Peirce thought the subject to be an index. Perhaps the best explanation is his claim that the function of an index is to direct the attention of the interpreter to the subject matter of an assertion:

> [I]t is requisite that there should be a kind of sign which shall act dynamically upon the hearer's attention and direct it to a special object or occasion. Such a sign I call an *Index*. (Peirce 1931: 2.336 original emphasis)

In focusing upon the activity of language users, this is suggestive of a more reflexive conception. However, on account of this causal and so context dependent emphasis, it is comparatively difficult to reconcile Peirce's account with the grammatical subject being indexical, since it is associated with an inherently abstract position and so is an abstract form of expression.[4] Such abstract forms of expression are most clearly exemplified by prominent positions, such as the grammatical subject, which are therefore largely independent of the lexical content that occupies them. I want to argue that on account of this independence, they comparatively freely generate or project new valuations on to the lexical occupants of the grammatical positions that they define. And these comparatively abstract values derive their significance from the prominence of these positions, which are, in this sense, expressive.

By contrast, Peirce did not ever seem to make this distinction between context dependent and context independent forms of indexicality, since, his (like many other conceptions of indexicality, by adopting a causal account) inherently takes the content of such expressions to be primarily context dependent rather than

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[4] Indeed, Burks (1949: 679) in his attempt to criticise what I want to argue was an implicitly syntactic claim on Peirce's part, relating to the subject position rather than the expression occupying it, would seem to fail to recognise this very point, confusing the expression occupying the subject position with the subject.

reflexive.[5] Indeed, the account of indexicality adopted here is, as we shall see, both broader and more pragmatic than Peirce's comparatively causal account of indexicality.

On this reflexive view, indexical expression not only takes comparatively overt – since morphological and so concrete – forms of expression (such as pronouns and other words, which are its more usual exemplars), but also, and more subtly, the form of abstract syntactical or grammatical positions such as the grammatical subject. Such context *independent* indexical expression is one of the more important possible sources of such significance within a context, since it allows language users themselves to freely generate such valuations. Their functioning is, therefore, not based upon the reception of values already present within the context of expression, as we saw context *dependent* indexical expression, such as reference, was. That is, it is an important (since ubiquitous, if subtle) determinant of the intrinsic importance of items of discourse in languages in which word order is significant – such as English. In this way, the context of expression has to be understood valuationally, since, as we have seen, subsequent referring expressions select their content from it, based, in part, upon the grading of significance already present within the context of expression.

Context dependent accounts of indexicality are, on this reflexive view, then, both too representationally or extrinsically orientated, (placing too much weight upon the context itself) and one-sided, neglecting context independent forms of indexical expression. The context of expression also needs to be understood in relation to the activity of language users, as expressive and so interpreted, as not only given to them but as also involving valuations, and so requiring interpretation, being inherently graded for its significance.

Not only indexical expression itself but also the context of expression is then

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[5] In particular, indexicals for Peirce are, in terms of his categories, which I briefly contrasted with Whitehead's modes of perception in Figure 2.3 on page 77, Seconds (or Whitehead's causal efficacy), which accords with this causal interpretation. By contrast, within the pragmatic account that I am presenting, indexicals, are clearly Firsts, being characterised by immediacy or reflexivity, and so are also exemplars of Whitehead's perceptual mode of symbolic reference.

considerably more complex than it is typically taken to be, since, on this view, the context is also understood to be expressive – that is, in large part constituted by the expressive activity of other language users. Rather than attempt to discuss these comparatively abstract forms of expression (such as the subject notions) here, I want to postpone doing so until I can discuss them at greater length in the next chapter.

This, then, is the important truth in Halliday's characterisation of the form of expression of the textual metafunction as wave-like and so as periodic in structure (see page 84). It remains, however, a simplification, in that it is still too distributional and one-sided, in that it neglects the role of cohesion (anaphora), which Halliday does recognise as playing an important role within the textual metafunction.

As I noted in the last chapter, the conventional response to the indexical nature of reference has been to focus upon its context dependence rather than its reflexivity. However, I want to argue that this response to the difficulties that indexicality presents for more traditional conceptions of language, typically cast in terms of abstract objects (even in a sophisticated form such as Frege's) is an over-reaction. In particular, the placing of undue emphasis upon the context dependence has been unfortunate in discouraging investigations into the relationship between indexicality and syntax. For syntax is, by its nature, comparatively abstract, and so context independent.

What then unifies the different types of indexical and so grammatical expression is their reflexivity, not their context dependence (which is only a feature of certain more receptive forms of indexical expression such as reference that have – admittedly – historically been taken to be the paradigms of such expression, but which represent just one pole of the bipolar organisation of grammatical activity). This reflexive conception of indexicality, and so of the grammar, then, encourages the view that indexicality covers a broader and more various range of subtle and complex forms of expression than it has been traditionally taken to. Indexical expression spans not just the use of the significance already present

within a context which grades the prominence of elements within that particular context, as in the case of reference, but also its production or generation. That is, the behaviour of language users has the expressive diversity, and so capacity, to both use and so be affected by – and yet also generate or express – such valuations such that these different types of indexical expression are not independent of one another but rather contribute to an economy or circulation of valuations. That is, their interdependence means that, together, these different types of indexical expression allow language users to reflexively manage the significance intrinsic or immanent to the organisation of their own discourse, thereby allowing them to direct their own activities in concert with one another.

The expressive function is then central because it is, like activity in general, bipolar or two sided, one side being comparatively conformal in content, the other side, comparatively abstract. Beauty as a value is characterised by balance and symmetry, on account of it integrating both sides of the grammar with one another. Activity and value are both a cause and an effect. The turn taking that forms the basis for conversation allows participants to alternate their roles as cause and effect.

As we have seen, then, this pragmatic account places the problems of reference centre stage, proposing that a correct understanding of the function of the grammar is an important key to their resolution. But, likewise, I want to argue that indexicality is an important key to a semantics of grammar. That is, the functioning of the grammar and of reference within a language need to be understood as intimately related to one another. This can begin to explain the relativity and reflexivity of both reference and the grammar of a language in general.

What reference provides, then, is an immediate focal, since selective, direction to a discourse. Because the valuational content of reference is inherently variable and so relative, it provides a direction which can be negotiated between the participants participating in that discourse. The variability of valuations directly introduces variation into the motivation to act in particular ways, thereby allowing the expressed valuations to regulate the direction of the discourse and so to

adapt to the participants and circumstances involved. Again, the hierarchical relationship between the grammar and the lexicon allows reference to provide a negotiated selection from the broader potentiality that the lexicon provides.

The distribution of value is central to the organisation of language, because language, as an activity, is adapted to the purposes that its participants intend to realise through the adaptation of the activity of the same participants. That is, the distributed activities that make it up need to be coordinated with one another. The communication or expression of valuations naturally does this by conveying motivations to act and so providing the basis for the adaptation of action as both plastic and motivated. The fundamental task of language on this view is the sharing and adapting of the ends of activity, as the basis for the motivation to act itself, which, in turn, forms the basis for the adaptation and so coordination of activities broader and less reflexive than language itself.

The centrality of nominal expression and reference is the linguistic counterpart of the pervasiveness of substance and so of importance within conscious experience. If substance is not defined by its definiteness but rather, pragmatically, by its decisiveness, then it cannot provide a fixed foundation for either experience or language. Rather, in either case, it finds its primary function in the coordination of action.

A strength of this valuational emphasis is that it does not render the tremendous amount of grammatical variability of the roles under which lexical expressions or content can fall inherently paradoxical, since it does not ascribe to the grammar the same degree of objectivity that it does to the lexicon.[6] As perspectival and valuational, grammatical content is more variable than lexical content. This greater variability and relativity of grammatical content being due to its being valuational, superficial and immediate; whereas lexical content is presented under a grammatical guise.

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[6] This problem forms one reason for Halliday's account of what he calls grammatical metaphor, which I shall discuss in Chapter Six. For instance, see Halliday's notion of semantic juncture (see page 267).

To nominalise a lexical item or content is not to turn it into 'a thing' in any ontological sense because, as we have seen, things do not exist in this sense (though they will often be related to a society of occasions which does exist). Nominalisation involves more of a re-valuation than a re-categorisation of a lexical item. As we have seen, such a valuation is not independent of its properties or causal efficacy either, since it is a perspectival composite; but, as such it is the product of activity. By contrast, Lexical content is less reflexive and so more objective or language transcendent. Nor is this to deny that the lexicon also conveys valuations; but these, as the lexicon in general is, are more overt and transcendent or extrinsic to the organisation of language itself.[7]

This position also bears out Levinson's (2000: Chapter 3) claim that the resolution of reference is not something which can be simply presumed to occur before (and thereby ground) subsequent grammatical – or for that matter pragmatic – processes. Rather, reference is the product of such activities and grammatical processes. Thus, a foundationalist conception of the grammar, of its being built upon a fixed referential base, has to be replaced by one in which the content of reference is understood as transitory and shifting. Grammatical processes contribute to the inherently variable and relative determination of reference, since it is otherwise indeterminate when considered independently of the broader environment in which it is situated.

This is just a more specific instance of Whitehead's ([1929] 1978: 12, 13) more general claim that:

> [l]anguage is thoroughly indeterminate, by reason of the fact that
> every occurrence presupposes some systematic type of environment.

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[7] There is a systemic functional literature (for example, Martin (2000), Martin and White (2005)) on what is called 'appraisal', concerned with the expression of valuations, which attempts to classify and analyse such expression. However, since it is not based upon an explicit conception of value, it would seem to implicitly take value to be a universal or abstract object. Another unusual feature of this literature is that it takes such expression to be interpersonal. This might provide further support for the view, which I entertain later that, for Halliday, subjectivity just *is* intersubjectivity. Finally, by taking such expression to be largely lexical, it thereby, like Halliday, tends to treat valuation as not central to the organisation of the grammar of a language.

> [... For] no language can be anything but elliptical, requiring a leap of the imagination to understand its meaning in its relevance to immediate experience.

The pragmatic response to the indeterminacy – or better, variability – of the content of language in general (and of reference in particular) is to cast its determination as the product of a broader coordination problem. It is the essential indeterminacy and so variability of grammatical expression – and of nominal expression in particular – which allows language users to jointly manage the direction and development of their own discourse. That is, since reference needs to be managed by language users, it is also essentially reflexive. The variable and relative content of nominal expression in particular provides a means for them to express their interests through it.

The implicit nature of these relationships to the broader environment requires that they be determined in large part through the activity of the language users themselves. Such implicit or tacit relationships predominate in the expressive or central functions as the most nominal and so the most formally economical of the functions. Such expression can only be understood in terms of both its context of expression and its consequences for the meaning of other expressions. These implicit relationships are borne out more explicitly and so fully by the other two more absolute or outer functions that express more overtly the two more basic or pure currents of significance (which underpin the significance of the expressive function). If this is the case, then reference is both focal and central rather than peripheral, since it draws upon both sides of the grammar and of the language as a whole. But this means that it cannot be situated in the ideational metafunction.

That is, the function of the grammar of a language is the organisation of reference, and, with it, language itself. Reference is context dependent in the sense that it is receptive to the valuations in its context of occurrence, being made determinate through the expression and reception of selective valuations which grade items in the domain of discourse for their relative importance for the internal organisation of language itself as an activity. Reference as the managed

focus of discourse is not something given to its participants but rather is relative, negotiated between them and so is a product of their expressive activity.

Nominal expressions are marked both by their syntactic position relative to other expressions and their distinct morphological form. What characterises the expressive or central function or textual metafunction, on this view, then is this integration of the two sides of grammatical expression. As an inherently mixed mode of expression, involving a heightened complexity of expression. Nominal expression is, then, not primitive, basic or fundamental on this view.

The payoff for this greater complexity is heightened economy, and so efficiency of expression – along with the capacity to communicate a more complex content. The pragmatic functions are, therefore not groupings (like the metafunctions), but rather functional sources of value, realised by, for instance, greater economy of expression, arising from the cumulative exponence discussed earlier. Such increases in the efficiency of expression make the coordination of expression by grammatical expressions all the more feasible, since it lessens their crowding out of other content within the finite channel of communication. But such economies are clearly dependent upon the grammar of a language being highly integrated both internally and with the lexicon, through such functions.

Moreover, this heightened economy of expression explains why nominal expression is the least explicit or most formally economical form of expression. Action understood on the model of perception is essentially selective and reference, understood as an activity guided by nominal expression, stands at the high point of this selectivity. Reference is particularly deceptive because, while lifting certain superficial features into prominence, at the same time, it pushes into the background, and so conceals, the network of relationships that is implicitly required and so presupposed by their being lifted into prominence. It is not a self-sufficient but, rather, a complex, situated act.

As Bateman (2008: 35) has observed, the textual is the least well behaved of the metafunctions by the lights of Halliday's own definition of them as indepen-

dent groupings, since it is too well integrated with the other two metafunctions. It therefore poses the greatest threat to his understanding of the metafunctions as partitioned, isolated and homogeneous groupings of functions. By contrast, the pragmatic reconstruction of the metafunctions as functions clearly makes a virtue of this interdependence to the point of using it to motivate a conception of grammar grounded in interdependence instead. That is, it starts from a vision of the grammar (and so of the organisation of a language) as organised around the task of coordination and so of interdependence – rather than either independence (as Halliday would seem to hold) or dependence (as a more dependency or morphological view of grammar would seem to suggest); although the latter two types of order are incorporated as types of order which require coordination on account of their mutual heterogeneity. So, whereas Halliday tends to isolate the textual metafunction (like the other metafunctions), the pragmatic account radicalises it as the site of interdependence, extending it to the whole of the grammar, thereby unifying the two more polar positions. However, it is clearly not a mere hybrid of them, since the task of coordination and so unification is the fundamental task performed by the grammar over and above that of the two positions unified, which are more indicative of the contrast which lies at the base of the lexicon.

Particularly in light of the divergence between the two conceptions of reference (which I will discuss further in Chapter Five), we can now begin to see how the other metafunctions are also affected by the differing interpretations and so positioning of nominal expression in particular within the two accounts. If nominal expression does actually belong in the expressive function (which is, by contrast, comparatively starved of content by Halliday), then both the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions, to which I now want to turn, risk being over-subjectivised content-wise or over-nominalised formally relative to the expressive function. Indeed, as we shall see, this is a feature of the criticism and consequent reorganisation of both these metafunctions.

4.5 Reconstructing the ideational metafunction

I now want to turn to the large experiential subcategory of the ideational meta-function. We saw in both the last chapter and, indeed, the last section, how in this, Halliday's representational metafunction, a recurrent element in its content is the notion of things, which is also mirrored in the claim that it takes a particulate form of expression (see page 81).

Since this metafunction is dominated by reference, much as, as we have already seen, the textual metafunction is, clearly, I already began to address the issues confronting the reconstruction of this metafunction in the last section. Since the expressivist conception of grammatical expression underlying this pragmatic conception of grammar demands greater consistency of expression than Halliday would seem to require, it demands a much more consistent, if ultimately a more involved, conception of reference, which is largely confined to the expressive function..

The system dominating this metafunction is that of Transitivity, which clearly combines or brings together in great number, nominal and verbal expressions, and so participants and processes. Clearly, certain types of processes inherently typically involve certain types of participants, and this invites placing both within the same metafunction; and, indeed, within the same systems as related choices. So, although quite distinctive, verbal expression, and its analogues on other ranks or scales of organisation, is not distinguished functionally from nominal expression, in which case the contrast between nominal and verbal expression in particular is largely lost within this metafunction. That is, it thereby collapses together different expressions with quite different forms and behaviours, giving rise to the problem of intra-metafunctional heterogeneity, which therefore characterises Halliday's metafunctions. This means that the collocations involved are clearly too complex to be at all uniform, such that it undermines the possibility of isolating the different component types of expression within such complex expressions, as required by a more expressivist conception of communication.

Chapter 4. A pragmatic reconstruction of the metafunctions

Halliday represents the mode of expression of these experiential systems within the ideational metafunction through a constituency-based organisation, where a constituent is a word or group of words that behaves as a unit within a hierarchical structure that forms the basis for a phrase structure grammar. What is particularly distinctive of Halliday's understanding of constituency is the presence of functional labels on higher nodes (Hudson 1987), along with a preference for comparatively flat hierarchical structures. This introduces a form of holism into these structures and so into the contrast between parts and wholes, paralleling the importance of the contrast between prosodies and phonemes in Firth's phonology.

However, as I have observed, what this tends to present is an abstract overarching order, while this more pragmatic account attempts to break the grammar down into expressive components, as we shall see, closer to the manner of a dependency grammar, against which phrase structure grammars tend to be contrasted, although clearly this is just one aspect of the broader organisation of the grammar. Indeed, as we have already seen, the very notions of substance and so reference are, on this view, not simple and so require decomposition.

Constituency organisation, based as it is upon a mereology or logic of parts and wholes, is, by contrast an inherently abstract way of conceiving of the notion of substance, at odds with Whitehead's emphasis upon there also being an important, since contrastive, conformal aspect to the notion. We have seen that Whitehead also has a conception of hierarchy more closely tied to the expression of importance particularly through reference, which makes it both more relative and variable and oriented towards the organisation of discourse.

In reconstructing the ideational metafunction, I would therefore seem obliged to strip Halliday's system of Transitivity of its participant roles, focusing instead upon the the prehensive relationships between such 'participants' as sites of activity and to the temporal context which forms the background to their activity. In this way, this metafunction can be provided with a much more focused and uniform content.

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Traditionally, activity has been taken to be largely expressed by verbal expression. We have already seen that, on this pragmatic view, verbal expression cannot have a monopoly on the expression of activity. We have just seen that nominal expression is a primary site of interpretative activity, so the expressive function is not only essentially nominal, but also a site of activity.

Another feature of this broadening of activity is that, as we saw earlier (see page 28), change or motion turns out to be comparatively derivative in respect to action, since there can, in fact, be no enduring agent of action, only societies of such transitory agents (Leclerc 1958b). Hence, activity cannot be equated with its temporal features or effects. The expression of such temporal relationships such as tense and aspect are clearly a prominent feature of verbal expression. Hence, the traditional conceptions of the content of verbal expression and of an enduring agent of action support one another, but, like the traditional conception of action, neither notion would seem to be entirely coherent.

As we have seen, Whitehead's epochal conception of action sustains at least two types of process, one internal to the becoming or concrescence of individual occasions, the other arising from the succession or transition between such occasions. Limiting activity to verbal expression would seem to be based upon a conception of activity that limits it to only its more overt and so visible, indeed even derivative, products and so to motor activity, whose comparative visibility underpins its prominence. That is, the traditional conception of activity privileges motor activity, which is comparatively overt and public, over perceptual and other self-constitutive activities such as emotion and thought, whose products are much more covert and private. Yet I have also stressed the central role of language in making the latter activities more public through expression and how this figures prominently in the organisation of language itself – in reference, for instance, once it is understood as expressive of purpose.

This very distinctive, epochal conception of action and so of time, with its associated event ontology, encourages a particular concern with the temporal context of becoming. As we have already seen, for Whitehead, perception, indeed, physical

prehension in general, is always of the immediate past, not of contemporaries in the immediate present, the latter being an active, interpretive construction based upon the former.

Likewise, Nobo (1979) has stressed the significance of 'transition', of efficient or other-causation, in which the initial phases of an occasion's becoming are constituted by the objectification of antecedent occasions, which are given as a complex datum for that subsequent occasion. Its concrescence or self-causation is a reaction or response to these initial phases of its own constitution. That occasions, upon completing their own becoming, are objectified in subsequent occasions though the process of transition, whereby they constitute the initial phases of subsequent occasions, marks Whitehead's departure from the traditional conception of particulars: that they are, unlike universals, *not* repeatable. This is the other side of Whitehead's blurring of the traditional distinction between universals and particulars that I discussed earlier (see page 11), in that it means that particulars are also, to this extent, repeatable and so universal (Vlastos 1937).

There is then an important asymmetry to the relationship between an occasion and its temporally antecedent environment. Indeed, the notion of physical prehension which underpins Whitehead's conception of an occasion's concrescence, and so self-causation, concerns the essential asymmetry of this influence. Earlier occasions cannot prehend the future, since "there are no occasions in the future" at their moment of becoming, only their antecedents. The latter are given to them as forming the settled past, having ceased becoming and are therefore beyond their influence. So, as much as self-creative activity is confined to the process of concescence and so to the present moment, what is definitely experienced is always temporally prior to it. (Hartshorne 1984: chapter 9)

This suggests that the essence of the pragmatic reconstruction of the experiential component of the ideational metafunction is best characterised by dependency, based upon the necessity of conformation to the antecedent environment, a form of expression which does not really figure in Pike or Halliday's three basic of

forms of expression. Moreover, since the grammar of a language is, on this view, expressive rather than representational, this is not so much a representational as an expressive conception of dependency. That is, it centrally concerns the transmission or expression of significance. As an example of this, , in the next chapter (see page 221), I will discuss number agreement between the grammatical subject and the verb in English, in which the direction of the agreement is the reverse of what it would seem to be if the dependency were representational.[8]

If the function of the grammar is primarily coordinative, then even the grammatical aspect of verbal expression should also be primarily concerned with the communication of importance or significance. Indeed, the immediately antecedent context of expression has a stubborn, obstructive givenness that demands that current expression (as subsequent to it), be coordinated with it. As such, it is an important source of significance in its own right – to which current expression must in some measure conform or adapt.

On this pragmatic view, what distinguishes verbal expression would, then, seem to be not so much its reference to activity (since this is true of the whole of the grammar) as being centred on that aspect of activities that is conformal – which forms the fundamental basis for temporal relationships. Verbal expression is only the site of the more overt, explicit or public as opposed to implicit, covert and private side of activity.

In conclusion, Whitehead's epochal conception of action both broadens action in general and narrows the scope of the conformal function. This conception's concern for the immediacy and transitoriness of action (becoming), as distinct from temporal change or motion, leads to a particular interest in the immediate temporal context of action. But the notion of context in general has a broader

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[8] In this, it is similar to Neville's (1989) attempt to construct a metaphysics and indeed, a semiotics, centred on valuation. For Neville, the truth is conceived as the carry over of value from the past into the present and future. Also see Grange (1993).

meaning that also encompasses spatial and other forms of context which do not have the same conformal significance and so asymmetry as the temporal context.

Indeed, even within the temporal context, the immediate past, since conformal, contrasts with the immediate present and our expectations concerning and anticipation of the future. For instance, the polarity of questions allows them to orient not only to the settled context as the context *dependent* component of their content does, but also to the audience and so to the response that it is expected to receive. Both polarity and mood (in this case, typically the interrogative mood) fall within the abstract function and so are comparatively context *independent* (when compared to the notion of context in the conformal sense).

This allows the anticipation of a certain response and so the negotiation of agreement between speaking turns so as to realise what Sacks (1987) called the 'preference for agreement.' That is, a question is comparatively unmarked when it anticipates the polarity of the response that it is expected in invoke from its audience or more marked when the response is 'dispreferred' or does not agree with that anticipated. Particular care is therefore required in distinguishing between these different types of context.

4.6   Reconstructing the interpersonal metafunction

When I first introduced the contrast between Halliday's metafunctions and the categories of the classical American philosophers in the last chapter (see page 78), the interpersonal metafunction was presented as the point of greatest difference. Whether this is actually the case probably depends upon Halliday's conception of subjectivity, which is not especially clear – although I will discuss what can be made of it towards the end of this chapter. The introduction of an conception of value underlying and so uniting all the metafunctions is probably more significant, although this raises much the same fundamental issues. As I have already suggested, I want to argue that this function is associated with abstract expression and so with the expression of comparatively abstract values

and so of the value of freedom as it is relevant to grammatical expression. What I will again attempt to do is indicate how this metafunction can be revised or extended on the basis of the more pragmatic position.

As we have seen, the dominant system within Halliday's interpersonal metafunction is that of Mood, and his interpretation seems to largely focus on this system.[9] Also, by contrast, we saw earlier that Whitehead attempts to identify the fundamental basis of freedom, not in social and so interpersonal terms, but in the capacity of individual occasions for self-construction or self-determination (see page 114). This suggests a way to bridge these two views.

Before venturing further, I want to first turn to McGregor's (1990, 1997) earlier attempt to critique and radicalise this metafunction, since I want to argue that it tends to support the same revisions that would lead to it being understood as expressing abstract content (although McGregor does not draw this conclusion himself). In attempting to break the dominance of constituency, McGregor (1990, 1997) goes to considerable lengths to clearly distinguish two different types of order, associated with the two dominant, ideational and interpersonal, metafunctions respectively.

The basic units of the interpersonal metafunction, for McGregor, are wholes, where one unit encloses and so shapes another. He therefore argues that the interpersonal metafunction needs to be based upon an account of relationships between distinct wholes, which he calls 'conjugational' relationships. These are perhaps best exemplified by the relationship of an operator to its scope, where the operator functions to modify its scope. That is, he understands these relationships in terms of modification, always involving a modified unit, a whole over which the relationship applies, which he calls its 'domain'. In addition to such scopal relationships, there are those he calls 'framing' relationships which function to partition a whole from its environment – rather as a picture frame

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[9] See the system network numbered 3 in Figure 2.2 on page 71 for a highly stylised representation of part of the Mood system in English.

separates a picture from its encompassing environment (as, for instance, quotation might be interpreted as doing).

In this way, McGregor would seem to have, at least implicitly, recognised that what dominates what Halliday calls the interpersonal metafunction are, in fact, abstract forms of expression. And this is reflected in the general semantics that he attributes to them as modifying or shaping expressions. This also accords with his emphasis upon wholes, since abstract notions are essentially extensive and repeatable. He (1997: 281-2) rightly notes that many notions such as quantification are amenable to this approach. However, he also introduces the view that, at least semantically, an interpersonal relationship must also be involved in such expression – without clearly explaining why this is the case.

This pragmatic position that I am arguing for does not deny the importance of a subjective aspect to such expression. Indeed, it seeks to explain the presence of such notions within the grammar precisely on the grounds of their importance, since, for within such a conception, the grammar in general functions through the communication of values rather than high order abstractions. The abstract function understood as expressive must, therefore, concern grammatical expression which conveys comparatively abstract values (such as freedom) which inherently concern abstract or general potentiality as their objects. What it denies is that the *objects* of such valuations are subjective or that this, the interpersonal metafunction, is the central locus of importance or subjectivity within the grammar, as Halliday seems to claim, particularly in contrast to the textual metafunction. As we have seen, Whitehead has a realistic, since comparatively Platonic, stance towards the eternal objects which are given for occasions. This means that such objects are not themselves values.

Apart from mood, the more obvious paradigms of expression within the abstract alignment are the adwords (adjectives, adverbs), of which polarity (negation) is probably the most abstract and general in content. These are expressions with a comparatively fixed morphological form, but which are also comparatively optional and mobile in their placement. Such abstract expression can also take a

more subtle and yet also important form in the grammaticalisation of the positions that expressions occupy, such as the subject notions (which I will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter). In this case, what are particularly variable are the expressions which occupy such positions and so to which this significance is attributed, allowing the comparatively free generation or projection of valuations, in terms of which other (for instance, referring expressions) function.

Abstract notions, such as polarity and mood, are grammaticalised or taken up into the grammar, on account of their significance or importance as notions, for instance, due to their generality. That is, their abstractness means that they bring a certain type of value to the grammar. Such values are, then, deployed to grammatical ends in the internal organisation of the language itself; that is, as the basis for the coordination of expression itself – in particular, with respect to its more optional or variable and so abstract features. The grammar, on this view, recruits more significant or important notions from the lexicon, whether they be abstract or particular, to perform reflexive and so grammatical functions.

I want to argue that the interpersonal aspect that Halliday's focus on the system of Mood encourages is an outgrowth of the more fundamental abstract underpinnings of this alignment. On this pragmatic view, the former interpersonal aspect concerns the coordination of the more abstract, and so holistic, speech act aspects of a language user's actions with the likewise comparatively free actions of other language users. In this way, this alignment concerns the valuation and so coordination of abstract potentialities, or sequences of potential acts open to language users.

By contrast, Halliday seems to take Mood to be essentially interpersonal, because he would seem to identify subjectivity with public exchanges and so inter-subjectivity, which he, in turn, tends to associate with a certain scale of organisation. In particular, subjectivity is identified with interaction that transcends the fundamental structural units in Halliday's grammar, the clause and clause complex. Likewise, he would seem to understand the notion of action as occurring in exchanges between linguistic participants rather than, more fundamentally, as

constituting them as agents and so as activities in themselves. Since the fundamental unit in Halliday's grammar is the clause or clause complex, both activity and intersubjectivity are situated largely outside of his grammar and so transcend it, making the grammar comparatively blind to them.

Having argued that there is at least some continuity between the two accounts, I want to briefly mention two obvious divergences that more clearly suggest that differences still exist. Halliday regards personal pronouns as interpersonal, while it should be clear that, as amongst the more paradigmatic indexical referring expressions, they belong in the expressive or central function in the present pragmatic conception. Likewise, the placement of the logical subcategory within the the ideational metafunction, to the extent that it is indeed logical in content,[10] suggests that Halliday understands abstract expression more representationally than the more Platonic and constructivistic interpretations of Peirce and Whitehead.

4.7 Complex expressions and compositionality

One important purpose of distinguishing the different functions and so poles of activity within the pragmatic account is to facilitate understanding their interaction through an account of linguistic compositionality based upon the likewise compositional, since transactional or interactive, theory of value which I have already outlined. If the central function of a grammar is to communicate significance which, as we have seen, is essentially complex and interdependent, then such expressions need to be understood in terms of their interdependence with other expressions (which forms part of an expressivist account of linguistic compositionality). So this compositionality should also extend to the form and behaviour of signs.

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[10] Halliday's sophisticated treatment of tense is an interesting case in point. He classifies tense as logical on account of its recursivity. Clearly, the temporality of its content would encourage this ideational interpretation, even within the present pragmatic account.

The importance of compositionality to this view can be traced to the inherent compositionality of the sign itself and its primary content, importance, which is likewise, compositional. On this very functional view, even seemingly simple expressions are in fact composite, hence the need for an account of this compositionality. Obviously, since this conception is not predominantly representational, by compositionality, I do not mean compositionality in the truth conditional sense. Rather, it concerns the expressive compositionality of value as a content and in its expression, both of which, as we have seen, are understood relationally and interactively.

On the other hand, as we have seen, Halliday's functionalism attempts to deal with complex expressions in a much less situated and compositional way. The three strands of meaning which Halliday attributes to the clause allow for a large amount of variation in the relationship between these independent strands, but they do not seem to be understood as interacting with one another. We will also see that, for Halliday, in the case of his accounts of grammatical variation and of grammatical metaphor, for instance, the content of grammatical expression is taken to be proportional to its form of expression. Within this pragmatic account, on the other hand, expression is more relational and interactive, since it does not need to be directly encoded. This is because the the interaction between the content of the individual expressions which make them upcontent of complexes of expressions is analysed in terms of instead. Indeed, we have seen that, for it, individual acts of reference are inherently complex. This means that these two views regarding the nature of functionalism also differ considerably in how they account for how expressions relate to one another in complex expressions.

Functional groupings are significant for both these theories, however, they begin from different groupings and impute quite different meanings to complexes of expressions. Indeed, the content of complex expressions is understood in terms of a very different functional logic in each case. What would seem to underlie these differences are two very different conceptions of why grammatical expressions are brought together to form complexes.

Chapter 4. A pragmatic reconstruction of the metafunctions

Since the present pragmatic account is fundamentally expressive, concerned with the expression of value as the product of coordinated and so unified contrasts, it is based on the view that value is the product of the interaction of opposites or differences. Therefore, differences or opposites are attracted to one another by the value that their interaction gives rise to as the product of unity in difference. This accounts for the inherent heterogeneity of natural language. Language is productive of value though its capacity to unify contrasts internal to – as well as external to – language itself, and so to create value based upon an aesthetic conception of unity.

Halliday, by contrast, tends to understand language in terms of comparatively homogeneous partitions which are comparatively independent of one another, although they do fall within a broader unified system. Hence, there is not an emphasis upon meaning being constituted through the interaction of different expressions (of opposites), and particularly between different metafunctions. Rather they consist in selections from a pre-established unity that is a language-wide system of system networks. Moreover, expressions which are expressed together are taken to have been selected from the same metafunction. In this way, Halliday's functionalism is collocational, avoiding interaction between expressions from different metafunctions. The guiding principle for Halliday's functionalism would seem, then, to be that 'like attracts like'. If their mutual participation was based upon the differences or contrasts between the expressions involved rather than their likenesses, as the pragmatic account is, there would be no grounds for grouping them together on the basis of their mutual involvement or collocations, since it would actually be indicative of their differences rather than their similarities. This in turn would be more indicative of their belonging in different pragmatic functions rather than in the same metafunction.[11] This collocationism seems to be particularly a feature of the subject notions (which I will discuss in the next chapter), but it is not explicitly discussed – nor does

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[11] Alternatively, this might be a byproduct of Halliday's functionalism being limited to the clause and thereby introducing a top-down rather than a very compositional approach to the constitution of functional meaning.

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Halliday seem to articulate a (for instance functional) basis for it. Either way, Halliday would seem to group expressions together on the basis of their associations, rather than the form or behaviour of individual expressions; hence the heterogeneity of the metafunctions.

If, by contrast, the different behaviour of different expressions (for instance, of the different parts of speech) is taken to be indicative of differences in their individual content, which encourage their combination within complex expressions, then this leads to more expressively consistent functional groupings, although the complex expressions formed may be very heterogeneous. As an expressive conception, the present pragmatic view therefore draws the conclusion that the individual form and behaviour of grammatical expressions is expressive of their content, although expression cannot be understood in isolation. This is the fundamental basis for different types of expression belonging in different pragmatic functions. So this conception makes no attempt to group together expressions within the same function on the basis of their collocations or joint participation in expressions, for this is based upon their differences rather than their likenesses.

In the association of two expressions, often one will be a vehicle for the other in the sense of being involved in the internal organisation of the language itself, rather than being communicative of some language transcendent content. That is, one is required to primarily perform an internal, immanent or reflexive role – that of a vehicle, possibly comparatively empty in terms of its language transcendent content – for the other with a comparatively language external or transcendent content. Given the vertical alignments between the grammar and the lexicon these two functions – immanent and transcendent – do not preclude one another. Indeed, they invite their integration, in which case, these two types of expression ultimately require one another, because the one expression only makes sense in the presence of the other. The grammar recruits and so grammaticalises expressions and so values from the lexicon, while the interpretation of the lexicon is coordinated by the grammar.

So, in spite of their superficial similarity, Halliday's metafunctions and the pragmatic functions turn out to be particularly different in respect of their compositional organisation. It is the differences between the accounts of subjectivity and so expressivity in particular which, I want to argue, form the basis for the more fundamental differences between the organisation of metafunctions and the pragmatic functions. Whereas the pragmatic functions are based upon the organic unity of subjectivity, a unity in difference, the metafunctions shed no light on one another and so, as we shall see shortly, tend to divide and so fragment his account of subjectivity.

4.8 Fundamental differences between the two accounts

I now want to return to comparing the two broader positions as well as their related conceptions of functionalism, of experience or subjectivity and of communication. Although hampered by the absence of very explicit accounts of these aspects of Halliday's account, I want to briefly attempt to explore these particular differences as central to understanding the basis for the contrasting stances of these two accounts.

While neither of these accounts explicitly privileges certain metafunctions over others, it is clear that there is a very different implicit emphasis in the two accounts. For Halliday, the two primary, extrinsically oriented metafunctions are clearly the two more important metafunctions – at least implicitly for the account as a whole, since they are the largest, making up the great bulk of his account, while the textual metafunction is, on occasions, even omitted (for example, Halliday 2005: 59, Halliday and Matthiessen 1999: xi). This bears out the predominantly extra-linguistic or language transcendent emphasis of his account of grammatical content.

On the other hand, it is the reflexive and so comparatively immanent, expressive function (which has as its counterpart the textual metafunction), which is most paradigmatic of the functioning of the grammar within the present prag-

matic conception. The other two functions are extensions of it – and contribute towards it – as the focal function within the grammar. The grammar as a whole, since language is understood as consisting of heterogeneous components, is understood as functioning immanently or reflexively to coordinate, organise and unify the process of communication itself. The grammar of a language is understood as expressive and reflexive, and so as self-expressive, hence the centrality of the language user to this account. Moreover, on this view, such content is relative, the relativity arising from the relativity of individual experience, which is communicable owning to the relativity of such self-expression.

Halliday, by contrast, consistently avoids the individuality and particularity of experience, while tending to understand experience in terms of knowledge. For instance, Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 1) limit their concerns to only the abstract potential within experience:

> In this book we are concerned with how human beings construe experience. This means, first and foremost, not experience as an instantial product - the particulars of the world that is around us and inside our heads, the particular individuals, the events [...] and so on - but experience as a resource, as a potential for understanding, representing and acting on reality. It is in terms of this potential that the particulars of daily life are interpreted: they make sense because they are instantiations of this potential.

Indeed, they (1999: 3) believe that language is more fundamental than experience:

> This suggests that it should be possible to build outwards from the grammar, making the explicit assumption that the (abstract structure of) categories and relations needed for modelling and interpreting any domain of experience will be derivable from those of language. Our contention is that there is no ordering of experience other than the ordering given to it by language. We could in fact define experience in linguistic terms: experience is the reality that we construe for ourselves by means of language.

These views clearly differentiate Halliday's position from Whitehead's view of the adequacy of language to experience, which underpins Whitehead's much greater ambivalence towards language.[12] Language, for Whitehead, is, like experience, as I discussed earlier (see page 173), inherently variable and motivated by pragmatic concerns (Mays 1959: 55-6, Harrington 1972). However, the fundamental type of coordinated unity or togetherness is an experiential unity, from which all other relationships are conceived of as abstractions. For Whitehead ([1929] 1978: 189):

> there is a togetherness of the component elements in individual experience. This 'togetherness' has that special peculiar meaning of 'togetherness in experience'. It is a togetherness of its own kind, explicable by reference to nothing else.

All other relationships need to be conceived as abstractions from this fundamental type of experiential togetherness. The assumption that there is another sort of togetherness in terms of which togetherness in experience can be analysed is held to create insurmountable difficulties. (Rorty 1963: 138)

Now, experience, like expression, is neither entirely public nor private but is a unification and coordination or bridging of these two aspects of the becoming of all occasions in their dual-sided natures as subject-superjects.

> In the analysis of actuality the antithesis between publicity and privacy obtrudes itself at every stage. There are elements only to be

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[12] Halliday and Matthiessen's (1999: 3) belief in the fundamental nature of language differs considerably from Whitehead's much more experiential position when they, for instance, claim:

> We contend that the conception of 'knowledge' as something that exists independently of language, and may then be coded or made manifest in language, is illusory. All knowledge is constituted in semiotic systems, with language as the most central; and all such representations of knowledge are constructed from language in the first place. [...] Hence when we consider the knowledge enshrined in a particular discipline, we understand this by examining the language of the discipline - the particular ways of meaning that it has evolved.

> understood by reference to what is beyond the fact in question; and
> there are elements expressive of the immediate, private, personal,
> individuality of the fact in question. The former elements express
> the publicity of the world; the latter elements express the privacy of
> the individual.
>
> An actual entity considered in reference to the publicity of things
> is a 'superject'; namely, it arises from the publicity which it finds,
> and it adds itself to the publicity which it transmits. It is a moment
> of passage from decided public facts to a novel public fact. Public
> facts are, in their nature, coordinate.
>
> An actual entity considered in reference to the privacy of things is a
> 'subject'; namely, it is a moment of the genesis of self-enjoyment.
> It consists of a purposed self-creation out of materials which are at
> hand in virtue of their[, the actual entity's,] publicity. ([1929] 1978:
> 289)

Whereas the traditional interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy exaggerates
the individual and so the private pole of activity, Halliday's conception of func-
tionalism very much emphasises the social and public dimensions. In particu-
lar, he emphasises the distinctness of two complementary orientations, an inter-
organism perspective (which he describes as 'Durkheimian') and an intra-organism
perspective. Of these, Halliday clearly, favours the former, more sociological,
inter-organism perspective.

Moreover, what seems particularly problematic is that, again, Halliday would
seem to think that these inter and intra-organism perspectives can be neatly sep-
arated from one another. That is, he does not seek to address the relationship
between the two. Indeed, he (1978: 18) identifies the functional with the social
and so the public alone.

> More important than the grammatical shape of what the child hears,
> however, is the fact that it is functionally related to observable fea-
> tures of the situation around him. This consideration allows us to
> give another account of language development that is not depen-
> dent on any particular psycholinguistic theory, an account that is

> functional and sociological rather than structural and psychological. The two are not in competition; they are about different things. A functional theory is not a theory about the mental processes involved in the learning of the mother tongue; it is a theory about the social processes involved.

Thus, in his keenness to avoid competition between these two disciplinary standpoints, he seems to set up another dualism between them. Likewise, important influences on Halliday's conception of language, like Durkheim and Saussure, are abstract and structural in orientation, being notable for their avoidance of individual explanations and so reference to individual experience. This is in contrast to pragmatism with its greater emphasis upon individual, first person experience. For Halliday, functionalism does not concern the relationship between the private and the public (between the individual and the social), which would seem to suggest that communication does not have a fundamental role in bridging these divides either.

This also leads to a very clear emphasis upon the contexts of language use. Placing an emphasis upon the context of action is one way of attempting to naturalise action, which is often associated with attempts to naturalise pragmatics. The risk is, of course, that this will implicitly result in a change of topic to the *context* of action, action itself being ignored. For instance, this is an important aspect of the path taken by analytic philosophy in its turn towards causal theories of reference. This, in turn, leads to the charge of circularity, that is, that such an approach simply takes action for granted (see, for example, Roberts 1993: 145-6 claim that causal theories of reference therefore tend to be circular). Action cannot be simply equated with its context of occurrence, as much as the latter is clearly important to action, since it tends to internalise its context of occurrence.

Moreover, this also creates a tension with Halliday's constructivism. The difficulty that such a constructivism presents is that it threatens to decontextualise action. And while Halliday, following Firth, clearly asserts the significance of

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the context, just how it is to be accomodated within such a constructivistic position therefore presents a challenge to which his response is not entirely clear.

Constructivism is certainly not at odds with Whitehead's more pragmatic position. Like that of the pragmatists, Whitehead's position is influenced by the seminal constructivism of Kant ([1787] 1998). Indeed, there are clearly 'Kantian' interpretations of Whitehead's philosophy (Bradley 1994, Rose 2002), which I particularly drew upon in discussing Whitehead's conception of freedom (p. 112.).

Whitehead's response to this challenge is his temporal realism which situates his constructivism within a broader and more encompassing conception of action in which it is juxtaposed with a temporal context of past events which, having ceased becoming, are given to their successors. This allows a less abstract account of experience, since it organised around this contrast along with a more explicit account of the relationship of experience and language to its context of occurrence.

What we therefore find are two different conceptions of action and, indeed, of subjectivity. Halliday's conception of subjectivity, although much less explicit, seems to be, again, considerably more abstract and interpersonal. By contrast, a pragmatic conception, since centred on valuation is both more reflexive and less abstract. This means that the two accounts tend to both situate and conceive of subjectivity quite differently.

Indeed, how to deal with the more reflexive features of language would seem to be a problem for Halliday much as it was for Roman Jakobson.[13] Halliday's preference for complementarities means that, as in Jakobson, his functionalism is ultimately overshadowed by the abstractness of his conception of language and communication and so must take a muted form.[14] More moderate, since

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[13] For a discussion of Jakobson and reflexivity see Attridge (1987)

[14] For his preference for complementarities see Halliday (2008). Indeed, he (1978: 112) would seem to clearly distance himself from the triadic emphasis of the pragmatic tradition when he says "[s]ince in respect both of the stratal and of the functional organization of the linguistic

less polarised, positions, allowing mediated relationships, are ruled out by the need to either directly wed the poles of binary oppositions to one another or, alternatively, treat them as independent of one another.

This is evident even in Halliday's account of the metafunctions, in that he would seem to provide experiential accounts of two of the metafunctions. In the case of the interpersonal metafunction, he tends to identify subjectivity with the inter-subjective (as seen in the previous section – see page 185) and, more implicitly, he conceives of the large experiential portion of the ideational metafunction – indeed, this very label suggests it (see page 74) – in experiential terms. This would seem to create a dualism within his account of experience, since, as we have also seen, he rejects a psychological interpretation of the textual metafunc-tion (including other psychological interpretations, such as those advanced by cognitive forms of functionalism), (Matthiessen 1992: 39) in keeping with his rejection of a psychological interpretation of Bühler's expression function (see page 76). Since Halliday does not discuss the nature of subjectivity or expe-rience itself, it is never clear just why subjectivity should be split across these two metafunctions which, as we have seen, are defined by their independence of one another. This dualism suggests a basic problem of unity within the se-mantics of Halliday's account which he does not ever seem to discuss. The present pragmatic position would obviously seem to have a broader conception of subjectivity, which is not surprising given the greater emphasis that it places upon experience and so subjectivity. By the same token, Halliday has a more developed conception of language, and, as we have seen, tends to privilege what he takes to be the linguistic manifestations of subjectivity. As we have seen, Halliday's general functional stance is also much more public than private.

Having articulated these differences in broad outline in this chapter, I will in the subsequent chapters develop the consequences of these differences in greater

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system we are adopting a ternary interpretation rather than a binary one, we should perhaps explicitly disavow any particular adherence to the magic number three. In fact the functional interpretation could just as readily be stated in terms of four components, since the ideational comprises two distinct subparts, the experiential and the logical".

detail through the exploration of their exemplification in a number of decisive forms of grammatical expression.

4.9 Conclusion

The reconstruction of the metafunctions that I have presented is clearly not just a re-organisation of which expressions fall within each (which is itself considerable), but also a re-organisation of the entire underlying organisation of the functions themselves and the relationships between them – which, in turn, form the basis for the key relationships within the grammar and the relationship of the grammar to the rest of the language. These relationships are important because, on this view, the practicalities of the functional and efficient organisation of communication are realised through grammatical expression being interdependent, economical and compositional in both the form and content that they take. In this, it is not just the individual component expressions, as expressive of valuations, but also the overall organisation which is itself functional in organisation. In this way, it draws upon the breadth of Halliday's functionalism while attempting to further radicalise it through an emphasis upon interdependence.

A theme that has particularly begun to emerge in this chapter (and that will continue to develop) is that the textual metafunction and the expressive function comprise the decisive point of comparison between these two conceptions. In some ways, the pragmatic position is the closest to Halliday's in respect of the textual metafunction, since both have a close interest in the organisation of discourse. Yet at the same time, they are also comparatively distant at this point because, although Halliday's positive semantics regarding the textual metafunction is not entirely clear, he would, nonetheless, seem to clearly deny the centrality of the activity of the language user in the organisation of their own discourse. So, his semantics is, at this crucial juncture, seemingly not a reflexive and so pragmatic one. Clearly, on the pragmatic view, this, in its case the expressive function, is the primary (since most balanced) locus of significance and so of

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subjectivity. For Halliday, on the other hand, who, as we have seen, is far less concerned with subjectivity and experience in general, subjectivity seems to be very much identified with inter-subjectivity and so with the interpersonal meta-function. So, in this respect, the disagreements with respect to the other meta-functions may actually be more minor, since Halliday does seem to, at least implicitly, admit that these are subjective. The changes to these serve more to make these metafunctions more expressively consistent and to introduce a greater role for valuation which is clearly more central to the pragmatic conception.

We are now in a position to contrast these two conceptions of the functional organisation in more detail in the subsequent chapters. In the next chapter, I will focus upon how the various subject notions in particular bear out the respective functional organisation of each of these accounts. Then, in the subsequent chapters, I will return to the role these particular expressions and functions play in larger complexes of expressions.

Chapter 5

A comparison of the subject notions

5.1 Introduction

What I want to call the subject notions (Theme, Subject, Actor) in English, three grammatical sources of prominence which dominate the clause in English, provide an ideal point from which to compare these two functional accounts of the grammar of a language in detail, since they are both central to and yet handled in quite different ways in each of these theories. This allows the two types of functional reasoning discussed in the earlier chapters to be compared and contrasted in some detail. It will also provide a foundation to the two positions in sufficient detail for them both to be further developed and contrasted in the subsequent chapters which attempt to draw out some of the consequences of these initial positions.

The distinction between these three subject notions dates from the second half of the nineteenth century. Halliday (1985: 32) renames them as outlined in Table 5.1 on the next page specifically because: "They are not three kinds of anything; they are three quite different things". However, the identification of these subject notions as grammatical expressions does not greatly differ between them, at least for simple examples. To facilitate the comparison, I will therefore not vary their names between the two accounts.

Traditional term	SFL Term	Traditional interpretation
Psychological Subject	Theme	The concern of the message
Grammatical Subject	Subject	That of which something is predicated
Logical Subject	Actor	The doer of the action

Table 5.1: Theme, Subject and Actor

The differences therefore tend to reflect the differing interpretations of their meaning or the content attributed to them. These differences, in turn, arise from the different broader conceptions of communication and the differing roles that the subject notions play within these accounts. Moreover, the subject notions are not exhaustive of but rather illustrative of these two accounts. Halliday uses them to illustrate the how different the different metafunctions are. For the more pragmatic standpoint, on the other hand, they provide an illustration of unity in diversity, of how the expression of grammatical prominence has a diverse range of forms and so sources, particularly when I also come to consider intonation as yet another source of prominence.

What I want to do then, in the next section, is identify the different subject notions and provide an overview of the two conceptions of their respective contents and roles within these two conceptions. I will then, in the subsequent sections consider each of the three subject notions in greater detail, starting yet again from the textual metafunction and its representative subject notion, the Theme. Towards the end of the chapter, I will also briefly attempt to address intonational prominence and the notion of information packaging or structure as it also shares certain similarities with these notions in terms of its prominence, although more so on the more pragmatic view.

5.2 Identifying and interpreting the subjects notions

I now want to identify these subject notions in a way that does not attempt to be theory neutral but rather serves to illustrate just why these notions are of

particular interest to both of these conceptions by doing so in terms of some of the notions that I introduced earlier.

Of the subject notions, the Theme, the most initial subject is probably the most prominent and so straight forward to identify as typically the most initial expression, whether it be a group (phrase) or a word, in a clause. The grammatical Subject, on the other hand, also has a fixed position, although not necessarily the initial one. The latter can be distinguished from the Theme by its distinctive morphology and its recurrence in a tag question attached to the same clause. The logical subject or Actor, on the other hand, is the subject form whose position can be varied more than these other two types, and so whose position is the most open, and is typically distinguished by a preposition.

What is particularly interesting about these means of identification is that, while they make these subject notions distinguishable from one another, they do not prevent them from being conflated within a particular expression. As I discussed in Chapter Two (see page 89), given that both of these conceptions entertain something like three different functional strands or threads of content or meaning running through the clause, it is possible and indeed very common for the one constituent to have more than one function or component of these strands of meaning at a time, allowing for, in word and paradigm (WP) terms, a sort of cumulative exponence to occur.

Indeed, in simpler constructions such as the first example, in Table 5.2, this will typically be the case.

	The duke	gave	my aunt	this teapot
Textual	Psychological Subject (Theme)			
Interpersonal	Grammatical Subject (Subject)			
Ideational	Logical Subject (Actor)			

Table 5.2: Example of conflated Theme, Subject and Actor

However, it is equally important that they can also be separated and so distinguished from one another as in the more complex construction in Table 5.3 on

the next page (Halliday 1985: 33). In this way, the subject notions bear out Halliday's claim "that a grammar evolves in order that we can mean more than one thing at a time" (Halliday and Martin 1981: 101).

	This teapot	my aunt	was given by	the duke
Textual	Theme			
Interpersonal		Subject		
Ideational				Actor

Table 5.3: Example of distinguished Theme, Subject and Actor

Indeed, there is a whole range of possible variations in cumulative exponence that between these extremes as borne out by the examples in Table 5.4 on the facing page (Halliday 1985: 33).

As I indicated in the last chapter (see page 153), the present pragmatic account attempts to radicalise this by further generalising these, by recognising not only the above, what I have called, horizontal alignments, but also vertical alignments between the grammar, that is, between the language internal or immanent organisation of a language itself and the lexicon, that is, its more language transcendent organisation and content. The existence of both types of relationship contribute to both the expressive efficiency and expressive breadth of a language by increasing the compositionality or capacity of expressions to be re-combined with one another in inherently meaningful ways.

I now want to provide an outline of what would seem to be Halliday's conception of the role of the subject notions, before doing the same for the pragmatic conception. As I already noted, Halliday sees these as "three quite different things", thereby announcing his strategy of emphasizing their differences rather than their similarities. So, although superfically similar, he is primarily concerned with their differences and in particular their differing contents or meanings deriving from the respective metafunctions that they represent. That is, within Halliday's account, their role is comparatively analytic, involving the introduction of divisions, which, as we have seen, tends to characterise the metafunctions in general.

My aunt	was given this teapot by	the duke
Theme		Actor
Subject		

This teapot	the duke	gave to my aunt
Theme	Subject	
	Actor	

By	the duke	my aunt	was given this teapot
	Theme	Subject	
	Actor		

Table 5.4: Examples of variously conflated Theme, Subject and Actor

One important limitation of the metafunctions in their most systemic or paradig-matic form that I discussed in Chapter Two is that the metafunctional divisions do not obviously scale either beyond or below the clause, thereby implicitly privileging the clause. That the metafunctions do not scale directly threatens to greatly limit the scope and so extent of this functionalism. Although Halliday does not discuss this as a problem, he would seem to address it by distributing the three subject notions over the three metafunctions. In this way, the reach of the metafunctions is extended to other ranks or scales of grammatical organisation.

For Halliday, the subject notions are functional roles that other classes of gram-matical units, such as nominal groups, can participate in. Since each of these expressions, as typically realised by a group (phrase) or word, most typically a nominal group or word, they will tend to resemble one another form wise. How-ever, given the importance of word order within a language like English, the different groups and so metafunctions can, nonetheless, be differentiated dis-tributionally, if they are associated with different positions within the clause. Thus, Halliday's functionalism tends to assign functional meanings to the po-sitions about which expressions cluster to form focal groupings. This way, the subject notions provide each of the metafunctions with a different focal position

centred on different nominal groups within the clause. This would also seem to be one explanation of why Halliday tends to adopt a sort of grammatical collocationalism that I discussed earlier (see page 188). That is, the differentiation of the different nominal groups is very distributional or analytic, in the sense that it focuses on their respective positions rather than the internal organisation of the different nominal groups. So, the nominal groupings or clusters of expressions at the group or phrase level, which are centred on the three different types of Subject, are divided into three functional types, associated with the three different metafunctions.

For this reason, this metafunctional organisation of the subject notions is, I want to argue, one of the decisive moves in how Halliday's account is structured. It means that the subject notions mark the fundamental lines of division within it, thereby placing them and reference at the very heart of his account. Of these grammatical notions, Halliday's understanding of the grammatical Subject is, as we shall see, the most decisive, yet also the most idiosyncratic notion in its overall makeup. It is also the most clearly articulated grammatical function, which is not to say that it is not prone to criticism.

They are then, for Halliday, largely defined in large part, especially their meaning, by the metafunction which they are taken to be the representative of. As we shall see, the Theme or psychological subject is associated with the textual metafunction and so is the central discourse role, while the grammatical Subject is associated with the interpersonal metafunction and so has an interpersonal meaning, and the Actor or logical subject is associated with the ideational metafunction and so has a more representational content.

I now want to briefly turn to the way in which the present pragmatic conception conceives of the subject notions particularly given the greater expressivity that it attributes to them. It, by contrast, tends to take them together, at their face value, as comparatively similar forms of expression sharing a comparatively similar content. That is, it emphasises their fundamental, superficial similarity as a starting point, before attempting to discriminate differences based upon variations in

the composite nature attributed to reference in the proceeding two chapters to this otherwise shared content. They are all prominent expressions, in part because they are typically referring expressions, but also for differing reasons and in differing degrees. They attach prominence to the content of the lexical expressions which they present which is intrinsic to the organisation of language itself.

Thus, it attributes a common, composite content based upon the broader commonalities of the expressions in question, attributing variations in content to variations in the composition of the expressions expressing this content. That is, it views their form and behaviour as inherently expressive such that the analysis proceeds through the identification of the underlying sources of significance and their modes of expression.

One aspect of this is that they are comparatively abstract since, as we have just seen, they are associated with syntactic positions. In this, they are representative of the abstract side, as opposed to the context dependent side of the economy, circuit or circulation of values that I discussed particularly in the last chapter (see page 170). That is, they are, as comparatively abstract forms of expression, expressive of the abstract value of freedom, and so productive or generative of new values, as opposed to being receptive to values already present within the context of expression. Yet, to the extent that they also typically house nominal expressions, whether a word or a word group, and so bring together a grammatical position together with a nominal grammatical expression, they can also draw upon the latter context dependent or conformal sources of value or significance already present within the context of expression. That is, in bringing together these different forms of expression along with the currents of significance they either express or draw upon, they are inherently composite like the values which they express. This capacity to bring together different sources or currents of value or significance, which, as I have stressed, is inherently composite, accounts for their very significance and so prominence in the organisation of discourse.

Chapter 5. A comparison of the subject notions

So, as they are united by the task of expressing immediate valuations, the pragmatic account consolidates the three subject notions within the one expressive or central function which is the pragmatic analogue of the textual metafunction. The differing degrees and types of prominence that they express form the basis for the organisation of topics which, in turn, forms the basis for a pragmatic conception of the topical aspect of the organisation of discourse.

Of course, in spite of tending to share these common features, each of the individual subject notions are nonetheless each distinctive in terms of their more specific expressive features such as their behaviour and form and their associated content.

The Theme, occupies the most prominent, initial position, deriving significance from this. It is the most focal locus of significance or importance, its significance derives from the role of the initial position in anticipating what will follow it, subsequently, within the immediate discourse. By contrast, the grammatical Subject is the most basic or fundamental of the subject notions. The grammatical Subject gains its significance from its relationship to the main verb within a clause, indicating the most significant participant associated, in part by convention, with it. Due to its distinctive morphology and fixed position, it allows the differentiation of two other subject notions. The logical subject or Actor is independent of both the verb and initial position. It therefore has the most variable significance, being tied to no particular position, although always standing in some relationship to the fixed reference position of the grammatical Subject.

In comparing the different subject notions in greater detail, I will articulate Halliday's conception before the pragmatic adaptation of it. I want to begin with the Theme, as the subject notion about which there is most agreement within the two accounts, since it is Halliday's representative of the textual metafunction (within the pragmatic analogue of which the pragmatic account consolidates all three of the subject notions).

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5.3   The Theme

Both accounts share roughly the same identification of the Theme, as the most initial or fronted subject notion.[1] An important difference between the theme and the other subject notions is that it does not have to coincide with a nominal group or word. As the subject notion which is representative of the textual metafunction, it is the subject notion most closely involved in the organisation of discourse. However, I want to argue that the broader framework within which it is situated, which is less intrinsically discourse orientated in Halliday's case, makes it more difficult for him to articulate a conception of the Theme.

Halliday's account of Theme attributes two meanings to it. It is both the topic in an extended sense and what Halliday calls the point of departure for the message conveyed by the clause. The Theme is broader than the notion of topic which is typically confined to one type of Theme, Halliday's ideational Theme which he calls the 'topical theme', since it also includes Themes from the other two metafunctions, textual and interpersonal Themes, when the content of either of these metafunctions occupies this initial, thematic position. The Theme of a clause comprises everything up to and including the first experiential constituent, the topical Theme. However, perhaps due to the difficulty in articulating just what it means for the Theme to indicate what the clause is about, in this broad sense, emphasis has historically tended to shift away from the former more semantic interpretation toward the latter more formal, point of departure interpretation (Thompson 2007: 678).

The point of departure interpretation in which it is said to be "the point of departure for the message" and "the element the speaker selects for 'grounding' what he is going on to say" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 58) is, however, not obviously any easier to interpret. Particularly given the initial position of the Theme in English, it is not entirely clear as to how much this interpretation is

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[1] Halliday does also differentiate different types of Theme, although this detail will not greatly concern us.

just a reference to its mode of expression, a point which makes this interpretation more formal and so comparatively empty semantically. This interpretation is also clouded by Halliday's claim that it is more figurative. Halliday frequently makes gestures in such a direction in his account of the textual metafunction but in the absence of an account of figurative language, which is largely lacking from his writings, this does not seem to add a great deal of clarity. (Huddleston 1988: 158)

Part of the reason for the growing dominance of this more formal interpretation may be Fries' (1983) and subsequent attempts to develop a more explicitly discourse related conception of the Theme. This concerns the patterned relationships between Themes within a broader text which are claimed to underlie the broader 'method of development' of a text. In this way, a Theme can be related to its surrounding discourse via relationships between the Themes of related clauses. Indeed, Fries also attempts relate thematic to information structure, as we shall see Halliday also does although less explicitly.[2]

Halliday also relates the Theme to the Rheme, the rest of the clause apart from the Theme, that is, the rest of the message. This would seem to be a rather negative and so vacuous method of definition and, indeed, the notion of Rheme would seem to lack a positive definition. It does, however, bear out Halliday's dependence on notions of constituency. Indeed, one difficulty with both Halliday's and Fries' conceptions of the Theme is that they seem to remain committed to a coding conception of language in general and so to the notion that Theme or, in its more narrow form, topic, must find explicit expression. (Huddleston 1988)

Within the textual metafunction, for Halliday, the Theme stands principally in relation to the function of New, new information, identified by the tonic accent. What he claims to be common to both is that they are prominences. That is, they are taken to be two types of prominence in which, for one, the thematic

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[2] Moore (2010) would seem to present perhaps the most promising development of Fries attempt to relate the two. However, it has come to my attention too late for me to fully assess its significance.

prominence, the unmarked location is at the beginning of the clause, whereas, for the other, the tonic or informational prominence, marked by a change or variation in pitch, it lies at the end of the clause. This forms the basis for the main complementarity that Halliday finds within the textual metafunction and is an important instance of why he understands the textual metafunction as periodic, being associated expressively with the beginnings and ends of units.

It is this notion of prominence which best provides a common point of intersection with the present pragmatic account. Indeed, the relationship to information packaging is also of interest to it, so I will also discuss information packaging or structure and so New further once I have discussed the subject notions. However, Halliday makes no real attempt to either explicate the notion of prominence or to use it to explicate his account of the content of Theme.

The drift away from a more semantic toward the more formal interpretation of the Theme also accords with Halliday's resistance to psychological or reflexive interpretations of the textual metafunction which, as we have seen, is a major difference between it and the pragmatic understanding of the expressive or central function. Nor does Halliday seem to have attempted to coordinate these two types of interpretations of Theme with one another. There is now an extensive literature on Theme and useful surveys of it provided by, for instance, Gómez-González (2000) and Fries (1995). However, most of this literature has not developed the notion a great deal beyond Halliday's premises, since, with some exceptions, it does not draw them into question.

Within the pragmatic account, the Theme is the paradigmatic subject notion since it exemplifies the view that subject notions generate or express importance internal to the operation of language itself in perhaps the most straight forward way. Importance, as a content is, however, not expressed by a simple mirroring of this content in the form of an expression. Rather it is dominated by implicit relationships arising from, for instance, the interpretive activity of language users. For, as I have argued, importance is the product of the interdependence and so of the interplay of different sources and so currents of significance.

The focus of this conception is then upon how the Theme expressively articulates the importance that it conveys, not only actively, through its form and behaviour, but also passively in relation to its context of expression. Central to such an explanation is the claim that the initial position is focal to a confluence of currents of significance which I want to argue derive from three primary sources. These centre on its occupying the prominent initial position in the clause. Firstly, its initial position means that it provides the earliest anticipation of what is to come subsequently within the immediate discourse. Secondly, the initial position also places it in the best position to capture or receive the carry over of significance from the discourse which immediately precedes it. Thirdly, it is the most necessary expression in the sense that, if any expression occurs, it will be thematic. Therefore, economy of expression also demands that initial expressions carry the most significance.

This final, third point highlights an important feature of the nature of the expression of significance on this view and its consequence for grammatical expression, whose economy and so efficiency I have already stressed. It is that not only is is prominence significant, but so is expression itself. Since expression is inherently associated with significance, it is much more economical to express the irrelevance, insignificance or diminished significance of contents by inhibiting expression and so thereby not drawing attention to them.

The content of such expression, as significance, has duration, is not simply momentary, but nor is it stable, instead decaying with the passage of time. In this way, the expression of significance depends crucially upon the very transitoriness of significance. Sustained significance tends to require recurrent expression in some form. This furthers the claim that much grammatical expression is very implicit rather than overt. Negative importance or significance, in the sense of positive aversion, is quite a different matter, in which case the significance, which is just negative, can presumably warrant the diseconomy of its more overt expression.

These sources of significance are quite general and so also apply to other scales

of organisation, but here I shall only consider the Theme as an element within the clause. Moreover, they are also relevant, if diminishingly so, to less initial positions. These sources of significance therefore form the basis for a declining profile of significance or thematicity which is relevant to the interpretation of all of the subject notions within an account which does not attempt to sunder the subject notions from one another, since all are interpreted according to the same expressive principles. However, in English, word order is very significant and the significance of this will depend upon the significance of word order within the language in question.

Being the most significant and so prominent subject notion, the Theme also has the greatest projective reach of these notions. This is what accounts for its capacity to transcend the clause in which it is expressed. It is therefore essentially oriented towards discourse and dialogue, which can sustain a multiplicity of topics that transcend individual clauses just as it can sustain a multiplicity of speakers. Hence, the Theme, on the pragmatic view, is essentially generative or projective of significance. The downside of this is that it is the most superficial and so fleeting and, in that sense, the least substantive of the subject notions. It frequently acts to link or negotiate the transition between discourse units. In this way, it forms an orienting background or introduction to any particular discourse unit.

Whereas the Theme projects a valuation onto the content of the expression which occupies it as a position, as we saw in the last chapter, the interpretation of receptive indexical or phoric expressions is shaped by the reception of such values. Syntactic or context independent and morphological or context dependent forms of indexical expression form the two sides of the one grammar. That is, thematic and anaphoric or cohesive forms of expression form the two sides of a transaction in which values are expressed and received by two quite different types or modes of indexical expression, the one projective of intrinsic significance, the other, in a complementary way, functioning in terms, of values expressed or projected by the former.

Moreover, these two modes of expression can occupy the same location since one can form the comparatively abstract relative location for the other, a comparatively concrete word. The position can function to construct or attribute an abstract value while the word functions indexically to receive antecedently projected values. The paradigm of this capacity for them to co-occur is the Theme which is located in the ideal position to combine both the projection of significance into the future while, at the same time, receiving significance from the immediate past. In this sense, the Theme is not only the most projective but also the most receptive of the subject notions. That is, the significance of the Theme arises from the convergence on the initial position of these two main currents of significance, arising from both the anticipation of subsequent expressions and the carry over the significance of antecedent expressions.

The significance of these relationships means that values are, then, not simply coextensive with their expression. Once they are expressed, they endure, if only fleetingly. Moreover, such currents of value, whether phoric or cohesive relationships arising from the inertia of the past, or the thematic projection of significance into the future, combine and interact with one another. Such a view obliges us to reject any simple relationship between a grammatical expression and its content such as that we tend to find in encoding conceptions of the sign in favour of a much more compositional, expressive one. As Malinowski (1920: 53-54) observed, importance is often inversely related to the overtness of its expression. The significance of the language user, implicit in the dominance of these two types of implicit relationship, of projection and of reception, also accounts for why the Theme is the subject notion with the most morphologically economical form of expression. That is, it is not morphologically marked as, for instance, the grammatical Subject is.

I argued in the last chapter that value consists in a balance of heterogeneous interactants. Hence, this account does not equate thematicity with choice and so freedom as Halliday tends to when he excludes obligatory thematic elements from the Theme. For instance, it is often the thematic portion of the clause which

indicates the speech function (for instance, initial Wh- forms indicative of the interrogative mood or dropped (zero) grammatical Subjects as indicative of the imperative mood). Importance cannot be simply identified with freedom, since this exaggerates the significance of one value, freedom, relative to that of, for instance, the truth, which is clearly not a matter of choice, yet no less significant in terms of its relative contribution to value or significance. That is, too great an emphasis on freedom or choice is not compatible with the Theme being the most balanced of the subject notions.

The Theme is, then, within this pragmatic view, the paradigmatic subject form as the most balanced, and so most significant or important subject notion. The other two subject notions, while also being characterised by this interdependence, are, nonetheless, as we shall see, less balanced, exemplifying a predominance of either context dependence or conformation in the case of the grammatical Subject or freedom and independence in the case of the Actor, respectively. These differences in behaviour are I will argue also expressive of differences in the content thereby expressed.

So, having outlined the two alternative conceptions of the Theme, we are now in a better position to provide a fuller characterisation of the grammatical Subject and Actor.

5.4 The grammatical Subject

The grammatical Subject, as the subject notion which is the representative of the interpersonal metafunctional, tends to dominate Halliday's conception of the subject notions. His arguments for the interpersonal nature of the grammatical Subject are both comparatively unique to his account and one of, if not the most, striking and most clearly articulated examples of his particular mode of functional argumentation, where the involvement of expressions with other expressions sees them both grouped together under the same metafunction. For Halliday, the grammatical Subject is most closely associated with the system

networks which constitute the interpersonal metafunction, leading him to claim that it indicates 'modal responsibility', which is indicative of what is "held responsible for the functioning of the clause as an interactive event" (1985: 76).

Halliday's arguments for the interpersonal nature of the grammatical Subject essentially involve arguments for the association of the grammatical Subject with systems associated with this metafunction, in particular with the system of Mood which is the dominant system within the interpersonal metafunction. The arguments are, therefore, collocational or associative.

The strongest case for Halliday's position seems to rely upon the grammatical Subject's role in the expression of various form of the English interrogative Mood. In particular, in the case of polar (e.g.: Does he know?) and Wh- interrogative (e.g.: Who does he know?) interrogatives, the Subject and Finite verb invert their usual or unmarked (declarative) order in which the subject proceeds the Finite verb. Halliday's response to such joint involvement would seem to be, then, to assign both these expressions to the same interpersonal metafunction as the interrogative. As we have seen, he largely takes it for granted that what he calls the interpersonal metafunction, dominated by the system of Mood, is the locus of interpersonal or subjective expression within the grammar, although the pragmatic position that I have outlined clearly differs in this respect. Clearly then, the nature of the Mood system is also central to Halliday's argument. For, while the interrogative in particular may have an interpersonal aspect, clearly the mood system as a whole also contains moods which might be argued to be less interpersonal such as the more declarative or indicative moods.

Halliday does attempt to extend his account to also encompass these other options within the Mood system. For instance, he (1994: 76) also argues that his conception of the grammatical Subject accords with the form that offers and commands typically take.

> [I]n a proposal (a 'goods-&-services' clause), [. . .] the Subject specifies the one that is actually responsible for realising (i.e. in this case,

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for carrying out) the offer or command. For example, in *I'll open the gate shall I?* (offer) the opening depends on me[.]

But it might be objected that it is the addressee (i.e. not the Subject) of an offer who is responsible for accepting or rejecting an offer and so is responsible for whether it is carried out. Likewise, he (1994: 76) argues that:

in *Stop shouting, you over there!* (command) it is for you to desist or otherwise. Hence the typical Subject of an offer is the speaker, and that of a command is the person being addressed.

But, again, it might be objected to this analysis, that someone issuing commands presumably takes responsibility for them, yet this will usually not be the Subject of a command. So, Halliday's arguments would seem to be too brief, requiring further clarification as to just what the content of the subject consists it.

Halliday also attempts to extend his analysis to cover the role of the subject in statements. Indeed, he (2004: 117) does this by attempting to extend this same notion of modal responsibility to also cover the Subject in statements as "something by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied". However, this is clearly suggestive of notions of truth and falsity and so of the ideational rather than the interpersonal metafunction. So here Halliday seems to be stretching the content of the Subject across two metafunctions. As we shall see, the latter is actually much closer to the pragmatic conception of the grammatical Subject.

However, Halliday would seem to attempt to deny the relevance of the truth when he claims that the necessary presence of the Subject in the unmarked indicative form of statements indicates that such claims are inherently negotiated and so interpersonal in nature. That is, he would seem to be implicitly insisting that the truth is not something which is given and so has a realistic basis, but rather is inherently negotiable. But if this is the case, then it is not clear what the contrast between the interpersonal and the ideational metafunctions consists in.

Affirmation or denial adds a subjective or valuational aspect to this. However, it is important to note that this subjective element is not the real point of concern for the present pragmatic position, as it clearly takes all the subject notions to be subjective in the sense of expressive of importance. The issue is the nature of the importance expressed which, nonetheless, does differ across the subject notions which, on an expressive view, will find expression through the differences in their respective behaviours.

A complicating factor in this is that it is not clear what Halliday's conception of subjectivity is, although certainly it is true that it is not his primary concern. But precisely because of this, one does at times get clear indications that, for Halliday, subjectivity just *is* inter-subjectivity. The pragmatic position is, as we have also seen, based upon a broader conception of subjectivity and so does not need to deny this inter-subjective aspect to subjectivity. However, because of this greater breadth, for it, the differentiating behaviour which is indicative of the different types of significance is more important.

The fundamental issue, within this relational conception of subjectivity, is the nature of the non-subjective relata felt. So, this cannot be just about subjectivity, since if we, for instance, argue about the truth or falsity of a claim but that does not, in itself, determine the claim's truth or falsity, since this is determined extra-linguistically. Moreover, the argument itself does not need to be marked, by the Subject or otherwise, because it is implicitly marked by the incompatibility of the two or more positions being argued about.

So, on this pragmatic view, the Subject does not mark a negotiation or argument, but rather expresses the topic at the core of what the argument, if there is any argument, is about. It then concerns the nature of that topic. That is, in pragmatic terms it expresses the topic which is given (closer in Halliday's terms to the most ideational subject) within any such argument. We cannot negotiate or argue without a Subject, whether implicit or explicitly expressed, because otherwise there would be nothing to argue about, nothing to affirm or deny.

Fawcett (2008: 70) makes a related criticism when he observes of Halliday's claim that the grammatical Subject represents the 'modally responsible' element:

> this description, like the others, uses a metaphor, in that it implies that the referent of the Subject of a clause is 'responsible', when (i) only an animate being can be 'responsible', and (ii) many Subjects are inanimate. So this description of the Subject [...] fails to provide us with a characterisation of the Subject that applies in all cases.

I want to argue that this is not only borne out by the claimed content of the grammatical Subject, as Fawcett has observed, but also by its linguistic form and behaviour in accordance with the expressivist conception of the relationship between the content and the mode of expression that is part of the present pragmatic conception of these same subject notions.

The expressive features of the grammatical Subject that accord with its being the most basic or fundamental Subject are that it is the most morphologically active (distinctive), while at the same time being the most syntactically passive subject. This contrast between its morphological and its syntactic behaviour is not meant to privilege one over the other, since both aspects are, as we shall see, vital to its functioning. For instance, its distinctive morphology allows it to be sufficiently identifiable to function as a reference position in relation to which the other subject notions can be discriminated, which is, on the other hand, a more syntactic role. More particularly, as Lyons (1977 Vol. 2: 504) observes, the grammatical Subject can be identified as:

- the nominal which determines verbal concord or agreement;

- the nominal inflected for the grammatical category of case. For instance, the grammatical subject distinguishes a subjective case form 'he' from an objective case 'him' in certain pronouns; and

- the medially positioned subject, against which the other subjects can be distinguished as initial (thematic) and or variable in position (Actor).

As I have indicated, what is central to the subject notions in general on the pragmatic view is their expression or projection of significance. The grammatical Subject, in particular, gains its significance from both its position and its relationship to the main verb with which it co-occurs, being the most significant participant associated by convention with it. I have argued that verbal expression particularly expresses the more concrete relationships of such focal points of significance as identified, for instance, by the subject notions, to other activities and the context or background of those activities. For, on this view, such focal points of significance are understood as the products of activities, set against a background or setting that they are related to by the verbal group. That is, lexical verbs are each conventionally associated with a range of different participant roles with associated degrees of priority or prominence which determine their relative ordering, as expressive of these variations in prominence, in the context of that verb.

The grammatical Subject is the nominal which is the most conventionally significant in the context of the relationship to which is governed by the main or lexical verb. This relationship to the context of activity means that the language transcendent value which the Subject is most indicative of is the truth. In this respect, the pragmatic conception has some resemblance to the 16th and 17th Century conception of the Subject as the "part of the proposition of which the predicate is affirmed or denied". (Fawcett 2008: 69)

Both accounts also claim that the grammatical Subject is closely related to the Finite verb. But, on the pragmatic account, verbs in general are situated within the conformal function (the pragmatic counterpart of Halliday's ideational metafunction) rather than the interpersonal metafunction, where Halliday situates the finite verb, since they are essentially concerned with relationships of dependency (and so valence) to the context of their occurrence. This affinity is especially so in the case of the Finite verb, since it is the most thematic or initial verb. As the most thematic or prominent verb it shares in some of the features of the subject notions as prominences.

The grammatical Subject is the most necessary or obligatory subject notion, just as the verbal group is the most necessary or obligatory type of group or phrase. This is not an accident but due to the fact that they share a similar role and so content which is expressed and so borne out by a similar mode of expression. In English, a language in which word order is very significant, the reflexive or grammatical role of the grammatical Subject, like that of the verbal group, is to provide a fixed reference position or point against which other expressions can be identified as occupying certain positions relative to it. So, just as the verbal group is required for the identification of other groups, for instance, discriminating between subject and object or complement nominal groups, likewise, the grammatical Subject is required to discriminate between and so identify the other types of subject.

That is, it is on account of this reflexive role in the identification of, for instance, the other subjects, that the grammatical Subject is the most basic subject, which has to occur, even if it carries no transcendent or lexical content, as opposed to this purely immanent or reflexive content or function. The Subject is, then, in these cases, largely a vehicle for other expressions, such as other subject notions and forms of the interrogative mood that require it in order to be identified. That is, since it is the most necessary or obligatory subject in English, it is the grammatical Subject which forms dummy or empty forms which are, on account of their performing this function, not without a function or content but do, nonetheless, lack the depth of content that its less superficial uses have. That is, on account of its more superficial and reflexive grammatical role, it is not required to to express its potentially deeper (since more relational and less superficial) content based upon it relationship to deeper (since more relational) notions such as the truth, when, for instance, involved in the affirmation or denial of claims. This is an example of the hierarchical organisation that I have claimed for the relationship between the grammar and lexicon, borne out by what I have called vertical alignments between the grammar, that is, between the language internal or immanent organisation of a language itself and the lexicon, that is, its more

language transcendent organisation and content (see page 153). The grammar stands in a hierarchical, coordinative relationship to, and so, in effect, 'presents' the lexicon. The lexicon is not an alternative form of expression which stands on a equal footing with it. It is in comparatively rare phenomena such as this that we can see the necessary presence of the grammar, acting indexically, that is reflexively, where there is comparatively little of the more objective and so stable content and expression of lexicon present.

As Fawcett also observes, in addition to his earlier criticism, this becomes even more problematic for Subjects which have no referent at all. That is, Halliday's account cannot explain the existence or semantics of dummy subjects, such as in "It's raining" or "It's nice to see you" which are the natural consequence of its obligatory role in the organisation of the language itself, since this role is reflexive and so does not require a referent. That is, these are referring expressions in the pragmatic sense of conveying significance within the organisation of language itself.

I have already mentioned the importance of the inversion of the Subject and the Finite verb to Halliday's account in certain interrogative constructions in English. In this inversion of position, the finite verb, which, as I have just explained, is not entirely unrelated to the grammatical Subject is, for instance, understood to functional quite differently within these two accounts. For Halliday, the involvement of both the Finite verb and the Subject in the expression of interrogative forms of expression is indicative of the fact that both are part of the same interpersonal metafunction and so share the same metafunctional meaning.

On the pragmatic view, on the other hand, the fronting or promotion of the Finite verb is understood to be a form of thematisation. This thematisation of the Finite verb foregrounds it, bringing it into or closer to the expressive or central function (making it more textual in Halliday's terms). So although on the pragmatic view, verbs fall within the conformal function (or Halliday's ideational metafunction), their being thematised and so fronted, shifts them towards the expressive or central function (textual metafunction) making them marked themes. The gram-

matical Subject is, by contrast, in the same constructions, de-thematised, since it is the positional reference point against which the thematisation of the Finite can be judged to have occurred. That is, at the same time as the Finite verb is fronted and so foregrounded, it is demoted or backgrounded through its reversion a background or less initial position. So, on this view, the Subject is, again, more of a grammatical vehicle in this process of foregrounding or thematising of the Finite verb. That is, it is an expression necessarily involved in the expressive organisation of grammatical expression itself, which experiences the opposite fate of its thereby promoted or foregrounded grammatical associate.

Clearly many of the expressive features of the grammatical Subject are morphological as much as these do not figure at all prominently in Halliday's conception. By contrast, the expressive orientation of the present pragmatic conception demands at least the outline of a conception of morphology, that is of the constitution of words, to address these features. As I suggested in the last chapter (see page 180), the conformal function, as the most fundamental, is best represented in terms of relationships of dependency, which forms the basis for morphological expression as the most fundamental form of grammatical expression.

On account of its morphology, as the subject which agrees in number with the finite verb, the grammatical Subject is the subject most amenable to a dependency analysis. Agreement and anaphora might also be argued to be closely related or at least continuous phenomena (Corbett 2006: 228-9). Within the pragmatic account, these morphological forms of expression and the parallels between them are emphasised, along with the contrasts which they form with, for instance, more context independent forms of expression. That is, they are taken to be both distinctive and expressive of the content which they convey. By contrast, as we will see in the next chapter (see page 263), Halliday largely limits his analysis of cohesive (phoric) relations to those above the clause and so fails to generalise this mode of expression to other levels of organisation.

As we have seen, the pragmatic account of the Theme also emphasises that, in situated usage, it draws upon such cohesive or anaphoric relationships to its con-

text of occurrence as a source of significance. I want to argue that anaphoric or cohesive expression can be understood as functioning in terms of the reception of intrinsic values arising from within an expressive context. Receptive expressions stand, then, at the receiving end of a context dependent relationship along which significance is conveyed. At the other end of this relationship is another expression from which the significance is drawn.

What the pragmatic account emphasises, then, is that agreement is not only a device for relating or tying two expressions to one another, but also a device for varying the significance of expressions and so varying their significance or salience. In this, agreement and anaphora are taken to function analogously, although on slightly different scales of organisation, to transfer significance between different expressions. Both involve the reception of significance by morphologically based grammatical expressions. The function of the agreement in the case of that between the finite verb and the grammatical Subject is to distinguish one subject form, the most morphologically active, from the others. Its being the most morphologically active subject naturally suggests that it should fall within the most obligatory or necessary aspect of the expressive function, since morphological expression is dependent upon the presence of some morphological expression as the vehicle for its expression. That is, it's significance is not only communicated distributionally, by its relative position, but also more relationally and contextually by morphological modes of expression such as agreement with the Finite verb.

This pragmatic understanding of agreement attempts to explain why the direction of agreement (the expression of number on the verb, deriving from the noun) reverses what might be taken to be the 'natural' direction of such dependency relationships (Miller 1983). For, number presumably originates from the noun and yet the nominal expression is typically understood to be dependent on the verb. It attempts to explain this functionally and expressively in terms of the difference in significance between these two expressions and their expressive features. In particular, it is claimed that agreement is more salient or pronounced if it takes

the form of more pronounced or significant features, such as number, which derive from the more significant or prominent, nominal, term in the relationship. So although agreement may be less 'natural' if it reverses how the dependency relationship would be understood *representationally*, it will nonetheless be more significant *expressively* and so noticeable that way. So, again, what is stressed in this glimpse of a pragmatic conception of morphological grammatical expression is that the grammar of a language is not so much representational as coordinative in its function and content and so behaviour. The grammar of a language is not a mirror of nature but, rather, is reflexively oriented towards its own internal organisation which concerns the expression of a valuational rather than representational content.

At this point, I need to introduce an important qualification that demonstrates that this fledgling account of morphology will, perhaps not surprisingly need to become more complicated. Certainly this is comparatively undeveloped, fledgling account of morphology so I do not think that it is a big surprise that it is needs to be more complicated.

In particular, it runs contrary to the observation that in nominative-accusative languages such as English, it is the subject that is the least active or most morphologically economical nominal within such a case system. We have been spared this fact by the fact that in English the case system is comparatively reduced. So, a distinction will need to be made between the more directly discourse related aspects (since this is how I am inclined to interpret case) of morphology from those relating to agreement.

Halliday is, however, as we have seen, most insistent upon its association with the expression of Mood. But this is a comparatively idiosyncratic feature of English, just as the grammatical Subject being obligatory in English is, which clearly affects his ([1992](2003)(3): 205) ability to explain the notion of the grammatical Subject in languages other than English:

The Subject in English does two jobs in the mood system: it takes

responsibility for the proposition, and it also plays a part in realising the distinction between one category of mood and another. There is a nominal element in Chinese which does the first job but not the second – and since it is not required for making the distinction between declarative and interrogative, it is often "not there" where the Subject would be in English. (The temptation then is to say that something in the Chinese has been "dropped" or "omitted". But this is where the comparative approach becomes pathological. Nothing has been omitted; that is a fiction created by looking at Chinese through English eyes.) The important question then becomes, what is the difference in meaning between a clause which makes explicit this modally responsible element and one which does not. It could be a matter of ellipsis (i.e. the element is presumed from elsewhere - note that there is still a difference in meaning between putting it in and leaving it out, albeit a subtle one); or it could be realizing some other systematic semantic opposition.

The problem here is that the association between the grammatical Subject and the expression of Mood is a preoccupation that Halliday himself introduces, not the comparative approach. As we have seen, it is Halliday's argument concerning the semantic content of the Subject arising from his account of English which is dependent upon its involvement in the expression of Mood. Languages in which the grammatical Subject does not exhibit the same association with the expression of Mood would seem to demonstrate precisely why Halliday's account of the content of the Subject rests on comparatively selective evidence, deriving largely from English. For, languages like Chinese, for instance, provide no evidence for the semantic claim that Halliday presupposes, that the Subject is essentially and especially interpersonal. His whole argument, then, would seem to depend upon this premise that the grammatical Subject is interpersonal which he would seem to import from his metafunctional semantics of English, based upon, as we have seen, its formal features. Yet, since it is precisely the universality of these formal features, which are drawn into question by languages like Chinese, Halliday's argument would, then, seem to be question begging.

For the pragmatist, the grammatical Subject in English is obligatory on two sets of expressive grounds which are mutually supportive of one another. It supports both the expression of distinctions between the different types of Subjects and between the different Moods. It therefore has a strong functional since expressive basis in English. It has no necessary connection to Mood on this view. Rather it is taken up in the expression of Mood precisely because it is obligatory for other reflexive reasons that I outlined earlier. In both cases, the Subject functions to distinguish thematised expressions and so directly contributes to the expression of significance.

Such a pragmatic account of the grammatical subject does not require the grammatical Subject to be obligatory in languages other than English because, being expressive, such behaviour is contingent on its relationship to other forms of expression within a language. For the pragmatist advocates a practical or expressive relativism. In languages other than English, verbal expressions are able to perform functions performed by the grammatical Subject in English since, as I have already stressed, the two are closely related in both behaviour and content. Indeed, it is verbal expression which will tend to be the more obligatory in such cases. The involvement of the grammatical Subject with Mood is, therefore, far more contingent than Halliday seems prepared to admit. So, for instance, in the complex morphology of verbal expression in many classical languages, many grammatical distinctions conveyed by grammatical Subject in English can be conveyed by the verb, making the grammatical Subject optional. Yet since these intersecting relationships function to compound the significance of the grammatical Subject in English, its behaviour and content can clearly be motivated within the context of English.

Since Halliday begins from a formal association between the grammatical Subject and the comparatively abstract system of Mood, he arrives at a comparatively abstract conception of the content of the grammatical Subject. The pragmatic account of the grammatical Subject, on the other hand, situates it, in Halliday's terms, on the opposite side the metafunctions from where he does, as the most

ideational subject notion, although situated within the expressive function (see Figure 5.1 on the next page). Clearly, the grammatical Subject is one of the areas where the systemic and the pragmatic view are, then, most strikingly at variance with one another. Moreover, given the unavoidably systematic structure of both theories, this fundamental difference carries over to the two accounts of the Actor, as the subject expression which most obviously contrasts with the grammatical Subject in both accounts, as much as Halliday tends to depreciate such relationships, since he holds the subjects to be unrelated notions. As a result, along this horizontal axis, Halliday's and the pragmatic accounts can be seen to be the reverse or the mirror of one another.

5.5   The Actor

For Halliday (1985: 34), the Actor is "the element the speaker portrays as the one that does the deed". As the representative of the ideational metafunction, it is the subject notion with the most representational content. It "is the active participant in that process", where what is meant by that process is the process represented by the verbal group. Halliday does not argue for this position and says little more than this. Its assignment to the ideational metafunction would, therefore, seem to be more of a product or derivative consequence or residual or of his claim that the grammatical Subject is interpersonal on the basis of a positive argument from evidence. This means that his position is, while at least consistent with his position regarding the grammatical Subject, nonetheless open to similar criticisms which I shall return to after presenting the pragmatic account of the Actor.

On the present pragmatic view, if the grammatical Subject can be characterised in terms of its dependency, then the Actor can be characterised in terms of its being comparatively context independent and so free relative to the other subject notions within the expressive function. In contrast with the grammatical Subject, the Actor as a subject notion is the most:

A: Halliday's metafunctions and subjects

Textual

Theme

Subject   Actor

Interpersonal   Ideational
(Logical/Experiential)

B: Pragmatic functions and subjects

Expressive

Theme

Actor   Subject

Abstract   Conformal

Figure 5.1: The relationship between the subject notions and Halliday's metafunctions and the pragmatic functions

- syntactically active (distinctive) subject, while at the same time being the most morphologically passive;

- variable in position (ranging from initial to final position);

- optional and so variable in occurrence; and

- comparatively morphologically invariant.

The Actor is the most variable and optional of the subject notions, being highly variable in both its position and very occurrence within the clause. Since, like the

other subject notions, the intrinsic significance or importance that it expresses is very much a function of its position or presence or absence as an expression within the clause, the variability of its content is directly reflected in its mode of expression and what this mode of expression allows in terms of variation in expression. As the most optional subject notion, it has the function of varying the significance of the lexical expression which occupies it to the point of being able to vary its very presence or absence of expression.[3] This highlights a potential problem for a collocational account of the content of the Actor, relative to, for instance, the grammatical Subject. That its greater mobility makes it inherently much more difficult to say which other expressions it associates or collocates with.

The pragmatic view is, again, also more reflexive or immanent than Halliday's systemic view, tending to avoid stronger, extrinsic or lexical strength claims about the content of the Actor. That is, it is not understood representationally both because its content is understood to be immanent rather than extrinsic and comparatively independent rather than conformal. On this view, it is the most mobile and optional subject and so free or discretionary locus of significance. It is, then, the subject which falls within the abstract function, which is associated with both more positionally variable and optional expression, although as a subject, it falls within the expressive function. It is, therefore, the most independent of the subject notions, drawing on this for both its significance and the variability of its significance.

Given that, as I have suggested, Halliday's conception would seem to be the mirror reversal of the present pragmatic conception, it should not be surprising that it views the content which Halliday attributes to the grammatical Subject as more expressively appropriate to the Actor. For, it is odd that the representative of the representational metafunction should be the most free and so active

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[3] This position needs to be qualified similarly to the claims for the grammatical Subject, in that in terms of case, the Actor will typically be an object and so more morphologically active or formally marked (less morphologically economical formally) than the grammatical Subject.

element. For the paradigm of representational validity is the notion of truth, understood as a relationship of correspondence or conformity between a representation and something given to it. But if it is expressive of agency, how can this be taken to be given. Likewise, to see the paradoxical nature of the relationship between the grammatical Subject and Actor within Halliday's account, recall that, while he takes the Actor to be expressive of agency, he, at the same time, attempts to attribute responsibility to the grammatical Subject instead of it. It is sometimes said to be a principle the field of ethics that "ought implies can". That is, responsibility implies the freedom to have potentially acted otherwise. Yet Halliday seems to be arguing that responsibility is expressed by the subject notion which is most obligatory and restricted in its behaviour – the grammatical Subject, rather than that which exhibits the most freedom of behaviour – the Actor. That is, he would seem to claim that it is representational (ideational) on the strength of the claim that it is *representing* agency, rather than anything to do with agency itself. In short, Halliday's accounts of *both* the grammatical Subject and the Actor do not seem to be expressively congruent with the content that he attributes to them. The focus of Halliday's conception is clearly far less upon the Actor than the grammatical Subject. However, if this reasoning does not support Halliday's position regarding the grammatical Subject, it is even less likely to support that regarding the Actor.

Returning to the pragmatic view, the Actor is, on this view, the most independent of the subject notions. Indeed, it is sufficiently free or syntactically mobile so as to also be a complement or object. In this it demonstrates the continuity between these two different types of expression. However, this might also raise doubts about whether it is the most appropriate subject notion and in particular, the most appropriate abstract subject notion. For, the significance of the Actor is, as I have stressed, tied to its position, deriving from the profile of significance which I mentioned earlier (see page 210), which allows it to function to dethematise as much as to thematise the lexical expressions which occupy it. For instance, in the passive voice construction, it can potentially dethematise the con-

ventional active voice Subject which need not be expressed. A better candidate may then be a grammatical expression which employs an alternative, although likewise abstract, mode of expression such as the tonic prominence which, since expressed intonationally, is also variable in position but whose significance is not so closely tied to its position on account of this mode of expression being is largely independent of position, being also a function of the tonic variation in pitch. In particular, in the next section I want to turn to how the contrast between the various subject notions might be extended and so developed further, if we extend it to also recognise a role for grammatical intonation and so to notions of grammatical information packaging.

5.6   Information packaging

On the pragmatic view, the subject notions are grammatical prominences. What I now want to argue is that intonation is also an important grammatical prominence. I want return to McGregor's (1997) critique of Halliday's conception which builds upon his attempt to develop an alternative to Halliday's constituency based account of the interpersonal metafunction. McGregor's proposals in respect of information packaging are, again, I want to argue, very suggestive. What I want to then do is suggest how the pragmatic view can further radicalise them, particularly where McGregor's account seems to be held back by presuppositions that it still shares with Halliday's.

Halliday situates information structure within the textual metafunction, which, as we have seen, he understands in terms of periodicity – that is periodic prominences located towards the beginning and the end of units.

> So there is a peak of prominence at the beginning, which is the Theme; and another peak of prominence, usually at the end, which is the focus of information or, simply, the New. The two are different in meaning. The Theme is speaker-oriented; it is the speaker's signal of concern, what it is that he is on about – he may even make

> this explicit, by starting 'as far as . . . is concerned'. The New
> is hearer-oriented (though still, of course, **selected** by the speaker);
> it is the speaker's presentation of information as in part already re-
> coverable to the hearer (the Given) and in part not recoverable (the
> New). Halliday ([1979] 2002(1): 207 original emphasis)

The first prominence, the Theme, is, as we have seen, marked by the initial
position itself, the second:

> takes the form of tonic prominence: that is, the location of the tonic
> accent, which is the dynamic centre of the pitch contour, the place
> where the greatest pitch movement takes place. (This may be a
> falling movement or a rising movement or some kind of complex
> movement, depending on which kind of melody it is. It corresponds
> to what is sometimes called "primary stress", although it is not, in
> fact, a stress feature.) (Halliday [1979] 2002(1): 206-7)

Now, central to McGregor's critique is his claim that information structure or
packaging is, in fact, interpersonal rather than textual as Halliday claims it to
be. As we have seen, Halliday sees a complementarity between Theme and the
tonic focus or New internal to the textual metafunction. So, although Halliday
distinguishes between thematic and information structure as the Prague school
failed to do, he nonetheless, seeks to preserve some relationship between the
two. But he is not very explicit about the nature of the relationship between
them.

As we saw earlier (see page 183), McGregor argues that the interpersonal meta-
function can be understood to have an organisation that is not constituency based
and that, contrary to Halliday, information packaging falls within it. That is,
these two types of organisation, textual and interpersonal, can come apart. In
the case of information packaging, this allows McGregor more freedom in his
account. This is significant because the expression within the interpersonal meta-
function (or the abstract function within the pragmatic account), I have argued,
is characterised by a greater freedom of expression.

Chapter 5. A comparison of the subject notions

Halliday's account tends to presuppose that information units align with constituency units, however, as he also recognises, this is not necessarily the case. As McGregor (1997: 270-273) observes, this problem arises because he attempts to analyse information units in terms of two constituent functions, Given and New, normally occurring in this order. Much of McGregor's arguments against this position stem from the fact that:

> [b]ecause the boundary between Given and New is so fluid, and may occur anywhere, these two designations cannot represent constituents. For to presume they do would be to admit that constituents - and the functions that are inherent to them - do not necessarily require specific linguistic realisations. Given and New lack realisations in form, and thus cannot be regarded as linguistically significant in terms of Halliday's own criteria (1985: p. xx) - and certainly not by S[emiotic]G[rammar] criteria.

This is, in turn, because, as Halliday (1985: 275) observes:

> whereas the end of the New element is marked by tonic prominence, there is nothing to mark where it begins; so there is indeterminacy in the structure. If we take an instance out of context, we can tell that it culminates with the New; but we cannot tell on phonological grounds whether there is a Given element first, or where the boundary between Given and New would be.

However, since both the constituency and encoding requirements that McGregor mentions are likely to be of less relevance to a pragmatic account, I will not continue this line of criticism here. Of greater relevance to it is McGregor's claim that information and constituency structure (or whatever might replace it) are largely independent of one another. Certainly, information units do not have to coincide with clauses. Halliday's tendency to conflate information and constituency units, whether intentional or not, in particular undermines his capacity to provide an account of information packaging independent of the constituency

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organisation of the clause. McGregor's account is, on the other hand, inherently much more able to distinguish information from thematic as well as constituency structure. Furthermore, distinguishing between them allows information structure to be explicated on its own terms rather than in relation to the Theme, a relationship which Halliday does not really explain the significance of anyway. Moreover, this allows the development of an account in which information structure is understood in McGregor's terms of an operator in relation to a scope or domain, as we saw in last Chapter (see page 183). As I stressed then, McGregor's reinterpretation of the interpersonal metafunction also has the potential to bring with it a revised, pragmatic semantics that is more able to articulate just how this form of expression is expressive of its content.

More generally, the description of intonation clearly presents many challenges. In particular, it is characterised by a continuity which resists being interpreted discretely and so in a systemic way as giving rise to a small, fixed set of possibilities which can be defined as a system (Crystal 1969). But this also means that it speaks to the need for a less reductive conception of grammar that McGregor's proposals for the interpersonal metafunction gesture towards. As I noted (see page 28), there is an analogous contrast between the *abruptness* or *discreteness* of the actual and the *continuity* of the abstract or possible which is fundamental to the non-reductive structure of Whitehead's metaphysics.

Clearly, intonation has a central role in the expression of Mood in English, to which it is suited by the abstractness of this content. This is also consistent with the tonic accent being a comparatively abstract prominence. Yet this is, again, at odds with Halliday's claim that it is the grammatical Subject that is the subject notion that is most closely associated with the Mood system, a position which McGregor (1997: 282) has also not found compelling.

McGregor's interpretation also allows the scope, as well as the operator (in this case, the tonic prominence), the freedom to be independently constructed. This means that the constitution of information units themselves has to be addressed and addressed separately from the constituency organisation of clauses, since the

information focus is tied to the construction of this much more variable information unit. This would seem to be a key feature of the associated information focus provided by the operator because it inherently allows more than one intonational focus per clause. Much of the variation in information structure then need not be simply attributed to the site of the operator but can also be attributed to variation in the scope or size of whole information units.

By contrast, the rigidity of Halliday's constituency based information unit would seem to create difficulties for his account. The tonic makes less sense, as a marker of unpredictable content, if it comes at the conclusion of that content. Moreover, it is limited as a marker of unpredictable content, if only one expression can be marked as unpredictable per clause. It would seem to make more sense to see these as the outcome of Halliday's tendency to identify information units with constituency units, that is, clauses. The information unit needs to be understood as endogenous to information packaging itself rather than as exogenous to it, like the clause would seem to be. That way, the information unit as a whole can also be understood as adapting to its needs.

The nature of the tonic prominence itself would also seem to present potential difficulties for Halliday's account, since he clearly stresses the unmarked final position of the tonic prominence. He presumably does this both because it forms part of one, if not the, paradigm example of the periodic or wave structure of the textual metafunction and because of the inherent distributional bias of the constituency framework within which he situates it. While the tonic is, like the thematic initial position, also a site of attentional prominence, it is, nonetheless, clearly of a different type, the marked change in the pitch supplying the focus of attention. For this reason, it is far from clear why the emphasis that Halliday places on its position should carry the same significance for New, as it does for Theme, which is defined by its position. It is a marked or overtly expressed focus or prominence, unlike the comparatively unmarked or covertly expressed focus of the Theme. This is important because it means that the tonic syllable has an essentially variable position, whether the final position is unmarked for it

or not. So, its prominence is largely independent of its position. So, Halliday's emphasis upon the final position of units would again seem to exaggerate the significance of the relationship of informational to constituency organisation.

As we have already begun to see, the thematic focus associated with the Theme is inherently complex. I want to argue that information focus is not simple either. For, as much as both Halliday's and McGregor's accounts both tend to emphasise informational focus, there are at least two types of such focus, new or informational focus and contrastive focus.

In contrastive focus, not only new but also given items can bare the tonic focal accent. Halliday's rather distributional account of tonic accent in particular begins to break down because, in this case, the contrast between Given and New threatens to break down. This, again, undermines Halliday's claim that the tonic accent is distinguished distributionally, that is, that it inherently falls towards the end of the clause. Moreover, given the existence of these two cases, it is important that they be distinguished contextually, which neither of these accounts would seem to attempt to do. That is, the interpretation of the tonic focus, like the Theme, would seem to be situated, reflexive and indexical. This would explain why both of these accounts have tended to emphasise that information structure concerns new information rather than contrastive emphasis. On the other hand, for much the same reasons, this also presents an opportunity for the pragmatist to develop an alternative conception by interpreting the tonic focus in a much more indexical and so pragmatic way, as essentially concerning the attribution of significance or importance rather than information.

5.7 An outline of a pragmatic conception of information packaging

A pragmatic account of intonational focus shifts the emphasis away from information to the expression of significance or importance. This is because, on this view, it is the attribution of significance or importance which is common

to both types of focus, whether informational or contrastive. On this view, the tonic focus is foremost a prominence. It is, secondarily, a comparatively abstract and so a freely chosen and distributed prominence. So, whereas Halliday and McGregor's accounts tend to subordinate contrastive focus to information focus, the pragmatic account if anything, favours contrastive focus, thereby replacing their implicit prioritisation of information with an explicit account of significance or importance and so of prioritisation itself. Within a grammar organised around coordination, issues arising from the newness and so unpredictability of content are clearly far from irrelevant but, nonetheless, fall within the scope of a broader, more general need to expressively convey importance comparatively freely. New constitutes a subset of attributions of prominence based upon the newness, that is, the news worthiness of content. This interpretation diminishes the contrast between the two types of focus by subordinating both to a broader emphasis upon significance or importance.

The tonic focus can be understood to express a comparatively abstract prominence within the expressive function, as I have suggested, somewhat akin to the tentative position that I proposed for the Actor. It conveys a selective emphasis which is comparatively free and mobile in terms of where it can be located and so also upon just what this emphasis falls, in the comparatively continuous and so abstract medium of intonation. Compared to both the Theme, which is much the less marked, and the grammatical Subject, which is, likewise, comparatively marked and yet fixed in its position, it clearly has a much freer distribution of occurrence. That is, it allows the expression of significance or importance in a much more discretionary and flexible way than the other subject notions. What also favours this judgement, that it is an abstract prominence, is that the New, being new and so not being already present within the existing context of discourse, makes it inherently comparatively context independent.

It is difficult to say what information is in this context because it would seem to, at least in part, consist in the way in which the content is divided up into abstract, extensive units. McGregor's account, by placing greater emphasis upon varia-

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tion in the construction of information units, highlights another complex feature of information packaging. The divisions introduced by the construction of information units themselves are more abstract and extensive and so less prominent and so evaluative than the tonic stress. They are selections from a comparatively abstract continuum of potential divisions. The points of division are selected on somewhat subjective grounds. They may therefore best explained through the interaction of subjective and objective factors rather than being simply assigned to either one or the other factor and so to either one or the other of the metafunctions or functions.

As I suggested initially, McGregor's critique of Halliday's account of information packaging would seem to be a dispute over just which metafunction information packaging belongs within, supported by his reinterpretation of the interpersonal metafunction, within which he takes it to actually belong. In particular, McGregor would seem correct to suggest that the construction of the information unit itself and the placement of the tonic syllable are oriented towards the addressee and are, in this sense, subjective or interpersonal. From this, he, argues that information packaging should be part of the interpersonal metafunction. This would seem to be an inconsistency in Halliday's account. Indeed, Halliday, in the extended quote that I began with (on page 231) makes similar claims.

As we have seen, I takes Halliday to be correct in claiming that the tonic prominence is a prominence. However, I also takes McGregor to be correct in identifying the type of prominence as an abstract one. Combining these two positions by introducing a pragmatic understanding of the relationship between abstract content and that of significance or importance, gives rise to a third, more moderate and less reductive position than either of these positions.

With the notion of importance comes the complexity of interdependence. Indeed, this is another aspect of McGregor's account which is closer to the pragmatic one, since, having rejected a paradigmatic underpinning to the metafunctions, he is not under the same obligation as Halliday is to keep them separate

from one another. Hence he can observe that, even if information packaging is interpersonal, the object of information packaging itself need not be.[4] Thus, he implicitly recognises that, at the very least, two metafunctions may be involved in the expression of information packaging, allowing one to provide the selective focus, the other, the underlying, objective content for that focus. But he does not develop this position, presumably because it does not sit comfortably with the claim that information packaging belongs in the interpersonal metafunction. Thus, by adopting a more complex conception of subjectivity, the pragmatic view allows for a comparatively self-consistent resolution of the conflict between Halliday's and McGregor's conceptions of information packaging which, as I have suggested, also brings with it the potential for quite a different emphasis than that in either of these accounts.

This pragmatic account of information packaging remains incomplete and will not figure especially prominently in what follows. In spite of its taking us beyond what are usually taken to be the subject notions, this detour into information packaging can, I think, be justified on a number of grounds. Firstly, it allows us to entertain the prospect of a somewhat different conception of the subject notions, in which they are most fundamentally prominences of different types. It therefore suggests the possibility of interpreting the tonic accent as the third, comparatively abstract prominence. Indeed, one might wonder whether, understood in these terms, it is a more suitable subject notion than the Actor, which is the other obvious contender for the more abstract (optional) subject notion. For the latter's variability of position and optionality is, after all, often used to background rather than foreground what would otherwise be subjects through grammatical processes such as passivisation. That is, the Actor's variability and optionality of position and occurrence is not accompanied by another expressive means of foregrounding its content such as pitch variation provides the tonic accent. Another possibility is that there be more than one such subject notion

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[4] As McGregor (1997: 278) notes: "[t]his does not of course mean that what is exchanged, information, is itself interpersonal in nature; a commodity is not the same thing as the process of its exchange".

A: Pragmatic and revised subject notions

Expressive

Theme

Tonic   Subject

Abstract   Conformal

Figure 5.2: The revised pragmatic subject notions.

within this function, just as there may be more than one tonic prominence within a clause.

Secondly and relatedly, it is important to demonstrate that this pragmatic account fully embraces a non-reductive conception of language and so attributes distinctively different types of organisation to the different functions that it recognises. Indeed, the distinctiveness of the tonic accent adds to the contrast between the three subject notions and so better differentiates the three types of prominence in line with the three broad types of value that I distinguished in Chapter Three. In Figure 5.2, I therefore diagrammatically represent a revised set of subject notions using the tentative label 'Tonic' to cover the broadened pragmatic conception of the tonic accent, covering both New and contrastive stress. However, in what follows, the Actor will figure much more prominently particularly due to its prominent role in passivisation. Moreover, it is then incumbent upon it to provide some indication as to the nature of each of these functions, of which the abstract (optional) function is the one which is the least developed within this thesis.

Thirdly, it is important to address Halliday's conception of information packaging since it is one of the more paradigmatic functions of the textual metafunction, which has clearly shaped the way in which he presents this metafunction as

'periodic' and attempts to understand discourse.

5.8 Conclusion

For Halliday, the subject notions are the principle exemplification of the diversity of the metafunctions and so the fundamental functional divisions within his grammar. As we have begun to see, it is the grammatical Subject that dominates Halliday's account of these subject notions. Indeed, it might be said to dominate his whole conception of grammar, since he goes to greater lengths to argue for his quite unusual conception of it, that it is fundamentally interpersonal, than seemingly any other grammatical notion. This tends to reinforce the view that, for Halliday, subjectivity is to be understood as intersubjectivity. In relation to the classical American conception of experience that I have outlined, this seems closer to the classical empiricist position in being a comparatively abstract conception.

As we have also seen, the more expressive emphasis of the pragmatic conception of roughly the same subject notions, leads to a striking disagreement as to the relative placement of particularly the grammatical Subject within the grammar and so its content which, given the analogous systematic structure of both conceptions, precipitates an analogous disagreement concerning the placement of the Actor. I have also discussed how the tonic prominence as an intonational prominence provides another even more contrastive source of prominence that passes beyond the kin of the subject notions. Yet, nonetheless, it rightly figures in Halliday's juxtaposition of Thematic and intonational structure. What I have attempted to explore then is the unity in diversity of these different types of expression, each of which is a composite of different modes of expression. This unity in diversity mirrors the organisation of Whitehead's conception of value, that I have argued might therefore begin to provide them with a valuational and so inherently relative semantics.

We saw in Chapter Three, that accounts of the indexicality of reference are dom-

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inated by the notion that reference is context dependent. The present pragmatic account does not deny this, but, nonetheless, it does deny that this is the most important feature of indexicality. This chapter has been concerned with how, within such a reflexive and so valuationally oriented conception of indexicality, language users are able to reflexively organise their own discourse because they are able to freely express and so generate the valuations that they attribute to their lexical expression through comparatively abstract forms of indexical expression. These complement the more overt forms of indexical expression such as reference, which have dominated the discussion of indexicality to date.

Although I have argued that the subject notions are expressive, they are largely tied to grammatical positions. Since, overt morphological expression is more observable and so noticeable, involving variation in the material form of expression, their contribution remains, at this stage, comparatively elusive. In the next few chapters, I will introduce other sources of variation including variations in both the constructions in which these and other grammatical functions occur. Since, I have argued that the grammar concerns the organisation of discourse, it essentially concerns the coordination and so orchestration of these different sources of variation in the expression of significance. Given the quite striking differences in the content claimed for each of the subject notions by these theories a more situated comparison of the two positions within the context of particular discourses, as opposed to a mere point by point contrast, would also seem to be required. This being the case, the full significance of the differences between the two accounts is ultimately only likely to become apparent in the light of their differences concerning the organisation of discourse itself, although in this thesis there will not be the space to do this.

Chapter 6

Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor

6.1 Introduction

For any grammar which proposes that the grammar of a language is meaningful such that variations in grammatical expression are meaningful, the bewildering array of possible paraphrases or agnates that are possible in natural languages presents an obvious challenge. In the last chapter, we began to see in detail how the two accounts differ from one another. The problem of variation is particularly central to the present pragmatic conception on account of its emphasis on the inherent relativity and so variability of the valuations which are required for the adaptability of action and so for coordination. It particularly attempts to address this need to vary the content expressed through an account of the expressivity of the grammar of a language.

That the metafunctions support three concurrent threads of meaning running through the clause means that Halliday's account does have a capacity to address issues of compositionality, although his orientation is clearly less expressivist. For instance, Halliday, in a somewhat similar, employs the notion of 'construal' to indicate that a particular grammatical configuration when used in a particular

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context is, semantically as well as lexicogrammatically, never a simple representation, a re-coding of a given experiential or world-based state of affairs. It is always a joint or co-construction of some state of affairs. That is, it is a construal rather than simply a neutral reporting of what is given to it.

So, here again, there are clear similarities with what we might expect from a pragmatic conception, although, as we have also seen, the details tend to diverge from such a pragmatic account. Many of these divergences would seem to be traceable to the contrast between Halliday's constructivistic emphasis and the more valuational and expressive emphasis of the present pragmatic conception, which lie behind their differing conceptions of subjectivity, which I discussed earlier (see 194).

What we have considered thus far has presupposed a particular form of realisation or 'construal', where the realisation has, to this point, been what Halliday calls a 'congruent' realisation. This type of realisation forms the basis for the base form of the system networks. What Halliday calls 'grammatical metaphor' is an additional notion with which he attempts to address grammatical variation, which is largely orthogonal to the system networks, since it concerns variations in the realisation of this base form. In this way, the system networks are understood as a dynamic open system, grammatical metaphor acting to expand their semantic potential.

For this reason, the notion of 'congruency' and, in particular, departures from it, are central to this type of variation. That is, it involves departures from the more "likely" relationships between, for instance, a type of expression and the functional content that realises it, as, for instance, when Halliday (2003(3): 20-22) claims that "processes are congruently construed as verbs". In this way, Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor would seem to be a tentative attempt to extend his existing framework to cover another significant type of variation.

Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor seems to have begun, somewhat unusually for a theory of metaphor, although perhaps not for a linguistic theory,

as an account of the *form* of grammatical metaphors. Subsequently, its scope of application would seem to have been narrowed, at least for the purpose of attempting to provide the account of such formal variation with a semantics. I, therefore, want to distinguish two phases or stages in the development of Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor, although Halliday himself does not do this himself. There is an earlier theory of grammatical variation which Halliday comes to call grammatical metaphor and a later, much more focused, account of the content, particularly of the parts of speech and of nominal expression in particular, with which Halliday attempts to combine it. What I want to focus on is the success or otherwise of this attempt to combine the two sides of his account of grammatical metaphor, since the unity of content and expression is a central concern within the pragmatic account on account of its expressivism. One might conjecture that the narrowing of the scope of the theory reflects an implicit awareness of the difficulty of achieving this.

This chapter will also allow us to look more closely at Halliday's conception of meaning, particularly of reference. Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor ultimately focuses on nominal expression, since he claims that grammatical metaphor has a nominalising direction. Moreover, his views on reference are clearly shaped by his conception of science in which the notion of grammatical metaphor figures prominently.

I want to begin by outlining Halliday's account of the parts of speech, since, as I have indicated, it is, ultimately, the primary site of his account of grammatical metaphor. This will allow us to first consider the basis for what he takes to be the congruent realisational relationships which form the basis for an account of the parts of speech. I will then turn to his account of grammatical metaphor, which presupposes these, attempting to account for variations from them. I then turn, in particular, how grammatical metaphor relates to Halliday's account of reference along with the central role that nominalisation has within his account of grammatical metaphor.

6.2 Halliday's conception of the parts of speech

Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor concerns deviations from congruent realisational relationships. I want to begin by discussing the grounds that he provides for these congruent relationships that make up his conception of the parts of speech before turning to his account of grammatical metaphor. As I noted, as a worked out account, the scope of Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor would, seem to be largely limited to the parts of speech, a set of categories which, otherwise, do not figure prominently within Halliday's grammar given its emphasis upon the clause.

That grammatical expression be grounded in a semantics is important to both these conceptions. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 177) provide a list of prototypical correspondences for the parts of speech, which are outlined in Figure 6.1 on the next page, which they argue apply in the case of congruent expression.

The congruent (prototypical) grammatical realizations of these types of element in English are as follows:

process	↘	verbal group
participant	↘	nominal group
circumstance	↘	adverbial group; prepositional phrase
relator	↘	conjunction group

Figure 6.1: Parts of speech realisations - Halliday & Matthiessen (1999: 177)

We are told that "[P]articipants are realised by nominal groups, which are made up of both things and qualities" (ibid.: 184). Moreover, within the nominal group (ibid.: 185):

> (i) things are more time-stable than qualities; and
> (ii) things are more experientially complex than qualities.

But the latter is also true of the relationship of nominal groups to verbal groups, since with are also told both that:

> participants and processes form a temporal complementarity: partic-
> ipants persist, whereas processes unfold, through time. (ibid.: 178).

> Nominal groups have, in fact, far greater potential than verbal groups
> for creating experientially complex categories; and this reflects a
> fundamental difference between participants and processes. The

> nominal group has the potential for intersecting any number of qual-
> ities in the representation of a participant; and this makes it possible
> for the taxonomic ordering of participants to be considerably more
> elaborated than that of processes. (ibid.: 180)

So participants and things stand in strikingly similar relationships to both pro-
cesses and qualities respectively, such that it is not entirely clear what differen-
tiates them. If anything, Halliday and Matthiessen's (1999: 207, 186) parts of
speech risk collapsing into a single opposition between:

> nouns and verbs [...] distinguished as primary classes, whereas
> substantives and adjectives are distinguished only as secondary classes.
> [... For] whatever is being construed as stable, as having persistence
> through time, is essentially a construct, an assemblage of different
> qualities that (to borrow Jespersen's metaphor) can be crystallized
> only as an organic whole. The nominal group embodies this essen-
> tial association between complexity and permanence.

On this view, then, the basis for the fundamental division within the parts of
speech is based on this opposition between things that endure and those that do
not. As we shall see, such a binary interpretations of the parts of speech tends
to persist even in those who claim to reject Saussure's presuppositions (see page
23). Moreover, what is also apparent from this account of the parts of speech is
that we are told considerably more about the compositional and behavioural fea-
tures of expressions than the comparatively meagre descriptions of the content
which they express, which is, nonetheless, taken to be unproblematic. Indeed,
much of the evidence for the latter content would seem to derive from the be-
haviour of the former.

> Both the difference in temporal permanence and the difference in
> experiential complexity are reflected logogenetically. Participants
> tend to persist in the unfolding of a text; and since they do, they can
> accrue various qualities. In contrast, processes cannot persist in text:
> unlike the deictic system of the nominal group, the deictic system of

the verbal group, the tense system, is not a system for tracking textual instances of processes as a text unfolds. To achieve persistence in text, processes have to be reconstituted metaphorically as participants (ibid.: 181)

So this semantics of the parts of speech would seem to be based upon the form of the expression rather than the expression being based upon its content. In realisation statements such as that in Figure 6.1 on page 247, we seem to be being presented with re-descriptions of the claimed behaviours of grammatical classes as their meanings. Given this, it is difficult to see how the meaning or content can explain the form, since it is both discussed in comparatively little detail compared to the form and behaviour of the expressions and seems to be taken to be largely derivative from the form of their expression. Halliday and Matthiessen's representational stance, deriving from their association of the parts of speech with the ideational metafunction would, therefore, seem to be quite dependent upon their representational presuppositions.

6.3   An outline of Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor

I now want to turn to Halliday's conception of grammatical metaphor which concerns variations away from the congruent realisational relationships claimed for the various parts of speech that I have just discussed. The parallelism between Halliday's two conceptions of lexical and grammatical metaphor respectively is clearly based upon his conception of the lexicon and the grammar being on a par with one another, the one being particular, finding expressing through words, the other, abstract and general, finding expression through classes which I discussed in Chapter Two (see page 57):

In metaphor in its traditional sense, one **word** moves into the domain of another; looked at from the other end, a lexico-semantic construct that is typically realized by one word is instead realized

by another, which typically realizes something else: e.g. *sowed suspicion*, where 'provided grounds for,' more typically realized as *caused*, is realized instead by *sowed*, which typically realizes 'scattered for cultivation.' This kind of metaphor is lexical. In grammatical metaphor, on the other hand, a grammatical-semantic construct that is typically realized by (a member of) one **class** is instead realized by (a member of) another class, which typically realizes something else: e.g. *planetary motion*, where 'process: do, etc,' more typically realized as a verb (e.g. *move*), is realized instead by a noun, a class which typically realizes 'participating entity.' As long as we say *planets move* we are still in the realm of the first grammar, the primary semiotic construal of experience, in which the phenomenon is construed as happening (grammatically, a clause), with a process/verb *move* and a participating entity/noun *planets*. When this is reworded as a nominal group planetary motion, it takes on the grammar that is characteristic of classes of **things**. And just as in lexical metaphor there is a semantic **junction**, such that *sowed* (in *sowed suspicion*) carries over features of its typical sense as scattering seeds (and the metaphor is readily extended to *seeds of suspicion*), so also there is semantic junction in grammatical metaphor, such that the noun *motion* carries over features of the typical sense of a noun as the name of a participating entity. There now exists a thing called *motion*, and *planetary motion* is one kind, a sub-class of this thing. The sense of 'change location', as in *move*, has become objectified (in Whorf's sense; i.e. 'made into an object'; not 'made objective'). Halliday ([1995] 2003(3): 419 original emphasis)

So, Halliday (2003(3): 22) argues that what he calls grammatical metaphor is a form of metaphor, but this claim does not seem to be based upon a very explicit account of what a metaphor consists in:

In calling this "metaphor" I am not indulging in any fancy neologism. I am simply extending the scope of the term from the lexis into the grammar, so that what is being "shifted" is not a specific word - a lexical item - but a word class; and I am looking at it from the perspective opposite to that which is traditionally adopted in the discussion of metaphor: instead of saying "this wording has been

shifted to express a different meaning" (i.e. same expression, different content), I am saying "this meaning has been expressed by a different wording" (same content, different expression). We can represent this as in Figures 4 and 5.

'produce of earth' ↓ fruit

'outcome of action' ↘ result

'entity' ↓ noun

'process' ↘ verb

Figure 4 Lexical metaphor   **Figure 5** Grammatical metaphor

The point is, however, that it is no longer the same meaning. If a process (congruently realized by a verb) is reconstrued in the grammar as a noun (which congruently realizes an entity), the result is a semantic hybrid, which combines the features of 'process' and of 'thing.'

Unfortunately, Halliday does not, here as elsewhere, really explain what is driving this shift of meaning which he takes to be indicative of a metaphor. However, clearly the decisive notions for him are those of 'congruency' and 'incongruency'. Taverniers (2003) provides a useful historical survey of the development of Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor. The notion of congruency can be understood in terms of contextual markedness or use, or in terms of formal markedness or economy of expression. Halliday does not ever seem to clearly distinguish between these two possible interpretations of the notion. That is, 'congruency' seems to share in the notorious ambiguity that plagues the notion of 'markedness'. Indeed, Halliday claims that congruence or incongruence

"is most often associated with *markedness* (Halliday 1976/1956, 1984, 1985) or *typicality* (Halliday 1984, 1985)" (Taverniers (2003: 28 original emphasis). As central as these notions may be, they are not clearly defined and so distinguished from one another. Halliday seems to use congruency in both ways to refer to expressions as both "one which can be regarded as typical – which will be selected in absence of any good reason for selecting another one" (Halliday 1984: 14) and as "that (structure) which would be arrived at by the shortest route" (Halliday 1985: 321), "the most straightforward coding of the meanings selected" (Halliday 1985: 321). This suggests that Halliday may not adequately distinguish between them. Either way, incongruency of expression would, for Halliday, seem to be the primary determinant of incongruency of content and so such shifts, although just why it should give rise to metaphorical shifts is not explained.

There is also the difficulty that the variation, on this view, arises in the *realisation* of the content of an expression which would seem to differ from what is described formally within the body of a system network. Yet, system networks would seem to describe many of the same relationships of variation in formal markedness and relative frequency of expressions. If the scope of grammatical metaphor is to be defined in contrast with the largely formal content within the body of a system network and this contrast breaks down, then the scope of application of the notion of grammatical metaphor would seem unclear. And indeed, as we shall see, it does not seem clear as to just when the notion of grammatical metaphor is applicable.

Likewise, note that, in the last extended quotation, Halliday is attempting to describe grammatical metaphor from a formal rather than a semantic point of view, in that it is understood as a variation in wording rather than meaning. This is comparatively unusual for a theory of metaphor. Subsequently, Halliday admits that there is a change in meaning, but what is distinctive of his account is the attempt to characterise metaphor formally.

This does raise the question as to whether it is a form of metaphor, while also

making it more difficult to understand. After all, Halliday claims that it is a metaphor because of the shift in meaning. But metaphor is far from the only possible source of variation in the meaning of expressions. For instance, I have suggested that the whole of the grammar is indexical and so is composed of shifters or token reflexive expressions whose meaning shifts on different occasions of use. Indeed, pronouns provide a perfectly mundane example of expressions whose meaning shifts without their usually being regarded as figurative in meaning. So, shifts in meaning alone would not seem to make such shifts metaphorical. Rather a metaphorical shift is a particular, if significant, range of types of shift of meaning and Halliday would seem to provide no basis for this shift in meaning being a metaphorical one.

Likewise, it seems difficult to claim merely less typical or more formally marked forms of grammatical expression are, therefore, somehow metaphorical. Nor does Halliday make it clear how either of these claims stand in any relation to some a actual account of metaphor. His position does not seem to be clearly supported by any of the major traditions in the theory of metaphor, which is not to say that these are unproblematic. Indeed, he does not seem to ever refer to any such theory or outline an alternative theory of metaphor.

I want to suggest that it is the shared object conception of language which sees shifts in meaning, indeed variation in general, as unusual, since it emphasises the sharedness and so stability rather than the expressivity and so relativity of linguistic expression. Moreover, for similar reasons, such a shared object conception may also not be the most appropriate basis for an account of metaphor, since it tends to be being inherently literalistic.

Being focused on the level or rank of the word or word group, Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor makes focal quite a different scale of organisation than the majority of his grammar and metafunctional functionalism. Although Halliday does not discuss motivation for this choice, it is, perhaps, best explained by the sort of common sense or folk ontology which can be called upon to form the basis for a representational semantics of the parts of speech. Particularly within

the context of this thesis, this change of scale is especially important because Halliday's claims regarding grammatical metaphor are one of the few places in which he attempts to provide a semantics of reference, which I want to turn to next.

6.4   Reference, the language of science and relativity

As I have already indicated, Halliday's semantics for the parts of speech is largely implicit. We can, however, attempt to piece together some indication of the relationship between the different parts of speech from Halliday's (2004c(5): 40, 43) claim that grammatical metaphor has a nominalising direction which forms the basis for the semantic drift that he attributes to it.

> The interesting question that arises is: is there a single principle that we can observe to lie behind these various shifts - a 'general drift' in the direction taken by all the varied types of grammatical metaphor? I think there is; it seems that we can discern a pattern [...] The general drift is, in fact, a drift towards the concrete, whereby each element is reconstrued in the guise of one that lies further towards the pole of stability and persistence through time. Thus, entities are more stable than qualities, and qualities than processes; while logical semantic relators like 'and', 'or', 'but', 'then', 'so', are the least stable - and hence the most complex - of all.

So, Halliday would seem to attribute the increasing permanence and stability of the content of expressions, transformed by grammatical metaphor, to the process of nominalisation. This would seem to be one of the few explicit indications as to what he takes the relationship between the parts of speech to consist in. However, he provides no reason or grounds for why grammatical metaphor should have this nominalising direction apart from a table of examples set out in a figure (ibid.: 41-42). After all, such shifts can also precede in a de-nominalising direction as, for instance, in the case of denominal verbs (for example, Clark and Clark 1979) and it is not clear why either direction should be privileged.

Nonetheless, clearly, the centrality of nominalisation makes reference central to the semantics of Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor.

Halliday's views on reference are drawn in a number of directions by quite diverse influences which do not ever seem to be explicitly reconciled with one another. Indeed, it would seem possible to identify two accounts of reference centring on the ideational and the textual metafunctions respectively. The first is comparatively language extrinsic or transcendentally oriented, the other is much more language immanent and discourse oriented. I want to consider the more extrinsic account which is associated with the ideational metafunction, which Halliday explicitly associates with his account of grammatical metaphor, first. I will then turn to the second, associated with the textual metafunction, which is much closer to the pragmatic conception of reference.

One important source of Halliday's views on reference would seem to be his views on the language of science. This interpretation of reference also provides some indication as to just why Halliday takes stability and persistence to be significant, which would seem to be motivated by the conception of science which informs his conception of linguistics. Although these are not especially linguistic matters, they would seem to be an important motivating factor for his views regarding nominal expression and reference, relative to the linguistic considerations, which I indicated when discussing his account of the parts of speech. Nonetheless, his views on the language of science seem to be one of the few places where he is explicit about the nature of reference. For this reason, Halliday's conception of science seems to assume a dominant role in justifying his conception of reference. Indeed, for Halliday (2004c(5): 216), reference would seem to be indicative of the very nature of science itself, since he takes it to aim to construct "an edifice of things" through nominal expression. He ([1995] 2003(3): 421) provides various reasons why he thinks that this should be the case:

> [T]he metaphoric reconstruction of the grammar is adapted to the

> evolution of forms of discourse embodying technical taxonomies and sequential argument (of which the present sentence is a typical example); it is useful for building theories. By the same token, it brings about a secondary semanticization, a semiotic reconstrual of human experience in which the flux [...] is not only analysed and "parsed out", as in the clausal grammar of our mother tongues, but made stable, bounded and determinate by the nominalizing grammar of systematic knowledge. Where the grammar of daily life presents the world as a mix of things and going-on, of order and disorder, stability and flux, the elaborated grammar of science reconstrues it as a world of things: it holds the world still, symbolically, while it is observed and measured - and also experimented with and theorized about. If this was the only grammar we had, of course, there would be nothing metaphorical about it; it would be the unmarked mode of categorizing experience. But it is not.

Indeed, scientific writing is taken to be a distinctive register whose development is dependent upon and developed through grammatical metaphor, which is required for a departure from common sense. Moreover, Halliday (1993: 132) admits that post-Newtonian conceptions of science are, then, likely require a different form of expression again.[1]

Given this understanding of science, it is comparatively difficult for Halliday's account to associate language with the facilitation of other activities. Reference in particular, is understood as an inherently static and so stable foundation to be built upon rather than an inherently relative and so variable source of co-ordination. Hence, he is inclined to identify the content of reference with its extra-linguistic objects.

Although, it is important to note that, as much as Halliday's views on grammatical metaphor tend to be dominated by his views on reference and, in turn, by his views on Newtonian science, it does not follow from this that reference is central to language in general for him. Rather, he tends to depreciate the significance of

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[1] See Goatly (1996) for a discussion of post-Newtonian conceptions of science in relation to Halliday's conception of grammatical metaphor

reference, so it is more likely that his emphasis upon reference derives from the predominance of reference in his account of *ideational* grammatical metaphor which, in turn, predominates in his discussions of grammatical metaphor in general. This may well explain why Halliday's account of the language of science is so significant for his views on reference, probably comprising the majority of the reasons he provides for it.

Another important source of influence on Halliday's understanding of reference in particular and of the ideational metafunction in general is Whorf, who would seem to have had a similar conception of reference, the development of which is also understood in terms of metaphor. Whorf (1964: 139) distinguishes between real and imaginary, between perceptual and metaphorical, uses of the parts of speech. He (1964: 139-40) identifies grammatical categorisation with patterns of habitual usage, one pattern being shared across both real and imaginary situations.

> We say 'ten men' and also 'ten days'. Ten men either are or could be objectively perceived as ten, ten in one group perception - ten men on a street corner, for instance. But 'ten days' cannot be objectively experienced. We experience only one day, today; the other nine (or even all ten) are something conjured up from memory or imagination. If 'ten days' be regarded as a group it must be as an "imaginary", mentally constructed group. Whence comes this mental pattern? [... F]rom the fact that our language confuses the two different situations, has but one pattern for both. (ibid.: 139)

Another complex form of nominal expression that Whorf (1964: 140-41) discusses are binomials combining individual nouns, denoting bodies with definite outlines, with mass nouns, denoting homogeneous continua without implied boundaries such as "a stick of wood", or "a cup of coffee", which are present in what he called Standard Average European (SAE) languages but not Hopi.

> Our language patterns often require us to name a physical thing by a binomial that splits the reference into a formless item plus a form.

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> Hopi is again different. It has a formally distinguished class of nouns. But this class contains no formal subclass of mass nouns. All nouns have an individual sense and both singular and plural forms. Nouns translating most nearly our mass nouns still refer to vague bodies or vaguely bounded extents. They imply indefiniteness, but not lack, of outline and size. In specific statements, 'water' means one certain mass or quantity of water, not what we call "the substance water". Generality of statement is conveyed through the verb or predicator, not the noun. Since nouns are individual already, they are not individualised by either type-bodies or names of containers, if there is no special need to emphasise shape or container. (Whorf 1965: 141)

So, Hopi has no formal class of mass nouns. All nouns have an individual sense, so "water" always means a certain mass or body of water. Whorf would seem to have taken his model for nominal expression from this more concrete form of reference, declaring other forms to be imaginary or metaphorical. Halliday's account of reference seems strikingly similar to Whorf's, in taking what could be argued to be more elaborated forms of expression to be somehow figurative.

By contrast, as we have seen, pragmatism has a more complex conception of relativity. As a relativistic philosophical movement, it aims to provide a conception of of relativity in general and so of linguistic relativity in particular, understood in a practical rather than in its more traditional, although less defensible, epistemic guise (Margolis 1991). In doing so it distinguishes the relativity arising from the internal, purposive organisation of activity itself from that arising from the more arbitrary or contingent differences arising from the historical context or background of different societies and languages. As we have seen, a pragmatic conception of reference needs to be understood in terms of the interdependence of these two sources of relativity, the one internal and reflexive, the other, external and given.

Purposiveness and so emergence applies not just to individuals, but also to the broader societies which they form. For, as we have seen, for Whitehead, strictly

speaking, any enduring individual has to be understood (in a more general, technical sense) as a 'society' of related momentary events or occasions that are the final concrete actualities. Enduring societies are therefore more abstract than the individual, fleeting and so transitory events that make them up. For this reason, Whorf's relativism seems comparatively crude because it contrasts differing societies at different phases or stages of their development and so would seem to inevitably confuse differences arising from relativity as an immediate and so situated phenomenon with those arising from differing degrees and paths or trajectories of historical development. In particular, Whorf would seem to implicitly privilege the language of the Hopi, in taking its practices in the use of nominal expressions to be a standard against which others can be judged in his comparisons without making a case for why this should be the case. Given the extent of the differences, both between the societies and the languages involved, relativity, in Whorf's sense, is therefore comparatively easy to demonstrate. But, by the same token, this means that he ends up advancing a comparatively crude conception of relativity that therefore weighs the scales in its favour and Halliday, in following him, has seemingly done likewise.

Halliday's account of nominal expression is, like Whorf's, in that it privileges what might be argued to be comparatively fundamental or representational forms of nominal expression. The standard average European (SAE) languages, on this view, rather than being recognised to be embedded in comparatively large, technologically sophisticated societies, supporting an extensive division of labour, are simply awash with metaphors. On the present pragmatic view, this is would seem to be an artefact of privileging a more basic, representational conception of reference, something that neither Whorf nor Halliday attempt to justify. That is, for the pragmatist, SAE languages would seem to provide abundant evidence against such narrower, representational conceptions of nominal expression and reference.

As a non-reductive theory, the pragmatic account seeks to incorporate, although also to distinguish, not only the situated and so comparatively immediate rel-

ativity of the content of indexical and so grammatical expression but also the, by contrast, comparatively arbitrary features which arise from the given, historical context and so background out of which particular languages emerge. By recognising the context and so path dependence of the development of languages, it aims to give recognition not just to a practical relativism underlying the immediate operation of the grammar but also to the potentially much more arbitrary historical backdrop which provides the setting for expressive activity. Comparing the languages of societies in different phases of development would therefore seem likely to frustrate the identification of more subtle forms of relativity, characterising indexical and so grammatical expression, which I have argued are intrinsic to the operation of language itself. These are a product of the significance of the role of the language user and so give rise to a subjective or user centred conception of relativity, which has traditionally been discounted due to the comparatively abstract and impersonal nature of linguistic theories of language.

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The position taken toward linguistic change and development adopted is therefore much closer to the likewise admittedly contentious, although clearly functional, position of Jespersen (1949). This is best understood in terms of its broader philosophical underpinning in philosophies with an emphasis upon be-

coming, growth and creativity. It is, therefore, inclined to attempt to understand linguistic change in developmental terms, although one which aims to offer more than merely a "shallow optimism and an unrealistic faith in inevitable progress". (Grange 1970: 2)

6.5   Reference and discourse

Halliday also has a more textual conception of reference which is quite different from his ideational conception that I have been reviewing thus far. This is understood in terms of cohesive or (ana)phoric relationships of dependency.

> Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUP-POSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text. (Halliday and Hasan 1978: 4)

Although this is clearly closer to the pragmatic account of reference, there remain clear differences between the two accounts. We can better understand how Halliday's discourse conception of reference relates to the pragmatic one by looking at Halliday's understanding of the sort of order that we find in a discourse or text. For Halliday and Hasan (1976: 7), a text is defined by the texture within it, which is, in part, formed by cohesive relationships.

> A text, as we have said, is not a structural unit; and cohesion, in the sense in which we are using the term, is not a structural relation. Whatever relation there is among the parts of a text - the sentences, or paragraphs, or turns in a dialogue - it is not the same as structure in the usual sense, the relation which links the parts of a sentence or a clause.
>
> [. . .]

> In other words, a text typically extends beyond the range of structural relations, as these are normally conceived of. But texts cohere; so cohesion within a text – texture - depends on something other than structure. There are certain specifically text-forming relations which cannot be accounted for in terms of constituent structure; they are properties of the text as such, and not of any structural unit such as a clause or sentence. Our use of the term COHESION refers specifically to these non-structural text-forming relations. They are, as we have suggested, semantic relations, and the text is a semantic unit.

Although Halliday sees a text and so cohesive relations as extending beyond structural relationships, he nonetheless recognises the existence of both types of organisation on both scales of organisation.

> Since cohesive relations are not concerned with structure, they may be found just as well within a sentence as between sentences. They attract less notice within a sentence, because of the cohesive strength of grammatical structure; since the sentence hangs together already, the cohesion is not needed in order to make it hang together. But the cohesive relations are there all the same.

> Cohesive relations have in principle nothing to do with sentence boundaries. Cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it. This other element is also to be found in the text [...]; but its location in the text is in no way determined by the grammatical structure. The two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, may be structurally related to each other, or they may not; it makes no difference to the meaning of the cohesive relation. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 7-8)

Here, we can see that these two types of order are both present. However, Halliday shows no real interest in their interaction.

> [C]ohesion is not, strictly speaking, a relation 'above the sentence'. It is a relation to which the sentence, or any other form of gram-

> matical structure, is simply irrelevant. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 9)

And although he also claims that both types of order are present within the clause, he also clearly tends to treat them as being associated with different scales of organisation, cohesion with relationships above the clause, structure with relationships within the clause. For, as we have seen, Halliday makes no real reference to cohesive relationships in his grammar of the clause, as we saw in his neglect of the morphological features of grammatical Subject in his account of it (see page 221).

Since the pragmatic accounts of both discourse and reference are essentially concerned with the coordination of the interplay between two different types of extensive order, as productive of significance, they differ from Halliday's in this respect. This accounts for the complexity of reference on this view. The pragmatic account resolves the conflict we find between Halliday's two different understandings of reference by rejecting his ideational conception of reference and with it the claim that nominal expression has a stable content. Nor is reference entirely dependent upon its context of occurrence. That is, it charts a middle course that requires that reference have an expressive, mediating role.

For the pragmatist, reference is essentially complex and variable. This is particularly central to the way in which the grammar of a language as a whole is organised around it, forming the basis for the topics which develop through a discourse. These are unitary phenomena since the organisation of the grammar just is the organisation of discourse. Both are grounded in the inherent variability of significance and so of the content of reference as the primary vehicle for the expression of significance internal to a discourse. Grammatical expression centres on the expression of significance and so of individuality, whereas, for Halliday, given his views concerning the content of the grammar and the lexicon respectively, there is only generality or particularity.

The existence of two different accounts of reference raises the question of how Halliday's accounts can be reconciled with one another. For, surely, anaphoric or cohesive reference is essentially indexical, as the pragmatic account takes all reference to be. If Halliday was to treat them as two different cases of dependence, one endophoric the other exophoric, how is he to explain the stability he claims for reference. If reference is essentially stable, then what is the basis for different items being subsequently taken up as the content of referring expressions standing in anaphoric relationships? That is, how can it be that the same anaphoric expression can have different contents on different occasions of use, and yet this content be stable? Relatedly, how is the selectivity of reference to be explained? These are issues which, although central to how a language is understood to function, Halliday never seems to discuss.

Indeed, a number of Halliday's claims would seem to, if anything, run contrary to his explicitly stated position on the semantics of grammatical metaphor and so nominal expression. For instance, as against, nominal expression being more stable and determinate than other types of expression, Halliday argues that grammatical metaphors (that is, on his view, nominalisations) involve a loss of information, and so, one would presume, of determinacy, independent of a context. For example, Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 270) claim that:

> [In grammatical metaphor, t]here is a loss of experiential meaning, since the configurational relations are implicit and so are many of the semantic features of the elements (e.g. *engine failure : an engine / engines // the engine / the engines; failed / fail / will fail* &c.)

Moreover, elsewhere, they (1999: 235) claim that:

> We have also seen that there is a derivational priority [of the congruent relative to the incongruent] because of the loss of information: given *she announced that she was accepting* we can derive *the announcement of her acceptance*, but given *the announcement of her acceptance* we do not know who made the announcement, she or

someone else ('they'); whether she had accepted, was accepting or would accept; or whether it was a case not of her accepting but of her being accepted – twelve possible rewordings in all.

For the present pragmatic account, on the other hand, this selectivity is not accidental, being a product of the greater or lesser formal economy of nominal expression. This enhances the capacity of language users to reflexively coordinate and thereby organise and direct their their own discourse, because it allows language users themselves to determine the significance of items within their discourse as, in large part, a product of their own expressive activity. This forms the basis for the need to recognise the discourse context of all nominal expression, from which follows the essential instability of the content of such expressions. By contrast, I want to argue that the fragmentation of Halliday's account of reference into two distinct theories anticipates the fragmentation that we find in his account of discourse which I will address in Chapter Seven.

This difference between the two different accounts of reference also illuminates some of the differences between Halliday's and the pragmatic conception of the sign. Halliday's claims provide us with at least some idea as to the relationship between the two, the formal and the semantic, sides of his theory of grammatical metaphor. In particular, since he claims that grammatical metaphor is a process of nominalisation, he would seem to have to argue that nominal expressions are more incongruent or formally marked. For, the semantic side of his theory claims that they are the more metaphorical and he associates increased metaphoricality with increasingly incongruent expressions and so increased formal markedness or atypicality.

What makes this claim about the formal economy of nominal expressions particularly significant is that the pragmatic position, as we have seen, adopts a rather more subtle, since more complex, position. For the pragmatist, nominal expressions are the most formally economical because, as I have explained, they are the most complex and situationally determined part of speech. Now, this is the exact opposite of Halliday's apparent position. However, this pragmatic

position needs to be qualified somewhat. For, it is complicated by the fact that derivational nominalisations, such as we find in the nominalisation of "fail" to "failure", involve morphological additions and so decreased formal economy of expression. But, as we have also seen, the pragmatic position with respect to nominal expression is that it is an inherently complex form of expression, that it is not simply distinguished morphologically, involving variations in formal economy, but is inherently morpho-syntactic, also being distinguished by variations in the relative positions of expressions. As a consequence, there is no simple, general relationship between form and content, but rather an inherently complex, composite one. The telos of linguistic change on this view is, in general, towards increasingly heterogeneous or mixed forms of expression (Werner 1987).

This suggests that a fundamental problem for Halliday's claims regarding grammatical metaphor, indeed one which reoccurs throughout his grammar, is the presupposition that grammatical content mirrors or is proportional to the form of grammatical expression. Yet there is no reason why this should necessarily be the case in the case of complex situated forms of expression characterising the grammars of languages. Moreover, he lacks a general account of word order. As a consequence, his conception is simply too sweeping to be able to address the complex, situated, expressive relationships which can be argued to underpin nominal expression in particular but also grammatical expression in general.

A pragmatic account, by contrast, rejects this comparatively proportional relationship between the form and content of signs. Whereas Halliday tends to privilege language as a system independent of its users, a pragmatic account tends to subordinate language to the purposes and activities of its users. The language user is a self-organising, society or unity of acts and language, to the extent that it is also an activity, comes to share this same organisation. Ultimately, this must lead to reject and, indeed, reverse Halliday's implicit presupposition that a simpler form implies a simpler content and, so, that a complex form implies a complex content.

A central message of the pragmatic account is that the relationship between form and content is more complicated than this, since the process of communication is expressive and so cannot be based upon a simple analogy or mirroring of the one in the other. While it might be applicable to the more absolute content conveyed by the lexicon, the primary content of the grammar is valuational and so relative. Once the content is recognised to be both context and purpose dependent any simple, general relationships are likely to break down.

On this pragmatic view, the least formally economical forms of expression will be the most variable in meaning, since they have the least form to encode and so tie their meaning down. This means that, even if nominal expressions have a simpler form, they can still have a more complex content or meaning, since they must be interpreted indexically and so in a more complex and situated way. Hence, on this view, the economy of expression which typically characterises grammatical expression in general and nominal expression in particular does not imply that the grammar of a language expresses a simple, general or uniform content but quite the opposite. This is also borne out by the pragmatic account's emphasis on the inherent variability of such content. The pragmatic position on both reference and so grammatical metaphor is, therefore, in its details, more complex and subtle than Halliday's position.

6.6 Semantic juncture

Up until this point, I have only discussed the semantics that Halliday attributes to grammatical metaphor in terms of the process of nominalisation, which suggests an increasingly nominal meaning. But Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 271) also attribute to grammatical metaphor what they call 'semantic juncture' which they explain as follows:

> Thus grammatical metaphor is a means of having things both ways.
> An element that is transcategorized loses its original status because
> of the nature of the semantic feature(s) with which it comes to be

> combined (e.g. 'like ...' is a quality; so when we say *mousy* 'like a mouse' this is *only* a quality — it has none of the thing-ness of the original mouse). A[n] element that is metaphorized does not lose its original status. Its construction is not triggered by its being associated with any new semantic feature. If it *has* a new semantic feature this is as a result of the metaphorizing process. So *failure* is both process and thing: it is a process construed as a thing (or rather, a phenomenon construed as a process and reconstrued as a thing); its initial status as process remains, but because it has been nominalized, and the prototypical meaning of a noun is a thing, it also acquires a semantic status as something that *participates* in processes [...]. It has become a 'junctional' construct, combining two of the basic properties that the grammar evolved as it grew into a theory of experience. (original emphasis)

So, we are told that *failure* is both a process and a thing. But, as I have already suggested, Halliday has said so little about the content of the parts of speech, for instance, what it means for something to be a 'thing', that it is far from clear what this means. And even if we did know what the individual parts of speech meant, it is even less clear as to what their conjunction might mean.

This compounding of meaning seems indicative of a representational semantics, since it takes the content of expressions which derives from their parts of speech to be a given rather than inherently variable and so negotiable.[2] For, Halliday seems to take this to be a representational use of language. This would seem to be the point of focusing upon the parts of speech. His semantics of the parts of speech, as we have seen, is not a very explicit one, but, rather seems to be an implicitly common sense, representational one. But such a common sense semantics would seem to break down almost immediately once the notion of grammatical metaphor is introduced, since it hardly exists as a representational notion. Moreover, this treatment of the content of expressions as given also bears out how this semantics of grammatical metaphor tends to centre on individual

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[2] See, for instance, my earlier discussion of nominalisation. See page 172.

expressions, in spite of Halliday and Matthiessen's (1999: 233, 250-5) claim that grammatical metaphors come in syndromes, or groups of related variations.

Metaphor is, we are told, about extravagantly, having one's cake and eating it. But it is not clear what the costs or benefits are. Indeed, for many, perhaps the majority, of grammatical notions, Halliday claims that there is no similar common sense understanding which can be attributed to them such as that he attempts to attribute to the parts of speech. Indeed, he ([1984a] 2002a(1): 307) seems quite content to view these as simply 'ineffable' for semantic analysis. I will not have space here to discuss Halliday's arguments for this.

The pragmatic response to these difficulties is, as we have seen, to embrace a non-representational semantics centred on an understanding of action and so variation. The grammar stands in a hierarchical relationship to the lexicon such that it selects certain lexical expressions and so their contents for expression and so emphasis, thereby grading the lexicon for its significance within particular contexts. Nominalisation, in particular, allows certain lexical expressions and so their contents, to be promoted in significance and so to be come more topical and so central within and to the direction of the discourse. This selectivity and grading for significance is inherently transitory and so variable, expressive of the immediate direction of the discourse. Moreover, the compositional and cumulative nature of this significance means that it, and so the direction of a discourse, can be reflexively negotiated between its participants. The parts of speech are then, on this view, not representational but rather pragmatic in function.

Like Halliday, I have focused upon ideational grammatical metaphors. Interpersonal grammatical metaphors, such as indirect speech acts, have, by contrast, received comparatively little attention, so I have not considered them here. Moreover, yet again, the textual metafunction is anomalous in that there are no textual grammatical metaphors, although Halliday does not seem to discuss this, let alone provide any explanation for why this should be the case. Indeed, the absence of textual grammatical metaphors would seem to remove the middle ground between these two polar types of grammatical metaphor, raising ques-

tions about how they are related to one another or form a unitary phenomenon. It also tends to confirm that, for Halliday, grammatical metaphor does not perform an immanent or reflexive role within language itself. Rather, he tends to attribute such grammatical variation to variation in the extrinsic content of expressions, thereby multiplying what he takes to be their extrinsic content. That is, he makes no attempt to address it more reflexively, as arising from variation within the process of communication itself and so within the intrinsic, qualitative or coordinative aspect of communication. As such, grammatical metaphor makes comparatively little contribution to how language itself is organised and so to the organisation of discourse.

6.7   Conclusion

The plasticity and multiplicity of the forms of expression that the grammar of a natural language can take poses a major challenge to any theory of language. It could be argued that this is particularly the case for one based upon a conception of language as a shared object, since, by its very nature, not intrinsically designed to deal with variation. Halliday counters this with three strands or threads of meaning running throughout the clause and his conception of grammatical metaphor.

The account of grammatical metaphor would, again, seem to be driven more by formal than by semantic concerns. Halliday's semantics of grammatical metaphor would seem to derive from his semantics of the parts of speech which would again seem to have both comparatively formal origins and be reliant upon an implicit proportionality between grammatical form and content. I have mainly focused on the success or otherwise of Halliday's attempt to integrate these two sides of his account of grammatical metaphor. I have argued that this attempt to bridge the gap between content and form, even in spite of the accompanying narrowing of focus, does not seem successful. In this way, the problem of unity between the two sides of Halliday's account seems to recur. Indeed,

he provides comparatively little explicit discussion of the relationship between meaning and form in grammatical metaphor.

Halliday's account of grammatical metaphor is indirectly significant particularly for the light that it sheds on his conceptions of not only the parts of speech but especially of reference which is an important point of contrast between these two types of functionalism. And while Halliday's attempt to develop a semantics for grammatical metaphor encourages him to be more explicit about the content of nominal expression, it remains a feature of his semantics in general that it remains comparatively implicit. Indeed, he would seem to entertain two different conceptions of reference, the one, ideational and so representational, figuring prominently in his account of ideational grammatical metaphor, the other, discourse oriented, forming part of the textual metafunction. Clearly the latter, discourse oriented conception of reference is much closer to the, likewise discourse oriented, pragmatic conception of reference in general that I have outlined. But it is also the much less developed of Halliday's two conceptions, particularly in respect to its semantics. Presumably, it could not have the same semantics as his, more representational, ideational account. Unfortunately, Halliday does not seem to discuss this simultaneous deployment two different conceptions of reference which would seem to be one of the more striking instances of the lack of a consistent relationship between expression and content within Halliday's grammar. This again suggests that it is ultimately a sort of deep grammar, whereas, as we have also seen, the pragmatic emphasis is more superficial. In this way, it is again the textual metafunction which provides the point of greatest contact between the two conceptions and yet it is the point at which Halliday's conception is at its least explicit.

In the next chapter, due to limitations of space, I will only be able to provide a comparatively brief, pragmatic response to the sort of grammatical variations Halliday has called grammatical metaphor. This is, in part, because such grammatical variation within the pragmatic account falls within a much broader and so ambitious conception of grammatical compositionality. However, it should

become apparent that it is, like the account of reference that is central to it, much more concerned with the organisation of the language itself and so a reflexive conception of discourse than Halliday's is.

Chapter 7

A pragmatic account of grammatical variation

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I want to develop a pragmatic conception of the grammatical construction, building upon the essential interdependence of grammatical expression that arises out of this more perspectival standpoint on the content communicated by the grammar of a language. In particular, I will, attempt to outline a pragmatic account of a grammatical variation. This involves developing the view that discourse is essentially perspectival and so is better understood in terms of valuational rather than the categorical notions typically used to understand a grammar.

I want to explore these differences in relation to some specific construction types, the grammatical voices in particular. These constructions involve grammatical processes that alternatively promote lexical items into or demote them from subject positions such as the Theme and grammatical Subject. On the pragmatic view, these all function to introduce variations in the significance of the lexical items involved, thereby introducing variations in their relative significance and type of topicality. Such constructions, therefore, provide a broader context in

which the expressivity of the subject notions can be further explicated particularly in terms of their interdependence with other grammatical notions.

7.2   Grammatical variation as re-weighting

The grammar concerns the coordination of linguistic activities which is an essentially local process. That is, coordination is achieved through the expression of values which are inherently variable and so adaptable to particular local contexts in which the coordination occurs. So, subjective expression cannot be understood independently of the conditions under which it occurs. It is therefore not something which is self-contained but rather essentially interdependent with associated linguistic acts and its broader surroundings. Individual acts of expression introduce a modulation or adjustment to the stream of significance carried over from the context which precede them. Such valuations and the salient focal points they give rise to are also partially the product of interpretation and so involve choices concerning what is specifically attended to and thereby granted significance. This means that the elements coordinated or harmonised within a perspective and their associated valuational weightings, which constitute the organisational basis for a perspective, can always be re-weighted. Grammatical expression conveys such a grading or weighting of the significance of the more objective features of a setting, leading to their inclusion or exclusion, allowing those selected to be incorporated into the unity of a finite act of expression. Changes in the grammatical guises and so weights that lexical items appear under can therefore to be thought of in terms of changes of perspective or vantage point. Different intentions, associated with different possible gradings of the content and setting, introduce the requirement for different weightings or intrinsic valuations as communicated by grammatical expressions of the comparatively objective content communicated by, for instance, lexical expressions.

What grammatical variation allows is a re-weighting of the relative significance of lexical items through variations in grammatical expression. In so doing, it

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allows the harmonious incorporation of lexical expressions into expressive unities, expressive of different perspectives or vantage points of the participant's expressing them. It is the flexibility, adaptability and subjective relativity of the grammar which allows it to unify the comparatively objective and inherently diverse content of the lexicon, drawn from both sides of nature, into the expression of a unified standpoint productive of significance. The content of the lexicon is adapted by being graded for significance by the grammatical guises under which it occurs. The finitude of expression means that there must always be some grammatical and so valuational grading for significance through which certain expressions are selected for incorporation while others are excluded. But that there are, for instance, a range of subject notions means that any lexical content can potentially appear under a range of different grammatical guises and so different degrees and types of gradations of significance. These different possible gradations form the basis for the organisation of perspectives directed at the comparatively objective conditions which are expressed by the lexicon and make up the broader given context which underpin the realistic aspect of this conception of language.

Given the pervasive interdependence that underpins valuations, individual expressions and so parts of speech need to be understood in an inherently situated way within the broader environment provided by a discourse. As Halliday has rightly observed, what he calls grammatical metaphors come in syndromes or collections of related variations. I have suggested that the comparatively representational conception of reference that he associates with grammatical metaphor seems rather unhelpful in this respect. On the other hand, I want to suggest that a more reflexive conception of reference facilitates articulating precisely the interdependence and relativity of such syndromes of related variations in both the form and the content of grammatical expressions. That is, grammatical metaphor, like grammatical expression in general, does not just concern the semantics of individual expressions but rather the relationships between them. It concerns the re-weighting of items within perspectives that are

inherently extensive, incorporating a field or web of interdependent elements. A clause, on this view, conveys a type of perspective which, as we have seen, is not so much understood as a mere representation of a setting as a course of concerted action within it. Moreover, grammatical analysis, therefore, cannot simply concern the relationships between the different parts of speech in the abstract but must concern their relationships as embedded within constructions and discourses. That is, it involves an essentially situated conception of their content, in which the parts of speech cannot be understood in isolation from one another. It is through these grammatical relationships that the content of the individual elements within an expression are inter-defined and so related to one another. And when generalised, this suggests a way of understanding the internal organisation of constructions and their content in similar terms. If the parts of speech express valuations and so cannot be understood independently of, but, rather, only as essentially related to one another, this allows the development of an account of grammatical compositionality which can, in turn, form the basis for a pragmatic account of grammatical constructions.

Being comparatively abstract, positions within constructions place minimal restrictions on just what is to bear the values generated. That is, such abstract structures allow a great deal of freedom of expression since they are largely independent of the expressions which occupy them. Since their contribution is the more independent of the context, syntactic mechanisms are the more effective means of generating new values and so of raising items which are not already prominent into prominence or foregrounding them. As we shall see, the comparative mobility of the abstract parts of speech, for instance, adjectives and adverbs allows them to, likewise, have their significance varied in this way. This declining profile, at the rank of clause, forms the basis for a continuity, on the pragmatic view, not only between the different types of subject notions that I have already discussed, but also between subjects and objects (or complements). Again, this is a continuity of valuation. Objects, since they follow the verbal group, are comparatively backgrounded relative to the subject notions

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which comprise the foreground of the clause. Nonetheless, within this contrast between foregrounded and backgrounded lexical items, just as there are different types of subject, there are also different types of object graded in terms of their significance by their sequential order of appearance.

I now want to consider in some detail one class of grammatical constructions: the grammatical voices. Since these particularly concern variation in the positions of nominal expressions, this will allow a continuation of the focus on reference and so on the expressive or central function. I will first outline the basic components of simple clauses and their roles within them before outlining three types of expressive variation or transformation associated with the three functions. These different types of variation are typically combined in what might be understood as variations from the more basic construction types which progressively render the form of a construction as a whole more complex. This approach does, however, not impute derivations in a deep transformational sense. Rather, in keeping with its emphasis upon the superficiality of the grammar, it is concerned with variations in the surface organisation of the grammar which, as expressive, is taken to be expressive of the content which can be extracted from it. What requires that the analysis ultimately be deeper than this is both the situatedness of expression and the greater depth of the content coordinated by the grammar. Moreover, I want to argue, that the grammatical processes and the constructions embodying them cannot be understood reductively in terms of one type of grammatical variation alone, since each type of expressive variation has to be understood in relation to the others, the different types of variation occurring jointly and so essentially in relation to one another.

There will be no scope for the consideration of very complex constructions here, since it will become apparent that even the seemingly simplest of constructions stand in quite complex and subtle relationships to related constructions and to their contexts of occurrence. These relationships I want to argue can be motivated by the compositionality of expression and the expressive constraints under which grammatical expression occurs. Much of this arises from the need

for two, hierarchically related, levels of organisation within constructions, given the need to express both comparatively expressive and so evaluative or subjectively relative content along with the more objective content that is the object of such valuations. That is, while the grammatical processes or transformations involved in the voices allow certain nominal groups or expressions to be promoted or foregrounded into subject positions while others are demoted and so backgrounded, it remains the case that, throughout, just what is being revalued by these processes needs to remain identifiable. Indeed, as we shall see, the pragmatic account makes much of the continuity between subjects and objects or complements and the need for them to remain re-identifiable across the grammatical guises that any given content may recur under.

What is particularly significant in such constructions are, as I have already suggested, variations in the order in which expressions are presented, which I want to argue is the principle means for foregrounding and backgrounding them. I want to argue that much of the overt expressivity of constructions, in English at least, arises from variations in the order in which expressions are presented. This depends upon the existence of a comparatively abstract, and so context independent, profile or cycle of significance which declines from a high point at the beginning of the clause which I discussed earlier (see page 210). I have already provided a number of grounds for this which are best understood as arguments for the prominence of the Theme, which I discussed earlier (see page 209). The comparative generality of these reasons suggests that they support an initial prominence from which significance decays over a whole range of scales of linguistic organisation. Nonetheless, this is not a universal, most obviously for languages in which word order is less significant than in English.

Syntactic structures, since they concern the arrangement of words and phrases, are more extensive than the units of expression which make them up. The initial prominence of the Theme means that it projects a declining profile of importance, the regular recurrence of which establishes a regular rhythm or cycle of variations in significance. Since significance is communicated on all scales or

ranks of organisation, this is not exclusively a feature of any particular scale of organisation. So there are likely to be a number of cycles of different frequencies concurrently present relating to different although inter-related coordination problems on different scales of organisation. However, here I shall only concern myself with the clause. On account of this regular rhythm, the incidence of importance is, within limits, inferable from the relative positions of expressions. This cycle comprises the more extensive and so abstract or ideal aspect of the expression of intrinsic value, which occurs in virtue of the relative positions of lexical items.

It is the constancy of this declining expressive profile that allows the construction or projection of values on to lexical items by varying their order of presentation within it. That is, given the comparative abstractness of the subject notions, variations in voice, which reorder the sequence in which expressions are presented, allow the valuations to be attributed to lexical items to be varied comparatively freely.

However, as we have seen, this is not the only source of values appropriate to the grammatical interpretation expressions within a stream of discourse, since the discourse context is also a source of values that are more conformal or context dependent. These are much more cumulative, since they rely upon the recurrence of content. Any interpretation, therefore, involves the coordinated intersection of two streams of significance. Given this, the discourse context in which any construction occurs clearly has an important role in its use. Indeed, as I have emphasised, on this view, grammatical processes and the determination of reference are intimately related. However, I will only be able to discuss constructions independently of the discourse context in which they occur and so primarily in terms of their capacity to comparatively freely generate or project valuations.

I therefore want to explore the way that these characterisations are borne out by the behaviour of a range of constructions, beginning with comparatively simple constructions before progressing to increasingly complex constructions. As we saw in the case of the subject notions, they become more complex and so in-

teresting when we are able to recognise a number of different types of object present at once. As more and different types of object notions are introduced, issues concerning the identification and coordination of the objects involved develop. I want to argue that these grammatical processes raise issues of how objects and subjects are re-identified across different construction types which in turn shape the organisation of those constructions and the behaviour of expressions within them.

I now want to introduce some distinctions relating to the number and types of objects or complements that we find in constructions. The simplest constructions, intransitive constructions, as in (13), do not require an object at all, although more transitive verbs can also assume an intransitive form as in (14). The simplest construction with an object, on the other hand, is what I shall call the single object construction, as in (15).

(13)   The duke laughed.   (intransitive)

(14)   The duke gave.   (intransitive)

(15)   The duke gave this teapot.   (single object)
                                         OO

In the process, I want to use a notation introduced by Hudson (1992) in an excellent discussion of double object constructions which I will draw upon extensively in the following analysis. In particular, it will be convenient to compare the last two constructions by employing the notation OO to refer to the object of the single object construction, and O1 and O2 to refer to the first and second objects, respectively, of the internal dative construction (16) in the first double object construction that we will be considering.

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(16)   The duke gave my aunt this teapot.   (internal dative)
                               O1   O2

What is particularly interesting about the internal dative is that it differs from the single object construction not only in terms of the number of objects but also their order, since the OO of the single object construction has more in common with O2 than O1, since both OO and O2 tend to share the same semantic role, usually that of an inanimate object which is in large part specified by the meaning of the verb. This has a bearing on two competing views concerning the nature of the relationship between the grammatical objects. The one somewhat more traditional analysis which has subsequently been favoured by British linguists (such as Huddleston, Quirk et al. and Hudson himself) associates O2 with the OO of single object constructions while dissociating it from O1. The other tradition, associated with transformational grammar, tends to associate O1 with the OO while dissociating O2 from these. However, Hudson (1992) argues that the evidence, for instance, from syntactic transformations, overwhelmingly favours the former, more traditional position with the sole exception of the passive construction in which O1 behaves like the OO. Hudson (1992: 257-264) presents an extended discussion of eleven items of evidence in support of these claims summarised in Table 7.1 on the next page.

Even if this is the case, it still leaves open significant questions as to just why the variation in the order of the objects occurs and as to just why the passive construction is so exceptional, which I shall attempt to address shortly. The essential point for now is that the second object is not simply added to the end of the single object construction, that is, in the second object position, but rather follows immediately after the verb. To preserve the same ordering as the single object construction when two objects are present, a less formally economical construction has to be used, the external dative, as in (17). In this construction, one of the objects, the second or O1, is marked by a preposition.

	PROPERTY	O1	O2	OO
(i)	X passivizes easily	+	–	+
(ii)	X extracts easily [1]	–	+	+
(iii)	X can follow a particle[2]	–	+	+
(iv)	X can be moved by Heavy-NP Shift[3]	–	+	+
(v)	X is accusative in a true case system[4]	–	+	+
(vi)	X must be subcategorized for[5]	–	+	+
(vii)	X has same semantic role as OO	–	+	+
(viii)	X is normally nonhuman	–	+	+
(ix)	V + X may constitute an idiom[6]	–	+	+
(x)	X = extractee of infinitival[7]	–	+	+
(xi)	X controls a depictive predicate[8]	–	+	+

[1] We will discuss extraction shortly.

[1] E.g.: Some people reject:
"The secretary sent out [the stockholders]$_1$ [a schedule]$_2$".

[2] Heavy-NP shift is the positioning of a grammaticaly complex noun phrase to the right of its canonical position.

[3] In closely related languages, such as German, that still have an overt case system.

[4] That is, is lexically specified in a verb's valency (that is, is one of its arguments).

[5] E.g. "Lend O1 a hand" where O1 is free to be any noun phrase and "Kick the bucket" (V + OO).

[6] E.g. "*He gave [her]$_1$ [it]$_2$ [to cheer # up]" where "#" indicates the object missing from the infinitive.

[7] In "The nurse gave [John]$_1$ [the medicine]$_2$ sick" O1 can't control the depictive predicate. In "John gave [Mary]$_1$ [the meat]$_2$ raw" O2 can control the depictive predicate.

Table 7.1: Comparison among O1, O2, and OO

(17)   The duke gave this teapot to my aunt.   (external dative)
                         O2   O1

The prepositionally marked object in this construction occupies the final position and is optional. When this final, marked object is absent from the external dative,

it can be seen to be identical with the single object construction (18).

(18)   The duke gave this teapot.   (single object)
                          OO

On the present pragmatic view, such variations in expression are in large part
to be understood as introducing variations in the distribution of intrinsic val-
ues within a clause, since nominal expressions are the primary loci of intrinsic
values that are, in part, a function of the relative order and so positions of expres-
sions. Moreover, such variations of this type are not entirely neutral or equiva-
lent, since they relate constructions with differing degrees of formal economy of
expression.

On this view, it is the main verb which expresses the most conformal activity
within the content of the clause. In doing so, it tends to define the probability
that certain types of relata will occur within the clause. In keeping with this, it is
the most conventional or basic of the part of speech. That is, there will be vari-
ous related lexical verbal expressions (that is, main verbs) each of which carries
its own distribution or prioritisation of the significance of the associated relata.
Conventionally associated with a given verb is not just relata which have differ-
ing probabilities of occurring with a given verb but also, since these relata are,
as we have seen, also the main centres of intrinsic importance within a clause, a
particular distribution of importance is also intrinsic or internal to the meaning
of a verb.

It is this distribution of intrinsic importance that is asymmetric, since it pro-
vides a ranking or hierarchy of significance amongst the potential relata, that
determines which particular relatum will, for instance, be the subject and so the
unmarked order of the relata associated with the verb in question. That is, the
relatum that carries the most intrinsic importance, on account of being related
to the verb as indicative of a particular conformal aspect of an activity, will be
the conventional subject for that verb. By the unmarked order, I mean the most

formally economical one in the sense that it does not need to be distinguished by formal additions to the clause.

It is also often the case that a verb takes a particular dependent object or complement, which is also comparatively internal to its meaning. So, for instance, one sings a song. The range of agents and recipients of a particular verb is rarely as restricted as that of the dependent object. So there are at least two distinct types of complement or object, one the more dependent, the other, the more independent. We can therefore distinguish different types of complement or object in much the same way as we can distinguish different types of subject as comparatively dependent (grammatical Subject) or independent (Actor).

As we have seen, the word order of English single and double object constructions takes a somewhat unexpected form and so is difficult to explain. Indeed, not only is the order of the objects or complements difficult to explain in relation to the single object construction, it is also difficult to explain in terms of their relationship to the main verb (that is semantically), since it is also the case that the object which is more closely tied to the verb (indeed, more closely than the Subject) is the O2 rather than the O1 in spite of the fact that the word order suggests otherwise (Hudson 1992: 262). So, in Peircean terms, it is difficult to explain this order either iconically or indexically (that is, in terms of contiguity)[1].

Hudson draws from this the (somewhat traditional) conclusion (with which I am sympathetic) that, since such relationships are difficult to articulate or explain in either configurational (phrase structure) or semantic terms, grammatical relations are, after all, basic.

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[1] Of course, as I noted earlier, the conception of indexicality that I am working with differs from Peirce's, which is closest to the conformal function, and so this is not indexicality in my sense.

7.3 The passive voice as expressive

Having provided an outline of these comparatively simple constructions, I now want to turn to ways in which they are related to or can be transformed into more complex constructions. I want to suggest that both these and more complex constructions are governed by the similar compositional relationships. Differing and so alternative constructions play a fundamental role in the communication of different distributions of degrees and types of valuations.

On this view, grammatical expression conveys something like a perspective or standpoint which need not be understood entirely representationally, just as, as we have seen, perception need not be. In this, the pragmatic analysis of the passive voice, for instance, is close to that of Jespersen (1924: 167), when he writes:

> We use the active or passive turn according as we shift our point of view from one to the other of the primaries contained in the sentence. "Jack loves Jill" and "Jill is loved by Jack" mean essentially the same thing, and yet they are not in every respect exactly synonymous, and it is therefore not superfluous for a language to have both turns. As a rule the person or thing that is the centre of the interest at the moment is made the subject of the sentence, and therefore the verb must in some cases be put in the active, in others in the passive.

Although never consistently developed, this general insight is also present elsewhere in Jespersen's understanding of grammar.[2] Within the pragmatic account, these differences in perspective are fundamental to the organisation of activity.

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[2] Jespersen also seems to at least flirt with the idea that his notion of ranks, and so the 'primaries' in the above passage, relate to importance (Jespersen 1924: 96; Francis 1989: 81). He (1924: 54) also clearly warns against attempts to understand grammatical categories too representationally:

> In some of the other categories the correspondence with something outside the sphere of speech is not so obvious, and it may be that those writers who want to establish such correspondence, who think, for instance, that the grammatical distinction between substantive and adjective corresponds to an external distinction between substance and quality, or who try to establish a "logical" system of cases

This expressivist view means that language users choose grammatical constructions and populate them with lexical expressions not simply according to the objective features of the content that they express. So, the range of constructions is not simply a function of the range of objective variations in the features of situations but also of the range of subjective or perspectival standpoints on them. The grammar of a language does not provide an objective representation so much as a subjective means of controlling and so managing the process of communication itself within such broader settings. That is, it is primarily expressive of the different points of view points that constitute language as an activity inherently distributed across language users.

So, the language transcendent or objective features of entities do not oblige their being expressed by certain grammatical roles. Quite the contrary, they are placed under or expressed by certain grammatical roles because they accord with the language user's subjective interests or standpoint. These interests will tend to determine whether certain lexical, that is, comparatively objective, features find expression or not and how much prominence they are given. Language users deploy and populate constructions in such a way as to take advantage of the expressive capacities of the organisation of the grammar itself and the immediate context in which it is situated so as to best realise their interests through the valuations which they are able to communicate to others. That is, the grammatical organisation of a language does not express a language user independent organisation of the world. Rather, the organisation of the grammar of a language functions to convey a perspectival or subjectively relative, that is, weighted or graded, standpoint for the purpose of acting within a particular setting. Valuations expressed by the grammar can, for instance, be used to vary the degree to which objective contents are foregrounded or backgrounded and thereby included or excluded from linguistic expression.

I now want to attempt to interpret this construction in terms of the three aspects

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or moods, are under a fundamental delusion.

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of significance deriving from the pragmatic functions. The most important yet also most implicit source of significance is the declining profile of significance that I discussed earlier (see page 278) and so the significance of sequential order itself. In this way, the expressive function functions to coordinate the other two functions and their respective types of order.

I now want to turn to the two more pure or unbalanced functions which are more overt and so explicit in their expression, yet which tend to incorporate this broader distribution of significance attributable to the expressive function. I have suggested that the conformal function is the most communicative of conformal valuations, that is, valuations which reflect the efficacy of the antecedent context.

The grammatical variations in which the expression of this function is predominant tend to take the form of discrete configurations. They are expressed predominantly morphologically, while the variation in the content involved involves shifts between discrete configurations of content. That is, they involve the substitution of lexical expressions between different discrete grammatical positions and so roles. For instance, there is a configuration of lexical items and associated grammatical notions and so weightings associated with any given main or lexical verb. In relation to the subject notions, I have argued that it is the grammatical Subject which stands in the closest relationship of prominence to the main verb and so to verbal expression. Just as verbal expression is the most basic or fundamental form of grammatical expression in general, the grammatical subject is the most basic or fundamental form of subject. This is borne out by the analogies between their respective behaviours that I discussed in Chapter Four (see page 218). Both are characteristic of expression within the conformal function, as much as they have different positions within it combining a distinctive, if variable, form and so morphology with a fixed position. Since the position is comparatively fixed and so invariant, while the form is comparatively variable, this form of expression is comparatively morphological or paradigmatic. The fixed position encourages it to have a comparatively variable form, which aids its identifiability, which, in turn, facilitates identifying its position as a grammat-

ical point of reference. As I have argued, although fixed, its position remains central to its function within the internal organisation of the grammar.

A change of configuration involves lexical occupants exchanging or varying the positions or roles that they occupy. The most obvious way to do this is to change the main verb itself, since different verbs are associated with different configurations of relata and so distributions of significance such as, for instance, that associated with a particular type of nominal occupying the role of the grammatical Subject. That is, different main verbs are associated with different relata associated with different configurations of grammatical positions or roles and so which are expressive of variations in the grammatical content expressed.

Because of this, the verbal group not only occupies a fundamental reference position within the clause from which the other groups or phrases can be distinguished. It is also the most direct expression of the configuration of associated lexical items which fill out the more directly or closely associated nominal roles.

However, the configuration can also be changed through a variation or transformation of voice associated with a particular verb. When such a change of configuration occurs without a change in the main verb, then this has to find some other form of expression indicative of the change in the configuration of the expression that constitutes the change of voice.

The most recognisable of such voices, which depart from the default, active voice, is probably the passive voice on account of both its comparative frequency and less economical form. Moreover, it primarily concerns the relationship between the grammatical Subject and the Actor, and so is suited to a comparison of the more abstract and conformal aspects of the expressive alignment which I argued they were representatives of in Chapter Four. It will therefore be useful to begin with the passive voice, although, as we have already begun to seen, it is also somewhat unusual.

In the passive voice construction, the grammatical Subject of the active voice exchanges roles and so positions with the Actor of the associated active voice

construction. This involves lexical expressions shifting between or falling under what I have called vertical alignments. That is, they switch between being the object of different types of grammatical expression and so different types of value intrinsic to the organisation of the language itself. Although, for instance, conflation with more than one grammatical expression along the horizontal alignment is also possible, since the latter type of alignment is comparatively orthogonal to the former.

The need for what I will call re-configurations, that is, for lexical items to switch between grammatical roles relating to comparatively fixed positions arises from the existence of the comparatively fixed or reference roles or positions that are associated with the conformal function. The paradigmatic instances of such grammatical functions considered within the current thesis are the grammatical Subject and the verbal group.

By contrast, the Actor is more abstract in content, falling within the more universal, aspect of the expressive function. Its more abstract grammatical or reflexive function grants it the comparative freedom of a much more variable position and optional presence, although it also has a more fixed form. Whereas the conformal function internalises the conformal significance of the efficacy of the context, the abstract function is the more free and constructive, being comparatively more independent of any particular context. Such expression, therefore, contrasts with the comparatively discrete configurations and positionally fixed and obligatory, although morphologically variable, forms of expression associated with the conformal function.

The passive voice is therefore often used to exploit this comparative freedom of expression available to the Actor in order to either foreground by thematising lexical items, or alternatively, and perhaps more likely, background them by exploiting the same freedom of expression to deny them significance. For instance, in Jespersen's example (on page 285) it is used to background the active subject *Jack* relative to *Jill*.

However, the very variability of the Actor's position means that it can also be a means of thematisation and so foregrounding. Indeed, because of this, it can be more thematic than the Subject as, for instance, in (19).

(19)   By Jack,   Jill   is loved.
           Actor   Subject
           Theme

Because of this potential variability of both the Actor's position and occurrence, this aspect of the passive construction is a different type of variation from that involved in configurations and fixed positions associated with the conformal function. That is, this does not involve the swapping or exchange of lexical items between fixed positions with others, since it does not involve a discrete change of function and with it of the type of value expressed. Rather, the mobility of such expressions means that they are able to directly vary their significance with their position which is more directly expressive of the differing significance of different positions within the declining profile of significance. That is, in the case of the abstract function, including in this case, in which it is an aspect of the central or expressive function, the expressive relationship between expression and content is a more iconic one and so, in one sense, might be said to be more 'natural' one. However, I want to stress that the predominant mode of grammatical expression is indexical or reflexive rather than iconic. It is just that, in this case, the values expressed are more iconic or universal ones. That is, the variations in position are predominantly expressive of relative priorities and so valuations rather than of likenesses or resemblances.

Indeed, the significance of the Actor is so inherently variable that the presence of the expression itself is optional. So, a third option still is for the Actor to be entirely absent as an expression, in which case its implicit lexical occupant is further de-thematised or backgrounded as in (20). In this case, the absence of

the Actor grants it no significance from the profile of significance, although this is not to say that it may not receive significance from other sources.

(20) Jill   was loved.   (Absent Actor)
     Subject
     Theme

On the pragmatic understanding, then, the use of the comparatively polar, although not infrequent passive voice construction in which the Actor is absent (20), provides the language user, the speaker, with a means of avoiding the expression of a certain objective content on account of either its lack of significance or a desire to express its lack of significance for the speaker. More generally, the lexical content either foregrounded or backgrounded by being graded by the Actor might, in actual fact, not be as significant for the person expressing this point of view as the expression conveys, in which case it may manifest a pretence, a desire to not express the actual significance and so, perhaps, to conceal or disguise it from others, in particular, from the audience of the expression. Either way, this significance or the lack of it is inherently relative in the sense that it expresses a particular point of view and is open to variation between different points of view. For instance, the speaker might equally use the variability of the Actor's position to promote and even exaggerate its significance as in (19) relative to its actual significance for them. So the standpoint presented, again, is in large part a construction, which, as intended for others, need not necessarily be a direct expression of the experience of the speaker, in virtue of the abstractness of the valuations being expressed, rather than a representation. However, given the complex and problematic nature of communication, the clear communication of priorities, for instance, may demand this and so need not necessarily be pernicious. This distinction is, for instance, especially true of fiction where the narrator, who presents speech, and its author inherently need to come apart and so to be quite distinct from one another. Yet, works of art also often inherently

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make use of the context dependence of language since, for instance, in the sequential development of a literary work, such as a novel, the work of art itself forms the context for its own subsequent development, thereby providing it with both temporal and contextual depth. This reliance on such conformal as well as abstract values is indicative of the role of balance in the constitution of values in general of which beauty is the paradigm.

The Actor, as a somewhat representational label, is, then, somewhat unfortunate in that it suggests an objective rather than a subjective or valuational content. That is, it suggests a representation of, rather than an inherently selective perspective on, a situation which the speaker constructs and so chooses to communicate, with the intention of facilitating their course of action within it. Indeed, as we have seen (see pages 70, 226), Halliday seems obliged to attempt to understand both the Actor and the passive voice comparatively representationally, since both are, for him, representatives of the ideational metafunction.

So these two comparatively polar subject notions and the two polar positions they represent within the expressive function, clearly contrast with one another in terms of both their content and the behaviour of the expressions which express it. The switching between the two polar subject roles in the passive voice, since it addresses both sides of the balance within the construction tends to preserve its overall symmetry and so balance. That is it combines changes in both abstract and conformal aspects of the expressive function, both of which contribute toward the content of this third function. The change in both functions allows the preservation of balance, preserving the significance of the construction as a whole. Moreover, this interchanging of roles, central to the contrast between these constructions, is, as we shall see (see page 300), also marked in a comparatively economical way, again preserving the force and balance of the expression as a whole.

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7.4   Grammatical variation and re-identification

What I have just dealt with to this point are the more overt and so obvious and expressive features of the passive voice construction, which centres on the two more polar subject notions, whose variation gives rise to the comparatively overt expressive variation in the relative intrinsic valuations attached to the lexical items involved. As such, the passive voice does not necessarily directly involve the Theme, which I shall turn to in this section, although either the grammatical Subject or the Actor can be conflated with the Theme when they assume the initial position. The Theme is the paradigm of this more pronounced form of valuational expression as much as it is also takes a very formally economical and so implicit form.

However, these comparatively overt expressive relationships are underpinned by more stable objective and so objectively relative relationships which also need to be communicated and so find expression in the organisation of constructions. That the valuations expressed by a grammar are inherently relative means that they are not independent of the lexical items that they grade for significance. The organisation of the lexicon suffuses the grammar as its object of valuation, just as the grammar serves to grade for significance and so vary the prominence of the content of the lexicon.

This means that the more overt and so expressive reorderings, associated, for instance, with variations in voice are not unproblematic, since they give rise to the issue of how to re-identify the same lexical items and their more objective content and the relationships that they stand in under different orderings, that is across different construction types. Valuations are inherently valuations of something else, of the objective features of relationships which are themselves not simply valuations.

Given the pervasive interdependence that I have emphasised underpins valuation, any individual expression and the content expressed by it, stand in a number of relationships at once, each of which may need to be communicated at some

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level. Expressions not only stand in the comparatively expressive, valuational relationships which I have emphasised on account of their primacy within the grammar but also more conformal causal and more free abstract relationships, which are, in part, constitutive of those valuational relationships. These inherently less subjective relationships remain significant, because, as I have stressed, there is no sharp dividing line between the grammar and the lexicon, between comparatively subjective and comparatively objective content. The very context dependence of valuations means that they cannot be known independently of these objectively relative relationships. There cannot just be a reordering of the expressions that make up a construction because just what has been reordered and so revalued also remains significant.

Moreover, the coordination accomplished by the grammar also essentially concerns the coordination of these other more objective types of relationship. So, constructions are not just overtly expressive but also have to communicate the preservation of the more objective, background relationships between of these items, which are inherently more stable than the more transitory valuational ones. These are conveyed by another set of expressive relationships which are more subtle since they are not as overtly and so directly expressive. As we shall see, this less overt expression is an important reason for expecting different construction types to exhibit somewhat different forms and behaviours.

So, the behaviour of grammatical expressions is determined not only by their expressivity but also by the coordination and re-identification problems that the internal organisation of this expressivity gives rise to. So a grammar provides both opportunities for and restrictions on subjective expression, limited by the need to also, for instance, be able to re-identify the more objective contents. These problems of identification arise from the very economy and so efficiency of grammatical expression which does, however, come at the cost of heightened subtly and complexity of expression.

I now want to turn to the organisation of this more subtle aspect of grammatical organisation. In doing so, the grammatical variations that I want to focus on is

the contrast between extraction and passivisation. I first want to briefly return to consider the relative difficulty of passivising various objects within various types of construction drawing on some examples that Hudson (1992: 257) discusses. The single object passivises comparatively easily as in (22) from (21).

(21)   Fred met Mary.
                         OO

(22)   Mary was met by Fred.
         OO

Differences emerge when we consider different types of double object construc- tions, O1 passivising almost as easily as OO in (24) from the active voice (23), and considerably more easily than the other O2 object in (25).

(23)   Anne gave the children those sweets.
                              O1   O2

(24)   The children were given those sweets by Anne.
            O1   O2

(25)   % Those sweets were given the children by Anne.
                   O2   O1

Nonetheless, there people who find the following examples in 26 acceptable, although large numbers of English speakers find these much worse than when O1 is passivised. So I will flag this difficulty with a "%".

(26) a.   %[A book]$_2$ was given [John]$_1$.

      b.   %[A gold watch]$_2$ was given [Jones]$_2$ by the railway when he re-
            tired.

Extraction, as exemplified by (27) from (15) and (28), is the more formally eco-
nomical of the two variations, since it does not affect the verb phrase. These
examples also demonstrate that either an animate or an inanimate object can be
extracted from a single object construction:

(15, repeated)   The duke gave this teapot.   (single object)
                                             OO

(27)   The teapot the duke gave.   (extraction of OO (inanimate))
              OO

(28) Someone John met.   (extraction of OO (animate))
      OO

Many speakers find (31) much worse than (30).

(29) We give children sweets.
                    O1   O2

(30) Which sweets do you give children?
             O2   O1

(31)   %   Which children do you give sweets?
                        O1   O2

Here the similarities are reversed, with O1 less similar to OO than O2 is. The data are less than clear than for passivisation, but many speakers find sentences in which O1 like (31) much worse. For instance, Hudson (one of the rejectors) found that 13 of 14 native speakers he consulted in the UK regarding (32a) rejected it. However, some writers have at least not queried their acceptability.

(32)   a.   % [Which authors]$_1$ did they give [a prize]$_2$?

       b.   % The girl [who]$_1$ I gave [flowers]$_2$ is Mary.

       c.   % Nobody [who]$_1$ I send [an email message]$_2$ ever replies.

       d.   % [Which worker]$_1$ did you deny [his paycheck]$_2$?

       e.   % [Who]$_1$ did you give [a book]$_2$?

Another feature of extraction is that partial extraction is easier than extracting the whole, being more acceptable as for example in (33a) along with related examples.

(33)   a.   Which book shall we give [the author of]$_1$ [a prize]$_2$?

       b.   Which authors do you think will get prizes?

       c.   * Which books do you think [the authors of] will get prizes?

       d.   When did you fall asleep?

       e.   Which lectures did you fall asleep [during?]

So this behaviour seems more syntactically than semantically motivated. On the other hand, within internal dative constructions (which I discussed earlier on page 280), O2 is more easily extracted as in (34), than O1 as in (35). This tends to coincide with a distinction between the semantic classification of the objects which usually occupy these positions. O2 is typically occupied by an object comparatively dependent on the verb as in (34), while O1 is usually occupied by a more independent, usually animate, object, an agent or recipient as in (35). But the explanation does not seem to be entirely semantic, since, as we just saw, in single object constructions such as (28), OO, which can be an agent, is easily extracted.

(34)   The teapot the duke gave my aunt broke.   (extraction of O2)
              O2

(35)   %The Aunt the duke gave this teapot broke.   (extraction of O1)
                 O1

It is more usual for OO to be a dependent object as in (27) but as Hudson (1992: 261-2) has noted, there are nonetheless a small number of verbs such as "teach", "tell" and "show", which allow OO to have the same semantic role as either O1 or O2, as, for example, in (36):

(36)   a.   We told [the children]$_1$ [fairy stories]$_2$

       b.   We told [the children]$_0$

       c.   We told [fairy stories]$_0$

Now, as I have suggested, an important syntactic issue is how the different types of object are to be differentiated once extracted. That is, how do we know which

object has been extracted? In the case of single object constructions, there is only one object to extract so there can never be any uncertainty as to just which object has been extracted. In internal dative constructions, on the other hand, since extraction is not marked on either the objects or the verb phrase, it is not always possible to differentiate O1 (indirect) from O2 (direct) objects.

The passive construction, as exemplified by (37), is, by contrast, more noticeable than extraction since it is a formally more marked form of expression.

(37)   My aunt was given this teapot by the duke.   (passive)
       O1

One important reason for the lesser formal economy of the passive is that it is marked twice, being marked both within the verbal group or phrase and the object. For it is marked both within the verb phrase by the finite verb and past participle and by the object's preposition, when the conventional Subject becomes the Actor taking the preposition "by" when passivized. It has to be marked twice because the Actor, although marked, is optional and so is not necessarily present to mark the construction as a whole. On the other hand, the object needs to be marked independently of the construction as a whole, because it has no fixed position, as, for instance, the grammatical Subject has, since it is also comparatively mobile or variable in position. If this mobility and optionality is, as I have argued, an aspect of its expressivity then it cannot be marked or distinguished by its position. That is, more independent objects, which are less dependent upon and so determined by the verb, are the more difficult to distinguish or (re)identify and so need to be more marked and so are expressed less economically. Indeed, that such independent objects need to be more distinct formally is also true semantically. A person can be either the singer or the audience of a song and perhaps both.

By contrast, a more dependent object, since it can be expressed by a comparatively fixed position, does not need to be as formally marked. Indeed, given

the drive for economy and so efficiency of expression within the grammar, I want to argue that the more dependent object is therefore the more decisive in determining the ordering of expressions. Indeed, the greater identifiability of such expressions means that they have an important role in distinguishing constructions. Comparatively independent contents and more marked forms of expression, which, I have suggested, often coincide with one another, are more problematic due to their lesser identifiability and so lesser economy of expression. However, since this independence is an important aspect of their content and so, within an expressive account, is largely unavoidable.

In the case of the passive, it is the verbal group which must be marked because, although the Actor is the nominal (and so subject or object) that is least dependent on the verb, this also means that it is the most optional. This nominal therefore need not be present and if it is not present, then it cannot itself be marked for and so mark the passive voice. On the other hand, the obligatory nature of the verbal group, being the most reflexively necessary grammatical expression, makes it the ideal location to mark it. That is the verbal group is marked because it is the vehicle for the more inherently variable abstract forms of expression falling within the abstract aspect of the expressive function. Hence, once again we see how contrasting forms of expression require one another and so tend to be combined.

The emergence of such re-identification problems within constructions containing more than one object explains why in the case of single object constructions, both transformations occur with comparative ease. Double object constructions, on the other hand, require restrictions to be placed on the introduction of variations in order to preserve the distinguishability of the different nominals.

Now, given the drive for economy and so efficiency of expression within the grammar, it might also be argued that more formally marked forms of expression should only be deployed when they have to be. This is because, the overall expressive economy of a grammar is likely to be increased to the extent that formally marked and so uneconomical constructions are only deployed in more

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exceptional and so comparatively infrequent circumstances. So, it is perhaps not surprising that the formal diseconomy of the passive construction coincides with its comparatively exceptional behaviour in that, as I noted earlier (see page 281), within it, it is the O1 rather than the O2 which behaves like the OO of the single object construction. However, I have also argued that its markedness is inevitable given the content that it communicates.

So the exceptional nature of the passive construction might be understood as arising from its use in such comparatively exceptional circumstances in which its greater markedness is directly related to its exceptionality. Moreover, I have argued that an important restriction on this drive for economy in grammatical expression is that the considerable economy of nominal expression in particular threatens to undermine the capacity of language users to re-identify the content being selected by such nominal expressions. That is, these principles combine to suggest that its comparatively exceptional markedness arises from the circumstance where this greater markedness is required for the purpose of re-identifying the content of nominal expressions.

This explains why only the more dependent O2 is extractable, since this is the object which can be readily re-identified and that only O2s are extractable preserves their distinguishability. The dependent object or complement is the only one which can be extracted because this is the one which can be readily re-identified. And this, in turn, explains the more formally marked nature of the passive construction, which can then be understood as remedying not being able to extract O1s, since only in it can a fronted O1 be distinguished from other fronted objects. So, the thematisation or fronting of the independent object requires that the construction be marked twice but this is comparatively exceptional. So, in the passive voice comparatively exceptional and comparatively marked expression coincide.

The optionality of the Actor in the passive construction also means that it potentially has only one object, when it occurs without the Actor, as in (38), in which case it also needs to be distinguishable from the single object construction, as in

(39), since it otherwise shares the same word order. These constructions need to be distinguished because the more objective, as opposed to the more expressive, relationships expressed by these two construction types still differ from one another. So, since the Actor is optional, the marking within the verb phrase is required to distinguish it, as a construction, from the related single object construction.

(38)   My   aunt   was   given   this   teapot.   (passive without Actor)
            O1   O2

(39)   The   duke   gave   this   teapot.   (single object)

The type of the main verb determines the types of participants to at least some extent, although to varying degrees. But because nominal expressions are comparatively unmarked formally by comparison, they can be difficult to re-identify as occupying certain roles in relation to the verb. So this grammatical problem of re-identification is not independent of the semantics of the verb but at the same time it is a problem which transcends the meaning of the verb itself since it primarily concerns its relata.

Given that appearance and so expression is finite and the grammatical roles within a given expression are interdependent, there are, as I have indicated, expressive constraints on what can be expressed and so on how many shifts between functions, brought about by variations in voice, can occur at once. Nonetheless, such changes in function, which allow variation in the distribution of valuations expressed, allowing the interests of language users to be better expressed, realised and so harmonised. The constraints on grammatical expression are then most directly subjective or expressive rather than objective although this makes them no less real or constrained. For the organisation of value means that

the realisation of certain values tends to preclude the expression of certain values while obliging the expression of certain others.

I have argued that a fundamental function of the grammar of a language is to communicate importance intrinsic to the operation of language itself and that such variations in importance are most overtly generated by variations in word order. A central feature of importance is balance, which is a product of the interdependence or interplay between the two objective poles underlying activity and so value. Amongst the subject notions, this leads to the expectation that the Theme will provide a particularly prominent focus, since it is characterised by a more central and so balanced location and more formally unmarked expression than the other two subject notions. This allows it to extend a greater reach into both the immediate past and the immediate future of the discourse.

Moreover, I have also argued that the task of the grammar cannot be to only express these comparatively overt and so expressive intrinsic valuations but must also to allow the identification or re-identification of the content that these valuations apply to, that is, the comparatively objective and so objectively relative relationships which underpin the foregrounded content within different perspectives, that is under different distributions or gradings of significance. I have stressed that nominal expression and so reference carries with it a significance which grants it its prominence. However, within the internal organisation of a language, although it can be empty, such acts of reference will usually also have an objective referent which, I have stressed needs to be identifiable. In this respect, grammar and reference, as, on this view, intimately related, share a similar, double barrelled structure.

The prominence of the Theme's position means that it is one of the primary targets of these variations, in spite of the fact that such variations are, on account of its unmarkedness, more marked by variations, be they presences or absences, elsewhere than in the Theme itself. Likewise, in the case of the passive voice, as we have seen the complexity and economy of grammatical constructions means that the content of expression can be displaced from where it is encoded.

7.5   Conclusion

Within the present pragmatic account, expressive variation arises in large part from the need to communicate different valuations. For instance, much of the individual variation within perspectives hinges on differences in the relative significance that subjects attach to items within them. Such perspectives reflect the plurality of possible vantage points, not just physical but also valuational. These can be varied, transformed and modulated without requiring changes in the objective and so representational features of a setting, since they are the product of the agency of the language user. If language users are to be able to communicate their subjective experiences, and this centres on the significance they attach to things being essentially relative and so variable, then they need to be able to communicate this relativity. That is, they need to be able to vary the valuations they attach to the objective features of their experience as the fundamental basis for the organisation of their experience. Otherwise, they will not be able to communicate what is distinctive of their particular and individual perspective, indicative as it is of their interests, rather than those of someone else or of nobody in particular. Hence, on this view, the variability of the content expressed by the grammar is dominated by the variability of valuations as the essential basis for the organisation of experience and activities more generally. This requires that they be able to freely express and so communicate their own interests and so express valuations which in turn allow them to reflexively organise their own discourse in concert with that of other participants.

At this stage, this pragmatic conception of grammatical constructions is very conjectural and incomplete. The interdependence of valuations means that grammatical expressions, as expressive of valuations, are also interdependent. These relationships of interdependence form the basis for the relationships between different component expressions and the constructions that they compose. The differences between the valuations in the various paraphrases mean that paraphrases are not synonymous with one another but rather vary in subtle but, I

want to argue, compositional and so intelligible ways. Indeed, the very multiplicity of such possible paraphrases would seem to require that they should be expressive for them to be understood at all.

This pragmatic account endeavours to provide an explanation of why English has the grammatical organisation that it has largely in terms of the reflexive demands of the task of communication itself. An important aspect of this is the need for the internal organisation of a language, as reflected in its grammar, to be not only expressive but expressive in a compositional way. Moreover, this problem also, therefore, remains an inherently relative one, since this is a task which must be performed in a reflexive and situated way in the context of a given setting and, indeed, in the context of a language itself. It therefore does not oblige languages to share the same organisation as, for instance, English has. Nonetheless, the same broad coordination problems presumably arise for all languages given than any language should benefit, as an activity, from having an internal organisation which I have argued takes the form of a grammar.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The last chapter largely concluded the engagement with Halliday's grammar. I argued in the introduction that this thesis comprises a series of nested critiques, which are not limited to Halliday's particular stance. This allows the views being advanced here to be developed in many directions on a number of different levels. What has perhaps been the most unusual has been the particular emphasis upon a highly general, pragmatic, metaphysical background to the position being advanced. This, as I have emphasised, is in itself contentious even as an interpretation and extension of Whitehead's philosophy. It is, nonetheless, central to providing a broader conception of the nature of value and action which forms the basis for the pragmatic conception of language, centred as it is on the language user and their environment.

As I noted in the introduction, due to limitations in the space available given the length of the argument presented thus far, I will not have space to discuss the relationship of the pragmatic account to other positions or possible areas of likely further development, although there is no shortage of either. Instead, I want to conclude by outlining, in an exceedingly abbreviated form, how its relationship to neo-Gricean pragmatics illuminates both these concerns in a more decisive

way than any of the other alternatives that I might have otherwise discussed. In particular, I want to briefly argue that it provides a promising avenue for joint development given how complementary its concerns are to those being advanced here.

8.2 The relation to contemporary (neo-)Gricean pragmatics

This thesis has attempted to revive the now largely forgotten, and hence neglected, possibility of a pragmatic conception of grammar, which first emerged in the first half of the twentieth century. Although pragmatics has experienced a revival since the 1970s, this has been as an adjunct to much more abstract theories of language in general which experienced tremendous growth and development following the revolution in logic in the same first half of the twentieth century in which figures like Whitehead and Peirce were central participants. Indeed, pragmatics itself, since its contemporary Gricean turn, has also increasingly become a comparatively abstract discipline concerned with pragmatic inference and so has become much more universalistic than its much more relativistic precursors. So, it is not just theories of grammar which have become more abstract. It could be argued that pragmatics, since its Gricean, inferential turn, has also become much more abstract, since this was not a feature of earlier pragmatic theories. Although they are not without their differences, the classical pragmatic and Gricean traditions, I want to suggest, are comparatively compatible with one another, especially when compared to other more conventional, social object theories of language, since many of their central differences primarily contribute to their complementarity. By contrast, if grammar is also taken to be abstract in content, then this would tend to place such theories of grammar and pragmatics in direct competition with one another in terms of their place within a general theory of language.

The neo-Gricean rationalisation and systematisation of Grice's position continues this trend towards an increasing abstract pragmatics. For instance, this

increased abstraction might suggest that contemporary pragmatics can be understood as a radical extension or development of the iconic paradigm, in turn suggesting "the derivative nature of conventional meaning" as both Grice and Levinson seem to have taken it to do.[1] However, an important feature of this pragmatic reduction of Grice's maxims was a retreat from the maxim of relation or relevance (the main exception to this being relevance theory, which I shall discuss shortly), as the least systemisable of Grice's conversational maxims, and so from Grice's broader position, already considerably more abstract than the classical pragmatic position.[2]

So, in spite of the latter tendencies towards heightened abstraction, notions of relevance or salience, nonetheless, retain an undeniably central, if incompletely developed, role in neo-Gricean accounts. As Levinson (2000: 29) has observed:

> From a Gricean perspective, communication involves the inferential recovery of speakers' intentions: it is the recognition by the addressee of the speaker's intention to get the addressee to think such-and-such that essentially constitutes communication. The question has been just how this recognition of others' intentions is possible. Skeptics have assumed that all accounts will simply smuggle in the

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[1]Levinson (2000: xxi) writes:

> I found Paul Grice's ideas about the derivative nature of conventional meaning quite revolutionary. His central idea, that "every artificial or non-iconic system is founded upon an antecedent iconic system" of representation and communication (Grice 1989: 358), is still too radical for most current thinking in linguistics and philosophy.

[2] For instance, Levinson (2000: 74) writes in his work, which admitted focuses upon generalised conversational implicatures (GCIs) rather than particularised conversational implicatures (PCIs), that:

> The maxim of Relation or Relevance (which Grice (1989: 26-27) stated simply as "Be relevant" within the overall Cooperative Principle, "Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged") has pertinence only to the immediate, ever variable, conversational goals: it generates PCIs, not GCIs.

> notion of a conventional signal (Ziff 1975; Chomsky 1975: 62-77). Griceans have put forward various accounts that trade for the most part on a notion of mutual salience. Mutual salience was shown to have quite dramatic effects on the possibility of tacit coordination, or joint action in the absence of communication, by Schelling (1960: 55), a student of strategy in economics and politics.

As we have seen, on a classical pragmatic view, the grammar of a language can be argued to be essentially concerned with the communication of salience or importance as a means of managing reference. That is, the Gricean position would seem to overlook the possibility that intentions might not only be inferable but also be expressed comparatively directly through indexical expression and so through the grammar of a language. In particular, reference and its organisation becomes the vehicle for the expression of salience or importance which might be understood as allowing the comparatively direct expression of intentions. Moreover, as we have also seen, this involves an emphasis upon the *indexical* rather than the *iconic* features of linguistic expression. Indeed, Grice's account is comparatively weak when it comes to his account of both reference and 'what is said' (Travis 1989: viii-ix, 1991).

Nonetheless, the neo-Gricean position shares the same reflexive emphasis on the efficiency of the process of communication itself that I have been arguing for. For instance, Levinson has drawn attention to the significance of the simple fact that the encoding of speech is a comparatively slow process, phonetic articulation being a bottleneck in a system which can otherwise run about four times faster. He (2000: 6) sums up the speaker's response to this resulting pressure for economy as follows:[3]

> the speaker is trying to find an economical means of invoking specific ideas in the hearer, knowing that the hearer has exactly this

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[3] Likewise, Horn (1984) makes clear reference to such motivations, for instance, making reference to Zipf's (1949) "speaker's and auditor's economies", when first suggesting the reduction of Grice's maxims that the neo-Gricean position is largely founded upon.

> expectation. Now, the solution to the encoding bottleneck, I suggest, is just this: let not only the content but also the metalinguistic properties of the utterance (e.g., its form) carry the message. Or, find a way to piggyback meaning on top of the meaning. How can this be piggybacking be achieved? Only by utilizing the form, the structure, and the pattern of choices within the utterance to signal the extra information beyond the meanings of its constituents.

The present pragmatic view can therefore be understood as a subtle broadening both of this problematic and of the response to it. That is, it is a similarly reflexive view, that the fundamental concern of a grammar is with the process of communication itself. What classical pragmatism adds to this is the pragmatic emphasis upon the role of communication in the coordination of action, which can also be generalised to language itself. In particular, reference and its organisation becomes the vehicle for the expression of salience or importance. That is, it involves the comparatively direct expression of intentions.

Central to this thesis, then, has been this repositioning of grammar by centring it upon the inherently relative and reflexive organisation of the activity of reference rather than on comparatively abstract content. The very abstractness of Gricean pragmatics provides further support for this by filling out a genuinely pragmatic understanding of the expression of abstract content through conversational inference. The resulting, broader conception of pragmatics, unifying both the comparatively relative and the comparatively universal features of language, is then a much more ambitious, broad and encompassing one. Grammar retains its centrality but in a transformed role, in which it is intimately bound up with the organisation of language itself. Reference also retains its primacy of place at the heart of semantics, although, in a, likewise, transformed and so unconventional role as focal to the organisation of language itself understood as an activity. In this way, as an inherently relativistic and overtly functional grammar, it provides a far more complementary position to Grice's position than more orthodox grammars while also addressing certain important limitations. By contrast, more orthodox grammars tend to take the content of grammar to have an essentially

similar abstract content, and so must, nonetheless, understand the mode of expression of this similar content very differently.

The Gricean position, particularly on account of the incompleteness of its account of the nature of intentions (Avramides 1989), reference (Travis 1991) and compositionality (Lycan 1991) in particular, is largely complementary to the broader classical pragmatic position which, I want to argue, is able to supplement it in these respects. So these differences provide, in outline, an indication of how classical pragmatism can both differ from and yet still stand in a largely complementary relationship to Gricean pragmatics and its neo-Gricean successors. In particular, the present classical pragmatic conception provides an expressivist account of how salience or relevance is the primary content of the grammar. Without wanting to dismiss relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), it is important to note that its position is far less complementary (and so is more of a competitor) in addition to being comparatively distant from Grice and what might be called the neo-Gricean tradition proper. Relevance is here understood, as we have seen, in a comparatively pragmatic way, backed by a theory of value and its expression, whereas, within relevance theory, relevance is understood in an epistemic and so far less reflexive and pragmatic way.

The combination of a comparatively universalistic, since inferential, contemporary pragmatics with a more relativistic, since referential, classical pragmatics, such as that which I have outlined here, would, then seem to have a better chance of bridging the gap between the relativistic and the more universalistic features of natural languages that I discussed in the introduction to this thesis. Indeed, they may therefore stand in an important strategic relationship to one another within the broader thrust of the argument made in this thesis. In particular, they jointly suggest that a broader, consolidated pragmatic theory of language as a whole, akin to Verschueren's (1985, 1987) 'pragmatic perspective', by drawing non-reductively on both positions. In this way, a pragmatic account of language and of grammar, like Whitehead's metaphysics, ultimately aims to achieve a broader synthesis through the recognition of less reductive, 'wider points of

view'.[4]

8.3 Conclusion

Halliday's systemic functional grammar presents an ambitious structural functionalism spanning his comparatively comprehensive conception of the grammar of English. However, in spite of this, it would seem to remain committed, like most linguistic theories, to a conception of communication which makes just how such a conception is functional or purposive somewhat difficult to articulate. What I have therefore attempted to do is radicalise Halliday's into a much more overtly functional conception of grammar by drawing upon the more organic and aesthetic functionalism implicit in Whitehead's little developed conceptions of the sign, of value and of the relation between them.

Halliday's grammar, like most, presupposes what I have called a shared object conception of communication, in which the content is comparatively fixed and abstract. A language, including its grammar, is then understood as a shared system of categorisation. But this suggests that such a grammar is limited to communicating content which is also comparatively abstract. This, in turn, limits the capacity of such a conception to articulate a functional organisation, since it inherently, if implicitly, makes both language users and the context of language use less relevant, since these are not by their nature similarly high order abstractions.

Nonetheless, Halliday takes the organisation of discourse to be a central feature of the grammar of a language. It is this aspect of his grammar that I have particularly attempted to radicalise, by arguing that this is a sufficiently complex and extensive a task as to encompass the whole of the grammar rather than just part of it. Traditionally, linguistic theories have been based upon something like

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[4] "The progress of philosophy does not primarily involve reactions of agreement or dissent. It essentially consists in the enlargement of thought, whereby contradictions and agreements are transformed into partial aspects of wider points of view" Whitehead (1951: 664).

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Saussure's conception of the sign which encourages a language transcendent emphasis, since it is too binary or dyadic to recognise complexity internal to the functional organisation of the sign and so of language itself. Instead, I have argued that such a functional conception of discourse requires the recognition of value as a language internal content, if its reflexive organisation is to be understood as deriving from its being an activity. In Halliday, this is developed in a comparatively half hearted way, since those aspects of his theory which conflict with it, such as his conception of communication and of the content of the grammar as general and abstract, discourage the radicalisation and so development of these features.

This broadened scope of discourse and increased complexity means that I have had to focus upon one aspect of discourse, reference, which presents a paradigm of both the variability and the selectivity afforded by valuations. Indeed, I have argued that, since this content is central to purposive activity, reference should stand at the centre of such a more overtly functional, pragmatic conception of grammar. Even in theories of reference, this selectivity and so the role of valuation has been widely neglected, typically because of representational presuppositions concerning the role of reference, as much as these are not entirely misplaced. Reference is the point of greatest variability of content, central to the organisation of language itself understood as an activity, where the language user enters most forcefully into its functioning, purpose and direction. For this reason, I have argued that the content of grammar is essentially valuational, relative and subjective rather than general and so abstract as Halliday, for instance, argues it to be. Valuations convey motivations to act, and can thereby encourage language users to adapt their linguistic activity and coordinate it with that of others.

The notion of indexicality is also broadened beyond its usual locus of reference, and indeed beyond context dependent forms of expression. That is, on this view, indexicals do not just function in terms of the reception of values. The reflexive and so immanent management of discourse, by language users themselves, re-

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quires that they also be able to express or generate such values, as, for instance, the subject notions can on account of their abstractness. In this way, it attempts to unify referential and syntactic expression within a broader ecology of different types of indexical or reflexive expression, and so of expressions functioning not only context *dependently* but also context *independently* and so not just conformally but also freely, jointly functioning to reflexively or immanently organise discourse itself.

More broadly, I have attempted to reconstruct Halliday's metafunctions so that they are organised around a theory of value and the expression of value. This makes the broader conception of function both clearer and more explicit, allowing them to, for instance, be related to one another as inherently interdependent rather than independent of one another. So, for instance, the subject notions are understood to function in an interdependent and so unified way within a broader conception of discourse.

This increased complexity also explains why the conception of reference presented remains incomplete and so is, at this stage, only an outline. What I have primarily presented is a conception of grammar capable of supporting such a conception of reference, which, like the symbolic conception of substance that I have argued for, is understood as not self-sufficient but rather as essentially interdependent and relational. It is the filling out of this theory of reference which presents the most obvious path for the further development of this account.

An obvious question is whether this greater complexity can be justified as, particularly at this early stage, this theory may appear to be overly complex, compared to its shared object competitors. Since it is centred on reference rather than categorisation, its strength is its capacity to address variation, yet, since it encompasses the shared object conception, stability should not necessarily be an issue for it. This very different emphasis means that it aims to address features which they inherently tend to either neglect or avoid, although it is still too early to either advance beyond the more fundamental features of this account or explore many of these differences.

Finally, since this thesis has focused on the expressive function and so on reference, yet the function of the grammar extends well beyond the organisation of reference, to conclude, I want to very briefly consider the prospects for the other two functions. Again, Halliday's grammar, both presents novel approaches to these aspects of grammatical expression and yet is also likely to be challenged by their more indexical and so relative features.

Tense is a paradigm of not only grammatical but also of indexical expression. Due to its compound tense system, such expression in English is especially complex. Halliday's account of the English tense system approaches this in a comparatively abstract and recursive way through a sort of tense logic (Halliday 1976: Chapter 10, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Matthiessen 1996). Although, this begins to address its compositional complexity, Halliday's account has also attracted the attention of perceptive critics who have advanced positions which would seem to suggest the viability of adapting it in the direction the present pragmatic one. These criticisms which I will do little more than mention here, mainly involve increased recognition of the heterogeneity of both temporal expression and its content.

In Huddleston's (1991: 110-124) criticisms, the interdependence of tense and modal content is emphasised, which is mirrored the interaction between the syntactic and morphological aspects of verbal expression. For instance, the comparatively syntactic or analytic behaviour of *will* suggests that it is expressive of modality rather than a marker of future tense. This allows a broader interactive account of relationships between tense and modality, since, for instance, "*will* does not contrast with the tense markers but can combine syntagmatically with either" (Huddleston 1991: 114). A second, quite independent, although related, line of criticism, advanced by Bache (2008), from which I quoted earlier (See page 63), argues that Halliday's account of tense is developed too mechanically, neglecting the motivations of language users and the distinctiveness of aspect and phase.

Although the abstract function has had the most limited coverage in this thesis,

this does not necessarily mean that it is a weak point in a pragmatic account, since Grice (1975) makes the the logical connectives and operators his starting point, one which has been developed further by the neo-Griceans (esp. Horn (1989) and Atlas (2005)). Halliday understands Mood in terms of exchange, which has the very significant advantages of being both less representational and considerably more discourse oriented than more conventional philosophical speech act accounts such as that of Searle (1969, 1979).[5] However, it remains less developed than such accounts in part because this suggests the need for co-ordination which, as we have seen, is not really central to Halliday's conception. This is particularly true of the more indexical types of such expression, such as indirect speech acts that quite evidently involve complex combinations of both valuation and variation.

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[5] For excellent discussions of these different standpoints see Butler (1982, 1987, 1996).

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