Reconstructing the Concept of Subject

Frans Plank

Seminar für Englische Philologie
Universität Hannover

Im Moore 21
D-3 Hannover 1
West Germany

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The grammatical core relation of subject (and analogously the direct and indirect object relations) cannot be supposed to be equally relevant for all human languages: some languages manifest this genuinely grammatical category, some more prominently, some less so; others do not manifest it at all. Observations to this effect indeed are not particularly original, but are familiar from past and also present typological research. However, such typological observations are often less than explicit about the conceptual nature of the category of subject they are employing, and it seems therefore worthwhile to try and clarify, in quite an elementary manner, under which circumstances one may meaningfully and non-redundantly refer to the grammatical relation of subject in the description of individual languages. If, as I shall maintain in the following programmatic rather than data-oriented account, 'grammatical subject' cannot be an undefined prime concept existing independently of conceptually primary semantic and pragmatic categories (which in any language do exist independently), the obvious methodological implication is that the grammatical regularities of whatever language one happens to be concerned with ought to be carefully examined in terms of patterns involving the primary semantic and pragmatic categories before concluding that certain semantic, pragmatic, and/or morphosyntactic properties of an argument phrase are properties of something else, viz. of subjects.[1] Thus, in developing a typologically and universally adequate theory of relational grammar, we ought to follow Karl Bühler's (1934:249) example:

> Was wir erreichen wollen ... ist eine Lösung der Darstellungsaufgabe mit sprachlichen Mitteln unter Umgehung der Subjekts-Objektsrelation

and if it then turns out that particular languages in fact do perform their representational task with the help of a subject relation, its nature and raison d'être can be better appreciated by comparison with conceptually poorer representational systems. In what follows, I shall therefore first examine how languages could possibly get along with certain semantic and pragmatic concepts but without having subjects, and then, in the second part of this paper, how subjects may emerge from these semantic and pragmatic ingredients.[2]

1. Semantic and pragmatic ingredients of subjecthood

1.1. That languages ought to be able to do without grammatical subjects should be quite easy to imagine for someone familiar with so-called case grammar (à la Fillmore 1968, Chafe 1970, or J. Anderson 1971), where configurationally defined deep-structure relations like 'subject-of' and 'object-of', in the manner of Chomsky (1965), are abandoned in favour of semantic role relations like agent, patient, experiencer, stimulus, recipient, instrument or the like. The surface form of predications in such — imaginary — languages would simply be a direct rendering of 'underlying' representations in terms of these semantic roles. The meaning representation of predicates would involve the specification of the roles required by, or compatible with, a predicate; and the essential constructional task in understanding predicate-argument expressions would, thus, be to identify the role relationships held by each of the arguments present. Coding devices such as case or adpositional marking, agreement or cross-reference marking, and linear constituent ordering, individually or in combination, ought to be well suited to provide the information required to keep track of role identities. Agreement/cross-reference should be taken in a wide sense, so as to include not only argument-external marking referring to properties of individual arguments, but also markers referring to argument combinations, as in the hypothetical example (1):[3]

(1) a. farmer duckling kill-a (-a 'human agt - animal pat')
b. farmer duckling kill-b (-b 'animal agt - human pat')

On account of the small number of purely positional distinctions, linear ordering would seem to be the least expressive individual role coding system, favouring one-to-many relations between form (positions) and meaning (roles). In many cases, however, the roles of arguments could surely be identified without any distinctive encoding at all. Thus, role encoding would appear redundant especially with one-place predicates not allowing alternative roles, but also with other predicates when arguments on account of their inherent meaning are unlikely to fill alternative roles (as e.g. in (1), where alternative (b) would seem negligible for all practical purposes, so that one could dispense with relational encoding in the case of the 'normal' state of affairs).[4] Given structural representations in terms of semantic roles, not only encoding rules but all sorts of other grammatical processes could be couched in these terms as well, at least in principle. For example, if there is to be the possibility of ellipsis of coreferential arguments, as in English constructions like

A hunter caught a dodo and, a little later, died, recoverability of reference could be ensured by a constraint to the effect that unexpressed arguments must be coreferential with an argument in the same semantic role. With this constraint, the unexpressed argument in the second conjunct of 'hunter-agt dodo-pat caught and died' could only be taken to refer to the dodo, given that 'die' requires an argument in the role of patient. There would be no elliptical version of 'hunter-agt dodo-pat caught and hunter-pat died', nor of 'hunter-exp dodo-stim saw and hunter-pat died', where the coreferential arguments occur in different roles. This indicates that a role-based mechanism of coreferential argument ellipsis would be rather inflexible; and one could expect that if role structures are the only level of representation available to a language, anaphoric relations could be established more efficiently on the basis of anaphoric pro-forms differentiated according to an elaborate system of argument classification (e.g. 'hunter-agt dodo-pat caught and he/it died'). But this is not to say that semantic roles are unsuitable as points of reference for grammatical processes in general. One need not resort to fictitious examples to see that they may be extremely serviceable. English, supposedly no pure semantic-role language, provides many pertinent examples; compare only true imperatives (in contrast to optatives, desideratives, etc.), where the agent role seems crucial, or the orientation of the particle up (Whorf 1956) towards patients regardless of their grammatical relation (subject: The riverbed dried up; object: We ate up the meal). Thus far, I have been referring to pure semantic-role languages as imaginary, but examples such as these clearly suggest that representations in terms of roles or similar semantic notions are relevant for the relational grammar of real languages. This is of course a truism. Nevertheless, it is often ignored that this obvious observation raises a major empirical and theoretical problem, viz. to determine which grammatical processes indeed are contingent on semantic relations, in spite of the availability of other levels of relational structure. Before moving on to such additional structures, let us examine whether the familiar 'case' roles are the only kind of relational semantic representation imaginable.

Presumably they are not; to arrive at correct relational interpretations, one need not necessarily match individual arguments against a frame of abstract semantic

roles associated with a predicate. It seems to me that the perennial controversies among 'case' grammarians about the right inventory and assignment of roles are in part a reflection of the inappropriateness, or rather morphosyntactic irrelevance, of case-grammar style role frames, at least for the Standard Average European, and perhaps other, languages. Although in the process of constructing interpretations of predicate-argument expressions, a listener may, at some stage, find it useful to employ cognitive representations in terms of configurations of distinct, homogeneous, and autonomous roles such as agent-patient or experiencer-stimulus, he at any rate has to determine the relations holding between predicate and argument(s) on a more concrete level, with reference to individual predicates rather than predicate types. Even if such predicate types as 'verb of activity/experience/(emotional etc.) state' and the like are relevant for various grammatical purposes (such as classification), it suffices for the purpose of interpretation if the arguments co-occurring with, say, 'kill' or 'be in love with' can be identified as denoting the killer and the victim, and the lover and the beloved, rather than the role types of agent and patient, and experiencer and stimulus. Now imagine the enormous degree of differentiation required of a relational coding system if such concrete roles were to be encoded directly on the argument phrases. In a case language, there would have to be separate cases for the roles of killer-in-general, stabber, torturer, victim of killings-in-general, of stabbings, of torture, lover, loved one, hater, loser, finder, and so on almost ad infinitum — and one wonders why such a language in addition should have predicates at all, with all these semantic distinctions conveyed by case marking. Relying on more abstract and general role types at least would have the advantage that no disproportionate coding apparatus is needed to cope with the task of role identification. However, the attempt to do without abstract role types as semantic primes need not have such economically undesirable consequences. The identity of concrete argument roles needs no special encoding to be recoverable; this task is taken care of by the governing predicates themselves. What must be required of relational encoding merely is that it enables the listener to infer which concrete role is being played by which argument; and this is already achieved if the encoding does no more than distinguish the degrees, and perhaps kinds, of involvement of participants, on a level more general than that of the semantic role types familiar from 'case' grammar.[5] Consider again 'kill' and 'be in love with', i.e. predicates that refer to an activity

and an emotional experience (or, more neutrally, a state) performed or coming about through the involvement of two participants in two opposite capacities:[6] killer and victim, and lover and beloved. If a listener can tell from the lexical and referential meanings of argument expressions that the two participants involved in an act of killing reported by the speaker are, say, a farmer and a duckling, and if he is able, furthermore, to determine on the basis of relational meanings that the farmer is more influentially involved in the event leading to the death of one participant than the duckling, he can safely infer that the farmer must be the killer and the duckling the victim. (Situations that in English are described by expressions like By acting very stupidly, the duckling got (itself) killed by the farmer, are perhaps borderline cases requiring special morpho-syntactic treatment, the distribution of influence here being more balanced than in prototypical instances of non-accidental killing.) Suppose that the language has available only one case marker to encode this difference in the degree of influence of the two arguments (or, rather, their referents) that is crucial for the success of the hearer's inference, both of the alternatives indicated in (2) would be equally appropriate:

(2) a. farmer duckling-acc killed
b. farmer-erg duckling killed

The case form labelled 'accusative', thus, would encode the meaning 'less influential participant', and the case form labelled 'ergative' the meaning 'more influential participant'. Although these case forms have strictly semantic meanings and, at this point, are not intended to model the case system of an actual language of the ergative or the accusative type, their labels in fact are not entirely arbitrary vis à vis such systems, in so far as formal marking (-Ø vs. -acc /-erg) is intended to reflect alternative semantic marking correlations (if 'less influential' semantically marked, then -acc ; if 'more influential' semantically marked, then -erg) along the lines of the classic markedness analysis of case systems à la Jakobson (1936, cf. especially § 3).[7] Turning to the less violent interaction of being in love, there appear to be several options in this inferential framework. The question of which participant is more or less

influentially involved does not seem to have as straightforward an answer as with activities. Presumably, a case could be made for either alternative: the beloved as more influential for the occurrence of the experience denoted by the predicate in so far as he/she entices, intentionally or not, the lover into a state of emotional dependency; or the lover as more influential in so far as it is primarily his/her emotional involvement (which may be thorougly passive rather than active) which is the decisive criterion for the definition of the relationship as one of being in love. Analogous uncertainties as to the more or less influential contribution of the participants involved are characteristic also of other kinds of experience and perception. Thus, one should not be surprised to find that such non-activity predicates may be conceptualized differently with respect to the degree of influence of their arguments. If -acc is the marked member of the correlation and accordingly identifies the less influential participant, as in the system exemplified in (2a), both (3a) and (3b) would be suitable relational encodings allowing the inference that the farmer is the lover and the girl the beloved:[8]

(3) a. farmer girl-acc gave-love
b. farmer-acc girl attracted-love

Although a single case marker, thus, would suffice to encode the necessary distinctions, languages might of course be less parsimonious and employ additional case markers to differentiate not only the degree but also the kind of involvement of a participant. A 'dative' could be such an additional case identifying the less influential participant specifically of experiences, to be used instead of -acc in (3a) or (3b). Incidentally, we have so far illustrated the differentiation of more and less influential participants only on a syntagmatic level, i.e. with pairs of co-present arguments, as in (2) and (3). But note that these general meanings may also be used for the purpose of paradigmatic differentiation, i.e. to differentiate the degree of involvement of arguments of different one-place predicates (see 4a), or of the arguments of one one-place predicate inherently compatible with more and with less influential arguments (see 4b).

(4) a. farmer-acc died vs. farmer left
b. farmer-acc fell-down vs. farmer fell-down

As in (2a), -acc here encodes the meaning 'less influential participant'. If the situation illustrated in (4) is reminiscent of the case marking in certain 'impersonal' vs. 'personal'

constructions in languages like, say, Old English (cf. me hingrode vs. ic hingrode etc.), or, using the -erg/-Ø marking pattern as in (2b), of the case marking system of languages of the active type (cf. Klimov 1977), these similarities are perhaps not entirely accidental. To conclude this paragraph, we note that relational misinterpretations can be effectively avoided if in predicate-argument expressions two kinds of meaning are encoded in a sufficiently reliable manner: firstly, the lexical content of predicate and argument expressions; secondly, the relative degrees, and perhaps also kinds, of influential involvement of the referents of co-occurring or single arguments.

In our reflections on semantic relations between predicates and their arguments, there was no need to have recourse to a notion of grammatical subject. Although we occasionally alluded to grammatical regularities in real languages that seem to reflect such purely semantic representations quite directly, it was not claimed that the relational grammar of any natural language can be exhaustively accounted for in these semantic terms. But surely the possibility that there might exist such languages ought not be too rashly discarded on a priori grounds.[9] From what has been said so far, it would follow that for such languages, as well as for those parts of the grammar of any language which exclusively function in terms of the semantic notions adumbrated, an extra notion of grammatical subject is irrelevant. Let us now turn to aspects of pragmatic organization which are commonly assumed to be an integral part of the relational grammar of natural languages, in order to examine whether pragmatic rather than semantic representations may require the introduction of a notion of subject.

1.2. The existence of relational semantic structures between parts of clauses is entailed by the basic distinction of predicate and argument expressions itself; and the predicates rather than the arguments are the dominant parts in the determination of relational clause structures. This is not to say that there necessarily have to be grammatical markers, of the kinds considered in the preceding section, signalling the semantic relationships between arguments and predicates. Such relationships can often be identified on the basis of extralinguistic knowledge and of the linguistic context of an utterance. One important factor reducing the risk of relational misinterpretation is that aspect of the meaning of predicates which is known as selectional restrictions: Suppose we have two two-place predicates 'eat' and 'fress' which only differ in meaning in so far as the former denotes a relation between animate eaters and animate (but now probably dead) things eaten, whereas the latter more specifically denotes a relation between non-human eaters and animate things eaten, a clause like 'hunter lion eat', without any grammatical clues as to the relations of the two arguments, would be ambiguous without context, but not so 'hunter lion fress', since the non-human argument here must be the eater for the predication to be semantically well-formed.[10] But even if all predicates of a language are selectionally highly specific, or if a language does not systematically avoid the risk of relational ambiguities, clauses will always have a relational semantic structure determined by their governing predicates. The pragmatic structures that we shall consider in this section, on the other hand, are not necessarily and inherently governed by predicates; and in this sense they are not relational structures. Thus, there is no necessary connection in principle between the grammatical and lexical regularities underlying relational semantic structures and those of pragmatic organization. Nevertheless, just as non-relational semantic notions such as those of nominal classification may have some bearing on the relational grammar of a language, the status of argument expressions in the pragmatic organization of an utterance may also interact in various ways with their strictly relational status. The pragmatic parameters that I think are of particular relational relevance, at least potentially, fall under two headings: 'indexical' and 'informational'; the

first have to do with the anchoring of predicate-argument expressions in the speech event, the second with the speaker's organizing the information he is conveying in accordance with his "assessment of how the addressee is able to process what he is saying against the background of a particular context" (Chafe 1976:27).

1.2.1. It seems a most trivial observation that arguments may not only refer to entities external to the speech event, but also to the speech-event participants themselves; speech-event participants, viz. speaker (or writer) and addressee(s), may simultaneously be involved as participants in the event, process, state etc. denoted by a predicate. The interesting questions then are whether there are any natural constraints on which semantic relations speaker and addressee(s) may assume, and conversely whether there are any semantic relations that are open to no one but speaker and/or addressee(s). It seems to me that the complexity and significance of these questions is often underestimated; it is certainly too simplistic to suppose that whenever a predicate allows or demands human participants in a certain argument role, speaker or addressees may fill this role just as well as some third persons. A priori it could indeed seem plausible to deny that any special indexical constraints should be part of the lexical meaning of predicates, but predicates in use clearly are not always neutral with regard to the anchoring in the speech event. Consider only imperatives or predicates used to perform speech acts such as promises, warnings and the like; under such circumstances, arguments obligatorily refer to participants in the speech event rather than to third persons. Or consider predicates denoting inner states, such as believing/feeling/hearing/smelling something. If one is to make plain factual statements about such states in the indicative mood and present or past tense, the one who experiences these states as a rule is the speaker himself, for it is only his own inner states that are immediately (i.e. without the use of inferences, guesses, external correlates, etc.) accessible to him. If the utterance is not a plain statement, such inner-state predicates no longer demand that the experiencer role be filled by the speaker (cf. Can you hear me?; She apparently believed him; He must have felt the earthquake). I cannot explore in detail such regular-

ities of the speech-event anchoring of individual predicates. The kind of constraints I have briefly alluded to all seem natural considering the core meaning of predicates and the particular use they are put to. As far as lexical representations of predicates are concerned, there apparently are no a priori reasons to expect that speech-event participants and third persons (or, for that matter, non-persons) should in principle rank differently as candidates for particular, semantically suitable, argument roles.

As one of the most conspicuous categories in the classification of argument referents, and thus in the organization of pronominal paradigms, the distinction between speaker, addressee, and speech-event external persons and 'things' is well suited for exploitation in systems of predicate-argument agreement or cross-reference. If we may distinguish between 'impersonal' predicate expressions, which are neutral with regard to the kind of speech-event anchoring at issue (to roughly illustrate this somewhat clumsily: 'there occurred a killing of a duckling by the farmer/the speaker'[11]), and 'personal' predicates, incorporating this indexical pragmatic meaning aspect, there is a tendency to assume that if a language has personal predicates, these forms in fact must do more than simply reflect the speech-event anchoring of the predicative expression — on the analogy of languages like English or Latin, where finite verb forms such as am killing/neco or are killing/necas are traditionally analysed as not merely signalling that the speaker or addressee is involved in one of the argument roles (viz. agent), but as encoding that the argument referring to the speaker or addressee is in the grammatical relation of subject.[12] As an example where the interaction of speech-event anchoring, indicated by 'personal' predicate forms, and relational semantic structure may not warrant the introduction of an additional relational concept such as subject ~~and object~~, consider the following extracts from the independent indicative paradigm of transitive animate and inanimate verbs in Potawatomi, a Central Algonquian language.[13] I have chosen this example because a main controversy among the numerous analysts of these data, and their analogues in other Algonquian languages, has been whether subject ~~and object~~ can (thus

e.g. S. Anderson) or cannot (thus e.g. Bloomfield, Hockett) be taken for granted as a meaningful and, in fact, universally indispensable relational concept .

(5)	a. k-wapum-a	'you see him'
	b. k-wapum-uko	'he sees you' ('you are seen by him')
(6)	a. k-wapum-a-n	'you see the other'
	b. ----	'the other sees you'[14]
(7)	a. n-wapum-a	'I see him'
	b. n-wapum-uko	'he sees me' ('I am seen by him')
(8)	a. n-wapum-a-n	'I see the other'
	b. ----	'the other sees me'[14]
(9)	a. w-wapum-a-n	'he sees the other'
	b. w-wapum-uko-n	'the other sees him' ('he is seen by the other')
(10)	a. k-wapum	'you see me'
	b. k-wapum-n	'I see you' ('you are seen by me')

If subject is assumed to be a relevant notion here, one could for example conclude that the underlined pronominal prefixes, and the corresponding independent pronouns (also formed with these prefixes: k-in 'your self', n-in 'my self', w-in 'his/her/its self'), which can be added for the purpose of emphasis, as well as nominal phrases, which themselves do not manifest any case or other relational marking, are subjects, and that the (b)-sentences accordingly are passive, or at least passive-like, constructions, apparently lacking active counterparts, just as the active (a)-sentences lack passive alternatives.[15] I submit, however, that the meaning of the individual morphemes in (5)-(10), their distribution, the relational meaning of the predications (5)-(10), and the absence of alternative voice constructions can all be accounted for quite naturally on the basis of semantic and indexical-pragmatic notions. There are four, or five, decisions one has to make in generating, or interpreting, the correct transitive clauses, and none of these involves the grammatical relation of subject which is supposedly relevant for the grammars of English or Latin ('supposedly', because strictly speaking we do not yet know how to tell a subject ~~or object~~ if we see

one). First, there is the opposition of animate and inanimate transitive verb forms. The animate verb, wapum, is used if the stimulus of the visual perception is animate (see 5-10), and the inanimate verb, waput, if the stimulus is inanimate. We may note in passing that in Algonquian the role of stimulus is treated like that of patient ('less influential', Bloomfield's 'goal'), and the role of experiencer like that of agent ('more influential', Bloomfield's 'actor'). The second decision concerns the choice of one of the pronominal prefixes, which are glossed by Hockett (1966:61), following Bloomfield, as in (11):

(11) a. k- 'addressee involved'

b. n- 'addressee excluded, but speaker involved'

c. w- 'referent not local'

'Local' designates the participants of the speech event, whence the terms 'local' or 'you-me/I-you' forms for the sub-paradigm (10). Now, the Algonquian person system is known to be somewhat unusual,[16] and this is reflected in the glosses in (11a) and (11b). Much more common are person systems where morphological first and second persons are assigned the following referential meanings:

(12) a. 1st 'speaker involved'

b. 2nd 'speaker excluded, but addressee involved'

A comparison of the sets of personal pronouns and their referential meanings of Potawatomi and English shows the implications of this difference:

(11) a. kin 'addressee'

kinwa 'addressees', 'addressee(s) + non-local referent(s)'

kinan 'addressee(s) + speaker', 'addressee(s) + speaker + non-local(s)'

b. nin 'speaker'

ninan 'speaker + non-local(s)'

(12) a. I 'speaker'

we 'speaker + non-local(s)', 'speaker + addressee(s)', 'speaker + addressee(s) + non-local(s)'

b. you 'addressee'

you 'addressees', 'addressee(s) + non-local(s)'

Bloomfield (1962:38) describes a situation where it is quite obvious that in Al-

gonquian the addressee (2nd person) takes precedence over the speaker (1st person) in the choice of pronominal forms: in talking about their common daughter, a father addressing the mother has to choose a k-form (Menomini keta·nen 'our (inclusive) daughter'; cf. kinan in (11a)), but addressing anyone else, he has to choose a n-form (neta·nenaw 'our (exclusive) daughter'; cf. ninan in (11b)). In English as well as in other (non-Algonquian) languages with an overt inclusive/exclusive distinction, a 1st person form has to be chosen if the referential set of a pronoun includes the speaker. To return to the pronominal prefixes of our transitive verb paradigm, it should have become clear by now what they encode: anchoring the predicate (or entire predication) in the speech event, they identify that participant in the visual perception which is highest in the referential hierarchy (13), which thus constitutes an order principle of fundamental relevance not only for the organization of pronominal paradigms.

(13) addressee > speaker > non-local referents:
proximate > obviative

Regardless of their semantic argument roles, the prefix k- is chosen whenever addressees are involved (cf. 5, 6, 10); the prefix n- whenever speakers are involved but no addressees (cf. 7, 8); and the prefix w- whenever none of the speech-event participants is involved in an argument role (cf. 9). In (13), non-local referents are further distinguished as proximate and obviative, which brings us to the third decision. The two- or three-way contrast of obviation pertains only to non-local referents; within individual spans of discourse, distinct non-local referents, unless they are conjuncts in a coordinate construction, must be categorized as belonging to distinct categories of obviation, with the referents at the focus of interest being proximates and the others (nearer and further) obviatives (cf. Hockett 1966:60). Animate nominals are overtly marked as proximate or obviative, and in the verbal paradigm the final suffix -n signals that of the referents involved the one lower on the hierarchy (13) (i.e. the one not encoded by a pronominal prefix) is obviative, glossed as 'the other' in (6a) (vis à vis 5a), (8a) (vis à vis 7a), and (9). That differences in obviation are

treated somewhat loosely under certain circumstances has been mentioned in footnote 14; the consequences, however, do not seem to be serious in the respective contexts since even in the absence of this opposition there is hardly a risk of relational or other ambiguity. The last decision then concerns the choice of one of the 'theme' suffixes, -a, -uko, or -n; and clearly this is the most important one with regard to relational semantic structure. In fact there are two decisions involved here: the theme suffix alternation is -Ø/-n if both arguments refer to local participants, as in (10); and -a/-uko otherwise, as in (5)-(9). Which theme is chosen in both sub-paradigms depends on the semantic role relationships holding between the participants in the situation described: -Ø and -a signal that of the participants concerned the one ranking higher on the referential hierarchy (13) (i.e. the one indicated by the prefix) is playing the role of experiencer or agent, or, in other words, is more influential than the participant lower on the hierarchy (cf. 5a-10a); -n and -uko, on the other hand, signal that the referentially higher participant identified by the pronominal prefix is less influentially involved than the referentially lower participant, i.e. is playing the role of stimulus or patient (cf. 5b-10b).[17] The entire ensemble of morphological devices, thus, very effectively and elegantly ensures relational and referential unambiguity: the pronominal prefixes identify one participant (viz. the one highest on the referential hierarchy); the theme suffixes determine whether this participant acts on/experiences another or is acted on/experienced by another; and, on account of the opposition -Ø/-n (local) vs. -a/-uko (non-local), the theme suffixes also identify the second participant, aided if necessary by the final suffix distinguishing between proximate and obviative. If a sentence in addition contains independent nominal phrases, there likewise is no danger of ambiguity: their own proximate/obviative marking provides the necessary link to the bound morphology on the verb, where the semantic roles of the proximate and obviative participants are clearly distinguished (cf. 9). Turning now to inanimate transitive verbs, we first observe that these lack 'inverse' or 'centripetal' forms. In most instances it is quite easy to see why this should be so. Suppose an animate participant acts on or experiences an inanimate

one, as in 'I see it', 'you cut the bread', or 'he destroys it'. The participants in most of these cases may not switch their semantic roles for conceptual reasons (*'it sees me', *'the bread cuts you'); but if role switches are possible ('it destroys him'), animate rather than inanimate verb forms have to be chosen.[18] For a configuration to be crucial in this respect, both actants of a transitive verb would have to be inanimate (direct: proximate inanimate acts on obviative inanimate; inverse: obviative inanimate acts on proximate inanimate). According to Hockett (1966:64), however, there are few, if any, transitive verbs in Potawatomi that permit inanimate 'actors'. If there indeed are such verbs, the lack of an uko-form would seem to make it impossible for the obviative participant to assume the role of 'actor'; but this peripheral paradigmatic gap is presumably unlikely to cause much trouble in actual discourse. Recall also that only animate nominals have overtly contrasting proximate and obviative forms, so that clauses with an inanimate nominal, the other participant being inanimate as well, would be relationally ambiguous anyway — if such clauses did occur. Consider now the occurring forms of the (singular) transitive inanimate paradigm corresponding to the animate paradigm (5)-(10):

(14) a. k-waput-a-n 'you see it'
b. n-waput-a-n 'I see it'
c. w-waput-a-n 'he sees it'

The principles for the choice of pronominal prefixes are the same as with animate transitives. The choice of the theme suffix -a also follows from the account presented above: a referentially higher participant, who in this particular case, as in most or all others, is animate, acts on/experiences an inanimate participant lower on the referential hierarchy. Two problems remain, though (or probably just one), and they have (it has) to do with obviation: there is no overt contrast between proximate and obviative stimulus/patient in (14a-c); and there is no form for obviative experiencers/agents ('the other sees it') contrasting with (14c). Notice that ~~thus far~~ the referential hierarchy (13) so far does not specify the relative order of animate and inanimate (non-local) referents, but it seems not unreasonable to speculate that

if a two-argument configuration includes an animate and an inanimate referent, the animate referent (if non-local) must be proximate and the inanimate one obviative.[19] I assume, thus, that the category of animacy in a way dominates that of obviation, and that the relative order of animate and inanimate referents on the referential scale which is of fundamental importance for Potawatomi syntax and morphology, therefore, is as irreversible as that of addressee and speaker. If this assumption is correct, it follows that there can be no contrast of obviation in (14c), which strictly speaking ought to be glossed as 'he sees the other thing'. The obligatory obviation of the patient/stimulus in (14a-b) then seems to be the result of a generalization: inanimate referents co-occurring with animate ones are marked as obviative, no matter whether the animate referents are non-local (as in 14c) or not.[20]

This concludes my outline of what I think Potawatomi is really like. If this analysis of the data presented is basically correct, i.e. in accordance with the empirical facts, the relational grammar of Potawatomi does not justify or require the introduction of theoretical concepts (such as 'grammatical subject', 'active/passive voice') in addition to the semantic and indexical-pragmatic (and perhaps also informational-pragmatic, cf. the category of obviation) concepts assumed here. In the present context, this conclusion is above all of methodological relevance. Our strategy is to practise conceptual parsimony: if additional theoretical concepts are needed or at least useful, we should thus be able to determine precisely for which reasons and for which purposes. Since we have examined only a tiny fragment of the grammar and lexicon of Potawatomi, a more extensive analysis of this language, including, for instance, also the plural paradigms, the intransitive paradigms, and clause- and discourse-level grammatical processes, could still uncover such reasons and purposes favouring an elaboration of our conceptual apparatus (although I doubt that it in fact would, as far as grammatical subjects are concerned). Let me briefly comment on two properties of Potawatomi that could be considered potentially relevant to this issue. Firstly, not only transitive but also intransitive verbs show the opposition

of animate and inanimate forms; and the question is whether a new kind of relational concept is needed to characterize the set of arguments that determine the selection of an animate or an inanimate verb form, viz. the arguments in the less influential, patient/stimulus ('goal') role with transitives, and the single arguments, regardless of their semantic role, with intransitives. I do not think that this universally not uncommon ('ergative') patterning of transitive and intransitive arguments warrants the recognition of an additional non-semantic relational concept. We may well need a new relational category for the maximally perspicuous statement of certain morphosyntactic and lexical regularities, but this category is still genuinely semantic, although perhaps reflecting a kind of generalization which ~~that~~ differs from that underlying the previously considered argument roles.[21] What the argument roles in question have in common is that they are most likely to be filled alternatively by animate and inanimate referents, whereas the agent/experiencer-like transitive role is almost invariably filled by animate referents only. And, perhaps more importantly, intransitive referents, whether themselves active (as in 'he left/worked/ran/laughed') or not ('he slept/died/was ill'), would seem to pattern with the 'passive' transitive referents under the influence of the process/event etc. described by the predicate rather than with transitive 'actors', insofar as they too are 'under the influence', are often affected through their involvement in the situation described by the predicate, or, more generally, lack the self-transcending orientation characteristic of transitive 'actors'. If we assume that predicates, if they are not stative, at least imply states resulting from the situations they denote (e.g. 'die' - 'be dead', 'kill' - 'be dead'), these states will usually be characteristic of the referents in intransitive or in the more 'passive' transitive relations of the original predicates, and hardly of transitive 'actors'.[22] The second comment concerns the status of the centrifugal/direct (5a-10a) and the centripetal/inverse (5b-10b) forms in Potawatomi. Observing that in the local sub-paradigm the (a)-form is morphologically simpler (i.e. lacks an overt theme formative), and that the set of (b)-forms is somewhat defective if obviation is involved (cf. 6b, 8b), one might suspect that the (b)-forms perhaps are not quite on a par with the (a)-forms; that

they perhaps represent some kind of marked construction unrecognized in the analysis above. What could be the conceptual basis of this notion of markedness is not difficult to see: we have an unmarked speech-event anchoring of a predication involving two arguments if a referentially higher participant 'acts on' a participant ranking lower on the referential hierarchy (13), and a marked anchoring otherwise. What we could do, then, is reformulate the fourth, or rather fifth, decision, the one concerning the choice of theme suffixes -Ø/-a vs. -n/-uko, accordingly: -Ø/-a signal an unmarked role-referent configuration, and -n/-uko a marked one. From this we could also derive markedness values of individual argument roles; e.g. a transitive 'actor' is indexical-pragmatically unmarked if it outranks the 'goal' on the scale (13), and marked if outranked by the 'goal'. The question, however, is whether we are thus introducing a new conceptual dimension in addition to what has been implicit in our previous account. Thus far, we were able to formulate morpho-syntactic (and perhaps lexical) regularities in terms of purely semantic relations, at various levels of generality, in terms of absolute (addressee, speaker, non-local) and relative (referentially higher/lower) indexical-pragmatic status, and in terms of combined semantic-pragmatic argument properties (e.g. 'actor as referentially higher participant'). This last possibility of argument identification is crucial: designating an argument role as marked or unmarked along the lines just suggested is tantamount to determining its rank on the referential hierarchy relative to its opposite number. Thus, owing to the fundamentally important indexical-pragmatic ordering principle expressed by the scale (13), no genuine categorial innovations are apparently needed to account for the relational grammar of Potawatomi in a straightforward manner, regardless of the potential usefulness of markedness considerations concerning the role relationships between referents with different indexical-pragmatic statuses (in constructions, that is, where at least two arguments are involved — otherwise there would be no pragmatic statuses to compare[23]).

Having discussed in some detail a non-hypothetical example of a language whose relational grammar capitalizes on a very natural, and indeed inevitably present, aspect of human discourse, we can continue our catalogue of pragmatic concepts with potential relational relevance. The involvement or not of speaker and addressee(s) in the situation referred to by a clause is perhaps the parameter that comes to mind most readily if we ask how the arguments of a predicate relate to the speech event, but evidently an exhaustive analysis of speech-event anchoring should take into account more than this kind of relationship. If a single notion can be general and comprehensive enough to characterize what we have called indexical-pragmatic organization in its entirety, that of distance between speech-event participants and argument referents would seem the most appropriate one.[24] It is the least distant argument that referentially anchors a clause (its propositional content) in the speech event, and it seems plausible to assume that in sentence (or discourse) production and understanding least distant arguments are assigned some preferential status, say as primary reference points in establishing relationships between argument expressions co-occurring in discourse. Now, this notion of distance is hardly self-explanatory, even though one may be able to guess without further explication that the distance, in any sensible interpretation of this term, ought to be nil in case a speech-event participant at the same time is an argument referent. Considering this configuration a special, but presumably very common, case of distancing, one might wish to take distance in its literal, spatial sense, and to define it accordingly in terms of the position of referents relative to speaker and/or addressee. The elaborate demonstrative systems of many languages where arguments can, or must, be overtly categorized as 'close to speaker', 'close to addressee', 'distant from both' etc., attest to the communicative usefulness of such purely local distinctions, which may be supplemented by further deictic oppositions such as visible - invisible (present - absent). Temporal distance is an obviously related manifestation of the same notion. And also related, often in a morphologically transparent manner, is the distinction of referents as to their assumed familiarity, the familiar (or definite) referents being more suitable primary reference points

than those assumed by the speaker to be not yet familiar to the addressee. However, our notion of speech-event distance is intended to be yet more general, even though we recognize the fundamental importance of physical space for many other indexical-pragmatic orderings. Distance ought to be definable for perceptual as well as conceptual space, and ought to include the numerous, partly interdependent but also partly independent and occasionally conflicting, cognitive and affective links between speech-event participants and the argument referents populating their universe of discourse. Thus, it ought to account for all properties of referents potentially enabling them to attain a discourse status close to the naturally prominent status of actual speech-event participants. A key ingredient of this status is to what extent an 'entity' is perceived and experienced as possessing individuality (or an ego), as manifested in its physical (e.g. positional, motoric, causal), mental (cognitive and affective), and sociocultural interaction with the world. What seems most characteristic of those primordial individuals which are able to create a universe of discourse with themselves at the centre (i.e. the speech-event participants, with the speaker, the point of origin of a speech act, perhaps being more central than the addressee), is that they have the capacity of being conscious, intentional, and responsible agents effecting changes of the state of the universe (including their own position), and of being conscious experiencers of external sensory stimuli, of cognitions, emotions, and intents.[25] Given a choice among referents with different degrees of individuality, as defined in these interactional terms, ~~that~~ the one most closely resembling the speech-event participants (especially the speaker) in the way they themselves would, or actually do, interact with the world, is the most natural referential anchoring point for the ('subjective') representation of situations in human discourse, even if the contribution of this prime referent to the situation described is such as to require an act of empathy ('Einfühlung') on the part of the speech-event participants. (Notice, however, that certain sociocultural norms, such as taboo prohibitions or distance in social space (politeness), may well interfere with this natural preference of referential distancing.) Further factors decreasing the speech-event distance of a referent, which ultimately may

be derivable from the anthropocentric interactional conception of individuality, include, for instance, perceptual and affective-evaluational preferences for figures rather than grounds, large rather than small referents (size associated with power), referents above rather than referents below in a spatial configuration, and positively rather than negatively valued referents. Of the many questions raised by this overly crude account of a generalized notion of indexical-pragmatic structure, based on the multi-factor concept of referential distance from the speech event, let me briefly take up only two which I think are of some significance in the present context. Firstly, is indexical-pragmatic organization inevitably involved in any predication, or is it possible to have relational semantic structures where the speech-event distance of the argument role(s) present is irrelevant or undefined? It seems to me that this kind of pragmatic structure is indeed crucial for human communication, even though there no doubt occur predications (especially with one-place predicates) whose arguments are maximally distant from the speech event. But although there may not always have to be at least one referent close to speaker and/or addressee, I suppose that in most clauses in coherent discourse (especially with two- or three-place predicates) an asymmetric ordering of argument referents in this pragmatic dimension will be almost unavoidable — which, incidentally, is not to say that speech-event anchoring is completely contextually and situationally determined and thus not manipulable by speech-event participants: with certain limitations a speaker may choose, for example, the viewpoint of one referent rather than another.[26] Secondly, how does indexical-pragmatic organization manifest itself structurally? And, in particular, does this additional structural dimension, if present, demand that we recognize a new kind of relational category? Co-occurring arguments with different indexical-pragmatic status could in principle be overtly distinguished by various coding devices, such as linear order or segmental markers (cf. proximal/distal demonstratives). The choice of referring expressions may likewise be influenced by an argument's status in this dimension; for example, if a married couple, Adam and Eve, are involved in a situation which is described by the speaker from the point of view of Adam, the two actants are more likely to be referred to as 'Adam'

and 'Adam's (his) wife' than as 'Eve' and 'Eve's (her) husband'. And a further manifestation of indexical-pragmatic organization could be that grammatical rules other than those of encoding may be sensitive to whether an argument is more or less distant in relation to the speech-event participants.[27] As was demonstrated by our case study from Potawatomi, indexical-pragmatic structure may interact with relational semantic structure without there being a need for additional — grammatical — categories, and the same ought to be true in principle for the generalized concept of speech-event distance, even though there appear to exist natural affinities between certain semantic role types (agent, experiencer) and referential distance, as pointed out above. A priori, at any rate, it would seem to be a purely terminological innovation if we applied the label 'subject' to argument referents that happen to be least distant from the speech-event participants, à la Dik (1978:71 passim), who proposes to define the syntactic function of subject, as opposed to a number of semantic and pragmatic functions, as that argument that determines "the perspective from which the state of affairs is described" (which strikes me as similar to defining water as H_2O). As long as 'subject' (like 'water') is a terminological rather than conceptual extra, this notion would fail to be of much theoretical interest.[28]

1.2.2. This brings us to informational-pragmatic organization, which can be dealt with quite briefly since the various pertinent factors have been disentangled in a number of recent survey treatments.[29] The question suggests itself why utterances indeed ought to be structured in yet another way, in addition to evincing semantic role structures supplemented by perhaps less tangible structures relating these roles to the speech event. The obvious, though in this form rather trivial, answer is that the things people usually do with words perhaps cannot be done very well, or at least not very efficiently, with expressions that are structured as we have thus far assumed. Given an adequate stock of predicates and arguments, these structures are no doubt sufficiently rich to enable speakers and addressees to exchange even elaborate information, but what they do not provide for is that in view of the ways human organisms can deal with (i.e. process and

store) information, the same propositional content may have to be organized differently under different communicative circumstances concerning in particular the knowledge and beliefs currently available to the participants in the communicative event. Thus, in order to present their contribution to the development of discourse as effectively and conveniently as they can or will, speakers will always tend to take into account the information available to their interlocutors as well as general limitations of human information processing, even without consciously making great rhetorical efforts. Of the many aspects of the informational--pragmatic structuring of utterances, only those will interest us here which pertain to argument expressions, or rather nominal expressions, which need not be arguments in semantic core relations governed by predicates. There are about five parameters of informational-pragmatic organization which can be distinguished more or less straightforwardly, although in actual discourse some of them may well coincide or at least be difficult to isolate.

Firstly, referents may differ as to whether or not the speaker assumes them to be already activated in the consciousness of the addressee at the moment of the utterance, on account of the preceding discourse (cotext) or of the situational context. This difference in informational value is often described in terms of a distinction of old (presupposed, predictable) vs. new information, but Chafe's (1976) opposition of already vs. newly activated seems to me in general preferable. Saying that activation concerns actual referents is potentially confusing; 'referent category' or 'referential field' would perhaps be more accurate, since although the doubly underlined arguments in examples like Yesterday I saw a dodo and today I saw another one and probably also I bought a bike, but it has no handlebar certainly do not refer to the same entities as the newly activating preceding arguments (a dodo, a bike), it can be doubted that with them the speaker is newly introducing something into the addressee's consciousness which had not been activated at all in the preceding clauses. But it seems that arguments of this kind can still be said to convey, to some extent, new information and also the relatively most important information (i.e. what Dik (1978: 149ff.) calls 'focus').

A related distinction[30] is whether or not the speaker has reason to assume that the particular referent he has in mind can be identified by the addressee among those referents that could be categorized similarly (e.g. by using the same noun). As in the case of activation, identifiability of specific reference (or definiteness) may be established through prior mention in discourse, directly or indirectly (cf. again examples like those involving whole-part relations, such as a bike - the handle-bar, etc.), and through the non-linguistic context. There are unique referents (e.g. the sun, The Pope, Scotland) and certain socio-culturally salient referents (e.g. the postman, the bus)[31] which are identifiable independently of preceding discourse and speech situation, and this allows them to be newly activated without first establishing referential identifiability.

Thirdly, if the speaker can assume that the addressee is aware of a set of possible alternative candidates for reference in a particular context, which is thus likely to involve already activated knowledge, the referent actually chosen is presented as focus of contrast. Although in a way any referential act would seem to involve selection, i.e. exclusion of alternatives, contrastive focus referents can presumably be distinguished quite clearly from neutral referents depending on the contextual or situational availability and salience of a limited set of potential alternative referents.

Presumably owing to the information-processing capacity of human organisms, which are subject to the limitations of selective attention[32] (which may also motivate some of the former pragmatic distinctions), a structuring principle of some importance for an optimal management of discourse is that of separating what one is talking about (the focus of attention) from what is said about it (the comment). Thus, referents may differ as to whether or not the speaker focusses attention on them with the intention of adding to the addressee's knowledge about them.[33] Focus vs. comment is primarily a sentence-level, or even clause-level, distinction, although there may be sentences or clauses (e.g. in discourse-initial position, or certain subordinate-clause types) where none of the arguments is in focus. Focussing does not necessarily presuppose activation or definiteness, although these

statuses tend to coincide, in particular if a referent, once introduced as a clause or sentence focus, is established as the focus of longer stretches of discourse. Although not a necessary criterion for the coherence of discourse, continuity of focus would still seem the unmarked case; at least there are certain types of discourse (such as brief newspaper notices) where shifts of focus are almost completely avoided.

Finally, referents may differ as to whether or not they "set a spatial, temporal, or individual framework within which the main predication holds", and thus "limit the applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain" (Chafe 1976:50). Referents in this function, which need not represent arguments in semantic core relations governed by predicates (but this in principle

also applies to the informational-pragmatic functions mentioned before), are called topic by Chafe (1976) and Li & Thompson (1976), but perhaps the term 'frame' is preferable — if we are indeed dealing with an autonomous parameter at all. Since Li & Thompson (1976:464) also characterize topics as centre of attention, announcing the theme of the discourse, and thus necessarily definite, they seem quite similar to focuses, which, however, may be indefinite, especially if not yet established as focus of discourse. Although this suggestion may not be entirely appropriate vis à vis certain types of languages (especially those called topic-prominent by Li & Thompson), it seems to me that frames and attention-focuses perhaps ought to be distinguished as providing background and foreground information respectively. Thus in examples like Last friday I killed a duckling and I also saw a dodo or With my husband I killed a duckling and then chased a dodo the frames would identify the temporal or individual setting of the main predications the focus of attention of which in these cases is on the speaker. But then in examples like Princes Street is windy it would again seem arbitrary whether we decided to call the local setting frame or focus of attention. (Of course it could be both.)[34] One might in view of such difficulties of conceptual delimitation also speculate that a distinction between frame and focus of attention is relevant only for those languages which have particular framing constructions as distinct from basic attention-focussing predicate-argument expressions.

How do these informational-pragmatic parameters, then, manifest themselves? If it is important for the success of communication how a message is conveyed within a particular context, in addition to conveying the actual propositional content of a message, it seems reasonable to expect that there ought to be available some overt coding devices to signal informational-pragmatic structure, in addition to the encoding of relational-semantic and perhaps indexical-pragmatic structures, and, further, that there ought to exist grammatical regularities other than those of encoding which are sensitive to, and maybe even motivated by, informational-pragmatic distinctions. The coding devices mentioned in connection with semantic relations (viz. cases, adpositions, agreement/cross-reference, linear

order) ought to be equally suitable for certain pragmatic purposes, at least in principle. And there presumably are further ways of expressing the pragmatic status of a referent which are not so likely to be encountered in a purely semantic function, such as suprasegmental coding (e.g. stress), special nominal or adnominal elements (pronouns, articles), choice of non-basic constructions (e.g. clefting). Although certain coding devices are presumably predestined to serve certain pragmatic or semantic functions without much cross-linguistic variation, others may be utilized in different functions in different languages. Where we may also expect to encounter cross-linguistic variation is in the number of functions fulfilled by individual coding devices. In particular, there could be coding devices referring to semantic and to pragmatic parameters independently, and coding devices referring to semantic and pragmatic parameters simultaneously. Consider the following hypothetical examples which illustrate these possibilities:

(15) a. farmer-a duckling-b he-it-killed

b. farmer-b duckling-a he-it-killed

c. farmer-a duckling-b it-he-killed

coding rules: -a 'focus', -b 'comment';
first cross-reference marker 'agt ', second cross-reference marker 'pat '

(16) a. farmer-a duckling-y gun-z killed-m

b. farmer-x duckling-a gun-z killed-n

c. farmer-x duckling-y gun-a killed-o

d. farmer-a duckling-x gun-z killed-n

coding rules: -a 'focus';
-x 'agt ', -y 'pat ', -z 'instr ';
-m 'agt in focus', -n 'pat in focus', -o 'instr in focus'

In (15) the coding devices of case marking and cross-reference (with distinctive linear order of markers, which cross-reference independent arguments by class or gender) are independent, and encode pragmatic (focus of attention vs. comment)

and semantic (argument roles) distinctions respectively. In (16) only the case marker -a has an independent pragmatic function and encodes the argument in focus; the case-marking paradigm -x/-y/-z encodes semantic relations but is not autonomously semantic since it only applies to arguments which are out of focus; and verbal agreement likewise combines pragmatic and semantic functions since it signals the semantic relation of the argument in focus, which lacks semantic-role case marking.[35] As far as non-coding rules and regularities are concerned, we ought to expect that the same kinds of patterns may be found to be relevant. Thus, 'agent', 'patient', 'focus of attention', 'already activated', 'frame', 'agent in focus', 'patient in focus', 'identifiable agent in focus', and so forth, all specify conditions in terms of which grammatical rules may potentially be formulated, given the conceptual apparatus thus far introduced; and it remains to be determined empirically which of these patterns are exhibited by individual rules in individual languages. If for some purposes semantic and pragmatic parameters are referred to simultaneously, it may turn out that some matches occur more frequently than others. It was mentioned above that individuality, the factor that is often crucial for indexical-pragmatic organization, naturally, but not necessarily always, goes together with the semantic roles of agent and experiencer. And there would seem to be an analogous affinity between the same semantic roles and the informational-pragmatic statuses 'already activated', 'referentially identifiable' (definite), 'focus of attention', and perhaps also 'frame'. In other words, referents possessing a high degree of individuality, which most typically applies to speaker and addressees, are the prototypical instances of referents most likely to be already activated, referentially identifiable, and in focus in human discourse in general — which of course is not to say that referents in semantic roles less intimately associated with individuality may not acquire these informational-pragmatic statuses at all. What needs to be emphasized in conclusion is that, such affinities between semantic and pragmatic structures notwithstanding, grammatical regularities contingent on semantic and pragmatic structures do not in principle presuppose any extra relational concepts of a genuinely grammatical nature, nor do such extra

concepts necessarily emerge from the patterning of semantic and pragmatic referent statuses. If such extra concepts are indeed necessary or at least useful, their raison d'être must be due to factors as yet unrecognized in our outline of the conceptual framework in terms of which the relational grammars of human languages seem to operate.

2. On having a subject

2.1. Especially in studies on relational typology, an approach to defining subjects has become quite popular recently which is of particular interest for us because it seems to get along without taking into account what we have called pragmatic ingredients of subjecthood. What, according to this approach, is criterial instead is the identical or distinct behaviour of arguments in different clause types, in particular in clauses with one- and with two-place predicates, with regard to the grammatical regularities of a language.[36] Thus, the assumption is

that whether a language manifests subjects at all and which argument is the subject in a given clause, is determined by the patterning of the arguments of one- and two-place predicates in their involvement in grammatical regularities; the basic concepts available for the purpose of identifying arguments are relational-semantic and contextual-syntactic (occurrence in one- or two-argument clauses), although this contextual criterion is also partly semantic since it is the meaning of predicates which determines the number of argument places.[37] I think that a paradigmatic-identificational approach faces serious problems and that its inadequacy, as far as the definition of subjecthood is concerned, is essentially due to the neglect of the pragmatic statuses of the arguments compared in different clause types.

In the light of what has been said in the preceding chapter it should come as no surprise that arguments occurring in different clause types can behave identically. If they have identical semantic and/or pragmatic properties, they ought to be treated identically by grammatical processes sensitive to these semantic and/or pragmatic properties. For instance, an agent in a one-argument clause ('he was dancing') could be identified with an agent in a two-argument clause ('he was killing a duckling') on purely semantic grounds, just as a patient in a one-argument clause ('he was ill') could be identified with a patient in a two-argument clause ('he was killing a duckling'). It was pointed out above that it is also possible for grammatical processes to identify all arguments of one-place predicates with the non-agent of two-argument predicates ('he was dancing'/ 'he was ill'/'he was killing a duckling'), on the basis of a higher-level semantic common denominator of these argument roles. Now suppose all arguments of one-place predicates and agents (and perhaps 'assimilated' roles such as experiencer and possessor) of two-place predicates are treated identically by some grammatical rule ('he was dancing'/'he was ill'/'he was killing a duckling'), is this still an instance of semantic generalization, or do we need an additional non-semantic concept to refer to this particular set of arguments? It seems indeed unlikely that this set can be defined in purely semantic terms; it could be defined in pragmatic

terms, though: the rule in question might single out arguments with a particular status in the indexical (say, the least distant referent) or informational (say, the focus of attention) structure of different clause types. In other words, no matter which patterns of identification may be observed,[38] the fact that arguments in different clause types need to be conflated for the maximally general formulation of various grammatical regularities per se is no sufficient reason to recognize any extra relational concepts. The empirical problem, of course, is to determine what kinds of argument properties are relevant for the various grammatical regularities of a given language (keeping in mind that different regularities may well refer to different properties, and thus involve different argument patterns). This empirical enquiry may then turn up grammatical regularities involving argument patterns that are not definable, or at least not definable in a maximally general manner, in terms of relational-semantic and/or pragmatic clause structures; and for the purpose of identifying the arguments forming such patterns, the introduction of an extra relational concept would be appropriate. But clearly this is an altogether different criterion from that recognizing subjects whenever one argument of a two-place predicate behaves like the single argument of a one-place predicate.

The following could seem to be an instance of the premature recognition of subjects on the grounds that there is no maximal contrast between the arguments of one- and two-place predicates:

> ... a language has subjects if the agent in simple 'transitive' action sentences shares noncontingent syntactic or morphological properties with the patient/agent argument in 'intransitive' sentences which the latter does not share with the patient in action sentences. ... Other structural types have subjects to the extent that there is a single NP in such structures that also displays these properties. (Anderson 1979:4)

Armed with this definition one would have to conclude (as does Anderson) that Modern English has subjects since various grammatical rules — including those of linearization, verb agreement, pronominal case marking (cf. 17), equi-NP-deletion (cf. 18), raising out of complements of predicates like <u>be easy</u> (cf. 19) — treat certain arguments which are evidently not agents of simple transitive action sentences exactly like transitive agents. (Note that according to Anderson (1979:3) the agent in passives

is not supposed to behave like an active agent since it does not occur in a simple transitive action sentence.)

(17) a. He kills ducklings.

b. He was killed by a knight-errant.

c. He leaves tomorrow.

d. He is hungry.

e. He knows the answer.

(18) a. He wants to kill ducklings/to be killed by a knight-errant/to leave tomorrow/to be hungry/to know the answer.

b. *He wants a knight-errant to kill (scil. him); *he wants a knight-errant to be killed (scil. by him); *he wants everybody to know (scil. him)

(19) a. Ducklings are easy to kill.

b. *He is easy to kill ducklings/to be killed by a knight-errant/to leave tomorrow/to be hungry/to know the answer.

Defining subjects in this manner obviously cannot be tantamount to excluding the possibility that some grammatical regularities may involve simple-transitive-action agents but not the other arguments, or not all other arguments, that under certain circumstances (e.g. those illustrated in 17-19) behave like them; or that some regularities may involve certain arguments sharing some subject properties but not simple-transitive-action agents. Passivization, imperative formation, and the orientation of the particle up are among these regularities evincing patterns of argument identification different from that found in (17)-(19). Thus one must assume that 'noncontingent' is a key notion in Anderson's definition of subjecthood: insofar as grammatical regularities are to be stated exclusively in terms of semantic relations among arguments and/or of clause type (transitive/intransitive), subjecthood is simply irrelevant. There may exist morphological, syntactic, and semantic regularities that are necessarily and thus universally contingent in this sense (e.g. imperative formation, orientation of completion indicators corresponding to English up); but there certainly are others ~~that~~ which

may be contingent in some languages and noncontingent in others. Following Anderson, we have assumed above that linearization (i.e. preverbal position), verb agreement, pronominal case marking, equi, and raising, as illustrated in (17)-(19), are noncontingent rules in English; but what is required is empirical evidence in support of this assumption. If we reconsider the doubly underlined arguments in (17), it seems clear enough that their common denominator is not relational-semantic: the rules in question refer to agents and patients indiscriminately. Although it can thus be shown that the regularities observed are not contingent on semantic relations, it has not been shown yet that they must be contingent on subjecthood. What has been ignored is that the arguments that behave identically might do so for pragmatic reasons, and in this case the rules would not bear on subjecthood either. Thus, it might be that linearization, agreement, casemarking on pronouns, equi, and raising in English distinguish between focus of attention and comment, or between indexically close and distant referents, or between already and newly activated referents. My point is again primarily methodological rather than empirical: as long as it has not been established that a grammatical regularity is not contingent on a pattern of arguments definable in pragmatic terms, we cannot conclude that the regularity refers to arguments that are subjects (presupposing that 'subject' is not intended to be a synonym of 'focus of attention/indexically close/already activated'). If the empirical task then is to identify those morphological, syntactic, and semantic properties shared by arguments in different clause types which are not contingent on the relational-semantic and/or pragmatic statuses of these arguments, we are required to determine that arguments must be assigned a status ~~that~~ which is not purely semantic and/or pragmatic before we can compare the behaviour of arguments in different clause types along the lines of the definition of subjecthood quoted above. But what is this special, not purely semantic or pragmatic argument status to which grammatical rules may turn out to refer? Presumably these rules, if not stateable in semantic-pragmatic terms, are sensitive to grammatical relations, such as subject and object.[39] If this is the case, Anderson's subjecthood criterion quoted above indeed cannot really have criterial value because in order to apply it we must already know whether a

language has rules/regularities that are sensitive to subjecthood — otherwise it would be impossible to decide which rules/regularities are crucial for the purposes of the criterion, i.e. which rules/regularities are not contingent on semantic and pragmatic argument properties. Note that I am not saying that we are perforce engaged in a circular procedure in determining whether a language has subjects; I merely claim that a subjecthood criterion like that advocated by J. Anderson (1979) lacks criterial force. The primary empirical task is to survey the regularities of a language to find out which categories are necessary for the identification of the argument patterns involved.

In carrying out this programme, we encounter a second difficulty implicit in Anderson's definition of subjecthood. A priori it is possible that different rules of a language have different 'pivots' (cf. fn. 39). As far as Modern English is concerned, the doubly underlined arguments in (11) are the pivots for a linearization rule, for verb agreement, for case marking and for equi; but they are not the pivots for instance for easy-raising (cf. 18). And if we would examine further rules, it might even be the case that their pivots are not always chosen from either one of two strictly complementary sets of argument types; e.g. arguments that pattern with simple-transitive-action agents in one regularity may pattern with simple-transitive-action patients on other occasions. But even if we disregard such additional complications and consider only complementary pivotal argument sets, the quite elementary question is why one pivotal argument set should be assigned some privileged status. Or, to rephrase the question in terms of Anderson's subjecthood criterion: Why is it that simple-transitive-action agents and all other transitive or intransitive arguments sharing 'noncontingent' syntactic and morphological properties with them, rather than, say, simple-transitive-action patients and other argument types aligning with them as pivots of some grammatical rules/regularities, are assigned the status of subject? This looks like a silly question indeed, as long as one assumes that the assignment of the label 'subject' is an arbitrary terminological matter. However, I doubt that Anderson's referring to simple-transitive-action agents in his criterion for lan-

guages ~~that~~ which can legitimately boast subjects was the result of an arbitrary terminological decision. I take it that implicit in his definition of subjecthood is the assumption that subject is, in a sense, the primary grammatical relation (even if the arguments in this primary relation are not necessarily the pivots for all pertinent rules of a language), and that simple-transitive-agents are, in a way, the most natural candidates for this privileged status. What remains to be done, of course, is to explicate in what sense and why certain argument relations should be distinguished as primary, and why there should be a natural affinity between certain semantic roles and this primary status. It is the fault of Anderson's criterion that it fails to provide this explication;[40] but this, it seems to me, is not an accidental shortcoming but rather the logical consequence of any attempt to come to terms with subjecthood on the basis of a comparison of the behaviour of arguments across clause types without ascertaining in advance the distinctive grammatical properties of arguments within individual clause types. I now turn to considerations of this latter kind.

2.2. In what sense can arguments be assigned a primary status? Semantic argument roles per se seem hardly appropriate as the ultimate basis for drawing an additional distinction between primaries and secondaries, for what should be the conceptual parameter motivating a hierarchical arrangement of the inventories of more or less concrete semantic relations (such as killer, victim, etc.; agent, patient, etc.; more, less influential participant)? The distinction between core and peripheral participant roles is a different matter, pertaining to objects rather than subjects and having to do with the inferential identifiability of certain roles, but not of others, on the basis of the meaning of the predicate. The most plausible, and I think quite obvious, sense in which an argument can be said to have primary or secondary status derives from pragmatic organization, both indexical and informational, since at these levels we are dealing with inherently asymmetric oppositions. The paradigm instance of pragmatic primehood, then, would be an argument that simultaneously anchors the predication in the speech-

-event (indexical-pragmatic primary), denotes an already activated and specific (definite) referent, and constitutes the focus of attention and/or the frame of the predication (informational-pragmatic primaries);[41] and a paradigm secondary would accordingly lack all these properties. It was pointed out earlier that these several pragmatic statuses are to a certain extent interdependent; thus, for example, focus/frame referents tend to (or must) be already activated or even definite (although arguments that are not the focus or frame may of course be already activated and definite as well). Therefore, primary arguments will presumably rather frequently turn out to be in fact paradigm instances of pragmatic primehood. But evidently with the introduction of a label 'primary' we are not substantively expanding our conceptual apparatus, which is to say in particular that we can still do without a primary grammatical relation. A primary grammatical relation, or subject, has to be recognized, I maintain, only if pragmatic primehood is integrated with relational-semantic structures in a particular way. This way must be different from what we have seen to be the case in a language like Potawatomi or in a language like the one hypothetically illustrated in (16) (roughly modelled after Tagalog), where the choice of pragmatic primaries does not seem to be constrained at all by predicates and the semantic argument roles associated with them. In these two relational systems, semantic relations and pragmatic primehood are to be sure interrelated; e.g. there are coding devices which signal the semantic role of the primary argument. A primary grammatical relation owes its existence to an interrelation which is, in a way, less superficial because it has lexical origins, in a property of predicates which I propose to call 'semantic-pragmatic orientation'.

To simplify matters, let us initially ignore pragmatic statuses other than focus of attention and its opposite, comment. Imagine a language which has two two-place verbs, kill and die, which differ only in that the former has to be chosen

if the killer is the focus of attention, and the latter if the victim is the focus. Notice that both verbs are inherently causative; in this respect our ddie thus differs from the English verb die, which denotes a change of state without necessarily implying an external cause. The following, somewhat redundant, coding devices are available: a focus marker suffixed to argument expressions, and semantic-role markers on arguments that are not in focus. The semantic roles actually encoded are more general than killer and victim; there are further verb pairs analogous to kkill/ddie such as ddefeat (winner-focus)/llose (loser-focus) and llike (experiencer-focus)/pplease (stimulus-focus), and the markers -agt and -pat are supposed to identify referents as killer/winner/experiencer (more influential) and victim/loser/stimulus (less influential) respectively, if not in focus. With linear order being irrelevant, in semantic as well as pragmatic respects, we thus get the following expressions differing only in focus-comment organization:

(20) a. kkill farmer-foc duckling-pat
b. ddie farmer-agt duckling-foc

Insofar as each participant in the situation described (killing, defeating, liking — to arbitrarily choose one member of each verb pair for the purpose of characterizing the situations) is equally eligible for pragmatic primehood (focus), this hypothetical language is not much different from that presented in (16).

In this earlier system, however, there was no reason to assume any lexical correlates to alternative choices of focus, whereas in the present system alternative matchings of semantic roles and focus do have lexical correlates, since there are separate lexical items of predicates with inherently specified and unalterable role-focus associations. I refer to predicates as having semantic-pragmatic orientation if they are not inherently neutral with regard to the assignment of pragmatic primehood to their arguments ~~required by, or compatible with, their~~, with the arguments being identified or distinguished in relational-semantic terms. Notice that semantic-pragmatically oriented predicates like those considered here do not demand that grammatical regularities be stated in other terms

than relational-semantic and/or pragmatic ones. Thus, the suffixing of -foc refers to the argument in focus, the suffixing of -pat and the selection of the verb variant kill make reference to the non-focussed victim referent, and the suffixing of -agt and the selection of die to the non-focussed killer referent; and further rule pivots can be specified accordingly.

In all hypothetical and real languages ~~thus far~~ considered so far, the choices of semantic-role configurations and pragmatic statuses were in principle independent of one another: the choice of a role configuration had no implications, other than perhaps statistical ones (experiencers and probably agents are frequently indexically close and in focus etc.), for the distribution of pragmatic primehood statuses among the referents in these roles. Now suppose a language has predicates with semantic-pragmatic orientation ~~which do not strictly oblige one to focus attention on certain argument roles~~, which ~~however~~ designate a certain ~~but~~ argument role as preferred candidate, rather than as obligatory choice, for focussing. To use again hypothetical examples, consider two two-place predicates, kill and suffer, whose lexical specification includes not only the appropriate role configurations, killer-victim and tormentor-sufferer, but also the stipulations that the argument in the role of killer in the case of kill and the argument in the role of sufferer in the case of suffer are inherently more focusworthy than their opposite numbers. There are the following, somewhat redundant, rules of encoding: the predicates cross--reference the lexically preferred focus argument by class, regardless of whether this argument is actually chosen as focus or not; -prim and -sec are suffixed to the lexically preferred focus argument and to the argument not so preferred, again regardless of the actual choice of focus; -m is suffixed to any argument which in actual discourse is not assigned the pragmatic status stipulated by the predicate. Here are the expressions that are possible in this language, linear order being semantically and pragmatically insignificant:

(21) a. he-kill farmer-prim duckling-sec (killer in focus)

b. he-kill farmer-prim -m duckling-sec (no argument in focus)

c. he-kill farmer-prim -m duckling-sec -m (victim in focus)

(22) a. it-zuffer duckling-prim farmer-sec (sufferer in focus)

b. it-zuffer duckling-prim -m farmer-sec (no argument in focus)

c. it-zuffer duckling-prim -m farmer-sec -m (tormentor in focus)

The alternatives in (21) and (22) differ in focussing, just as those in (16) and (20); and the arguments in these constructions can be referred to in terms of their semantic roles, their pragmatic statuses, and in terms of role-status matching (e.g. the farmer in (21a) is a focussed killer (agent), but a non-focussed killer in (21b) and (21c)). But what is the distinctive feature of the present system vis à vis the previous ones is that alternative focussing constructions have more in common than their semantic role configurations, and the coding devices utilized in (21) and (22) render this quite transparent. Co-occurring semantic roles are also distinguished as lexically preferred candidates for focussing and commenting, and these lexically determined distinctions are constant role properties, in contradistinction to the variable pragmatic role properties due to the actual assignments of focus and comment status in accordance with the requirements of the discourse. Thus, the arguments marked by -prim and cross-referenced by the predicates in (21) and (22) have no constant relational-semantic content: they are in the role of killer, or, more generally, of the more influential or agent participant in (21), and in the role of sufferer, or less influential or patient participant in (22);[42] and they have no constant informational-pragmatic value either: they are in focus in (21a) and (22a), and not in focus in (21b-c) and (22b-c). What all these argument occurrences do have in common is that their semantic roles are designated as first, or unmarked, option for the status of focus by the predicates cill and zuffer. On account of lexically predetermined focussing preferences, constructions where the pragmatic primary (i.e. actual focus) is not that argument which is predestined to assume this status for lexical reasons (cf. 21b-c, 22b-c) can be characterized as pragmatically marked, whereas in the previous relational systems there apparently were no reasons not to consider alternative focussing constructions structurally and lexically equivalent. I suggest that we call predicates with this particular kind of variable, but not equivalent, semantic--pragmatic orientations subjective. And to allow for the possibility that some, but

not all, predicates of a language may turn out to possess this lexical property, it may be useful to characterize languages as a whole as more or less subjective, depending on the proportion of subjective predicates. Languages with subjective rather than orientationally neutral predicates could be characterized as more or less subjective in yet another sense, viz. with respect to the proportion of rules and regularities which have to be stated in terms of lexically preferred focussing and commenting roles, rather than in terms of purely semantic roles, actual pragmatic statuses, and matchings of roles and actual pragmatic statuses. Now notice that with subjective predicates, the relations holding between argument(s) and predicate acquire a new quality. They are no longer purely semantic (although their semantic content can of course still be isolated), since simultaneously with the choice of a particular semantic-role configuration one has to commit oneself to recognizing the privilege of one role with respect to the status of focus of attention. I think it is this kind of amalgamation of semantic relations and non--relational pragmatic privileges which creates genuinely grammatical relations,[43] and I suggest that the semantic relation which is lexically preferred to be in focus is the primary grammatical relation of subject. This is clearly a non-redundant definition of subjecthood (and the water-H_2O analogy is certainly not pertinent here), because subjects are only recognized in connection with predicates of a very specific kind, and moreover because subjecthood, in spite of distinct affinities between subjects and pragmatic primaries, ~~subjecthood~~ is not equated with pragmatic primehood: arguments can be subjects without being pragmatic primaries (cf. 21b-c, 22b-c).

According to this account, the subject in a pragmatically unmarked construction (such as 21a) remains subject in a corresponding marked construction (cf. 21b-c) where it is not in focus. In order to see that we may have to elaborate our concept of pragmatically marked constructions, let us briefly consider a real rather than a hypothetical language, and let us assume without really arguing these points that the English verb <u>to kill</u> is subjective and that the third-person referent introduced by speaker A in (23) is the focus in B's reply.

(23) A: Tell me about your duckling!

a. B: A farmer has killed it.

b. B: It has been killed by a farmer.

I take it that most analysts would agree that a farmer in (23a) is the grammatical subject: the English verb to kill, like many other action verbs, prefers the agent (killer) to be in focus, which makes this role the primary grammatical relation even if the focus happens to be elsewhere. But most analysts would also agree that the victim rather than the killer is in the subject relation if the reply is phrased as in (23b), again a pragmatically marked construction insofar as the preferred focus of kill is in this context not actually chosen as focus. Comparing this alternation of verb forms in English, to kill vs. to be killed, with those illustrated earlier, in particular in (16) and (20), we notice that like these it obviously has to do with differences in pragmatic organization. In the present case, however, this alternation is not simply a formal correlate of alternative but structurally equivalent matchings of semantic roles and pragmatic statuses. Instead we have to distinguish between a basic, unmarked subjective predicate and its marked variant, which is also subjective but differs in its inherent focussing preference from the basic predicate. Thus, although to be killed as a subjective predicate designates one of its arguments, that in the role of victim (patient), as unmarked choice for pragmatic primehood, its primary grammatical relation is still marked vis à vis the subject relation occurring with the corresponding basic predicate. An indicator of this marked status would seem to be that it is quite difficult for the subject of a non-basic construction to be outranked in pragmatic primehood by the argument that would be subject in the corresponding basic construction (cf. 24), whereas basic subjects need not be the actual pragmatic primaries (cf. 23a).[44]

(24) A: Tell me more about this farmer!

a. B: *A duckling has been killed by him.

b. B: He has killed a duckling.

If a subjective language has pragmatically marked constructions with basic predicates and also constructions which are pragmatically marked by virtue of the

employment of a marked predicate variant, three manifestations of subjecthood have thus to be recognized: basic subjects which are pragmatic primaries (cf. 21a, 22a); basic subjects which are not (cf. 21b-c, 22b-c, 23a, 24b); and non-basic subjects (cf. 23b), which presumably have to be primaries (cf. 24a). Since the different kinds of pragmatically marked constructions appear to be functionally equivalent to a considerable extent, subjective languages may well utilize them selectively. Marked non-basic predicates, for instance, would seem redundant in the hypothetical system illustrated in (21)-(22). But suppose a language lacks suitable adnominal coding devices, like the suffixes -prim , -sec and -m in (21)-(22), in order to signal that actual focussing is not in accordance with the lexical preference; non-basic predicates ought then be convenient means of expressing the necessary distinctions. Still, although the occurrence of one or another kind of pragmatically marked constructions in subjective languages may be partly contingent on the coding devices available, one should not be surprised to find that marked focussing indeed very frequently involves overt marking on the predicate rather than somewhere else in the sentence: after all, the criterion of subjectivity is that the meaning of a predicate includes a specification of focussing preferences.[45] Notice, furthermore, that it may be an oversimplification to regard formal complexity as the only, sufficient and necessary, criterion of non-basic predicate constructions. On the contrary, it seems rather likely that there always are some further indications or correlates of the kind of markedness at issue. For instance, the range of argument configurations compatible with non-basic predicates may be more restricted: the semantically implied argument role which is not in focus could obligatorily lack an overt representation, or could at least be relegated to a peripheral relational status, whereas in the corresponding basic construction both the primary (subject) and secondary (object) relations are core relations. A further characteristic of non-basic constructions could be that they show an affinity to certain marked semantic categories of the verbal paradigm (e.g. to marked members of aspectual oppositions), with the markedness values of these categories being determined in relation to the meaning of basic predicates (e.g. per-

fective aspect is presumably marked if predicates are basically dynamic, but unmarked if they are basically static). The meaning differences between basic and non-basic predicates need not be connected with strictly paradigmatic categories; for instance, basic two-place predicates could denote both purely spatial relations and relations where one participant is seen as affecting or effecting the other, with one of these readings (the former) being excluded in the marked construction. Presupposing that the English verb to approach is subjective and the English passive a marked focussing construction, examples like the following illustrate this possibility:[46]

(25) a. A train approached Smith. (spatial)

b. A stranger approached Smith. (not purely spatial)

c. Smith was approached by a stranger/*by a train.

And let me also mention that there may be discourse environments, e.g. discourse-initial position, where non-basic constructions are in general less likely to occur than unmarked, basic constructions, although to account for this, pragmatic factors other than focus would have to be taken into consideration as well.

Above we claimed that genuinely grammatical relations have to be recognized only if alternative choices of focus can be distinguished as unmarked and marked on account of the semantic-pragmatic orientation of basic (and non-basic) predicates, and we have tried to characterize marked constructions, which are the result of the lexically preferred argument not being chosen as focus. What ought to be emphasized is that a construction can be pragmatically marked even if none of the arguments of a basic subjective predicate is chosen as pragmatic primary in actual discourse (cf. 21b, 22b). This implication of our theoretical framework is important in connection with a perennial controversy about the passive concerning its primarily 'promotional' (or object-foregrounding) or 'demotional' (subject-backgrounding) nature. Since prototypical passive constructions in quite a few languages differ from basic actives with regard to the role-relation matching of two arguments (what is (direct) object in the active, is subject in the passive,

and what is subject in the active, is an oblique, peripheral object, or possibly unexpressed, in the passive), it has occasionally been assumed that neither of these two matching differences can occur independently and that one of them, viz. object-foregrounding, is in a sense more essential, the other (subject-backgrounding) being an automatic, universally predictable consequence.[47] Insofar as passives can be considered non-basic marked focussing constructions, presupposing the existence of basic subjective predicates, the theoretical framework outlined here suggests rather that subject-backgrounding, or defocussing, alone can be criterial of passives, which is not to deny that the necessity of foregrounding the object may be an important and frequent motive for the use of passives. Since the distinctive feature of basic subjective predicates is that they designate one argument as preferred candidate for focussing, an argument not so preferred cannot be chosen as focus without depriving the preferred focus candidate of its inherently privileged status, because there cannot be two focuses simultaneously. But the decision of whether the lexically preferred focus candidate is actually chosen as focus or not can be made independently of whether there already is an argument that is not in focus or not inherently focusworthy. That is, non-basic predicates ('passives', 'impersonals') corresponding to subjective basic predicates may in principle lack subjects, i.e. an argument role lexically predestined to be in focus, although by virtue of their association with basic subjective predicates they still differ from inherently neutral predicates where no genuinely grammatical relations can be defined to begin with. If subjectlessness in non-basic constructions of basic subjective intransitive and transitive predicates is, thus, a theoretical possibility, the interesting question is why some subjective languages allow such constructions,[48] whereas others apparently do not. As long as the absence of non-basic subjectless constructions in particular languages cannot be shown to follow naturally from other properties of their grammars, we would be required to assume an arbitrary constraint to account for their non-occurrence. As an illustration of the analytical difficulties potentially involved in deciding whether a subjective language has non--basic constructions without subjects, consider the following English examples

(from Visser 1973: § 1931):

(26) a. Bot now it es bis appell etten. (14th c. Curs.M.)

b. Ther was graunted ... to his wyf xx s. by yer. (c1440)

c. Than there was brought to the quene her owne chyldren. (1523-5)

d. In the fourth [year] of king Johns reigne was founded the Abbey of Dowsyke. (1571)

In particular the occasional lack of agreement (cf. 26b,c) might incline one to believe that the doubly underlined arguments are simply not subjects but are in the same non-primary relation as in the corresponding active constructions. But alternatively one could take them for non-basic subjects which are additionally marked due to their lack of pragmatic primehood properties, in which case the statement of agreement would have to be modified. If we follow Green (1977), who argues that the question of subjecthood in such constructions, and in fact also in analogous marked constructions with basic predicates (such as On the wall hung a picture of a duckling), is not decidable in any principled manner, we may be forced to recognize the possibility that the grammatical relation of certain arguments can be indeterminate, i.e. that such arguments are neither subjects nor non-subjects.[49]

It is time we remembered the simplifying premise of our account of subjectivity as outlined in the preceding paragraphs: we only considered focus of attention in explicating the notion of a primary grammatical relation, and ignored the other pragmatic primehood statuses. It seems clear that the concept of a subjective predicate, as opposed to inherently neutral predicates and predicates with entirely unalterable semantic-pragmatic orientation, does not have to be abandoned in order to develop a more comprehensive theory of subjectivity. Rather, it could be elaborated quite naturally in at least two ways, which may be referred to as maximalist and minimalist versions of the grammaticalization of pragmatic organization. In the maximalist version, a subjective predicate would designate one of its arguments as the lexically preferred candidate for all indexical- and

informational-pragmatic primehood statuses. In the minimalist version, a predicate would already qualify as subjective if it designated one argument as preferred candidate for at least one pragmatic primehood status, being inherently neutral with regard to the distribution of the remaining primehood statuses. The minimalist version would, thus, allow for variation of criterial statuses from one predicate to the other, or, if the predicates of a language should turn out to be treated uniformly, from one subjective language to another. In view of what has been said above about the likelihood of occurrence of paradigm primaries in discourse, it is perhaps not unreasonable to expect that predicates should be maximally subjective, if they are subjective at all, so that the use of such predicates in unmarked basic constructions would entail that the argument in the primary grammatical relation of subject simultaneously anchors the predication in the speech-event, is already activated, definite, and the focus of attention (or frame). But it is of course an empirical issue to determine to what extent primehood privileges are lexically assigned to argument roles by individual predicates in individual languages, and what accordingly are the criteria of pragmatically marked constructions. Thus, insofar as it is not taken for granted that argument roles must be lexically associated with the full share of pragmatic privileges in order to qualify as subjects, we allow for the possibility that basic primary grammatical relations have different pragmatic content with different subjective predicates, and especially in different subjective languages. This is not to say that being a basic subject per se is a matter of degrees: a semantic argument role either acquires the status of being a primary grammatical relation by virtue of being the unmarked choice for some pragmatic primehood status, or it does not. What may come in degrees is the number of pragmatic parameters with respect to which an argument role constitutes the unmarked choice. And another matter of degrees is with regard to which pragmatic parameters a subject in a marked, basic or non-basic, construction is the actual primary (although, as was briefly mentioned above, in marked constructions there is the additional possibility of an argument being in an indeterminate grammatical relation). One might well wonder at this point whether this

notion of subject can still be useful as an invariant for the purposes of language comparison.[50] I think it can, because languages indeed do have something in common if they are such as to allow the definition of a primary grammatical relation at all, as opposed to purely semantic relations, irrespective of the potential differences in the semantic and pragmatic content of this category. Nevertheless, these differences have to be kept in mind in any attempt to formulate cross-linguistic generalizations concerning relational regularities, since for some such regularities the actual pragmatic and/or relational-semantic status of an argument may turn out to be more important than the fact that this argument happens to be a subject. Concerning the above question of which pragmatic factors are constitutive for subjecthood in the first place, either the full set of primehood statuses (maximalist version) or indexical closeness, activation, definiteness, focus (frame) individually (minimalist version), I suspect that this may not be entirely unpredictable but at least partly be contingent on which means are available to a language for expressing these pragmatic distinctions. That is, it might be the case that predicates tend to be inherently neutral with respect to pragmatic distinctions expressed by autonomous coding devices which are independent of the encoding of other pragmatic distinctions and also of relational-semantic encoding. For instance, if a language has a system of definiteness marking which is independent of the expression of focus (or frame), and the latter parameter is encoded by devices which are also used for relational-semantic purposes (e.g. linear order), definiteness may turn out to be less criterial for the constitution of a primary grammatical relation. But with these speculations we are touching on the more fundamental question of why predicates should be subjective at all rather than being inherently neutral, which I will not presume to answer here, for the simple reason that I am not aware of any very satisfactory explanation. Again speculating wildly, I believe that the categorial conception of basic predicate expressions vis à vis that of nominal expressions might hold the key to an eventual answer of this question. It is my impression that we tend to find subjective predicates above all in such lan-

guages which have predicates with a truly verbal character, and neutral predicates preferably if predicate expressions have a nominal character, or at least do not contain a verbal element which is categorially maximally distinct from nominal and adjectival elements.[51] Since it has often been maintained[52] that a distinction between nouns and verbs, on morphosyntactic grounds, is to be found in each human language, 'truly verbal' in our hypothesis ought to be understood in a relative sense, as suggesting that predicates are likely to be subjective to the extent that a class of basic verbal elements are recognizable in a language which are predestined to assume predicative function and possess morphosyntactic properties not shared by other elements. Among the characteristically verbal properties, the presence of specifically verbal person marking is perhaps more important as a correlate of subjectivity than verbal tense, aspect (or aktionsart), or mood marking.[53] Now, if semantic participant roles are governed by personal verbal predicates, it seems that these roles are intimately tied up with indexical-pragmatic structure, i.e. with speech-event participant roles. And it is this semantic-indexical association which could be responsible for the inherent pragmatic privileges of certain argument roles; after all, indexical primehood strongly correlates with all informational-pragmatic primehood statuses: the speaker and the addressee(s) are the prototypical instances of referents which are always already activated, definite, and therefore most likely to be in focus (or the frame of a predication). Clearly, with inherently neutral predicates arguments referring to the speaker or the addressee will also tend to be used frequently as actual pragmatic primaries; but it seems more likely that with verbal predicates, where the connection with speech-event participant roles is a crucial categorial characteristic, pragmatic primehood qualities are more permanently (i.e. lexically) associated with argument roles, viz. with those typically filled by the speaker or addressee(s), or referents indexically close to them, e.g. referents with whom they can readily empathize.[54]

Leaving the realm of pure speculation, I now turn to one of the more obvious questions implied by this lexically based account of subjectivity: If predicates predetermine which of their arguments are the preferred candidates for pragmatic primehood status(es), they could do so randomly or in a principled, universally or at least language-specifically predictable manner. I think there is reason to believe that in all subjective languages there will be lexical idiosyncrasies as well as general rules of basic subject selection, which may not be cross-linguistically invariant, though.[55] If we take it that there are always general patterns of basic subject selection, the question is in what terms these patterns can be defined, i.e. what kinds of relational-semantic concepts are the appropriate basis for the assignment of pragmatic privileges. Obviously, role types such as agent, patient etc. would seem to be quite suitable for this purpose, whereas it is difficult to see how one could capture any generalizations if one relied entirely on more concrete roles such as killer, victim, and the like.[56] A brief look at the most common verbs of activity, experience, and possession in some Standard Average European languages, which presumably are subjective to begin with, indeed confirms our expectation that we should be able to uncover certain patterns if we rely on role types: typically, agents rather than patients (cf. English kill, hit, destroy, defeat, overcome, torment, write, build, make, eat ...; exceptional, if not analysed as experiencer-verbs: die from, lose to, succumb to, suffer), experiencers rather than stimuli (cf. see,

hear, feel, like, enjoy ...; exceptional: please, frighten, amuse, if not analysed as agent-verbs), and possessors rather than possessions (cf. have, possess, own; exceptional: belong to) are selected as basic subjects. Instead of being satisfied with such generalizations, presupposing that they are valid, we ought to wonder why these different role types behave identically with respect to subject selection in the languages under consideration. Is this an accident, and could the role types therefore pattern quite differently just as well? Or are we missing the real generalization, which could explain why the pattern observed indeed is more natural than possible alternatives, such as patient/stimulus/possession basic subjects or agent/stimulus/possession basic subjects etc.? Different patterns could, and do, no doubt exist (compare ergative systems with patient rather than agent basic subjects) ; but the roles of agent, experiencer, and possessor still constitute a natural class, although I think it would be a mistake to look for some genuinely relational-semantic common denominator, even at the more abstract level of more/less influential participant roles, in order to account for their tendency to acquire pragmatic primehood privileges. What these roles have in common, rather, is that the arguments occurring in them typically denote animates, if not humans. That is, both agents and patients, experiencers and stimuli, possessors and possessions may happen to be animate or human in actual discourse, but patients/stimuli/possessions of two-place predicates are as likely, or even more likely, to be inanimate or nonhuman as well, whereas it would be rather untypical or even impossible (at least in the case of an experiencer) for the roles of agent/experiencer/possessor to be filled by anything else but humans or animates. Now, it is not surprising that human discourse in general should be characterized by a preference for human and other animate referents to be chosen as pragmatic primaries, and if one of two co-occurring argument roles is to be given a special grammatical status, that of primary grammatical relation, the one with a distinct affinity to human or animate referents should be the obvious choice. Notice, incidentally, that many of the 'idiosyncratic' exceptions to the majority pattern of basic subject selection appear to be used preferably in situations where the argument in the role

which is typically filled by humans/animates is actually not human/animate whereas its opposite number is; cf. such examples as Latin fame perire 'to die from hunger' (vs. perdere 'make die, destroy') or English suffer pain/from a headache (vs. torment), die from cancer/from a rock falling on someone's head/ *from Bill (vs. kill). There are, as far as I know, no systematic cross-linguistic studies about the availability of lexical converses, but my impression is that lexical converses are most likely to exist in the case of predicates having two arguments both of which are likely to denote humans/animates. To mention a few pertinent examples from English and Ancient Greek: give/send vs. receive, sell vs. buy, lend vs. borrow, teach vs. learn, defeat/overcome vs. lose to/ succumb to, apokteínein 'kill' vs. apothnéskein hupó 'die from, be killed by', eũ légein 'praise' vs. eũ akúein 'be praised', hairein 'capture' vs. halōnai 'be captured'. In general, the important point here is that semantic role types per se are not necessarily the appropriate concepts to account for the patterns of semantic-pragmatic orientation of predicates; presumably these role types are not even needed to formulate the regularities of basic subject selection in a maximally general way. We can define the pertinent pattern simply by referring to participant roles in terms of the lexical content of the arguments that typically occur in these roles. In languages where killers, victors, eaters, producers ... (agents), perceivers, experiencers, and possessors tend to be in the basic subject relation, the crucial lexical-content feature seems to be that of animacy or humanness.[57] And this is not surprising since being animate or even human increases the chances of a referent to be chosen as actual indexical- and informational-pragmatic primary, pragmatic primehood being one of the areas of human language characterized by a strong anthropocentric, and ultimately egocentric, bias. There are, however, further factors that may also be relevant for the actual distribution of primehood statuses, some of which have been mentioned earlier:[58] thus, prior activation and definiteness, which are themselves primehood statuses, increase the likelihood of a referent being chosen as focus of attention; arguments denoting active, mobile, potent, positively evaluated, perceptually dominant entities, or, in gestalt terms, figures, are in general more likely to attain

primary status than arguments denoting passive, immobile, impotent, negatively evaluated, perceptually dominated entities, or, in gestalt terms, the ground. Even if certain subjective languages turned out to put more emphasis on some of these factors than on animacy/humanness in selecting participant roles as primary grammatical relation, we would not expect to find drastic variation between these languages, because a common property of all these parameters is that they are egocentrically biased: the speech-event participants, and especially the speaker, outrank all other referents no matter which of these parameters (animacy, figure/ground, activation and definiteness) is criterial.[59] It has been claimed, and I think rightly, that in ergative languages, though perhaps not in all of them, patients rather than agents are chosen as basic subjects, and this pattern would now seem difficult to understand, given these assumptions about the determinants of pragmatic primehood and their association with participant roles on an essentially probabilistic basis. If an ergative pattern in fact involves the grammatical relation of subject, rather than being defined in purely semantic terms linking transitive patients with intransitive arguments (cf. §1.2.1), our theoretical framework would lead us to expect that there should be some typical property of arguments predestined to occur in a patient role which would make victims, sufferers, products ... (patients) the preferred candidates for pragmatic primehood. Relational-semantic notions which are, in a particular way, related to, but not firmly connected with, participant roles could be relevant here. In prototypical instances of activities, agents rather than patients wilfully initiate and terminate the action and are primarily responsible for its outcome, and patients correspondingly are thoroughly, i.e. completely rather than partially, affected or effected (cf. e.g. Lakoff 1977). But notice that volition, control, responsibility and thorough affectedness/effectedness do not necessarily characterize agents and patients respectively. In less prototypical situations, an actual agent or patient may well lack one or the other of these properties, or may even acquire a property prototypically associated with the opposite role. English constructions such as (27c) and (28c) illustrate that patients can be regarded as primarily responsible, which is otherwise char-

acteristic of agents (cf. 27a-b, 28a-b):

(27) a. He sold a book. He put up a tent. He digested/chewed/ate the bread.

b. The book was sold by him. The tent was put up in about five minutes. The bread was digested/chewed/eaten by Smith.

c. The book sold well. A good tent puts up in about five minutes. Bread digests/chews/*eats more easily than shoe leather.

(28) a. A lorry ran him over.

b. He was run over by a lorry.

c. He got run over by a lorry.

There is much comparable evidence showing that the distribution of prototypical properties interferes with relational organization in subjective languages [redacted], and we can, therefore, infer that it may also influence the selection of a basic subject. Thus, if responsibility, for example, is an important pragmatic primacy factor, this argument role could be chosen as primary grammatical relation which is most typically filled by the primarily responsible participant, provided there is no other argument role more salient or focusworthy on other grounds. Our assumption that primary responsibility is a prototypical property of agentive roles is certainly well motivated in the case of English and other Standard Average European languages, but it does not seem to me entirely unlikely that this prototypical conception of agentivity should be subject to cross-linguistic, or rather cross-cultural, variation. In English and similar languages we can observe that some kinds of activity are apparently more susceptible to an association of patienthood with primary responsibility than otherwise quite similar activities (cf. digest, chew and eat in (27c), or sell as in (27c) vis à vis buy as in *The book is buying like hotcakes). In languages spoken under rather different sociocultural conditions it seems conceivable [redacted] that patients in general could be considered primarily responsible, or at least that in those activities which most thoroughly determine the daily life, prototypical human agents do not tend to consider themselves primarily responsible for the outcome of their actions, but [redacted] instead ascribe responsibility to factors ultimately not within their control.

Under such circumstances, the chances are that patients are chosen as basic subjects, if responsibility is indeed instrumental in determining pragmatic primacy. Another potential source of patterns with basic patient subject is perhaps the prototypical patient property 'thorough affectedness/effectedness' (which is presumably not transferable to agents) and its ranking as a determinant of pragmatic primacy. In a language like English, patients or other non-agents (e.g. temporal/local setting, instrument) with this property have relational privileges, as illustrated in the following examples:

(29) a. He was approached by a stranger/*by a train.
b. He shot the girl vs. He shot at the girl. He drank (of) the wine.
c. He loaded hay on the wagon vs. He loaded the wagon with hay.
d. Cobwebs were hanging in the kitchen vs. The kitchen was hanging with/full of cobwebs.
e. It was even more foggy on Tuesday than on Monday vs. Tuesday was even more foggy than Monday.
f. In 1979 we witnessed two big firms go bankrupt vs. 1979 witnessed two big firms go bankrupt.
g. A bullet/??A gun killed Smith.
h. Five cars park in this garage vs. This garage parks five cars.

Although the holistic-partitive meaning opposition is sometimes elusive, it seems legitimate to assume that the degree to which a participant is involved in, or affected or effected by, a situation directly determines which grammatical relation is accessible to an argument. 'Holistic' non-agents, however, do not have unlimited access to the primary grammatical relation: they can be construed as intransitive subjects (29d,e), but they cannot syntactically outrank an agent, if there is one, except in a non-basic passive construction (29a); if they end up as transitive subjects, then there is no agent (29f,g,h), and the non-agents may in addition possess the prototypically agentive property of responsibility or capability (29g,h). Total involvement or thorough affectedness/effectedness would, however, have to be more influential than the other factors determining

pragmatic primehood (e.g. responsibility) in order to bring about a pattern with basic non-agentive subjects. The involvement parameter could, of course, quite arbitrarily rank above the others in particular languages, but I think there often is a more principled basis. Although this is not necessarily reflected in the relational syntax of languages of the nominative-accusative type (like English) other than perhaps statistically, aspectual and/or temporal differences also correlate with the involvement parameter. Perfective or completive aspects, for example, differ from imperfective/prospective/potential/progressive/habitual aspects in describing a state, rather than an ongoing or potentially occurring activity, or a change of state already accomplished, the involvement of the participants having already reached its maximum degree. Under these circumstances the patient is likely to be particularly salient since it is typically the condition of the patient, rather than of the agent, which is recognizably different after the completion of an event (cf. The farmer has killed a duckling; He has melted the ice; He has built an igloo).[60] I submit that perfective-aspect or past-tense systems, then, are a potential source of the origin of patient subjects, from where they may be generalized to the entire relational system. In particular, if basic agent-patient predicates of a language are inherently static or completive, rather than dynamic or durative, referents in a patient role could thus acquire the status of preferred pragmatic primaries. ~~This would be another instance where typologically significant differences in relational grammar are ultimately contingent on lexical differences.~~

In the preceding paragraph we were concerned with the regularities of basic subject selection, and we had earlier mentioned the possibility that arguments which are not subjects of basic predicates may assume subject status with the corresponding non-basic predicate variants (e.g. passives). Now, some of the English examples used for the purpose of illustration in (27) and (29), and also the well-known constructional variability of predicates like open:

(30) a. He opened the door with a key.

b. A key opened the door.

c. The door opened.

could seem difficult to reconcile with the claim that with basic subjective predicates there is only one argument role which has pragmatic primehood privileges. According to traditional analyses, predicates like sell (27a-c), hang (29d, cf. in addition He hung pictures on the wall), be foggy (29e), witness (29f), kill (29g, vis à vis Somebody killed Smith with a bullet/gun), park (29h, cf. in addition They park their cars in this garage), open (30) can occur with different argument roles as subjects, without there being any overt formal marking (such as passive morphology, or pseudo-reflexive markers, as in German Das Buch verkaufte sich gut (27c), Die Tür öffnete sich (30c)) characterizing the predicates as non-basic variants. One could of course challenge these traditional analyses and claim that using the concept of subject is not really justified here to begin with; after all, there are, or perhaps rather, were, some predicates in English where different argument roles are equally eligible for pragmatic primehood status, and where, therefore, no argument qualifies as subject according to the criterion of subjecthood proposed above:[61]

(31) a. This dress becomes your sister vs. She'd better become her dress if she ...

b. This umbrella belongs to Bill vs. Hi, mister! D'yo belong this 'ere ombreller?

c. Your solos don't matter to me vs. I don't much matter your solos.

d. This theory faces several problems vs. Several problems face this theory.

(32) a. A minister edified them vs. ... a Minister, whom they can cordially ... affect, or by whom they can edifie (1657); I haue not edified more truly by man ... since the beautiful light first shone on me (1610)

b. The sun's reflection calefies and indurates the soil vs. Soils, which calify and indurate by the sun's reflection (1658)

c. He dwarfs Pompey vs. By him great Pompey dwarfs and suffers pain (1833)

→ (31)

Visser I : 31f

These robes do royally, and thou becom'st them!
So they do thee! (Ben Jonson, New Inn)

did ever Diana so become a grove as Kate
this chamber? (Shakesp., Tam. Shr.)
~~th~~ She will become thy bed (Sh., Temp)
— that cap of yours becomes you not (Sh. Tam. Shr.)

Common Scotticism: to speak of the person
suiting the thing, instead of the thing suiting
the person

she suits that hat — the hat suits her

If the predicates in (31) and (32) indeed are, as I suggest, not subjective, the overt coding devices, which supposedly help one understand what these sentence pairs differing only in pragmatic organization mean, cannot be taken as referring to grammatical relations like subject and object. But what do they refer to, then, and how are these sentences understood? Pragmatic primaries, regardless of their semantic roles, are encoded by preverbal position and by verb-agreement. Certain argument roles are prepositionally encoded, if the arguments in question are not pragmatic primaries (cf. to in 31b-c, by in 32), which suffices to obviate relational ambiguity. Where there is no relational-semantic encoding at all, neither direct nor indirect, the lexical content of the co-occurring argument phrases is such as to prevent relational misinterpretations (as in 31a and d). Assuming that a non-subjective analysis of become, belong, face, edify etc. is essentially correct, at least for some speakers at some stage of the history of English, do we have to conclude that the verbs sell, hang, kill, park, open etc. are inherently neutral as well? I think this conclusion would be mistaken because it ignores a fundamental difference between the two groups of verbs. With the relevant predicates in (27), (29), and (30), the various argument roles present in fact are not equally good candidates for pragmatic primehood status; rather, the alternative choices of primary are subject to differently severe conditions of a semantic and/or configurational character. In some cases, one argument role can only be chosen as primary if another argument role has no overt representation and is at best semantically implied by the predicate. Thus, confer the following examples with those in (31) and (32):

(33) a. *A key opened the door by Bill. *The door opened by Bill.

b. *Pictures were hanging on the wall by us. *The walls were hanging with pictures by some artists.

c. *1979 witnessed by/to us two big firms go bankrupt.

And in some, if not in all, cases, the alternative constructions of a basic predicate also differ semantically, and not merely in pragmatic organization. That is, there always seems to be one choice of primary that is semantically neutral, in

the sense that there are no particular constraints on what kinds of nominals may occur with the predicate, whereas the alternative choices are semantically marked in that they presuppose that the primary role is filled by an argument with particular non-contingent semantic properties. We have already come across the relevant properties earlier, in discussing the factors that may increase the inherent primehood potential of a referent: responsibility and capability, which are crucial, for instance, in (27c) and (29h); and degree of involvement (totality), which is crucial in (29d, e, f, h).[62] It is this semantic and/or configurational markedness which in my opinion justifies an analysis of such predicates as still being subjective: they designate one argument role as preferred primehood candidate, in general in conformity with the predominant pattern of basic subject selection; what they do in addition is allow other arguments to assume the status of the primary grammatical relation in a basic construction, under circumstances which are marked vis à vis those of the first option of subject selection. What is significant of course is that the second options of basic subject selection, like the first, are by no means random[63] (although there certainly are also verb-particular idiosyncrasies); we can define the patterns of second-option basic subject selection in terms of a small set of semantic (saliency) properties (in English: responsibility/capability, total involvement) which some arguments are more likely to possess than others, and which enable those arguments which possess them to be construed as subjects, provided there are no arguments with a stronger claim to subjecthood. Notice, incidentally, that we now have to distinguish three types of marked constructions with subjects: (a) basic predicates with subjects which are not the actual pragmatic primaries (e.g. are not the focus of attention); (b) basic predicates with second-option subjects (like those discussed in this paragraph); and (c) subjects of non-basic (e.g. passive) predicates. The availability of the second type, second-option basic subjects, is an important, though often neglected, parameter of variation typological and historical among subjective languages (cf. Plank 1978). Comparing Modern English, for example, with German, one notices that the se-

lection of second-option subjects is, on the whole, much more restricted in German, where often non-basic predicates (such as pseudo-reflexives) or lexically different predicates (cf. e.g. Fünf Wagen parken in dieser Garage vs. Diese Garage fasst fünf Wagen, or, with a modal, In dieser Garage können fünf Wagen parken (29h)) have to be chosen as translation equivalents of Modern English second-option subjectivizations with basic predicates. The primary grammatical relation of (basic) subject, thus, can be semantically more or less transparent: it is semantically relatively opaque if a wide range of semantic argument roles can assume this relation (as, for instance, in Modern English), and it is relatively transparent if only a limited set of argument roles is eligible for subjecthood. The degree of opacity of the primary grammatical relation can approach the point where it could seem questionable whether this grammatical relation still has any semantic content at all. Thus, Mathesius (1929, 1975: 101, 125) suggests that "the English subject has largely lost the function of agent, having instead acquired the function of the theme of the utterance" (1975: 125), whereas in Czech, "the subject has largely preserved the function of the agent" (1975: 101). According to our explication of subjectivity, predicates of course no longer qualify as subjective if all arguments co-occurring with them are treated on a par with regard to eligibility as pragmatic primaries; and thus Mathesius' 'subjects with a purely thematic function' simply would not be subjects at all, but rather arguments with some pragmatic primehood status (focus of attention etc.). As we have tried to show above, Modern English predicates with second-option subjects, presumably unlike those illustrated in (31) and (32), still justify an analysis in terms of subjects, although the semantic content of this grammatical relation here is not very specific. In discussing the function of the subject, Mathesius also notes that the availability of second-option subjectivization has significant lexical correlates, which very well accords with our claim that subjectivity in general is essentially a lexical matter.

He observes, for instance, that "the English verb to read does not mean to carry out the activity or reading but to be in some relation to the activity called reading" (1975:75), the actual meaning of the verb being determined by its context of use, i.e. by the lexical content of the arguments co-occurring with it. To say, then, that the inherent, virtual meaning of a basic subjective predicate is relatively unspecific in this sense is tantamount to suggesting that such a predicate does not severely limit the choices of semantic argument roles as pragmatic primaries in a basic, albeit marked, construction. If we can, thus, distinguish types of subjective languages according to the degree of transparency of the basic-subject relation, this typological observation ultimately calls for an explanation: Why is it that second-option subjectivization is more constrained in some languages (such as German and Czech) than in others (such as Modern English)? I do not presume to answer this question here, but would like to refer again to Mathesius (1975: 103), who speculates that this difference is connected with what coding devices are available to a language, and specifically mentions the "fixed grammatical word order of English" as a determinant of the thematic rather than semantic function of Modern English subjects. ~~This speculation, if valid, would of course have interesting diachronic, or perhaps rather panchronic, implications, since the fixation, or grammaticalization, of word order is one of the most noticeable distinctive features of Middle and Modern English, vis à vis the older stages of this language and also vis à vis some other Modern Germanic languages, and the much talked about drift towards analyticity would thus turn out to be an even more comprehensive phenomenon than is often assumed by investigators taking into consideration case marking and word order as the only manifestations of this drift.~~

In view of the attempts to define the grammatical relation of subject in terms of an identical treatment of argument roles in transitive and intransitive clauses (cf. § 2.1 above), it may seem surprising that in our own account of subjectivity we have not mentioned the distinction of transitive and intransitive clauses. In fact, it seems that we have largely ignored intransitive pred-

icates, referring in our subjecthood criterion to a ranking of argument roles according to their pragmatic privileges: if a predicate requires only one argument, there apparently is nothing that could be ranked. One conclusion of our account could be, therefore, that in subjective languages one-place predicates are subjective by default. If there is only one argument present, it is necessarily the preferred (i.e. only) candidate for pragmatic primehood status. It need not be chosen as actual primary, though which may happen quite frequently with so-called verbs of emergence or coming-into-existence (or coming-onto-the-scene), such as be, appear, exist, arise etc., occurring in existential or presentative constructions. Nominals occurring with one-place predicates without being in a predicate-governed semantic relation could, accordingly, not be chosen as pragmatic primaries (say, as frames, as in As to Paris, the Eiffel Tower collapsed; That farmer, all his ducklings died), except in some marked construction, where the verb-governed argument may still be subject. The interesting question then is whether in a language with subjective two-place predicates, all one-place predicates must be automatically, by default, subjective as well. 'Impersonal' one-place predicates, as found e.g. in Old English (him/hine hingrode 'he (dat./acc.) was hungry', mec longade 'I (acc.) was ill at ease'),[64] are notoriously controversial in this respect. Are these verbs subjective and is the experiencer role in the grammatical subject relation? Or are these verbs subjective, but occur in a subjectless construction, on account of a constraint preventing arguments in the experiencer role from being chosen as basic subjects? Or are these verbs not subjective at all, and is the relation between them and their arguments purely semantic? The first alternative, although perhaps not implausible because the arguments occurring with these verbs are usually prototypical instances of indexical- and informational-pragmatic primaries, would confront us with the problem that there is no longer a uniform encoding of the subject relation: presupposing that nominative case marking and verb-agreement encode the subjects of other verbs, we would have subjects here which are not in the nominative and do not trigger verb-agreement. Moreover, arguments in a basic subject relation can often be removed

from this status in a marked construction with a non-basic (passive) verb variant, but such voice alternations are categorically excluded in the case of such 'impersonal' verbs.[65] The absence of voice oppositions is perhaps also problematic for the second alternative, which fares better with regard to the uniformity of relational encoding: if the experiencer is a non-subject of a subjective verb, why is it unable to occur as subject in a marked construction, like (direct) objects of subjective transitive predicates? Pending a non-arbitrary decision between these alternative analyses, it ought to be emphasized, at any rate, that arguments of one-place predicates may not necessarily be subjects by default in a language where this primary grammatical relation can be defined. The fact that a language is subjective (to some degree) does not guarantee that subjects are found with each predicate, transitive and intransitive alike. In conclusion, I still maintain, then, that the subjective nature of a predicate, and of a language, can be established essentially without taking the distinction between transitive and intransitive clauses as one's point of departure, and I suspect that two- or more-place predicates are indeed more crucial in this regard.

Notes

* A preliminary version of parts of this paper was read at the Spring Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain, Birmingham, March 26-28, 1980. I am grateful to this audience for helpful comments and questions.

1 In numerous studies in the wake of Keenan (1976) this misconception has been most apparent; witness such formulations as 'Agentivity is a subject property which is more difficult to acquire for non-basic subjects than coding or control properties' (cf. Keenan 1976:323ff.).

2 I have tried to come to terms with subjects on previous occasions (cf. especially Plank 1979b, 1979c, 1979e); this paper further develops and partly modifies these earlier attempts. Its intention, by the way, is not to present an extensive survey of the relevant literature on this subject.

3 Such examples are not entirely imaginary, though. Witness the phenomenon known as inverse verbs in many Amerindian, and perhaps other, languages (cf. § 1.2.1 for an example from Algonquian). Incidentally, predicates are not the only elements which may agree with or cross-reference arguments, but these further possibilities are being ignored here.

4 Cf. Plank (1979d, 1980a, 1981) for a more detailed treatment of relational encoding on a functional basis (with references to the extensive literature on this topic).

5 These more general semantic characterizations of argument roles are perhaps reminiscent of such notions as 'source' and 'goal' as used by certain traditional typologists (e.g. Finck 1907, 1936) and localistic case grammarians, or of such higher-level meanings as 'most - least active' as employed more recently by García (1975, ch. 4). Cf. also Van Valin & Foley (1980), who distinguish

between basic ('actor', 'undergoer') and derived (agent, patient, experiencer, etc.) semantic relations.

6 Or of one participant in two capacities.

7 Note that both case-marking options, -acc and -erg, could also be employed simultaneously, distributed among argument phrases on a 'functional' basis (cf. fn. 4). Accordingly, referents would not be case-marked if their more or less influential participation is in line with how referents of this kind usually interact with the world; they would receive -acc marking ('less influential') if they are in general more likely to be involved as more influential participants; and they would receive -erg marking ('more influential') if they are rather unlikely to be involved as more influential participants in the situations at issue. Here are some examples constructed in accordance with these principles:

(a) farmer duckling killed 'the farmer killed the duckling' (no case marking necessary because this is the kind of participation one would expect if a human and a small, harmless animal are involved in a killing)

(b) farmer hunter-acc killed 'the farmer killed the hunter' (the victim is marked as 'less influential' because as a human it could be expected to be a quite influential participant in a killing)

(c) farmer-acc duckling-erg killed 'the duckling killed the farmer' (both referents participate in rather unaccustomed capacities; hence both receive the appropriate case marking)

Cf. Silverstein (1976) for a recent detailed discussion of such split systems, where, however, grammatical relations like subject and object are taken for granted as points of reference of case-marking rules. The same basic idea may already be found in Thomson (1909).

8 Among traditional typologists, Finck (1905, 1907, 1936) has perhaps paid most attention to differences in 'assimilation' between linguistic representations of activities and experiences.

~~10 Keenan (1977) and van Oosten (1977) are two recent studies of the influence of non-prototypical participant properties on syntactic constructions in English. Further typological implications have been explored by Plank (1979b). Cf. also [illegible] ff.~~

9 Cf. e.g. Kibrik's (1979) typological approach distinguishing between languages whose relational grammar utilizes only a 'Situational Component' and languages also utilizing 'Speech Act' and 'Communicative Components', or Van Valin's (1980) distinction between 'role-' and 'reference-dominated' languages. What can be expected more accurately is that semantic relations may have a relatively independent status in the relational grammar of some languages; certainly pragmatic factors, like those to be discussed immediately, will always be there as well.

10 Cf. Plank (1980b) for further discussion. Interestingly, Li & Thompson (1976: 472ff.) notice that in Lisu (a Lolo-Burmese language) some verbs have more specific selection restrictions than their English counterparts; I don't know whether this observation can be generalized, but it would fit in well with the fact that in Lisu the semantic argument roles lack any further systematic encoding.

~~10 My impression is that such regularities are ignored by literary critics more often than in linguistic semantics, where point of view seems to have been discovered as a relevant category only quite recently.~~

11 There are languages whose basic sentence constructions have been assumed to be 'impersonal' or nominal; in fact, impersonal predicates have been claimed to be characteristic of ergative languages (cf. e.g. Wagner 1978). Cf. Trask (1979) for discussion of the affinity between impersonal/nominal (stative) predicates and ergativity.

12 Lewy's (1942) and Lehmann's (1974) category of a 'subjective' verb is relevant here, since the label 'subjective' is apparently applied on purely morphological grounds, without determining whether the personal verb forms refer to an argument in the grammatical relation of subject.

13 The following account, like S. Anderson's (1977, 1980) quite different interpretation, is primarily based on Hockett (1948, 1966); further discussion of this part of the grammar of Algonquian languages may be found in Uhlenbeck (1938),

Bloomfield (1946, 1962), Goddard (1967). I shall consider only singular forms, and (mor)phonological processes affecting the underlying (at least, non-phonetic) representations given in the examples will be ignored.

14 If one participant is local (i.e. speaker or addressee), obviation is optional. Thus, the forms given under (5b) and (7b) can be used to fill the gaps (6b) and (8b) respectively, just as (5a) and (7a) may be used for the explicitly obviated forms (6a) and (8a) respectively.

15 Thus Anderson (1980) speculates that the (b)-sentences diachronically derive from obligatory passive constructions, whereas synchronically they are actives with somewhat peculiar verbal morphology reflecting this earlier state of affairs. Compare also Uhlenbeck's (1938) deliberations about the passive character of the Algonquian verb. The concept of obligatory passivization has become quite fashionable recently, especially in attempts to explain the origin of ergative constructions (cf. Plank 1979b), and in analyses of inverse verb forms. A common failure of such explanations or analyses is again that a concept of grammatical subject is taken for granted, rather than shown to be indeed relevant. Incidentally, unspecified-actor forms of intransitive and transitive verbs, which are found in at least some Algonquian languages, have been called passives by Bloomfield; these forms, which lack a person prefix, are to be distinguished from the verbs in our (b)-sentences. These unspecified-actor 'passives' do not seem to require any extra relational concepts in addition to those assumed in the following analysis.

16 In fact Zwicky (1977) believes it is unique. See his paper for a more detailed, if inconclusive, discussion of possible analyses of this system.

17 The (a)-forms are known as 'direct', the (b)-forms as 'inverse', at least if the referents are not both local; but given the hierarchy (13), I see no reason for a terminological separation of exclusively local (cf. 10) and other forms. Uhlenbeck's (1938) terms are 'centrifugal' (direct) and 'centripetal' (inverse), and he assumes, for Blackfoot, a referential hierarchy with the speaker, rather than the addressee (as in 13), ranking highest, which I think is incorrect.

?? cf. also Frank IJAL 32 (1966) p. 53

18 Probably transitive 'actors' are obligatorily animate in Potawatomi, and such constructions would thus be impossible. Notice that class membership of nouns is not fixed once and for all; inanimates may acquire animacy if engaged in situations in a manner characteristic of people, animals and spirits (cf. Hockett 1966:62), which could partly account for the virtual absence of inanimate transitive actors.

19 Given only the two criteria of animacy and obviation, one could of course construct different sub-scales, such as: proximate (animate > inanimate) > obviative (animate > inanimate), or animate (prox. > obv.) > inanimate (prox. > obv.); but I believe that the solution adopted here is preferable.

20 If this is correct, one could expect an obviative suffix also in the corresponding plural forms; but there apparently is none (there is no proximate/obviative contrast, like 'you and I see it/the other', either). I do not think that this invalidates the analysis suggested because the generalization of the obviative suffix -n could well be partial; but since I lack pertinent diachronic information and, moreover, suspect that the transitive inanimate paradigm is problematic in other respects as well, I would prefer not to speculate further on this issue.

21 Compare Collinge's (1978) 'inert case/prime experiencer', J.Anderson's (1979) 'absolutive', or Kibrik's (1979) 'factitive', to mention only three recent works where a semantic relation similar to the one I have in mind here is recognized.

22 Cf. Wistrand (1941:48): "in der Regel übt die transitive Verbalhandlung eine augenfälligere und dauerhaftere Einwirkung auf das Objekt als auf das Subjekt aus, so dass jenes mehr als dieses davon gekennzeichnet wird." (We may tacitly substitute 'agent/patient' for Wistrand's 'subject/object'.) Notice also that 'affected/effected' is a distinction that pertains to intransitive arguments and the more passive transitive arguments, but not to transitive actors. And that reflexives often resemble intransitives would also seem a relevant observation in this context.

23 Query: Suppose Potawatomi intransitives also acquired a theme suffix, say

-a. Regardless of whether this would be a particularly plausible innovation (without concomitant or prior developments of a certain kind, I definitely think it would not), would this have serious consequences for our analysis? I.e. would this create a need for relational concepts other than those employed here?

24 Cf. especially Ertel (1974, 1975, 1977), MacWhinney (1977), and Kuno & Kaburaki (1977), where similar notions are discussed in more detail, although often with a preconceived notion of subject. I too think that subjects, if there are any, are closely related to indexical-pragmatic organization, but it seems to me mistaken to refer to grammatical relations in order to account for indexical-pragmatic regularities (e.g., subjects are easier to empathize with than objects, Kuno & Kaburaki) as if the two conceptual structures existed independently. See §1.2 for further discussion.

25 In elaborating these very general suggestions, we would of course have to make allowances for cultural, and concomitant linguistic, variability. For instance, individual criteria may turn out to be weighted differently (cf. e.g. Witherspoon 1977, on autolocomotion as the primary criterion in the classification of the Navajo universe), or criteria at different conceptual levels may be matched differently (e.g. ultimate responsibility may not universally be associated with agenthood; cf. Plank 1979b). See also Mauss (1938) on different conceptions of personality/individuality (esp. concerning the relativity of moral personal attributes, such as autonomy, responsibility, conscience).

26 A more detailed analysis of this aspect of (manipulative) speech-event distancing would have to take into account the more basic issue of narrative styles, since these appear to establish a frame that partly determines to what extent a speaker (narrator) may 'identify' with a referent.

27 See Kuno (1976) and Kuno & Kaburaki (1977) about the influence of empathy on syntactic rules.

28 In fact I think Dik's (1978) notion of subject is of theoretical interest. The important point is that in Dik's framework subject selection is obligatorily linked to a 'Semantic Function Hierarchy'. But in Dik's characterization of subjects that I have just quoted there is no acknowledgment of this semantic constraint

on the choice of a 'perspective'.

29 Cf. especially Chafe (1976), but also Dik (1978, ch. 6), Kuno (1972, 1975) or Grimes (1975). Much of what follows leans on Chafe's account; but cf. fn. 33 apropos of Chafe's use of 'subject'.

30 'Assumed familiarity' (cf. Prince 1979) would seem appropriate as an inclusive notion.

31 See Kalmár (1979) for a highly interesting account of the cultural variability of the set of entities that count as identifiable independently of the linguistic context.

32 On selective attention see Zubin (1979), with further references.

33 Chafe's (1976) calling the focus of attention 'subject' is another instance where the H_2O - water analogy seems pertinent.

34 I doubt that the distinction of these pragmatic statuses is essentially a matter of timing one's choices of semantic roles and of the focus/frame, with frames supposedly chosen prior to roles and thus to specific predicates (cf. Chafe 1976, Dik 1978: 136). Rather, there seems to be a tendency also for the focus to be chosen in advance of full lexical specification of the predicate (cf. Lindsley 1975), although only arguments in predicate-specific semantic roles are claimed to be eligible for focussing. In my own account of relational-semantic, indexical- and informational-pragmatic structures I have ignored how these structures are established and integrated in real time.

35 The interested reader is invited to compare the relational encoding in languages such as Choctaw (cf. Heath 1977) or Haida (cf. Eastman & Edwards 1979) and Tagalog (cf. Schachter 1976, 1977) with the coding rules of examples (15) and (16) respectively. I do not claim that (15) and (16) accurately model these languages (e.g. in Choctaw verb-dependent pronouns do not cross-reference independent nominals by class/gender but on the basis of a semantic role hierarchy; and in Tagalog 'agent', or 'actor', does not seem to be a purely semantic

concept), but they resemble the relational encoding of these languages closely enough to raise the question of whether the differences between model and reality are such as to justify the use of an additional concept, subject, in the description of the real languages.

36 Cf. Plank (1979b) for some criticism of this paradigmatic-identificational approach in the context of syntactic typology, and also for references (which would have to include the majority of recent treatments of ergativity).

37 But of course the valency of predicates can be increased or reduced by syntactic or lexical rules, such as causativization or (anti-)passivization.

38 Cf. Kibrik (1979:63ff.) for an exhaustive list of these patterns, and for some discussion of the functional reasons for the virtual non-existence in natural languages of some of the logically possible patterns.

39 In general Dixon's (1979) notion of 'pivot' seems to me quite useful in order to characterize the argument, or set of arguments, ~~that~~ which is the focus of a grammatical operation. Although there may be different pivots for different rules, the expectation is that pivots correlate with, or rather explicate, (basic and derived) subjecthood. Pivots are usually defined in terms of semantic roles and clause types (i.e. as patterns involving transitive agent, transitive patient, and intransitive argument), but this seems to me an oversimplification: pragmatic

argument statuses ought not be neglected in defining syntactic pivots.

40 In fact, Anderson (1979: 28) later comments on what might be the reason for the privileged status of agents ("the high-empathy rating of agents"); but the point is that he apparently assumes that subjecthood can in principle be defined without taking into account such additional indexical-pragmatic factors.

41 Focus of contrast is being ignored here, since this status seems to me to be less important as far as the characterization of paradigm primaries is concerned. ~~In fact, quite frequently arguments can take the focus of contrast (thus being not primaries according to the other pragmatic primehood criteria.~~

42 These abstract role assignments are probably problematic: the role of experiencer might be more appropriate for the sufferer than that of patient, and the tormentor could accordingly be regarded as stimulus rather than as agent (which is certainly preferable for the English verb suffer in constructions like He suffered pain/from headache). Since it was mentioned above that experiencers of such predicates as hear and see can be 'assimilated' to true agents, one might assume that there is some common semantic denominator also between the roles of killer and sufferer in the cases at issue, although this seems quite counterintuitive.

43 Cf. Li & Thompson (1976:484): "Subjects are essentially grammaticalized topics", i.e. topics which are "integrated into the case [i.e. semantic-role] frame of the verb". See pp. 49ff. for further discussion of what kind of semantic relations the choice of (preferred) focus (more generally: pragmatic primary) may be integrated with. According to Li & Thompson, Fillmore-type role relations are the only candidates for this integration.

44 This situation is reminiscent of what I have called 'partial markedness reversal' in Plank (1977): in an unmarked context, there are unmarked and marked alternatives; but in the corresponding marked context, the marked alternative of the unmarked context is the only possibility. If (24a) should turn out not to be entirely ungrammatical, this would be an instance of 'total' markedness reversal: in the marked (passive) context, the unmarked matching of the active (viz. agent

as pragmatic primary) is marked, rather than being ruled out altogether.

45 If passives (and antipassives) can be regarded as marked focussing constructions in subjective languages, we are thus not surprised to find that these constructions as a rule involve verb-marking, and, furthermore, that passive auxiliaries frequently derive from full verbs with non-agentive subjects (if the main verb to be passivized has an agentive subject in the basic construction), or that inflectional passive marking utilizes person markers which do not in general refer to indexical-pragmatic primary participants (i.e. 3rd rather than 1st and 2nd person markers). The other devices most commonly employed to encode (anti-) passives, viz. static auxiliaries and intransitive or reflexive morphology, require additional explanation.

46 Cf. Tuyn (1970), Bolinger (1977), and Hopper & Thompson (1980) concerning semantic transitivity.

47 This is essentially the position of Relational Grammarians such as Perlmutter & Postal (1977), and of those who opposed the traditional view that agent-suppression ('Täterverschweigung') is the main, if not the only, functional reason for the employment of passives.

48 Cf. Comrie (1977a) for a recent survey of some such languages, and Plank (1979e) for an attempt to identify grammatical properties which could allow one to predict whether or not a language is likely to exhibit subjectless non-basic (passive) constructions.

49 This is also the conclusion of Wellander (1923) and Wallin (1936, 1964), who have called this indeterminate relation 'object-subject' if co-occurring with a passive verb.

50 Cf. Johnson's (1977) critique of Keenan's (1976) multifactor concept of subject. Johnson argues that as a result of Keenan's failure to specify universally necessary subject properties, the sets of properties used to define subjects in different languages may in principle be disjoint. Note that although we recognize that an argument in the primary grammatical relation may have more or less pragmatic primehood properties, our notion of a primary grammatical relation (or sub-

ject) is not a multifactor concept in the sense of Keenan (1976).

51 Since Tagalog has become the stock example of a language where the grammatical relation of subject cannot be defined, it is perhaps appropriate to refer to the characterization of Tagalog predicates as essentially nominal in Schachter & Otanes' (1972: 62) reference grammar.

52 E.g. by Sapir (1921: 119) or Dixon (1977:20, 71f.). Martinet (1950) or Tchekhoff (1978), on the other hand, maintain that languages may differ as to whether or not they have genuine verbs.

53 Recall the notion of subjective verbs in the sense of Lewy and Lehmann (fn. 12). More important is perhaps Bühler's (1934:249ff., 376ff.) attempt to distinguish conceptions of predicates according to what kind of "Denkschema" they imply and what kinds of complements ("Sachverhaltsergänzungen", "Expositionsangaben") they require.

54 Recall here J. Anderson's (1979:28; cf. fn. 40 above) speculation about the influence of empathy preferences on the constitution of a primary grammatical relation; and see also Kibrik (1979) concerning the influence of what he calls Speech-Act Component on relational grammar. However, the concept of empathy (or Speech-Act component, or speech-event distancing) alone does not suffice to explain how semantic relations turn into grammatical relations.

55 For a more detailed discussion of typological variation in this area, especially with regard to ergativity, see Plank (1979b), with further references.

56 Fillmore (1968, 1977) accordingly proposes to account for the regularities of subject selection, basic and derived, in terms of a case (i.e. semantic role) hierarchy.

57 Cf. again Fillmore (1977), who posits two hierarchies: a saliency hierarchy, which determines which arguments get foregrounded (roughly: are overtly represented in a clause), and a case hierarchy, which determines how foregrounded nominals are assigned grammatical functions (such as subject and object). What I am suggesting is that a case hierarchy is at best an epiphenomenon as far as basic subject selection is concerned; to account for the observed patterns, saliency features, such as animacy/humanness, are all that is needed.

58 Further discussion of this issue may be found e.g. in Hawkinson & Hyman (1975), Givón (1976), Foley & Van Valin (1977), Fillmore (1977), and, from cognitive-psychological viewpoints, in Osgood & Bock (1977), Ertel (1977), MacWhinney (1977). See also Kuno & Kaburaki (1977) on determinants of empathy focussing.

59 Recall, however, what was mentioned earlier (fn.31 , with reference to Kalmár 1979) concerning cross-linguistic, or rather cross-cultural, differences in the store of cotext-independently activated and definite referents, which could also be responsible for more drastic variation of the patterns of subject selection.

60 The correlation between perfectivity and patient-prominence has been much discussed recently (and not so recently: Regamey 1954:373) in studies of split ergative systems. See many contributions to Plank (1979a), Dixon (1979), and also Comrie (1977b) on the affinity between passive voice and perfective aspect.

61 Examples (31a-c) from Jespersen (1928 : 210f.), (32) from Sundén (1918). Notice that to face is not a typical symmetric predicate, where there are no different argument roles to begin with: *Several problems and this theory face (each other).

62 More thorough discussions of 'secondary subjectivizations' can be found e.g. in de Vries (1910), Sundén (1918), Carlberg (1948), and Rohdenburg (1974).

63 Fillmore's (1968) case hierarchy is intended to account for the regularities of secondary subjectivization as well, but generally fails to do so; cf. Rohdenburg's (1974:70-105) critique, and also Carlberg (1948) for a good survey of the factors which may enable arguments to 'usurp' the subject relation although they are not first options for subjecthood.

64 Although it is controversial whether many of these 'impersonals' in fact can be analysed as lexically one-place; cf. e.g. Him sceamode ðæs mannes 'he felt shame because of that man' etc., where the second argument, in the genitive case, would at least seem to be in a peripheral, if not in a core, verb-related semantic role.

65 It is doubtful whether there are any genuinely Old English passives of intransitive verbs at all; but even in languages which have such passives (such as German), 'impersonals' never passivize.

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