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Subjecthood and the notion of instantiation

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Abstract

This paper deals with the concept of grammatical subjecthood, and focuses on different perspectives from which this grammatical function has been defined and described in a number of linguistic schools. Properties that have been assigned to the Subject function are grouped into four dimensions (i.e. predication, mood, voice/diathesis, and theme), and it is argued that each of these Subject dimensions can be explained on the basis of the notion of instantiation, as understood in cognitive grammar.
The cornerstone of this argument is Davidse's cognitive-functional definition of the Subject as Instantiator. By realigning Davidse's interpersonal characterization of the Instantiator with Halliday's triad of interpersonal, ideational and textual metafunctions of language, I argue that the Subject/Instantiator is the primary syntagm-forming element for realizing processual meanings.

KEYWORDS: subject, predication, grammatical relations; instantiation, grounding; systemic functional grammar, cognitive grammar.

1. The Subject: description, definition and theory

1.1. Subject properties

Among the most frequently noted properties of Subjects that apply to English[1] are the following:[2]

(i) Every sentence must have a subject, either overt or covert (Keenan 1975: A.2).

(ii) The unmarked position for overt subjects is preverbal (Keenan 1975: A.3.12).[3]

(iii) In questions, the subject and the finite are inverted, except for *wh*-questions with the subject as *wh*-element.

(iv) In an imperative, there is no overt subject, but the subject is understood to be the addressee (Keenan 1975: C.3).

(v) The subject triggers agreement with the verb (Keenan 1975: A.3.3).

(vi) The subject is associated with (mapped onto, conflated with – depending on the theoretical framework) certain semantic roles: in an active clause in action-type predicates, for example, it is the Agent which is realized as subject (Keenan 1975: C.2).

(vii) A proposition consists of a subject and a predication (see also Lyons 1977: 430ff).

(viii) Subjects undergo raising (Keenan 1975: A.3.16):

(1) a. It seemed that John was surprised by this answer.
b. John seemed to be surprised by this answer.

(ix) The controlled argument of a subordinate clause is its subject (Keenan 1975: A.3.4.2, Chomsky's 1957 "Equi NP deletion"):

(2) John wanted to read the letter.

(x) If subjects are extracted, they do not leave a *that*-trace in the subordinate clause, whereas objects can (Bresnan 1972, Bolinger 1972, Chomsky & Lasnik 1977):

(3) a. Which book did you say contains the answer?
b. *Which book did you say that contains the answer?

(4) a. Which book did you say you were reading?
b. Which book did you say that you were reading?

(xi) The subject is stranded in VP preposing constructions (Harley 1995: 18):

(5) Jane said John would write that letter, and write that letter John did.

(xii) The subject can be the only argument that is shared by coordinated clauses (Keenan 1975: A.3.4.3):

(6) I came in and was asked where I had put the keys.

(xiii) The subject is repeated in tag questions:

(7) John wrote that letter, didn't he?

(xiv) The subject is the promotion site in passive constructions (Keenan 1975: A.3.10).

(xv) The subject is usually discourse topic or theme (e.g. Kuno (ed.) 1976).

The features of subjects given in (i)–(xv) are adduced as subject properties in different theories in various ways: as defining features (e.g. Subject as Theme, (xv); Subject as Agent of active clause, (vi)), as recognition criteria (e.g. agreement, (v)), or as linguistic phenomena that are related to the special status of subjects in the grammatical model (e.g. (viii)–(xi)). Figure 1 gives a visual overview of the various subject properties mentioned above. The four grey areas show a possible grouping of the properties into four types of dimensions: predication, theme, voice and mood. This classification will be used as a framework to compare different theoretical approaches to the notion of subject below. Three of its dimensions are based on Halliday's distinction between three metafunctions of language: (1) theme refers to the *textual* organization of discourse; (2) mood has to do with the various types of interactional moves (question, command, statement), and is thus an aspect of the *interpersonal* metafunction (language as interaction); and (3) voice pertains to the relation between the subject role and various types of semantic roles (agent, patient), which are aspects of the *ideational* organization of language (language as representation). The fourth dimension in Figure 1 is predication. It refers to the age-old distinction by which the concept of 'subject' was first described by Plato: *onoma-rhema*.[4] This aspect is put at the centre of Figure 1 because of its entrenchment in linguistics in general, and because it will also play a major role in the explanation of the relationship between voice and mood that will be offered below.

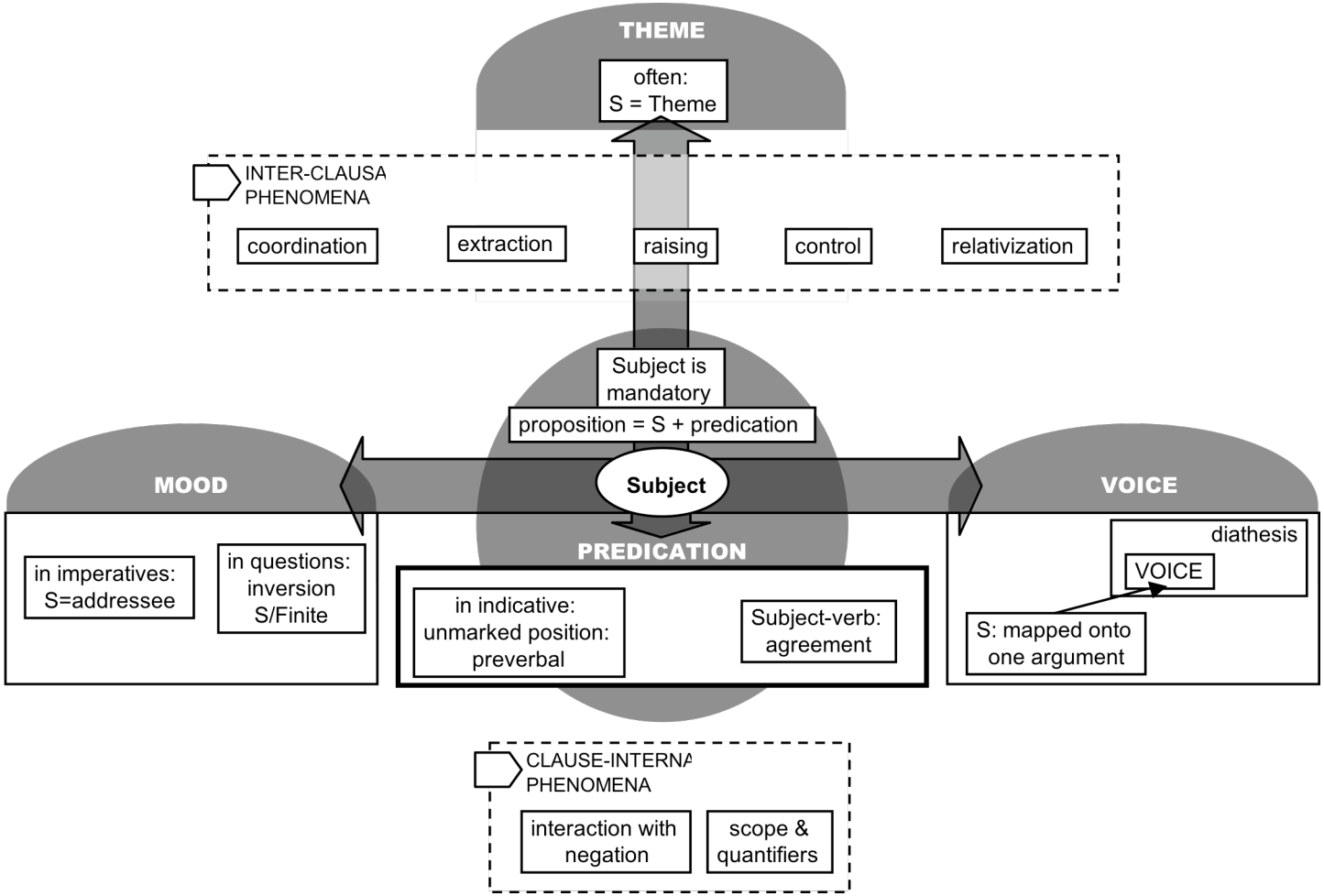

Figure 1: Subject properties

1.2. Subject definitions

Different linguistic schools highlight different aspects of the subject function in order to accommodate it in the overall design of their theories of language. By making a distinction between *onoma* and *rhema*, Plato was the first to uncover the prominent nature of that part of the clause that was later to be called subject. The notion of prominence is probably the general feature that returns most often in descriptions of the grammatical function of subject. Langacker (2000: 27) indicates five possible grounds for defining grammatical roles, viz. case marking, grammatical behaviour, syntactic configuration, semantic role, discourse function, and prominence, but argues that only the notion of prominence can play a role in a "fully general schematic characterization" that is in harmony with the model of cognitive grammar (CG) (ibid.: 28). More pungently, Langacker believes that the conception of subjects and objects as syntactic notions that can be defined in terms of grammatical features is "doubly misguided":

> First, the appropriate semantic characterization of subjects and objects is most essentially a matter of prominence (*an aspect of construal*) as opposed to semantic roles (or any other specific conceptual content). Second, the grammatical behaviors in question are symptomatic of the prominence constitutive of subject and object status, rather than being definitional for these grammatical relations. (Langacker 2000: 359; emphasis MT)

In order to base his definition of the subject on this feature of prominence, Langacker uses the model of figure-ground alignment: the subject is that constituent which is construed as the "primary figure" or trajector of a construction, whereas other constituents are either secondary figures (e.g. objects), or belong to the (back)ground (Langacker 1986: 12 and later, e.g. 2000: 36ff.).

The notion of prominence associated with the subject role is highlighted in a different way in various versions of generative grammars. Already in the first presentation of Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar (Chomsky 1957), the subject is 'prominent' in the model of the clause: the first level below the top of a tree

diagram consists of an NP (the subject), and the rest of the clause, referred to as VP (see Figure 2). Some of the traditional arguments that are given in order to corroborate the existence of a VP constituent are, for example, the fact that the subject can occur as the only shared constituent in coordinated constructions (cf. property (xii) above), or the fact that what is labelled VP can, as a whole, be replaced by *did so*.

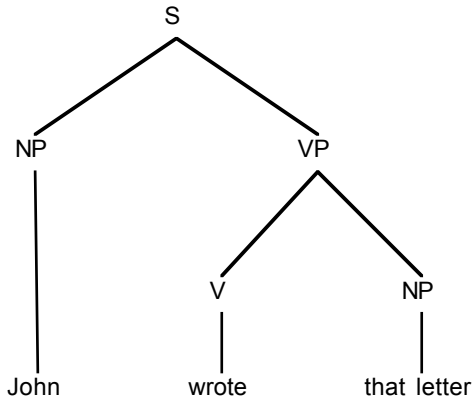

Figure 2: Prominence of the subject in generative grammars

Most later versions of generative grammar (including Government & Binding, and Minimalist Theory) maintain the "external argument position" of the subject, and it is especially in relation to the position of the subject that many phenomena, both clause-internal and inter-clausal, have received detailed discussion in formalist grammatical studies: control (and the subtype raising), extraction, relativization, stranding. In the gradually more detailed discussion of these phenomena which evolved through different versions of generative grammar, the question as to where the subject has to be generated in the syntactic tree has often played an important role. This has led to alternative proposals embedded in more fine-grained models of the clause, with divergent views of the generation of the subject: as specifier of IP (inflection) (e.g. Chomsky 1981), VP (e.g. Koopman and Sportiche 1991), Fin (finiteness) (Rizzi 1997), TP (tense) (e.g. Chomsky 1995), or EventP (Harley 1995).

Other approaches which are not based on a transformational(-generative) conception of language and which are more functionally-oriented, define the subject in relation to different types of linguistic functions, especially textual and ideational (representational) ones. This is reflected in the traditional definition of the subject as the 'agent' of an active clause (with an agentive verb). In such types of definitions (which are often part of a functionalist view of language in which different layers or levels of linguistic structuring are recognized and/or in which linguistic meaning is seen as being organized in terms of prototypes), the subject role is linked to (prototypical) semantic functions onto which it is mapped (couched in terms of cases or semantic roles),[5] and/or to the notion of (textual) theme or topicality.

More sophisticated versions of a 'multi-functional' approach to the subject which are based on the notion of a mapping between subject and semantic roles (and often incorporate the notion of prototypicality), are definitions which are based on one or multiple hierarchies of functions. In such an approach, a hierarchy of semantic roles is set up, indicating the accessibility of different semantic roles to the subject and object functions (cf. Jackendoff (1972); Comrie's (1989) *Animacy Hierarchy* in relation to agreement; the *Semantic Function Hierarchy* of Functional Grammar (Dik 1997); the *Privileged Syntactic Argument Selection Hierarchy* of Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997)), or the mapping is seen in terms of a hierarchy-to-hierarchy mapping (with two hierarchies, one for semantic roles and one for grammatical functions; e.g. Jackendoff 1990).

The 'multi-functional' definitions of the subject function that we have focussed on so far, relate the subject to ideational or textual aspects. Halliday's model of systemic functional grammar (SFG) is quite unique in its *interpersonal* characterization of the subject. In Halliday's interpersonal model of the clause, the functional elements of Subject and Finite play a central role: together they constitute the Mood element of the

clause,[6] and each of them contributes a specific aspect of interpersonal meaning to the clause as a whole.

(1) The Finite element, in Halliday's view, "brings the proposition down to earth, so that it can be argued about" (Halliday 1994/1985: 75). Bringing the proposition 'down to earth' here means relating it to the context of the speech event. According to Halliday, a relation to the speech event is established through the systems of PRIMARY TENSE and MODALITY. Apart from these two features (which are realized in a verbal operator), a further aspect of finiteness is POLARITY: in order for a proposition to be arguable, it has to assert or deny something.

(2) The Subject, then, is regarded as the second major element which is needed in order to create a proposition. It is defined by Halliday as that element "by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied", or the element "in whom the speaker vests the success or failure of the proposition" (Halliday 1994/1985: 76). For example, if I say *Jane has been given the letter*, I "rest my case" (to use another of Halliday's expressions used in this context (ibid.)) on *Jane*; whereas if I say *He has given the letter to Jane*, it is the element *he* on which the validity of the proposition "is made to rest".

It is clear that this interpersonal characterization is based on a conception which is rooted in the traditional subject-predicate distinction, and which is also emphasized in Davies' interpersonal account of clause structure, viz. that it is a "subject-predicate bond" (Davies 1979: 64) which constitutes an (arguable) *proposition*. However, Halliday's interpersonal characterization of Subject and Finite does not only hold for propositions (by default realized by indicative (declarative or interrogative) mood), but also for the other major category of interactive move distinguished in SFG,[7] viz. proposals (commands and offers). In the case of a proposal, the Subject

> specifies the one that is actually responsible for realizing (i.e., in this case, for carrying out) the offer or command. For example, in *I'll open the gate, shall I?*

(offer) the opening depends on me; in *Stop shouting, you over there!* (command) it is for you to desist or otherwise. (Halliday 1994/1985: 76)

The notion of 'modal responsibility', which forms the cornerstone of Halliday's interpersonal-interactive interpretation of the Subject function, has often been criticized or misunderstood: while some claim that it is too much biased as being based on propositions (with the subject-predicate distinction) and hence is not easily applicable to proposals (e.g. Fawcett 1999), others argue that the notion of modal responsibility can be linked to the inherent performative nature of proposals, but cannot be seen as relevant to propositions (e.g. Huddleston 1988) (see also Butler 2003b: 41ff). We will return to the nature of subjects in propositions and proposals in Section 4 below.

1.3. Conclusion and outlook

In this section, we have considered alternative types of characterizations of the subject function that have been proposed in different linguistic schools, focussing on various subject properties that have been adduced in these characterizations. We have seen that these properties can be grouped in terms of four dimensions, viz. the traditional dimension of predication, the ideational aspect of voice or diathesis (or the relation between grammatical relations and semantic roles), the textual aspect of theme, and the interpersonal aspect of mood.

The different linguistic approaches to the subject looked at in this section all highlight *different facets* of the *prominent* nature of the subject in the structure of the clause. What is missing, however, is a general linguistic characterization of the subject function which accommodates each of the different dimensions of predication, voice/diathesis, theme and mood.

In the remainder of this paper I will argue that the notion of *instantiation* can be used as a basis for clarifying the subject function in relation to each of the four dimensions mentioned above. The cornerstone of this argument is Davidse's

characterization of the Subject as the Instantiator of the clause. By realigning Davidse's interpersonal definition of the Instantiator – based on Halliday's conception of mood – with the complete ideational-interpersonal-textual triad, I will argue that the Instantiator is the primary syntagm-forming element for realizing processual meanings.

2. The notion of instantiation in CG: Langacker's model

Langacker [1991a: Chapters 1–6] introduced the notion of instantiation (in relation to the notions of type specification and grounding) in explaining the conceptual structure of the clause and the nominal group in English, starting with the nominal group, and then drawing a parallel with the organization of the clause. In this section, we will follow this order of presentation: it is useful to first consider Langacker's model of the NP, on the one hand because it is more detailed than his model of the clause, and the latter is explained in relation to the first, on the other hand because Langacker's NP model will also be important in Davidse's reinterpretation of instantiation at the level of the clause (as we will see in Section 3).

2.1. The type–instance motif in the NP

With regard to the nominal group, the notion of 'type' refers to the nominal head as such; this type can be further specified, qua type, by means of various kinds of modifiers (adjectival, nominal, prepositional; excluding determining modifiers). The following examples which Langacker [1991a: 53] gives illustrate increasingly specific **type specifications**:

(8) a. *convention site*
b. *excellent convention site*
c. *excellent convention site in the Midwest*

A nominal type specification as such merely indicates an entity as a representative of some class (type), without referring to any particular instance of such an entity. A

type inherently incorporates a characterization of some "basic (aspect)" [ibid.: 56], which points to the **domain of instantiation** within which instances of this type can be located. In the case of nouns, this domain is space.[8] In English, each simple noun type evokes this domain of instantiation by inherently belonging to one of three basic classes: singular count nouns designate a bounded region in space (*pebble*), mass nouns refer to an unbounded region (*gravel*), and plural nouns indicate a replication of bounded entities which together constitute an unbounded region (and hence are regarded as a type of mass noun) (*pebbles*).

A type specification is turned into an **instantiated type** (or instance for short) by being "anchored at a particular location in the domain of instantiation" [ibid.: 75]. In the case of nouns, an instance is presupposed when a type specification is **quantified** (as in *some gravel*, *seven pebbles*, *one pebble*). An instantiated type is **grounded** when it is indicated how it relates to the ground, defined as "the speech event and its participants" [ibid.: 53]. In nominals, grounding is realized in relative quantifiers, articles, demonstratives, and possessives. Each of these grammatical means, which are called "grounding predications",[9] indicates some relation to the speech-act participants in terms of three basic kinds of "factors": "definiteness, specificity, and referentiality". (1) *articles* indicate whether the instance is perceived as definite or indefinite (identified or non-identified in the context of the interaction); (2) *relative quantifiers*, such as *all*, *most*, *some*, *every*, can only be understood in terms of some reference mass, which is again presupposed in the speech interaction; (3) *demonstratives* inherently refer to the speech interaction because they presuppose that the entity designated is definite (identified), and also because they indicate the proximity of this entity to the participants (proximal vs. distal deixis [ibid.: 102]); (4) *possessives*, finally, are a special kind of grounding predication which again presuppose the specificity of the entity designated. Grounding predications are highlighted in the following examples:

(9) a. ***most of his*** *friends*

b. ***those*** *three books on the table*

c. *I bought some apples and* ***a*** *melon.*

Grounding presupposes instantiation, and some types of grounding predications inherently incorporate an instantiating meaning (e.g. *a*, *this*, *that*; *these*, *those* also specify the size of the entity (quantification)), in the same way as qualification presupposes the conception of an instance, and instantiation presupposes the conception of a type. In this sense, the different types of semantic functions defined by Langacker – type specification, instantiation (and quantification), and grounding – are said to indicate a kind of **layering** in the structure of nominal groups [Langacker 1991a: 143]: within this structure as a whole, the type specification is regarded "a kind of nucleus" [ibid.: 54], or the "innermost functional layer" [ibid.: 143], while a grounding predication is added as "the outmost layer" [ibid.: 54]. Since type specification, instantiation and grounding are semantic functions, this layering is interpreted by Langacker as primarily semantic (cf. his label 'functional layer'): it refers to the fact that instantiation presupposes type specification, and grounding presupposes instantiation.

However, as can be seen in the way in which these semantic motifs are realized in a nominal syntagm, this layering is also reflected in the form of the syntagm: non-determining modifiers are closest to the nominal head, while grounding expressions occur at the border of the nominal group as a whole. In this sense, the formal organization of the nominal syntagm can be said to be iconic to the interaction between different types of semantic motifs which are realized in this syntagm. It is precisely for this reason that I propose to use Langacker's model of the type–instance motif, as a basis for clarifying the nature of a combined syntagm [cf. Section 2].

Figure 3 gives an overview of Langacker's semantic functions and the way in which they are realized in language.

Semantic function	**Grounding**	**Quanti-fication**	**Instantiation**	**Type specification**	**Type**
Realization	articles relative quantifiers demonstratives possessives	absolute quantifiers	[an instance conception is presupposed through quantification]	non-determining modifiers	nominal head incorporating specification of basic 'aspect': singular, plural, mass
Further dimensions	degrees of subjectivity	actual vs. structural domains of instantiation			

Figure 3 · Langacker's type–instantiation–grounding motif in the nominal group

2.2. The type–instance motif in the clause

According to Langacker, at the level of the clause, the **type**, or the innermost layer in the overall clause structure, corresponds to the main or 'content' verb head, together with auxiliary elements, except those indicating tense and modality. These auxiliary elements, called "secondary auxiliaries" in SFG, indicate the 'basic aspect' of the clausal type, and hence are parallel to the categorization of nominal heads into singular countable, mass and plural types. They are realized by paired auxiliary items (an auxiliary verb and a suffix) expressing three kinds of meanings: (1) perfective aspect (*have* + *ed*: *have written*), (2) progressive aspect (*be* + *ing*: *be writing*) and (3) passive (*be* + *ed*: *be written*). As we have seen above, the 'basic aspect' of a type refers to the characteristic **domain of instantiation** within which instances of this type can be located. In this way, as noted above, a type specification inherently points to a domain of instantiation. In the case of clauses, which designate events (in which entities participate), the domain of instantiation is *time*.

Just like the distinction between singular and plural, and between mass and countable in noun types pertains to space (boundedness in space), the 'basic aspect' distinctions inherent in a clausal head (expressed by means the perfective and non-perfective morphemes *-ing* and *-ed*, which are part of the secondary auxiliary system) pertain to time. In Langacker's view, the morphemes *-ing* and *-ed* are inherently *atemporal*, or

more precisely, when they are added to a verbal stem, they construe an atemporal relation: expressions such as *written* and *writing*, when they occur as such (without an accompanying aspectual auxiliary), designate atemporal relations. One of the contexts in which such expressions can occur (independent of their matching auxiliary), is as modifiers in nominal groups (Langacker 1991a: 203, 210):

(10) a. *a written exam*
b. *students writing their essays on a PC*

Within the auxiliary-morpheme pair as a whole, it is the auxiliary which indicates the 'basic aspect' of the clausal head in relation to time: the auxiliary turns an inherently atemporal expression (*writing*, *written*) into a temporal or *processual* one (*have written*, *be writing*, *be written*). Langacker (1991a: Ch. 5) explains the temporal 'aspect' expressed by each of the types of auxiliary elements in relation to 'perfectivity' in general.[10]

In Langacker's model, the combination of a clausal head plus secondary auxiliaries is regarded as the **type specification** at the level of the clause. The conception of a type such as *be writing* is then turned into an **instance** by being tied to particular participants (e.g. *John + be writing + a letter*),[11] and this instantiated type can then be **grounded** by providing indications of tense, modality, and what Langacker refers to as "negation" (ibid.: 90), as in the following examples:

(11) a. *When I came in, John **was** writing a letter to his brother.*
b. *You **have to** write your brother a letter.*
c. *The letter **hasn't** been written yet.*

Through the tense-modal complex, events are construed as being part of "known reality" (Langacker 1991a: 244), and in this sense, the meanings expressed by temporal and modal grounding elements in the clause is similar to the meaning of 'definiteness' in the nominal group grounding. Furthermore, the distinction between present and past

in the tense system corresponds to the proximal/distal deixis realized in demonstratives (ibid.).

Figure 4 summarizes the way in which Langacker conceives of the semantic functions of type specification, instantiation and grounding at the level of the clause, in relation to his characterization of the nominal group. It will be noted that at this level, again, the type–instance motif indicates a layered type of structuring of the clausal syntagm.

Semantic function	**Grounding**	**Quantification**	**Instantiation**	**Type specification**	**Type**
Realization in NG	articles relative quantifiers demonstratives possessives	absolute quantifiers	[an instance conception is presupposed through quantification]	non-determining modifiers	nominal head, incorporating specification of 'basic aspect': singular, plural, mass
Realization in the clause	tense, modality, negation	?	participants	content verb head & 'basic aspect' expressed by secondary auxiliaries	

Figure 4 · Langacker's characterization of the type–instantiation–grounding motif at the level of the clause, compared to that of the nominal group

In exploring the type–instantiation–grounding motif at the level of the clause, Langacker pays most attention to the role of auxiliary elements (in the broad sense, comprising auxiliaries and inflectional morphemes), which appear to pertain to the two extremes of the type–instantiation–grounding layering: secondary auxiliaries are important in the *clausal type specification*, as we have seen above, while primary auxiliaries (tense and modality) realize the *grounding* at the level of the clause. The focus on the role of auxiliaries has two consequences: (1) Langacker does not specify an aspect of *quantification* at the level of the clause (that area which is parallel to absolute quantification in the nominal group); and (2) the nature of the intermediate semantic function of 'instantiation' at the clause level is not explicitly dealt with in Langacker's

work.[12] Hence, as can also be seen in Figure 4, within the 'middle' area in between type and grounding (i.e. type specification, instantiation, quantification) Langacker does not explicitly indicate a parallelism between the nominal group and the clause.[13] It is especially with regard to the area in between the type as such and grounding, that Davidse proposes a number of refinements of Langacker's model, based on further exploring this model in relation to Halliday's characterization of the interpersonal component of language, as we will see in the following section.

3. The Subject as Instantiator: Davidse's cognitive-functional model

As a starting point for refining the type–instance motif on the level of the clause, Davidse (1997, 1998) relates Langacker's type specification–instantiation–grounding pattern to Halliday's analysis of the interpersonal structure of a clause into Mood and Residue.

It can be seen that Halliday's notion of 'finiteness', with its three aspects of primary tense, modality and polarity corresponds exactly to Langacker's. A major difference between the two models lies in the role which is assigned to the Subject, since in Langacker's view, the Subject, together with other elements such as Complements and Circumstantial Adjuncts (using systemic-functional terms) has an instantiating role and thus has nothing to do with the grounding function, which in his model is restricted to finiteness and negation.

Adducing a number of arguments which corroborate the view that the Mood element (with Finite and Subject) has a distinctive status in the interpersonal structure of the clause, Davidse defines it as the **instantiating complex** in the clause (Davidse 1997: 422). Highlighting the central interpersonal role which Halliday assigns to the Subject, she calls the Subject the "**Instantiator**" of the clause (ibid.). It is argued that the function of Instantiator in the clause is realized in two ways: (1) the Subject itself

(i.e. the lexicogrammatical specification of the Subject) is an explicit or *objective* realization of the instantiating function; (2) the indication of grammatical number in the Finite is regarded as an implicit or *subjective* marking of the instantiating function (Davidse 1997: 422).[14]

As we have seen above, Langacker does not specify how **quantification** is realized at the level of the clause. In Davidse's view (1997: 422, 1998: 159), it is the system of *polarity* which realizes the function of quantification in the clause. Davidse links polarity to Davies' notion of "occurrence value" (Davies 1979: 105) (negative polarity: occurrence value = nil, positive polarity: occurrence value = at least one), and specifies that polarity is realized in two ways in the clause, as recognized by Matthiessen (1993: 472): (1) as fused with the Finite (e.g. *I have**n't** seen her today*), (2) or in the Subject (e.g. ***No-one** has seen her today*).

With regard to **grounding**, Davidse specifies an additional grounding function beyond primary tense and modality, viz. **person deixis**. This is motivated by drawing a parallel with the structure of the nominal group:

> Whereas the nominal group may be grounded *either* in terms of spatial proximity (via demonstratives) *or* in terms of person deixis (via possessives), the clause is grounded *both* in terms of temporal/modal proximity and person deixis (…) (Davidse 1997: 422)

As with the instantiating function of the Subject, the grounding function of person deixis can be realized either objectively, in the Subject itself, or subjectively, in the Finite (Davidse 1997: 422, 1998: 166).

What is especially relevant in relation to person deixis, is the distinction between first and second person on the one hand, which realize participants involved in the speech interaction (*I* as encoder, *you* as decoder), and third person on the other hand, which realizes participants which lie outside the speech interaction. This distinction has to do with a further semantic function which Davidse adds to the type specification–-

instantiation–grounding pattern, viz. the construction of the **speech function** of an utterance. This semantic function has no parallel in the nominal group, since it is only clauses, not nominal groups, which realize speech functions. While nominal groups designate entities or persons and identify them in relation to the speech event, clauses go one step further: beyond designating processes in which entities and persons are involved, and beyond relating these processes to the speech event, clauses also serve to *exchange commodities* (which are either purely linguistic, i.e. 'information', or physical-material, i.e. 'goods-&-services' (cf. also Section 3 above). In Davidse's model, then, speech function is characterized as an extra semantic function in the clause which is ground-related: it specifies the nature of the exchange in terms of three "ground-related primitives of I-you, give-ask, knowable-desirable" (Davidse 1998: 163).

Finally, it should be noted that Davidse further emphasizes Langacker's model of a layered structuring of the clause by interpreting this layering in terms of orientation: "the four semantic functions of type specification, instantiation, quantification and grounding tend to be reflected *iconically* in a right-to-left reading of the NG's structure" (Davidse 1998: 155, emphasis MT).

Davidse's refined model of the type–instance motif at the level of the clause is summarized, in relation to Langacker's model, in Figure 5.

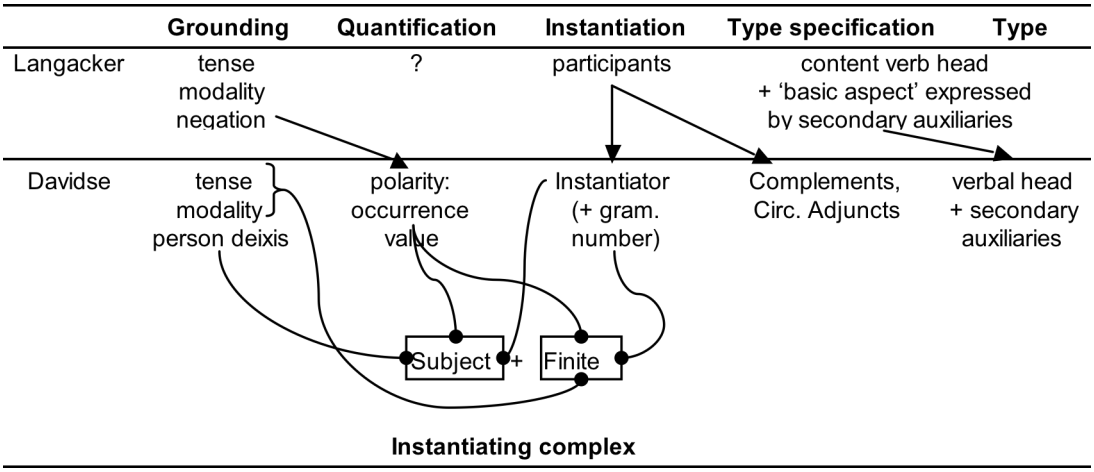

Figure 4 · Davidse's refined model of the type–instance motif in the clause

4. Type specification – instantiation – grounding: A metafunctional reinterpretation

In the previous section we have considered Langacker's model of type specification, instantiation and grounding, and Davidse's reinterpretation of this model in a systemic-functional framework. As we have seen, Davidse's reinterpretation has been guided by Halliday's model of the interpersonal component of language. Conversely, her refined model of the semantic functions of type specification–instantiation–grounding is especially intended to further elucidate the *interpersonal* layer of structure in a systemic-functional model of the clause. I believe that the type–instance motif can be used as a basis for specifying the semantics of the *three* metafunctional types of semiosis, viz. interpersonal, textual and experiential. In this section we will explore the possibility of reinterpreting the semantic functions of type specification, instantiation and grounding in metafunctional terms. In this reinterpretation, both Langacker's and Davidse's views on the type–instance motif will be drawn on.

The basis of the metafunctional reinterpretation of the type–instance motif which I would like to propose, is summarized in Table 1. It should be noted that this table only presents a rudimentary scheme which will serve as a starting point and a basic reference framework for the discussion below.

Semantic motif	Grounding	Instantiation	Type specification
Metafunction	Interpersonal	Textual	Experiential

Table 1 · A metafunctional reinterpretation of the type–instance motif: Basis

4.1. Type specification and the experiential metafunction

Let us again start with the innermost semantic motif in Langacker's model, i.e. type specification. As indicated in Table 1, I regard the motif of type specification as an experiential motif. It is clear that this conception is based on Davidse's model of the type–instance motif, in which *participants* other than the Subject together with the content verb are regarded as the type specification of the clause. However, from an experiential perspective as understood in SFG, the participant which is (or rather, which happens to be) mapped onto the Subject role is just a participant in the same sense as the other participants involved in the process are. In this sense, it is Langacker's conception of the role of participants which seems to be closer to the experiential perspective in SFG: in his view, *all* participants are assigned a similar role in relation to the process, viz. that of elaboration (as a type of instantiation).

I want to show that Langacker's and Davidse's views on the role of participants in relation to the type–instance motif are not incompatible, if it is recognized that two different levels of type specification are involved. In fact, the very recognition of these two levels is inspired by the notion of an experiential metafunction in SFG. The two levels at which an experiential type specification is relevant, are a level of functional structure and a level of syntagmatic structure. Hence the two kinds of type specification will be referred to as functional type specification and syntagmatic type specification. Since our focus in this section as a whole is on the clause as a kind of syntagm, an alternative term for syntagmatic type specification is clausal type specification.

A **functional type specification** refers to the relationship between schematic participant roles (and circumstances)[15] and a process type. This is a central aspect of the

experiential functional structure at the level of the clause: different types of configurations of participants (number of participants, type of involvement in the process, and so on) and the schematic (lexical) nature of these participants (for example, in terms of animacy, consciousness and so on) constitute a basis for recognizing different types of processes in the experiential network of TRANSITIVITY. I will refer to a functional type specification as a **process configuration**.

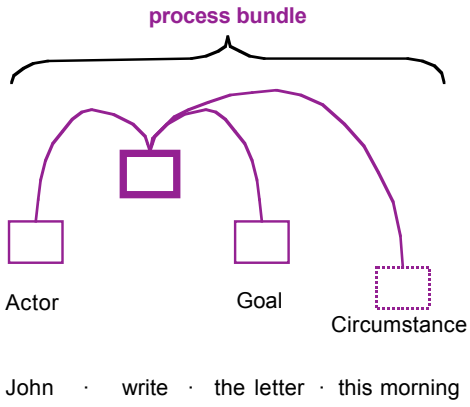

Figure 5 · Functional type specification modelled in terms of daughter dependency

A process-participant configuration can be modelled in terms of constituency or dependency. In this respect, it is perhaps the representation in terms of daughter dependency which captures best the nature of a functional type specification of a process: in such a model, the process is regarded as head, and the schematic participants are modelled as specifications of this head. This view, which is taken in valency models of transitivity, is visualized in Figure 6.[16]

A **syntagmatic type specification** refers to that part of a syntagm which constitutes a type specification in contrast to other instantiating and grounding elements, i.e. it is that part of a syntagm which does not have an instantiating or a grounding role. Hence, a syntagmatic type specification only comes into being through the semantic function of instantiation, since there is no syntagmatic type specification without there

being an instantiating and grounding component to which this type specification – qua non-instantiated component – is related. In this sense, since it depends on the function of instantiation, syntagmatic type specification is not a purely experiential phenomenon.[17]

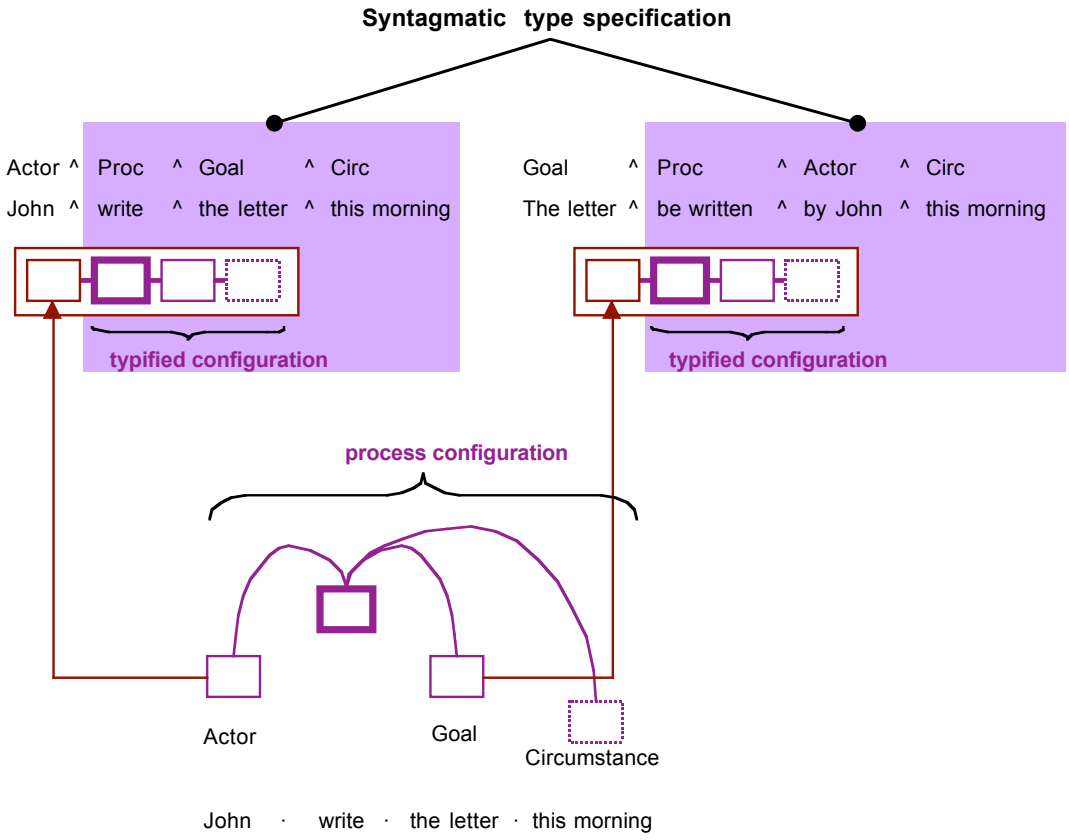

Figure 6 · The relationship between functional and syntagmatic type specification

The only aspect which deserves further attention, at this point, is the difference between functional and syntagmatic type specification. What happens when an experiential functional structure is mapped onto a syntagmatic structure, is that one of its participants is singled out to take the role of Subject. In the terminology used in this paper, one participant of a functional type specification is singled out as Instantiator, and the rest of the process configuration is typified. A syntagmatic type specification

will therefore be called a **typified process configuration**. It should be noted that a typified configuration is not a general type of process, but rather a particular way in which a configuration is turned into a clausal type specification in a particular syntagm. In this sense, a typified configuration can be, for example, *write a letter*, *be assigned a different role*, *give a present to John*, *be given a present by Mary* and so on. The relationship between functional type specification and syntagmatic type specification is visualized in Figure 7.

4.2. Grounding and the interpersonal metafunction

We now turn to the other end of the grounding–instantiation–type specification continuum, i.e. grounding. We skip the complex area of instantiation for the time being, so that it can then be specified in relation to both type specification and grounding in the following section. It is evident that the semantic function of grounding is interpersonal, and therefore this aspect of the type–instance motif does not require much further explanation. In keeping with Davidse's interpretation of the type–instance motif, I consider *modality*, *tense* and *person deixis* as expressions of interpersonal grounding. These two aspects are interpersonal grounding expressions, in that they relate clausal constructions to the interpersonal ground of the speech interactants in their role as intersubjective agents, who exchange commodities, and who express their opinion about the likelihood of occurrence of events which are designated. The semantic function of grounding can be visualized as in Figure 8.[18]

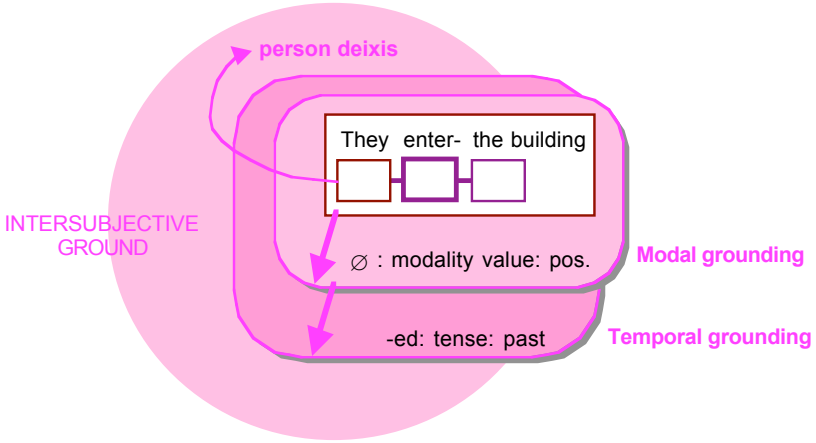

Figure 7 · Grounding

4.3. Instantiation and the textual metafunction

Having considered the two opposite ends of the type specification–instantiation–-grounding continuum, we can now turn to the centre of this continuum, viz. the semantic function of instantiation. As shown in Table 1, I will propose a metafunctional reinterpretation of instantiation as a textual type of function.

As has already been hinted at above, the nature of instantiation (as the central core of the type specification–instantiation–grounding continuum) is more complex than the two functions looked at so far, because instantiation interacts with both type specification and grounding. Furthermore, it has been noted that this interaction indicates areas of overlap between metafunctions; these can now be specified as overlaps between the textual component of language and the other two metafunctions. Because of the inherent complexity of this 'middle area', the function of instantiation will be explored in more detail than the other two functions we have considered above. In this exploration, both the peculiar nature of the textual metafunction vis-à-vis the other two, and the intermediary role of instantiation in the type specification–-instantiation–grounding continuum will be further specified.

4.3.1. The second-order nature and enabling role of the textual metafunction

The textual metafunction as it is interpreted in Hallidayan SFG differs from the experiential and interpersonal metafunctions in two respects. On the one hand, it is of a *second-order nature* compared to the other metafunctions, in that it builds upon experiential and interpersonal resources of language in order to create texture. On the other hand, the textual metafunction has an instrumental or *enabling role* vis-à-vis the other two metafunctions, in that it makes possible the integration of interpersonal and experiential resources in the overall creation of texture.

In explorations of the textual metafunction in SFG, it is especially its **second-order nature** which has come to be highlighted. This second-order nature of the textual metafunction is clearly demonstrated in the role of a discourse semantics, which pertains to cohesion as a *semantic* textual phenomenon which is created through various types of resources from each of the metafunctional components in lexicogrammar. In addition, Matthiessen (1990, 1992) has shown that the central *lexicogrammatical* systems of the textual component, viz. INFORMATION and THEME, exploit the other metafunctions, in that experiential and interpersonal structures function as "'carriers' of textual waves" (Matthiessen 1992: 47). Due to its particulate, segmental organization, experiential structure serves as a carrier of the textual system of THEME, which is realized through the sequence of experiential segments. Parallel to this, due to its prosodic nature, interpersonal structure functions as a carrier of the textual system of INFORMATION, which is realized through intonational peaks in the clause, or what Matthiessen calls 'pitch prosodies' (see Matthiessen 1992: 46).

The **enabling role** of the textual metafunction with respect to the other two metafunctions is explained in connection with its second-order nature, as can be seen in Matthiessen's characterization:[19]

> Because of its second-order, enabling nature, the textual metafunction operates in terms of the resources brought into existence by the other metafunctions; this is manifested in lexis (lexical cohesions) as well as in grammar (theme, information, ellipsis, etc.). (Matthiessen 1992: 54)

According to Halliday, the enabling role of the textual metafunction lies in the fact that "it is only in combination with textual meanings that ideational and interpersonal meanings are actualized" (Halliday 1978b: 113). Both Matthiessen's and Halliday's explanations of the nature of the textual metafunction show that its feature as 'enabling' and its second-order feature as 'building upon' other resources are theorized as interdependent: textual resources (such as COHESION (or discourse semantics), THEME and INFORMATION) are based on experiential and interpersonal resources, and it is precisely because experiential and interpersonal resources inherently also construe (i.e. Halliday's 'combine with') textual meanings, that they come into existence in actual language use, i.e. in the creation of texts.

As has already been hinted at above, the perspective which has usually been taken in SFG in considering the textual metafunction, is to highlight its second-order nature, rather than its enabling nature, vis-à-vis the other two metafunctions. In this perspective, textual resources of language have been characterized in terms of the ways in which they employ aspects of the other metafunctions. As we have seen above, this approach is clearly illustrated in the systemic-functional conception of COHESION (and especially also Martin's conception of a discourse semantics), THEME and INFORMATION.

In my view, both features of a 'second-order nature' and an 'enabling role' are essential in characterizing the textual metafunction. However, I want to argue that the characterization of these two dimensions of the textual metafunction as interdependent does not do justice to the unique contribution of each of these features to explaining the nature of the textual metafunction.[20] In other words, I believe that in order to value both the second-order nature and the enabling role of the textual metafunction, these two

aspects should be disentangled, rather than being defined as interdependent. I would argue that with respect to textual resources such as COHESION, THEME and INFORMATION, a perspective which highlights the second-order, rather than enabling nature of the textual metafunction (i.e. the perspective which has been taken in SFG) is the *only* perspective which is feasible; and furthermore, that it is indeed this perspective, and this explanation of the systems of COHESION, THEME and INFORMATION which motivates the conception of the textual metafunction as of a second-order nature.

I want to argue that the enabling role of the textual metafunction – as disentangled from its second-order nature – lies on a different level than the systems just mentioned. More specifically, I propose that the enabling role of the textual metafunction can be defined in terms of the semantic function of *instantiation* in the clause. Two aspects need further explanation in order to motivate the proposal to characterize the enabling role of the textual metafunction in terms of the semantic function of instantiation: (1) the interpretation of instantiation as a *textual* function, which is less obviously straightforward than the interpretation of type-specification as experiential and of grounding as interpersonal; and (2) the interpretation of instantiation as having an *enabling* role with respect to the experiential and interpersonal metafunctions, i.e. vis-à-vis type specification and grounding. These two aspects will be dealt with in the following two sub-sections.

Before this further argumentation can be given, however, it is necessary to be clear on what constitutes 'instantiation' in the interpretation which is offered here. I consider four types of resources as belonging to the core area[21] of instantiation in the clause: the *Instantiator* (/Subject) and concomitant to this, *grammatical number* marked on the verb in English; an indication of the *domain of instantiation* (i.e. time) in which a clausal type specification can be located; and *polarity* (i.e. the assignment of an occurrence value).

4.3.2. The textual nature of instantiation: Presentation and creation of relevance

The interpretation of the function of instantiation as a *textual* function can be motivated in relation to general characterizations of the textual metafunction which are proposed in SFG. Those aspects which are especially relevant, in this respect, are summarized in Table 2.[22]

Ideational	**Interpersonal**	**Textual**
language as representation	language as interaction	language as texture
language as reflection	language as action	language as relevance

Table 2 · The nature of the textual component of language compared to the other two metafunctions

One overall meaning which is attached to the textual metafunction, in order to differentiate it from the other two, is relevance:

> the textual component in language is **relevance** (the speaker as relating to the portion of reality that constitutes the speech situation, the context within which meanings are being exchanged). (Halliday 1979: 60; emphasis MT)

In the framework of the semantic functions of type specification–instantiation–-grounding, it is instantiation which does no more and no less than presenting and indicating the relevance of a typified process configuration. As we have seen above, in order to be actualized in a text, a functional type specification must be reconstrued into a syntagmatic type specification, i.e. one of its participants must be singled out to take up the role of Instantiator. It is the function of instantiation which *presents* a process configuration as a syntagm in a text, and it does so by setting up a relationship between an Instantiator and a clausal type specification, and by assigning an occurrence value to this relationship. In this way, an instance of an event is presented (but this event is not yet grounded in terms of tense or modality).[23] By creating an instantiated type the function of instantiation indicates the relevance which the event has to the interactants.

In other words by merely presenting an occurrence of an event, the speaker indicates that this event must have some relevance to the speech interactants.

4.3.3. The enabling role of instantiation

The second aspect which needs to be motivated, regarding the textual interpretation of the role of instantiation in the clause, is the further view of instantiation as having an *enabling* role with respect to the experiential and interpersonal metafunctions, i.e. vis-à-vis type specification and grounding. In this section, this enabling or constitutive role of instantiation will first be characterized in general terms (§ I), defining instantiation as the central basis for forming a syntagm, and hence, defining the enabling function of the textual metafunction as a function to form syntagms. After that (§ II), we will consider the constitutive role of the different resources for instantiation in the clause.

4.3.3.1. Instantiation and the formation of a syntagm

The enabling role of instantiation is inherent in its nature as intermediate between type specification and grounding. With regard to type specification, the role of instantiation is twofold: on the one hand, it is only through the combination of a typified configuration and an Instantiator that a process configuration can occur in a clausal syntagm. On the other hand, when a syntagmatic type specification occurs as such, i.e. without as such being instantiated, it inherently points to the domain of instantiation within which it can potentially be instantiated. With regard to grounding, the enabling role of instantiation is even clearer, since, as we have seen in Section 2, grounding cannot occur without instantiation, i.e. grounding presupposes instantiation.

Because of the fundamental constitutive role of instantiation in relation to both type specification and grounding, and because the continuum of type specification–-instantiation–grounding is regarded as characterizing the organization of a combined syntagm, I would argue that the enabling role of the textual metafunction is precisely its *syntagm-forming role*: although the interpersonal and experiential metafunctions each

contribute their own structure to a combined syntagm, it is especially the textual metafunction which, in a more abstract sense, lies at the basis of the formation of a syntagm.

By way of concluding this section, it is useful to reconsider the central role of instantiation in the syntagm in view of Halliday's characterization of the enabling role of textual metafunction: "it is only through the encoding of semiotic interaction as text that the ideational and interpersonal components of meaning can *become operational in an environment*" (Halliday 1977: 202, emphasis MT).

4.3.3.2. Instantiation as a hinge between type specification and grounding: The orchestrating role of the textual metafunction

In this section, I propose to interpret the function of instantiation as a hinge between type specification and grounding. This hinge inherently points in two directions, and thus holds together type specification and grounding. In more specific terms, the clausal resources for instantiation inherently also interact with type specification and grounding. By exploring instantiation in such terms, its constitutive role vis-à-vis the other semantic functions will be further specified, and, in turn, the nature of type specification and grounding will be further elucidated. Let us consider each of the clausal resources for instantiation in turn, starting with the central role of the Instantiator.

- **The enabling role of the Instantiator**. The most central, *instantiating*, aspect of the Instantiator lies in its role in creating an instance of an event, which can be presented (either as such, as in nominalization, or in order to be further grounded, as in independent clauses) as relevant in a speech interaction. This aspect of the Instantiator is encoded in the **textual** system of VOICE: in order for a process configuration to be presentable in a syntagm, it must always be assigned a voice, i.e. one of its participants must be singled out to be mapped onto the role of Instantiator.

The role of the Instantiator in the construction of an instantiated type also has an **interpersonal** facet: in Davidse's interpretation of the type–instance motif, the Instantiator, as the Subject of a clause, refers to that element which Halliday describes as being modally responsible; it is the element on which the validity of the instantiated process 'is made to rest'. This interpersonal dimension of the Instantiator lies at the basis of further grounding aspects which are encoded in the Instantiator, viz. person deixis. Person deixis is important in a general interpersonal sense in that it anchors the Instantiator in the interactants' intersubjective ground. It also has a more specific interpersonal role in indicating a speech function value.[24]

Finally, the relationship between an Instantiator and a typified process configuration is also a relationship between a Subject and a Predicate. Here 'Subject' is understood in a more traditional sense[25] than the interpersonal Subject in SFG. In order to indicate this distinction, I will refer to this dimension of the Instantiator as the **Predication focus**. It is through a relationship between a Predication focus and a Predicate that a predication is constructed, i.e. an instantiated process is created. This is the textual role, as defined above, of the Instantiator vis-à-vis a typified process configuration as merely 'instantiating' that process. However, I want to argue that in the reverse direction this relationship is inherently **experiential**. In other words, I interpret the predicating function of the Predicate vis-à-vis the Predication focus as an experiential function which is made possible through the textual function of instantiation, in the same sense as the interpersonal Subject as the element which is modally responsible is an interpersonal role which comes into being through the textual function of instantiation.

In this view, the Predicate *characterizes* the Instantiator by specifying the process configuration in which the Instantiator participates, i.e. the configuration in which the Instantiator, as a participant, is anchored. In a process configuration (i.e. a functional type specification), each participant can potentially be characterized in terms of its participation in the process. In the creation of a syntagm, when the process

configuration is turned into a typified configuration, one participant is singled out as the primary focus of a predication relationship. In this sense, also, the syntagmatic type specification, as Predicate, inherently incorporates an anchor point which 'points to' a Predication focus which is construed outside this type specification (or which is not explicitly construed, as in certain types of nominalization). This feature of the clausal type specification ties in with (and adds an extra dimension to) Langacker's description of the type specification as inherently pointing to the domain of instantiation in which it can potentially be located.

■ **The enabling role of instantiation.** As has been pointed out in Section 2, according to Langacker, it is an inherent feature of a type specification that it incorporates an indication of the domain of instantiation in which an instance of this type specification can be located. I would argue that, since a syntagmatic type specification (or a typified process configuration) is only formed through the role of instantiation, this feature of the syntagmatic type specification is a consequence of the function of instantiation. In this sense, an instantiated type such as *John's writing of a letter* inherently indicates a potential location of this instance in time, which means, a potential grounding of this instance in time. Therefore, it is the textual indication of a domain of instantiation which makes possible the further, **interpersonal** grounding of an expression in that domain of instantiation in terms of the system of TENSE.

While the domain of instantiation is implied in the construction of a typified process configuration, I believe that it is also explicitly indicated in an **experiential** way, in the role of circumstantial adverbials within the process configuration. In *John's writing of a letter this morning*, *this morning* construes a location in time as a domain of instantiation in an explicit, experiential manner.[26] This location can also be indicated in relation to another occurrence of an event, as in *Before he left this morning, John wrote a letter to his uncle*.

■ **The enabling role of the indication of an occurrence value.** The indication of an occurrence value has a constitutive role with respect to grounding resources, in a similar way as the indication of a domain of instantiation. In this case, it is the interpersonal grounding in terms of modality which further builds upon the mere presence of an occurrence or a non-occurrence. Modality grounds this (non)occurrence in two general ways: (1) when no explicit modal operators are used, the (non)occurrence is grounded as absolutely certain (in the case of propositions) or absolutely obligatory (in the case of proposals); different types of modal operators construe lower levels of certainty and obligation, indicating various values which are in between 'yes' and 'no'.

5. General conclusion

In this paper, we have explored how the grammatical relation of Subject can been interpreted in terms of the notion of instantiation. In building further upon Davidse's interpersonal characterization of the Subject as Instantiator, we have seen how instantiation, and its relation to type specification and grounding can be re-interpreted in relation to the three metafunctions as seen in SFG:

(1) The *experiential* metafunction has been related to *type specification*, both as a functional type specification, which refers to a process configuration, and a syntagmatic type specification, which refers to a typified process configuration, which is related to an Instantiator in the formation of a clausal syntagm.

(2) The *interpersonal* metafunction has been linked to the semantic function of *grounding*.

(3) With regard to the *textual* metafunction, it has been argued that *instantiation* characterizes the *enabling role* of this metafunction with respect to the other metafunctions. Besides this enabling role, the textual metafunction also has a *second-order nature* vis-à-vis the other two metafunctions, which is encoded in the

lexicogrammatical systems of THEME and INFORMATION, and the semantic system of COHESION (or more generally, a discourse semantics).

It has been shown that it is through the central, 'enabling' function of instantiation in the formation of a syntagm – in which the Subject, as Instantiator plays a major role alongside the Finite element – that the construction of a syntagmatic type specification (as incorporating an indication of a domain of instantiation, and an anchor pointing to a potential Predication focus) and the construction of a grounded instance can be brought about. In this sense the enabling role of the textual metafunction (which, as has been argued, is crucially concerned with 'instantiation') has been characterized as a syntagm-forming role.

The central role of instantiation in relation to type specification and grounding, and the fundamental role of the textual metafunction in relation to the other metafunctions, is summarized in Figure 9.

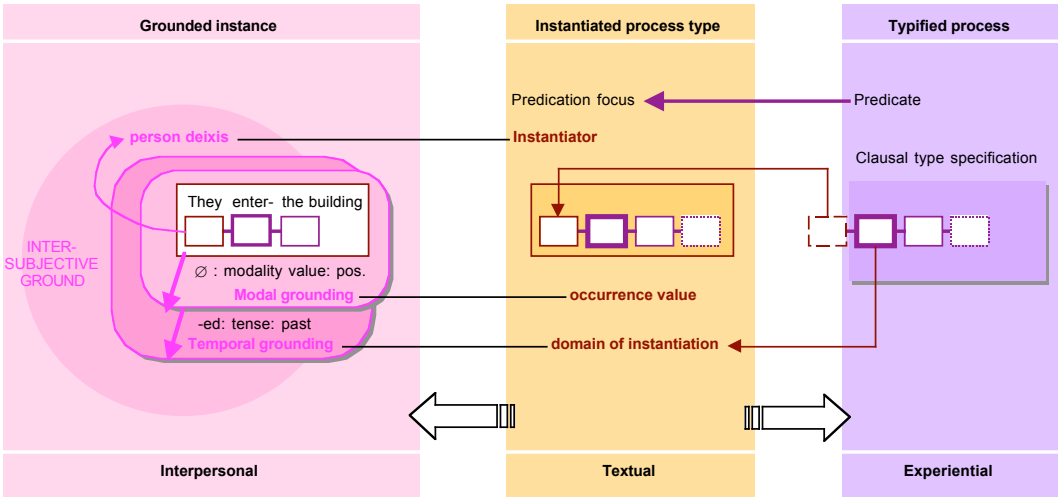

Figure 8 · The central role of instantiation in the type specification–instantiation–-grounding continuum

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1. This paper focusses on the notion of 'Subject' in English only. Although the discussion in this paper is theoretical rather than descriptive and Langacker's notions of type specification, instantiation and grounding are general semantic functions, the nature of 'Instantiator' as a possible *universal* grammatical function can only be assessed in a more descriptive and typological framework.

2. The majority of properties of English subjects presented in this overview occurs in Keenan's well-known "Subject Properties List". Where appropriate, a reference is included to the relevant item in Keenan's SPL.

3. Exceptions include clefts and existential constructions.

4. Plato, *Cratylus*: 425a, 431b-c; *Theaetetus*: 206d; *Sophist*: 261d–262d (cf. e.g. Plato *Collected Dialogues*, ed. 1961).

5. This is the type of definition which lies at the basis of the distinction between transitive (in which the subject has nominative case and the Agent role) and ergative languages (in which the subject has absolutive case and the Patient role).

6. Apart from Subject and Finite, the Mood element may also contain Modal Adjuncts (e.g. *probably, maybe, regularly, absolutely*); the remaineder of the clause (i.e. the Predicator (verb without finite), Complements and Adjuncts) is called the Residue.

7. In Hallidayan SFG, interactive moves are distinguished along two dimensions: (1) the direction of the interaction (give or ask), and (2) the type of commodity exchanged (information or 'goods-&-services'). These two dimensions yield four basic categories: statement (giving information; by default realized by indicative:declarative mood), question (asking information; by default realized by indicative:interrogative mood), command (asking goods-&-services; by default realized by imperative mood), and offer (giving goods-&-services; no default linguistic realization).

8. 'Space' can have different more specific meanings, including: 'physical space' (in nouns designating physical entities, such as *tree*, *pencil*, *house*; *sand*); 'quality space' (in nouns designating a brand or a type, e.g. *wine*, *glue*; in abstract nouns such as *hope*, *fear*) (cf. Langacker 1987: 206ff., 1991a: 27ff.).

9. Note that 'predication' is used here in a different sense than in the subject-predicate/predication dimension referred to in Section 1 above. In Langackers cognitive grammar, 'predication' is short for 'semantic structure' (cf. Langacker 1991b: 279).

10. There is no room to go into these explanations here. It is easy to see that the progressive aspect inherently pertains to 'time' as domain of instantiation (and arguably, this type of the clausal 'basic aspects' is closest to the nominal distinction between bounded and unbounded regions in space), in terms of boundedness; the perfective aspect is explained in terms of 'current relevance' (i.e. relevance in relation to some temporal reference point). The passive is most difficult to be linked to 'time' as domain of instantiation (and in traditional grammar, the

passive is not regarded as a verbal 'aspect'). Langacker explains the temporal aspect of the passive in terms of notions such as "an internal change of state" (1991a: 202).

11. An instantiated type as such, i.e. non-grounded, only occurs in nominalizations, such as *John's writing of a letter* (Langacker 1991a: 33).

12. Outside the context of exploring a type–instantiation–grounding distinction, in dealing with argument structure (and hence the nature and role of participants in an event, which are here related to instantiation at clause level), Langacker introduces the concept of "elaboration", which is regarded as a type of instantiation in general. The argument structure of a verb is defined as an abstract constructional schema consisting of a number of schematically characterized participants. This schema serves as "a template for assembling novel expressions" (Langacker 1991a: 37) by lexically specifying (or 'elaborating') the abstract schematic participant roles.

In general terms, this type of instantiation is what is called 'delicacy' in SFG, whereas the 'instantiation' involved in the type–instantiation–grounding is of the 'actualization' type (cf. also Langacker 1991a: 61, who refers to the distinction between type–sub-type and type–token/instance relations). We will return to Langacker's notion of elaboration in Section 4.2 below.

13. With regard to the clause, it is also this middle area which has received least attention, as indicated in the previous note. Besides that, Langacker is not clear on the status of participants (or subject, objects and complements) in relation to the type/instance motif: on the one hand, the indication of a subject, objects and complements is regarded as turning a type specification into an instantiated type (Langacker 1991a: 33); on the other hand, it is argued that "what is traditionally known as "subject-verb agreement" is analyzed as being part of the grounding predication" (ibid.: 247).

14. Note that Langacker's use of the terms *subjective* vs. *objective* (as referring to an implicit vs. explicit construal of subjectivity) is opposite to the labelling of the explicit vs. implicit expression of modality as *objective* vs. *subjective* in SFG (Halliday 1994/1985: 354ff; Halliday 2004: 613ff.). In relation to grammaticalization, Traugott uses the contrast subjective/objective

in a sense which is opposite to Langacker's interpretation, and which is closer to Halliday's usage of the terms. (See aso Goossens 2004 on this terminological contrast.)

15. Circumstances are mentioned between brackets here, because further on in this paper, circumstances will be placed in an intermediate area between the experiential and textual metafunctions.

16. It should be noted that functional type specification, as defined here, does not correspond to Langacker's conception of the role of participants, although this conception has been described above as closest to the experiential perspective in SFG. As we have seen, the general role which Langacker assigns to all participants in relation to the type–instance motif, is *instantiation* rather than type specification. However, it has also been noted that outside his treatment of the type–instance motif, Langacker also theorizes the relationship between participants and a process in terms of *elaboration*, which corresponds to delicacy in SFG

I believe that neither of these relationships applies to the connection *between* participants and a process, i.e. the relationship which holds *within* a process-participant configuration, and which has been characterized as functional type specification. (1) The instantiation which Langacker refers to pertains to actualization within one participant, i.e. it is the actualization of a schematic participant role, such as Phenomenon, into an instantiated ánd grounded nominal group, such as *the play* (as in *Did she like the play?*). (2) The relationship of elaboration or delicacy again does not pertain to the connection *between* participants and processes: delicacy is a general type of semiotic relationship, which, in the experiential metafunction, applies to transitivity configurations as a whole, and hence which holds between a schematic configuration (defined in grammatical terms), and a more specific type of configuration (defined in lexical-collocational terms). In this view, when the participants in a configuration are elaborated, i.e. rendered more precisely or lexically, the process is likewise elaborated, i.e. it is rendered as a more specific type of process (with a more specific, lexical sense).

17. This is also suggested by the fact that, as we have seen in considering Langacker's model above (Section 2), a syntagmatic type specification inherently points to the domain of instantiation in which it can potentially be instantiated.

18. The layering of temporal grounding and modal grounding is a subject which needs further investigation. The layering which is given in Figure 8 is proposed in order to account for expressions where modal operators are themselves located in time, as in, for example, *He has told me he **would** come tomorrow*. However, there is another sense in which temporal grounding (grounding in time as the clausal domain of instantiation) forms a layer which is closer to the type specification than modal grounding, in that, (1) a type specification inherently indicates the domain of instantiation (especially in the secondary auxiliary sets, cf. *have written*, *be writing*, *is written*)), and (2) modal grounding through modal operators incorporates both a modality value and a more abstract interpretation of temporal grounding (in that time, which is an aspect of reality, is reinterpreted as potentiality, which is an aspect of a projected reality) (e.g. *He **must** have left by now*, modal grounding: certainty, temporal grounding: present).

19. See also Halliday (1970: 325, 1976/1973: 25, 1978b: 112–113).

20. Since it is primarily the second-order nature of the textual metafunction which has received most attention in SFG (in relation to characterizing the systems of COHESION, THEME and INFORMATION), it is especially the notion of an enabling role of the textual metafunction which suffers most in this respect: there is no *specific* explanation of this enabling role in terms of textual systems in which it is realized. In this respect, the proposal which will be made further on in this section for defining the semantic function of instantiation in the clause as an enabling textual resource is offered as a possible readjustment of this imbalance in the systemic-functional characterization of the peculiarity of the textual metafunction vis-à-vis the other metafunctions.

21. I use the expression 'core area' here, because further on in this section, further aspects of instantiation will be recognized, which interact with type specification and grounding.

22. Cf. descriptions of the three metafuntions in Halliday (1979, 1994/1985, 1996), Matthiessen (1992).

23. At the level of the simple independent clause, a non-grounded instantiated type does not occur as such. (It is indeed an inherent feature of an independent clause, as independent, that it has its own grounding, i.e. that it does not depend on other constructions in order to be

grounded.) Constructions indicating a non-grounded instantiated type include nominalizations, e.g. *John's writing of a letter*, or *With John still writing his letter[, we had to wait more than half an hour before we could leave]* (see Heyvaert 2003). Such types of constructions are examples of experiential grammatical metaphor in SFG (see Taverniers forthc.).

24. The speech-functional meaning which is expressed through the role of Instantiator is the root speech-functional distinction between giving and demanding commodities. One of the aspects which contributes to encoding this distinction is an I/you contrast expressed in the Instantiator.

25. This is the sense which motivates the very use of the term 'Subject', i.e. the Subject as the item of which something is said.

26. Time is not the only type of meaning which can be experientially construed in circumstantial adverbials. I believe that circumstantial meanings such as time, reason, place and condition are inherently linked to the notion of 'instantiation' as such, while for example manner has to do with the mode of instantiation. The role of various types of circumstantials in relation to type specification and grounding needs to be further investigated. This can be done by exploring the scope of different types of circumstantials, where those adverbials which have the widest scope are more closely linked to the notion of instantiation. Work done in other functional schools which propose a layered structure of the clause – and of adverbials – can be revealing in this respect (e.g. in Functional Grammar, cf. especially Dik et al. 1990; and in Role and Reference Grammar, cf. Foley & Van Valin 1984, Van Valin 1990). Davies' (1967) exploration of different types of adjuncts is also very valuable with regard to this issue.