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PREDICATION AND THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)^*$

Mark A. Collier

*Scuse us, chorley guy! You tollerday donsk? N.
You tolkatiff scowegian? Nn. You spigotty
anglease? Nnn. You phonio saxo? Nnnn. Clear all
so! 'Tis a Jute. Let us swop hats and excheck a few
strong verbs weak oach eather yapyazzard abast
the bloody creeks.*

James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*

For some time now criticisms of, and alternatives to, the 'Standard Theory' approach to Middle Egyptian grammar have been appearing, particularly concerning the ST account of the grammar of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ and other purported adverbial forms¹. In this paper, I would like to continue this process by discussing the grammatical relation of predication in constructions composed of the initial particle *mk* followed by the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$. In an earlier paper I provided an all too brief account of predication in this construction², an account which is presented in more detail here, both to show that it is in accord with the general view within contemporary Linguistic theory and that it allows an enlightening description of the grammar of this construction in accord with the analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ as verbal verb-forms.

§ 1 *Two views of predication in Middle Egyptian*

Currently, there are two major views of the analysis of the grammar of constructions introduced by *mk* (and other initial particles) in Middle Egyptian – the 'standard theory' (ST) view and the emerging alternative view of what I suppose will have to be called, at least for now, the 'not-so-standard theory' (NSST). The central point of conflict to date

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1 For example, in the recent work of J.P. Allen, "Form, function, and meaning in the early Egyptian verb," *LingAeg* 1 (1991), 1-32, especially section 2; A. Loprieno, "Topics in Egyptian Negations," in D. Mendel - U. Claudi (eds.), *Ägypten im afro-orientalischen Kontext. Gedenkschrift Peter Behrens*. Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere Sondernummer 1991, Köln 1992, 213-35; Th. Ritter, *Das Verbal-system der königlichen und privaten Inschriften der 18. Dynastie bis einschließlich Amenophis III*, Diss. Tübingen 1992. Similarly Schenkel in the most recent edition of his *Tübinger Einführung in die klassisch-ägyptische Sprache und Schrift* (Tübingen 1991) has attempted to balance the two opposing views. For references to my own work, see footnote 9.

2 M.A. Collier, "The circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(f)/s\dot{d}m.n(f)$ as verbal verb-forms in Middle Egyptian," *JEA* 76 (1990), 80-82.

between the two points of view concerns the syntactic behaviour of those verb-forms which have traditionally been termed the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)*, a term which I shall retain here to prevent any misunderstanding. Consider the following example from the Illahun letters³ exhibiting the construction *mk* + circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)*⁴ – In his letter Horemsaf has noted that the *w3g*-festival will take place on day 17 of the second month of *šmw* and he requests that a long-horned bull be delivered as a contribution for this festival. The following is noted by (or on behalf of) the recipient:

- (1) pBerlin 10016, 2A: *mk sdm.n=i -st*
 “Look, I have taken note of it (lit. ‘I have heard it’).”

A very short pithy sentence, but complete and quite to the point⁵. He goes on to say, in another sentence also introduced by *mk*, that the overseer of offerings Sobekhotep has written to him about this and that he will have the bull sent.

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- 3 Published by A. Scharff, “Briefe aus Illahun,” *ZÄS* 59 (1924), 24-27 with pls. 1-2. For a recent translation of this section, see J. Johnson, “The use of the particle *mk* in Middle Kingdom letters,” in *Festschrift Westendorf*, 85 (E38) and for the entire letter and reply, E. Wente, *Letters from ancient Egypt*, Atlanta 1990, 75-76.
- 4 In my earlier *JEA* paper I used Sh.S. 2-3 as an example of *mk* + circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)*, an analysis which I still consider to be correct. However, Junge has recently analysed this as a second tense: “*Emphasis*” and *sentential meaning in Middle Egyptian*. *GOF* IV/20, Wiesbaden 1989, 109-10 (E79) and so such an apparently controversial example will not suffice here. The example in the text is chosen because there is no possibility of an analysing it as a second tense construction, since there is no adverbial extension to behave as the adverbial predicate/rheme/vedette required in the ST account of second tenses. The form of the verb in 1) is thus surely to be analysed as the circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* after *mk*; cf. Johnson, in *Festschrift Westendorf*, 76ff., and for standard arguments for the ability of the circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* to follow *mk* based on the occurrence of the passive *sdm(w)(=f)*, verbs of motion in the stative, and the negation *n sdm(=f)* after *mk*, see Collier, *JEA* 76 (1990), 75-76 (examples from the Illahun letters in Johnson, in *Festschrift Westendorf*, 76-80). For arguments against analysing *mk* as taking a nominalized object, cf. my review of Schenkel’s introduction to Egyptian grammar in *DE* 16 (1990), 85-86.
- 5 In the light of Junge’s discussion in *LingAeg* 1 (1991), 396ff., I should make some comment on this use of a ‘short pithy’ example. I wholeheartedly agree with Junge in terms of his discussion of cognition and language. I do not think that Egyptians thought, spoke or wrote *only* (or even predominantly) in short pithy sentences, perhaps ‘paratactically’ linked together (especially if such a statement is intended to be a reflection of underlying cognitive limitations). Just the opposite is true. As every Egyptian text demonstrates to me at least (particularly the literary texts such as *Sinuhe*), the Egyptians, just like any other human beings, constantly articulate intricate linguistic expressions manifesting exactly that complexity of ‘grammar’ which Linguists have come to recognise in all human languages. Junge himself has put it rather well:

Ever since then I have been thoroughly convinced that “involved constructions and lengthy periods”, “subtleties of thought” and “such abstractions as ‘cause’, ‘motive’, ‘duty’” are not in the least “repugnant to the Egyptian temperament”, as Gardiner believed, and that it is only up to us to find their means of expression in Egyptian and the rules by which Egyptian hypotaxis was governed. It was on this that I spent a large part of my energies. And although I did not cease to accept and admire Gardiner as the great figure he was in our field, he also stands, as I see it, for the “minimalistic view” that I feel an almost moral obligation to object to by now. (p. 398)

In the ST the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ are said to behave syntactically as ‘adverbial verb-forms’, as adverbial transpositions of the verb, displaying a paradigmatic grammatical behaviour with, or behaving as the grammatical substitutes for, simple adverbial expressions such as prepositional phrases. To preserve the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ in the ST, an analysis like the following is needed⁶:

(1b) *mk* [s [\emptyset ⁷]_{noun subject} [$s\dot{d}m.n=i$ -*st*]_{adverbial pred}]

Two important claims follow from the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ concerning predication and the notion of the ‘sentence’. In the ST analysis the primary or clause/sentence level predication exhibited in the construction following *mk* is one which does not concern the relations between the verb-form proper (here the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m.n$) and its immediate dependents; rather the verbal expression headed by the verb merely behaves as an adverbial expression within the construction. Indeed it is a common correlate of the ST analysis of the syntax of the verb (based as it is on paradigmatic substitution with non-verbal parts of speech) that the relations between the verb-form proper and its own immediate dependents are not relevant at the primary sentence/clause level; rather, they are to be isolated off within the verbal expression at some lower level. This means, of course, that the verb and its own immediate dependents cannot be considered to constitute a minimal sentence on their own. With a rather shameless gesture towards polemic, I shall term this the *verb subjugation hypothesis*⁸.

Junge is quite right to diagnose and challenge “positivistic” and “minimalist” views in Egyptological writing about the ancient Egyptian language. However, my claim (and I admit that this is rather controversial and requires a substantive defence) is that – despite Junge’s efforts to the contrary – such a “positivistic” and “minimalist” stance is *inherent* to the ST framework itself, of whatever form, because of its reductive substitutional strategy and reliance on reductive paradigmatic templates.

Anyway, to return to the point. If I use short pithy examples in practice (and, of course, just like us, the Egyptians *could* use short pithy sentences if they so desired), this is merely because they avoid some of the necessary complexity which more involved examples bring with them and which might therefore detract from the issue under discussion. As for the internequine discussion of ‘hypotaxis’ and ‘parataxis’, I see considerable problems in its present conception (both from a philosophical and linguistic point of view) and I hope to offer some remarks on this topic in the near future.

6 For an extended critique of this analysis in terms of the substitutional methodology used in the ST to justify the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$, see my remarks in *JEA* 76 (1990), 77-80. The account of this critique in J. Zeidler, *Untersuchungen zum Pfortenbuch* (Diss. Tübingen, 1991), 203-206 fails to see the irony of this move, which is intended to demonstrate the internal incoherence of the ST analysis, rather than being intended to justify some alternative conception of paradigmatic substitution. I shall return to this point later, as indeed to the notion of a “Komplex” (Makrostruktur) nature of Satztempora which Zeidler invokes (borrowed from Schenkel) in his attempt to salvage the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ after *mk* without invoking some \emptyset noun subject.

7 This omitted subject might be considered to be either an omitted pronominal or an omitted auxiliary.

8 Let me be clear about this in relation to the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$. I am not claiming that these verb forms *cannot* be used subordinately or ‘adverbially’. My criticism is rather that the ST asserts that they *always* in some way behave in such a manner regardless of where they occur (for example, in apparently main clauses usages as adverbial predicates to some nominal subject, or as inhe-

In the 'NSST', in contrast, the circumstantial *sđm(=f)/sđm.n(=f)* are analysed as behaving syntactically as 'verbal verb-forms', forms which thus do not necessarily exhibit a substitutional relationship with simple adverbial expressions such as prepositional phrases⁹. On this basis, I have suggested, albeit very briefly, that the proper analysis of predication exhibited in example 1) is in fact¹⁰:

(1c) *mk* [S *sđm.n*_{pred} =*i*_{subj} -*st*_{obj}]

The contrast with the ST is thus considerable: in the NSST the verb is analysed as a verbal verb-form and the primary predication relations in the construction *mk* + circumstantial *sđm.n(=f)* are considered to be exhibited between the verb and its immediate dependents. The verb-form and its immediate dependents are thus considered to constitute a minimal sentence here. These differences may be summarised conveniently as:

CIRCUMSTANTIAL <i>sđm(=f)/sđm.n(=f)</i> IN THE STANDARD THEORY	CIRCUMSTANTIAL <i>sđm(=f)/sđm.n(=f)</i> IN THE NOT-SO-STANDARD THEORY
<i>adverbial</i> verb-form	<i>verbal</i> verb-form
relations between verb and its dependents <i>cannot be relevant</i> at the level of the sentence	relations between verb and its dependents <i>can be relevant</i> at the level of the sentence
verb + dependents <i>cannot</i> constitute a minimal sentence	verb + dependents <i>can</i> constitute a minimal sentence

Predication, then, is clearly a central issue in this dispute. Of course, so far, I have commented on the ST position in a rather general manner in order to cover a number of ST proposals. However, despite the general homogeneity of the ST, researchers within this programme do differ on certain particulars. In order to compare the NSST view with the ST view in the necessary detail, I shall select one particular ST view to compare with my own. By far and away the most explicit and detailed theory of predication yet produced within the ST is that recently presented by F. Junge, primarily in his excellent attempt at a

rently subordinate 'non-predicative' forms raised to predicative status by an expression such as *iw* etc.). It is this underlying and necessary 'adverbial' status which I dispute.

9 See Collier, *JEA* 76 (1990), 73-85; id., "Constructions with *h3* revisited," *GM* 120 (1991), 13-32; id., "Circumstantially adverbial? The circumstantial *sđm(f)/sđm.n(f)* reconsidered," in S.J. Quirke (ed.), *Middle Kingdom studies*, New Malden 1991, 21-50; *JEA* 77 (1991), 23-42. In brief the claim is that although the grammar of the circumstantial *sđm(=f)/sđm.n(=f)* shows some similarities with that of simple adverbials such as prepositional phrases and that this must certainly be accounted for (for example the ability exhibited by both to occur as adjuncts), the grammar of these verb-forms cannot be reduced to, equated with, or simply described in terms of, the grammar of such adverbials. What is required, I suggest, is an account which can deal with both the similarities *and* the differences between these expressions and other patterns such as the sentence with adverbial predicate and the 'pseudo-verbal' constructions. An early feature-based version of such an account was presented in *JEA* 76 (1990), 83-84; I hope to be able to present a more detailed and wide-ranging account, cast in cognitive terms, in the near future.

10 *JEA* 76 (1990), 81-82.

defence of a sophisticated ST position, “*Emphasis*” and *sentential meaning in Middle Egyptian*, Wiesbaden 1989 (henceforth *Emphasis*)¹¹. Junge’s work has cast into sharp relief the issues concerning predication and the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)*.

With his usual firmness and clarity, Junge has articulated a rather precise theory of predication underlying which is a very strong version of the ST position on the grammar of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* outlined above, particularly in terms of the relationship between predication and the verb subjugation hypothesis in Middle Egyptian. Quite simply, this work has set the standard against which any serious alternative to the ST must be judged¹², not least because of the strong claim to legitimacy in terms of contemporary Linguistic theory which Junge makes (cf. below). To present an alternative point of view clearly necessitates a careful consideration of Junge’s position and this I propose to do. However, I should like to stress at the outset that it is his very commitment to clarity and precision which makes Junge’s account an intelligible position with which to engage and renders possible what I would like to term a ‘meaningful disagreement’ between our two positions. I hope that such meaningful disagreement will highlight the essential differences between the old ST approach to Middle Egyptian grammar and the emerging not-so-standard-theory alternative¹³.

11 Earlier version in *Crossroad*, 189-254.

12 I am quite aware (as has been pointed out to me on a number of occasions in conversation) that, outside the German tradition, Junge’s position is often seen as being far from paradigmatic of the ST by a number of STers and, indeed, I have no doubt that many would differ in their views on predication. However, it would clearly be impossible adequately to cover all possible ST viewpoints in this paper, and, indeed, few, if any STers, have been as explicit about their view of predication as Junge has been. As it happens, I belong to the school of thought which thinks that Junge has correctly followed the ST position to its logical conclusion and has given us the clearest vision yet of what an internally-consistent fully-fledged ST view of Middle Egyptian would look like. In this sense, Junge is clearly, for me, a central figure within the ST tradition in general (and not just within the German tradition). Indeed, there is much that I admire and agree with in Junge’s work, especially in *Emphasis*, not least his sober and perceptive discussion of issues such as focusing, tense/aspect and speech acts. My disagreement lies in the theoretical underpinnings of his work (and, of course, much work in the ST), primarily his adoption of the verb subjugation hypothesis in dealing with the grammar of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* and the grammatical ramifications which follow from this view.

13 The necessity of a direct comparison with Junge’s work was also brought home to me by the following comments on my account of predication in *JEA* 76 (1990) by Jürgen Zeidler in chapter 3 of his PhD thesis referred to in fn. 6:

In dieser Auffassung von “Prädikation” liegt nun aber ein Rückgriff auf eine Kategorie grammatischer Analyse vor, die von Junge (1986:223-226) mit peremptorischen Argumenten als “inconsistent” und teilweise “nonsensical” (a.a.O., 225) erwiesen worden ist: die Kategorie des “grammatikalischen Subjekts/Prädikats”. Es gibt, nach Junge, keinen Erkenntnisgewinn, weiter (oder wieder) mit diesem Konstrukt zu arbeiten, “one should surely stick to the ‘predominant view in linguistics today’ that ‘perhaps ... the grammatical subject is only a syntactic phenomenon, lacking in cognitive significance altogether’” (a.a.O., 226). (p. 205)

As I shall demonstrate below, my account of predication is, in fact, directly in accord with that view of predication currently held within the most influential and widely-supported Linguistic frameworks today

Junge's view of predication can be expressed rather compactly: he thinks that there is no sustainable distinction between the notions 'subject-predicate' and 'theme-rheme' (see below) and that the definition of the latter as 'given' (in the sense of 'aboutness') versus 'new' information (as 'what is said about') suffices for grammatical description at the sentence level:

The smallest unit of communication is the sentence. The sentence has a formal structure that takes part in structuring its content of meaning: The "immediate constituents" of the sentence give form to the basic constituents of its "propositional content", too, that is they fulfill the functions of "logical subject" and "logical predicate" in the structure of the sentential meaning. (p. 42)

"Logical subject" and "logical predicate" are, for Junge, equivalent to "theme" and "rheme":

For further use now "logical subject" is understood – as by A. Shisha-Halevy – to coincide with the term "theme" and its function may be characterized as "not very different from the ancient statement that the subject is what we are talking about"; it is the point of departure chosen by the speaker to begin his communication¹⁴. (p. 43)

Since the "particular" chosen for a subject/theme is part of the "addressee's knowledge" – it has to be to fulfill its "thematic" ends – it is again a "given" item; it may be something already talked about: "textually given"; something in the situational horizon: "situationally given"; or "culturally given" as an item belonging to the general background knowledge of the hearer/addressee. (p. 44)

Now, whatever "subject" is called to mind and established as the starting point of a discourse, whether by pointing to it or just by naming it or by making sure what discourse will be about by elaborately marking and characterizing it, the speaker "adds knowledge" to it; that part of the sentence that adds knowledge is the "logical predicate" or "rheme". In principle, both parts together will be a minimal proposition, and their linguistic forms together will build the minimal form of a sentence; both of them might be extended, however, to a considerable size. (p. 44)

The most simple unmarked proposition should consist of a linguistic unit representing the thing to talk about and at least one linguistic unit representing the "new" information. That is, the logical subject and logical predicate of a proposition each has a form, and both forms together constitute a "basic" sentence, the "self-contained minimal construction" necessary to transport a proposition. (p. 81)

In brief, then, for Junge, the self-contained minimal sentence in Middle Egyptian consists of two immediate constituents – a 'theme', or given point of departure, and a 'rheme', the "new" information said about the "theme". This can be exemplified by one of Junge's own examples (p. 11)¹⁵:

(2) = Junge's (E1) *mtn* [s [šps.wt_{noun}THEME] [hr šdw_{adverbial}RHEME]]
 "Now ladies are on rafts."

– views which are anything but shown to be "inconsistent" or partly "non-sensical" by the quoted remarks of Zeidler's unwitting accomplice.

14 However, this is not to be understood as implying strict initiality in linear order, cf. Junge's remarks on Halliday's notion of 'theme' on p. 43 n. 6.

15 The grammatical bracketing and labelling is added to this example in accord with Junge's discussion on p. 11-12 and throughout *Emphasis*.

The pattern of the sentence with adverbial predicate consists of two major constituents – a nominal expression and an adverbial expression in which the nominal phrase is said to function as the theme (*šps.wt* ‘ladies’, taken as the point of departure) and the adverbial expression as the rheme (*hr šdw* ‘on rafts’, taken as the salient new information said about the theme)¹⁶.

Junge attempts to weld this view of predication onto an underlying ST view of the grammar of Middle Egyptian¹⁷. In particular, he invokes the verb-subjugation hypothesis. Thus the quote from p. 42 above is more fully:

The smallest unit of communication is the sentence. The sentence has a formal structure that takes part in structuring its content of meaning: The “immediate constituents” of the sentence give form to the basic constituents of its “propositional content”, too, that is they fulfill the functions of “logical subject” and “logical predicate”. Now, some of the lower-level units of meaning are verbs, and the semantic structure of a verb calls for complements, calls for an actor/agent, an “object” or for adverbials (regimen): these “complements”, these verbal “roles” are necessary (to varying degrees) to complete the verbal meaning, but they are just part of the complex texture of lexemes, morphemes and rules of grammar that build up the constituents of the sentence. And actor/agent, object and “necessary” adverbials are on the same footing towards this verbal “kernel”, there is nothing that privileges the actor/agent role to the “honours” of higher level propositional structure that is announced by the term “grammatical subject”. Of course, in numerous cases the status of “logical subject” is given to the actor/agent role too – and, to be sure, more often than to other roles (object, adverbials) – and there are a few sentence patterns that ask for actor/agents in subject function (e.g. *sdm.jn=f* etc.; “indicative” (Old Perfective 1st person) but this is deliberate choice by the speaker and not due to their “subjectivity” (or else, “topicality”). (pp. 42-43)

The most pertinent aspect of this is that Junge can then claim, on the basis of the verb subjugation hypothesis of the ST, that verbal relations are, with very few exceptions, not

16 Note that linguists interested in Gricean pragmatics and speech act theory tend to be critical of notions such as ‘theme-rheme’, cf. D. Sperber - D. Wilson, *Relevance: communication and cognition*, Oxford 1986, chapter 4; L. Horn, “Pragmatic theory,” in F. Newmeyer (ed.), *Linguistics: the Cambridge survey. I Linguistic theory: foundations*, Cambridge 1988; and S. Levinson, *Pragmatics*, Cambridge 1983, p. x and cf. chapter 4. These linguists suspect that it may well be the case that notions such as ‘theme-rheme’ are mere coagulates which result from the interaction of more basic pragmatic principles (which, moreover, are taken to be dynamic principles of the interpretation of discourse rather than static structuring principles of linguistic form) and thus to be treated with some caution lest they detract from the investigation of the more richly textured processes of cognition and interpretation at work. However, I will not be concerned here with such matters and I shall simply assume that some form of notion of ‘theme-rheme’, ‘given-new’ will prove to be useful. Cf. section 4.

17 In fact, he invokes a very strict isomorphism between the ST view of Middle Egyptian grammar and his informational pragmatic account of predication. For example, in the sentence with adverbial predicate (such as Junge’s example E1), the noun subject is necessarily the theme and the adverbial predicate the rheme. This isomorphism, in the form of ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ as ‘immediate constituents of the sentence’ plays an important role in sustaining his particular invocation of the verb subjugation hypothesis. It would take another entire paper to criticise this view in detail, but it should be clear from the following discussion that such a view linking ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ by definition to the immediate constituency of the sentence (particularly to mandatory structural positions in terms of NP-AP) is not the “predominant view in Linguistic today”. Cf. section 4.

important at the sentence level in Middle Egyptian and hence verbal strings headed by verb-forms such as the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)* do not exhibit theme-rheme relations (and hence, for Junge, subject-predicate relations, since these are synonymous terms for him), but merely reflect the semantic structure of such verbs (i.e. their lexical template, cf. below); rather it is the entire verbal expression which is relevant at the sentence level, the grammar of which is to be dealt with in terms of paradigmatic substitution with non-verbal parts of speech (for the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)*, simple adverbials such as prepositional phrases). Thus, Junge is rather dismissive of what he considers a ‘primitive’ view of predication and the suffix conjugation verb-forms¹⁸:

Finally, it should be mentioned that there are “revolutionary” movements to be mentioned which tend to question the “standard theory” as such and to return to a primitive “predicativity” of the *sḏm=f*-forms of the pre-Polotskian paradigm. Ft. 11: Thus I especially welcome that Christopher Eyre, *Egyptian Sentences*, 132f., now explicitly sides with the phrasal character of the *sḏm=f* (“Suffix conjugations are verbal phrases (or verbal clauses), not sentence patterns”) – on the same basis as A. Loprieno, *Typological Order*, namely that “subject” and “predicate” are intraphrasal notions. (p. 13)

Since Junge accepts that *mk* precedes ‘complete sentences’ (*Emphasis*, 11), presumably composed of ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ immediate constituents, he does seem to be committed to the ST analysis of example 1 given earlier¹⁹:

(3a) *mk* [S [\emptyset _{noun}THEME] [*sḏm.n=i* -*st*_{adverbial}RHEME]]

and cf. his analysis of the sentence with adverbial predicate after *mk* repeated here for the intended structural parallelism:

(3b)=(2) *mtn* [s[*šps.wt*_{noun}THEME] [*hr šdw*_{adverbial}RHEME]]

It is clearly of fundamental importance to Junge’s project to defend this stance on the verb subjugation hypothesis and predication. Junge attempts this through a more detailed discussion of the grammatical relation of subject, claiming that:

The idea of “grammatical” subject is basically very simple. It is that noun phrase in a sentence which the predicate “agrees” with. Or differently stated: The noun the morphem that marks the predicative verb is coreferential with is called “grammatical” subject [...] In addition, being “the thing talked about”, the grammatical subject coincides with the

18 To be fair to Junge, these remarks date before my own contributions began to appear in print and so it is not clear whether Junge would consider the view of predication noted in *JEA* 76 (1990), 80-82 and here (and hence of much of contemporary Linguistic theory) as ‘primitive’, invoking as it does a “predicativity” of the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)*.

19 Compare the following quote from *Emphasis*:

But it should be well understood that the various forms grouped together as “circumstantial” forms of the verb are of course those that are able to function circumstantially/adverbially ... If, however, these forms function as representations of the logical predicate of the proposition itself, they are of course only “adverbials” by form; a translational interpretation such as: “The ears are while they are deaf” is more nonsense than illustration. (pp. 81-82)

logical subject/theme as defined above; the same is true of the grammatical and logical predicate.

Seen from the point of view of the semantics of the verb, the grammatical subject is identical with one of the “arguments”, “deep case roles” or “valences” of the verb, either the “actor/agent”-role (active voice) or its “goal/object”-role (passive voice).

In languages of “Standard-Average-European” typology, two features are thus economically combined, which does not mean – as may be stressed – that this combination is logically called for; the two of them are the semantic need for having all valences/deep cases of a specific verb occupied in the utterance, and the need of grammar to build up a sentence by “logical” subject and predicate. The two features are combined in the “actor”/“goal” valence representing the “logical subject”.

(20)

Now, as long as the predicate is necessarily a verb (as in the Indo-European/ “Standard-Average-European” languages, one may go along with the concept of the grammatical subject this far, but when non-verbal predicates come in, as in Egyptian and other languages, the “actor/agent”-role as much as disappears and only the logical layout of the sentence remains: logical subject and logical predicate [...] without any agreement between subject and predicate. Since “grammatical” subject/predicate then becomes nonsensical, one has to take recourse to two types: “grammatical subject” and “logical” subject/predicate. In the only case of an accepted apparently adverbial predicate containing a verb – preposition plus infinitive – the logical subject is indeed the actor again, but now the verb-subject agreement is lacking (pp. 66-68).

By attacking this view, Junge hopes to have ‘exploded’ the notion of ‘grammatical subject’ (p. 67), by dismantling the purported connection between agreement, actor/agent (active voice)/goal (passive voice) and ‘logical subject’. From non-verbal predications, which clearly lack roles such as “actor/agent”, he further goes on to claim that logical subject = theme is the only necessary sentence level notion and thus that agent, goal and the like can be left purely with the semantics of the verb.

Indeed, Junge makes a rather extravagant claim for this view of predication. In criticising Loprieno’s earlier distinction of subject-predicate and theme-rheme as different ‘levels’ of grammatical analysis, he says:

An ingenious and sophisticated scheme to make up for the deficiencies just named has been conceived now by A. Loprieno (*Typological order*): There, grammatical subject/predicate are declared the lowest level in a subject-predicate hierarchy; they do not only describe the verb-actor relationship but the basic Nominal and Adjectival Sentences too. These basic subject-predicate patterns are subdivided into those that can build up a sentence by themselves (nominal/adjectival sentence), and those that in general cannot receive sentential status (verbal phrase); especially the latter are used to build up higher level units of “pragmatic” subject/predicates by “embedding”. The model undoubtedly solves the problems raised by the introduction of “grammatical” subjects/predicates into the analysis of grammar and sentential meaning, but has to pay for it with a plethora of subjects/predicates, (“grammatical”, “logical”/“semantical”, “pragmatic”/“psychological”).

I, however, for the time being, feel satisfied with only one subject and one predicate in the analysis of language; I believe that one should surely stick to “the predominant view in linguistics today” that “perhaps [...] the grammatical subject is only a syntactic

20 At this point, Junge discusses certain examples such as *ti-sw iy=f* and *t3=n ph=n -sw* which he thinks demonstrate the ‘explosion’ of the notion ‘grammatical subject’ (p. 67). See my point 3 below.

phenomenon, lacking in cognitive significance altogether”, and leave things where they belong: the “actor/agent” role with the semantics of the verb and subject and predicate with grammar and discourse analysis” (p. 68)

Although there is much that I agree with in this discussion, I cannot agree with the conclusions which Junge draws. I shall argue that a rather different account of subject-predicate in Middle Egyptian emerges from contemporary Linguistics from that offered by Junge and that this account presents a considerable challenge to the ST assumptions on which Junge builds his theory. It is this alternative view of predication which I outline in this paper²¹.

Since Junge claims Linguistic legitimacy for his view, it is from the perspective of contemporary Linguistic theory that I shall consider his remarks on the nature of ‘subject’ (and thus I am not interested in any internecine debate within Egyptology). However, I must stress that it is not my concern in this paper to present an overall appraisal of Junge’s account of predication²². Instead I shall concentrate on the central cluster of his analysis in so far as it concerns the circumstantial *s_{dm}(=f)/s_{dm}.n(=f)* after *mk*: the verb subjugation hypothesis that relations between these verb-forms and their dependents are not relevant at the sentence level in Middle Egyptian and thus play no part in what I have been terming the primary predication of the clause (this, of course, is necessary, to support the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial *s_{dm}(=f)/s_{dm}.n(=f)* after *mk*, as we have already seen).

However, there are a few comments which I should like to make on Junge’s account as it stands:

1. There are fundamental problems with Junge’s characterisation of ‘grammatical subject’. Contemporary Linguistic theories would not claim that subject-predicate agreement will somehow suffice to define or characterise the ‘basically very simple’ notion ‘grammatical subject’ (such agreement is merely one kind of relationship exhibited between subject and predicate in some languages; the lack of agreement between subject and predicate being, of course, another widely exemplified possibility)²³. Indeed this has

21 This is the view which, as will become clear, underlay my brief section on predication in *JEA* 76 (1990), 80-82.

22 In particular I shall not discuss ‘second tenses’ here, since this would require a lengthy discussion of a rather different kind. Notice that there is nothing in the following account which precludes the possibility of clausal subjects or clausal predicates.

23 Could it be that Junge has been misled by configurational accounts of subject? One representative account which, superficially, might appear to come close to Junge’s account is that of H. Borer, “Anaphoric AGR,” in O. Jaeggli - K.J. Safir, *The null subject parameter*, Dordrecht 1989, 69-109. There Borer defends her view that Chomsky’s ‘extended projection principle’ (the requirement that every clause have a subject) be replaced by (p. 70):

Borer’s (1) Coindex NP with INFL in the accessible domain of INFL

However, coindexing is a concept of much wider application than subject-predicate agreement (which may be considered to instantiate one such coindexing) and is not restricted to just subjects and predicates (it could also apply between predicates and objects for example). Equally, even the restriction of coindexing in this case to the ‘accessible domain of INFL’ does not DEFINE the subject, it merely helps to LICENSE its occurrence (and, for Borer, affects the distribution of empty categories in subject position). For Borer, as for many GBsters, subject is defined configurationally as [NP, IP] (which, of course, makes no reference to verbs, agreement, agent/goal roles or “logical subject”=theme) and this is

known for many years within Linguistics, not least from languages which exhibit predicate agreement with the object²⁴. Furthermore, *pace* Junge's fn. 86, it is not the case that 'subjects' have to be in the nominative case²⁵, nor do active clauses require 'actor/agent' subjects²⁶. Of course, it may be that Junge is merely invoking the typical case in his discussion. However, in terms of a Linguistic discussion, Junge's attempt to associate agreement, actor/agent (active)/goal (passive) and logical subject in the notion grammatical subject constitutes a 'straw man' opponent and his discussion of the notion 'grammatical subject' needs disentangling from such issues. When this is done, I shall argue, a rather different account emerges.

2. It might well be agreed that the notions "actor"/"goal" 'disappear' when we turn to non-verbal predications. However, I heartily dispute that this merely leaves us with the 'logical layout of the sentence' into 'logical subject and logical predicate'. This is because subject and predicate in contemporary Linguistic theory is linked with event-structure and, as we shall see below, event-structure is equally present in non-verbal and verbal predications.

3. Junge's 'explosion' of the notion of 'grammatical subject' hinges on his discussion of *t3=n ph.n -sw* and its relevance for the notion 'complete sentence' with the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* as exemplified in the strings *iy=f* and *iy S-n(y)-wsrt*. I find the terms of this discussion rather confused (not least because of the invocation of a 'straw man' opponent as noted in 1). In particular, Junge does not seem to have taken the issue of pronomi-

a quite separate matter from coindexing or morphological agreement. Even with this extremely brief discussion, it should be clear that it would be a gross injustice to the richness of Borer's account of 'subject' (and I would claim of other configurationally-based accounts) to express this as 'the noun phrase in a sentence which the predicate "agrees with"'. As we shall see below, this is also true of other, non-configurational, accounts of 'grammatical subject' in current Linguistic theory.

- 24 Cf. the following from E. Moravcsik, "Agreement and markedness," in M. Barlow -C. Ferguson (eds.), *Agreement in natural languages approaches, theories, descriptions*, Stanford 1988, 104 (Swahili):

FN(1) a-li-wa-ona wa-toto
 he-PAST-them-see PL-child
 "He saw his children."

Here the verb shows agreement with the object *wa-toto* 'children' as well as a 3-person subject marker. (notice that Junge accepts a simple relationship between pronominals and agreement; cf. his fn. 88).

- 25 Consider the following from A. Zaenan - J. Maling - H. Thráinsson, "Case and grammatical functions: the Icelandic passive," *Natural language and linguistic theory* 3 (1985), 442:

FN(2) Honum var hjálpað
 "He (dative) was helped."

Zaenan *et al.* argue that 'honum' is indeed the grammatical subject (i.e. there is no alternative impersonal \emptyset subject) despite its dative case.

- 26 Cf: FN(3a) That ugly building has always frightened people.
 FN(3b) A fence surrounds his property.
 FN(3c) Line A intersects line B.
 FN(3d) John resembled his brother.

It would be bizarre to claim that 'that ugly building', 'a fence' or 'line A' are "actor/agents" here. (3d), where 'John' is hardly the "actor/agent" of 'resemble' either, shows that this is not inherently to do with inanimacy and much more to do with the event-structure of the situation (cf. below). However, it should be noted that Junge seems to use 'actor/agent' in an unusually broad sense.

nal binding sufficiently into account. In $t3=n \text{ } ph.n \text{ } -sw$, $-sw$ is a bound pronoun (in the stricter linguistic sense; i.e. not simply in terms of pronominal coreference). It is not free in reference, nor simply coincidentally coreferential with $t3=n$, as if it could have been otherwise: neither $*t3=n \text{ } ph=n \text{ } S-n(y)\text{-wsrt}$ nor $*t3_i=n \text{ } ph=n \text{ } -sw_j$ are Middle Egyptian constructions (and the same is true for $=f$ in $ti \text{ } -sw_i \text{ } iy=f_i$ – neither $*ti \text{ } -sw \text{ } iy \text{ } S-n(y)\text{-wsrt}$ nor $*ti \text{ } -sw_i \text{ } iy=f_j$ are good Middle Egyptian). Thus $-sw$ does not behave like an ordinary pronoun, but is necessarily bound to a binder (and it is this requirement for a binder which renders $ph=n \text{ } -sw$ incomplete), whereas, of course, $iy=f$ (with non-bound pronoun) and $iy \text{ } S-n(y)\text{-wsrt}$ lack such a binding relationship. So, even if one accepts Junge’s stance that $t3=n \text{ } ph=n \text{ } -sw$ is not some form of topicalization construction (and it is less than clear that this is the case²⁷), and that $ph=n \text{ } -sw$ (with bound $-sw$) is here an ‘incomplete sentence’ without a “logical subject” (supplied by the binder $t3=n$), it does not follow that $iy=f$ and $iy \text{ } S-n(y)\text{-wsrt}$ too *must* be ‘incomplete sentences’ or (subordinate) clauses (even aside from the issue of the relationship between “logical subject”, constituency and structure discussed in sections 3 and 4), since they do not require an external binder as “logical subject”.

On $t3=n \text{ } ph=n \text{ } -sw$, one could equally say that it is the very grammatical relation of ‘binding’ that allows a specific (indeed marked) relationship between “logical subject” (understood pragmatically as ‘theme’ – cf. section 4) and “goal” in an active construction containing an “actor/agent” without affecting the voice of the verb itself (which would not ordinarily have been the case in some putative $*ph.n \text{ } t3=n$ construction) and that this construction was used at this point in *Shipwrecked Sailor* because of the contextual requirements of

27 Especially if we simply mean by this that the construction merely involves a species of ‘antecedent-resumptive’ relationship, i.e. binding in the widest sense, also covering control. The grammatical relation of ‘binding’ does not seem to fit easily into Junge’s binary distinction (which in any case I find too coarse) between focusing/topic-shifting fronted expressions and simple subjects without such effects in *Emphasis* 5.3 (binders can be found in both groups). It is important not to confuse ‘agreement’ in the narrower sense with binding. Notice that an example of object agreement such as that in fn. 24 displays an object in its ordinary post-verbal position and an agreement affix on the verb, whereas $t3=n \text{ } ph=n \text{ } -sw$ has $t3=n$ in an unusual pre-verbal position (unusual for an object that is) and a bound pronoun cliticized onto the verb; equally such object binding contrasts with the lack of object agreement with the stative in Middle Egyptian, as noted by Junge himself (*Emphasis*, 67) – such significant differences are typical of the otherwise rather similar relations of binding and agreement. It is the similarity between binding and agreement which accounts (amongst other things such as grounding, word order and event-structure) for the similarities between $ti\text{-sw} \text{ } h3b(w)$ and $ti\text{-sw} \text{ } iy=f$, not simply some coarse *structural* similarity based on an equally coarse substitutional relationship between the stative and the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m=f$, and thus in such an account this similarity is neither ‘lost’ nor is $ti\text{-sw} \text{ } h3b(w)$ to be ‘rashly explained as another case of topicalization’.

On structure, it is interesting that the pattern NP + stative can be preceded by a further noun as antecedent to a resumptive pronoun (especially with parts of the body), cf. Polotsky’s discussion of patterns like $iw \text{ } s3=i \text{ } ib=f \text{ } 3w(w)$ in *Transpositions*, 3.8.7.1 and Gardiner’s *EG* § 215. However, this is not possible with noun + $s\dot{d}m(=f)$ – there is no pattern $*iw \text{ } s3=i \text{ } ib=f \text{ } 3w=f$ or the like with a further pre-verbal noun. Whether the stative example is to be analysed as a clausal predication or as a binding construction, it should be clear that the purported structural parallel between noun + stative and noun + $s\dot{d}m(=f)$ does not play the secure, decisive role Junge requires of it. Something far more subtle is involved here than the substitutional methodology of the ST might suggest! And note that there is, of course, no such pattern as $*\check{s}msw_i \text{ } t3_j=f_i \text{ } ph=f_i \text{ } -sw_j$.

the story ('Look, concerning this situation which I have just described [i.e. arriving home], we have returned safely, haven't we') whereas some passive construction invoking the agent in oblique position such as *'Our land has been reached by us' would probably have been as bizarre in this context in Egyptian (however constructed) as it is for us (notice that the simple passive without the agent is fine in English – cf. Junge's translation p. 110 [e]).

As for *iy=f* and *iy S-n(y)-wsrt* (i.e. in constructions which do not exhibit binding of the suffix pronoun after the verb), aside from the issues of the unlikely occurrence of such a minimal construction in context (ordinarily we are far more likely also to see at least some form of extra adjunct), and aside from the separate issue of initiality²⁸, I can see no reason, other than Junge's particular attempt to wed 'logical subject = theme' and 'logical predicate = rheme' with an ST view of Middle Egyptian, just why we could not see *iy=f* or *iy S-n(y)-wsrt* as 'complete sentences'²⁹ with *=f* or *S-n(y)-wsrt* as the "logical subject"³⁰. The point about *iy=f* (with a non-bound pronoun) and *iy S-n(y)-wsrt* is not some putative, incomplete parallel with *ph=n -sw* (with a bound pronoun) in *t3=n ph=n -sw*, but whether these constructions must be seen as necessarily "adverbial" even when used in main clauses, for example after initial particles such as *mk* or auxiliaries and this returns us, of course, to the central concerns of this paper.

§ 2 *Predication in contemporary Linguistic theory*

Linguistics is not a homogeneous field and there are considerable differences of opinion between different schools. However, as I hope the following account indicates, the view of

28 It seems to me that the non-initiality of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* is to be understood in terms of 'grounding' (the sentence-internal or sentence-external establishment of matters such as time reference/perspective and relevance of discourse participants) and not in terms of paradigmatic substitution, adverbiality or whatever. I hope to develop this view in print in the near future.

29 For example in a putative construction such as:

FN(4) **mk* [S *iy*rheme *S-n(y)-wsrt*theme]
 "Look, Senwosret returns."

Of course, the possible preference for constructions such as *mk -sw iy=f* or *mk -sw m iit*, or whatever, is due to issues concerning the presentation of events in Middle Egyptian, particularly tense/aspect and Aktionsart and not to any putative 'incomplete sentence' or 'adverbial' status of *iy S-n(y)-wsrt*. Fortunately, the same argument can be applied to perfectly good examples such as *sdm.n=i -st* in *mk sdm.n=i -st*. On *sdm.n ... -st* as a possible discontinuous rheme, cf. next note and section 4.

30 Thus, for example, would Junge dispute that 'Siôn' is the "logical subject" = theme, even though the "logical predicate" = rheme (gwelodd ddraig) does not form an immediate constituent, in the following example from Welsh (R. Sproat, "Welsh syntax and VSO structure," *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 3 (1985), 173-216 ex. 3a):

FN(5) Gwelodd Siôn ddraig.
 "John saw a dragon."

I choose this paper deliberately since Sproat's attempt at defence of a configurational subject in VSO languages mirrors the kind of invocation of different levels of structure which, it seems to me, Junge would require to defend an immediate constituency analysis of theme and rheme. Also note that it is clear from Sproat's GB account that such an invocation in no way necessitates the ST relationship between the verb subjugation hypothesis and predication in cases such as *mk sdm.n=i -st* – indeed just the opposite.

predication presented here is in accord with a broad swath of linguistic opinion. In terms of the rather general point of view adopted here, the various linguistic traditions share much in common in their treatment of predication and, I shall argue, unite in challenging the particular central premise of Junge's view which I am criticising here – predication and the verb subjugation hypothesis and the ST assumptions on which his view is based (particularly the notion of paradigmatic substitution with non-verbal parts of speech).

Most linguists tend not to deal directly with predication and the notion 'predicate' – it is clear that they feel that predication is a relatively uncontroversial issue (at least in terms of primary predication), or at least that there are more contentious areas with which to be concerned. I shall offer two direct accounts of predication, drawn from two rather different schools – Functional Grammar (Dik) and Government-Binding theory (Napoli and Grimshaw) – which present a view of the notions of subject and predicate that have much in common. However, there are a number of linguists who are concerned directly with the notion 'subject', since this has been the source of considerable controversy over the years. From these views it is also possible to glean their views on the notion 'predicate' and in this way the linguistic survey can be augmented from another school of the still dominant generative grammar tradition, Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (Pollard and Sag), and from an offshoot of this tradition, Cognitive Grammar (Langacker), as well as from the functional camp represented here by the work of Givón. In passing, I shall also note that such a view is also held within Lexical-Functional Grammar, Relational Grammar and Categorical Grammar (Montague Grammar), as well as in the functionally-based work of Michael Halliday. We shall see that there is considerable agreement between these various approaches on the notions subject and predicate, although, as one would expect, there are considerable differences in detail and underlying methodology³¹. Because these approaches still seem to be little known within Egyptology, I shall first present a brief account of their treatment of predication before returning to discuss the construction *mk* + circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* in this light. The reader who is not interested in pursuing such a detour into Linguistics should pass directly to section 3.

2.1 *Functional Grammar* (Simon Dik)

A convenient introduction to this account of predication can be found in Simon Dik's account of Functional Grammar³²:

31 I shall not deal here directly with work on theme-rheme *per se* such as that of the Prague School and its concept of functional sentence perspective or the work of Halliday, since this would require a whole paper of its own. Fortunately, this is not of direct relevance to the issues dealt with in this paper and so, as I have already noted, I shall assume that some such notion as 'theme-rheme' is indeed useful. Thomas Ritter has recently dealt with the linguistics literature on theme-rheme at length in his PhD thesis noted in fn. 1 and has drawn conclusions about the nature of the verb in Egyptian quite compatible with my own work, although from a rather different linguistic direction.

32 S. Dik, *The theory of Functional Grammar. Part 1: the structure of the clause*, Dordrecht 1989. A non-partisan but sympathetic account of FG can now be found in A. Siewierska, *Functional grammar*, London 1991.

In order to do justice to the formal and semantic properties of clauses in a typologically adequate way, we assume that each clause must be described in terms of an abstract *underlying clause structure*, which is mapped onto the actual form of the corresponding linguistic expression by a system of *expression rules*, which determine the form, the order, and the intonational pattern of the constituents of the underlying clause, given their status within the underlying structure

[...]

The underlying clause structure is a complex abstract structure in which several levels or “layers” of formal and semantic organization have to be distinguished. As a first approximation to this structure, we can represent it as follows:

CLAUSE	→	“speech act”
PROPOSITION	→	“possible fact”
PREDICATION	→	“state of affairs”
PREDICATE	→	“property/relation”
applied to TERMS	→	“entity/entities”

The construction of an underlying clause first of all requires a *predicate* which is to be applied to an appropriate number of *terms* of the appropriate types. Predicates designate properties or relations, while terms can be used to refer to entities. (p. 45-46)

There is much in this that other linguists would agree with and much with which they would not³³. However, from the perspective of our rather general interest in predication, we shall see that there is a core here which is shared in common throughout the Linguistic theories discussed in this paper and it is on this aspect of FG that I wish to concentrate.

What emerges from Dik’s account is that predication is concerned with the grammatical organisation, or instantiation of, propositions³⁴. It is clear that in FG there is a very close correlation between the lexical frame (i.e. the kind of dependents which a word selects for on the basis of its own meaning – I shall term this *lexical selection*) and predication:

As an example of a predicate we take the verb to *give*. This predicate designates a three-place relation between three entities in the roles of a “giver”, “something given”, and a “receiver”, and thus is necessarily applied to three terms [unless some other process affects the form of this predicate-frame (Author’s note)] ... When a predicate is applied to an appropriate set of terms, the result is a *predication*. (p. 46)

33 Perhaps the greatest area of dispute might concern the notions of an *underlying* clause structure and expression rules. As the quote makes clear, the need for such an abstract clause structure is driven by the typological dogma that underlies the FG project. Many linguists would express considerable doubt about the philosophical underpinnings of such a distinction. Thus it is far from clear that a typologically-adequate abstract underlying clause structure is required in order to describe the grammar of natural language (other theories do at least try to get by without such a notion). Also other linguists have wondered about the inordinate complexity of expression rules which FG requires in order to preserve this distinction (cf. Dik, chapters 14-18). From the perspective of our general interest in predication, this is a matter which need not concern us.

34 FG, as the quote shows, distinguishes between the ‘levels’ of the proposition and of predication, chiefly in order to be able to distinguish scope relations of various operators and satellites. I cannot see that this in any way affects the rather general issues of predication discussed here and, for sake of simplicity and cross-over with the other theories discussed here, I shall not respect this distinction. For similar reasons FG distinguishes between nuclear predications and extended predications. Once again I shall not be concerned with this distinction.

In FG the predicate frame (the lexical frame) for 'give' looks like (p. 68)³⁵:

(4) give_V (x₁)_{Ag} (x₂)_{Go} (x₃)_{Rec}

So, for Dik:

The predicate thus provides a "blueprint" for the types of predication that can be formed around it. (p. 69)

In terms of predication at the sentence/clause level, at the level of what I shall term the *primary predication* of the sentence/clause (Dik's term is *matrix predication* – cf. p. 47), the primary predication in a clause is thus provided by the fleshing out of the highest level predication in the sentence/clause (i.e. that predicate which is not embedded within another predication), or, to borrow a term from other brands of linguistic theory, the predicative expression which *heads* the sentence or clause.

Thus in the sentence

(5) John gave a book to Mary

'gave' is considered to be the primary predicate³⁶, not because it presents new information (it may equally be 'given' in context³⁷), nor because it is a new assertion or new knowledge about the subject; rather 'gave' is considered to be the predicate because of the *event-structure* of the sentence – the particular way in which the event is portrayed in words, here an event-structure in which the primary predicate 'give' plays a central organising role³⁸. Cf. the following quote:

The predication may be understood in terms of the two basic acts of *referring* and *predicating* (cf. Searle 1969). Referring means pinpointing some entity about which something is to be predicated; predicating means assigning properties and relations to such entities. (p. 111)

However, 'properties and relations' are taken in a wide sense to include not just verbs but also non-verbal predicates (cf. chapter 8). For example, Dik gives the following underlying clause structure for the sentence 'The chair is in the garden' (p. 173):

(6) = Dik's (44a) Pres {(dlx_i: garden_N (x_i))_{LOC}} (dlx_j: chair_N(x_j))_∅

It is clear, then, that Dik's notion of predication applies in just the same way to verbal and to non-verbal predications.

So Dik considers 'predicate' to be defined in terms of what I have termed the semantic *event-structure* of the sentence/clause (i.e. what kind of event is being described and in

35 Dik's account also invokes selectional restrictions on these arguments (for example, in terms of animacy). Once again, this is not relevant to the issues discussed here.

36 On the assignment of the term 'predicate' to lexical words and not necessarily to phrases, cf. the next section on the GB-based work of Napoli.

37 Cf. the discussion of Givón's view of predication in section 2.6 below.

38 The event-structure of verbal predications is, of course, extremely rich. The impact of lexical meaning on such event-structures is often labelled 'Aktionsart'. Cf. Dik, chapter 5 (under the term 'typology of states of affairs').

what way – verbal predications typically describe actions and states, whereas prepositional phrase predications typically describe locations).

Let us now turn to the notion ‘subject’ in FG. The subject is considered to be:

a “pointer” which indicates the entity [or embedded predication (Author’s note)] from whose perspective we present the SoA [state of affairs (Author’s note)] ... We can say that Subj assignment allows for alternative specifications of the “perspective”, the “vantage point” from which the SoA is to be presented. (p.213)

That is to say the grammatical subject is the primary grammatical perspective from which the grammar of the state of affairs is presented in the predication. To use a term derived from other traditions discussed below, it is the grammatically most *prominent* dependent of the predicate³⁹.

For Dik:

It will be clear that the perspectivizing functions Subj/Obj cannot be reduced to semantic functions. For the whole point of Subj and Obj is that they may be assigned to terms with *different* semantic functions, thus reorganizing the basic orientation inherent in the predicate frame ...

More complicated is the question about the relationship between Subj/Obj function and the pragmatic functions, specifically the Topic. We define the Subj as specifying the vantage point from which the SoA is presented in the predication, and the (Given) Topic as that entity about which the clause predicates something in the given setting. Subj has to do with the presentation of the SoA, Topic with the contextual embedding of the information transmitted by the clause. The two notions, though distinct, have a strong tendency to correlate, in the sense that the Given Topic will usually also be the Subj, and the Subj will usually be the Given Topic of a given construction ...

Several authors have interpreted these facts as indicating that Subj and Obj are primarily pragmatic notions. Sometimes the Subject is characterized as the “grammaticalized topic” (e.g. by Comrie 1981, Givón 1979, 1984). From our point of view, however, there are several reasons for not following this course, and for regarding Subj and Given Topic as two distinct notions, which, however, display a strong tendency to coincide in the same term. [details in Dik] (p. 216-217)

[...] a correlation between GivTop and Subj is not at all unexpected. As De Vries (1985) puts it, the GivTop determines the “contextual” perspective from which the discourse is organized; the Subj determines the perspective from which the SoA is presented. It is natural, though not obligatory, for the two kinds of perspective to coincide: “In this way the narrator expresses on the level of sentence-grammar the dominant contextual perspective of the discourse”. (p. 272)

Whatever one may think about this discussion, it is clear that Dik considers the notion ‘grammatical subject’ to be concerned with *event structure* – in particular, for Dik, with the perspective on events encoded in grammar⁴⁰.

39 Once again there are differences in how theories take the notion of ‘prominence’ (for example is it to be cast in cognitive terms?). Important as these are, at the general level of discussion in this paper, this is not terribly relevant.

40 And hence ‘grammatical subject’ has nothing inherently to do with subject-predicate agreement, *pace* Junge, *Emphasis*, 67. On grammatical subjects and subject-predicate agreement, cf. Dik’s discussion on pp. 132-35. We would, of course, expect some form of typical correlation between the notions ‘subject’ and ‘theme’ (the ‘subject’ will typically be part of the given information shared between

Finally, for our purposes, although the notion ‘grammatical subject’ is not *defined* by some coagulation between semantic role and pragmatic issues such as ‘theme’⁴¹, these are among the *influences* on which argument is likely to be chosen to perform the subject function (i.e. which expression is likely to be chosen as the perspective from which the event-structure of the predication is grammatically organised)⁴². Among such influences on subject-selection, Dik notes the following:

- a. The basic perspective associated with the meaning of the predicate (p. 215)
- b. The semantic function hierarchy (SFH): Ag > Go > Rec > Ben > Instr > Loc > Temp⁴³

The idea is that as we proceed through the SFH from the more “central” to the more “peripheral” semantic functions, Subj and Obj assignment become more and more “difficult”, and the resulting constructions become more and more “marked”. Intuitively, we can understand that presenting a certain SoA from the point of view of the Instrument used in it requires a more radical restructuring of the basic orientation coded in the predicate frame than presenting it from the point of view of the Goal. (p. 226)

- c. definite > other specific > non-specific
- d. 1/2 person > 3 person
- e. human > other animate > inanimate

Most of these are notions familiar to Egyptologists through the work of Loprieno⁴⁴.

2.2 *Government-Binding theory* (Donna-Jo Napoli)

A major discussion of predication within the tradition of generative grammar (more precisely within government-binding theory) has recently been presented by Donna-Jo Napoli⁴⁵. Napoli’s work is aimed at establishing that predicates are semantic entities and need not necessarily have isomorphic syntactic characteristics (p. 6 and then passim) – that is to say that there is no necessary isomorphism between syntax and semantics (pp. 22-23)⁴⁶. In

speaker and hearer) and ‘predicate’ and ‘rheme’ (the lexical head of the predicate will typically be part of the rhematic assertion). See section 4 for a brief discussion.

- 41 Although such a coagulation might be taken by some to define the *prototype* case of ‘subject’ in active transitive clauses. Cf. the quote from Lakoff in fn. 61 below. On prototypes, see section 2.5 on Cognitive Grammar.
- 42 Similarly in all the linguistic approaches discussed in this paper. See section 3 for a discussion of this in relation to Junge’s position.
- 43 Later on Dik attempts to derive the SFH, at least partially, from other features such as the hierarchy of argument prominence (which brings his account more into line with those discussed below) - see pp 236-7; however this is not particularly relevant here.
- 44 Cf. “Der ägyptische Satz zwischen Semantik und Pragmatik: die Rolle von *jn*,” in *Akten des Vierten Internationalen Ägyptologen-Kongresses. Beihefte SAK 3* (1988), 77-98.
- 45 D.J. Napoli, *Predication theory: a case study for indexing theory*. Cambridge studies in Linguistics 50, Cambridge 1989.
- 46 This is common to a number of frameworks. For a development of this idea, cf. J. Sadock, *Autolexical syntax: a theory of parallel grammatical representations*, Chicago 1991. Sadock further suggests non-isomorphism between syntax and morphology and between syntax and pragmatics. I exploited the non-isomorphism between syntax and morphology in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 42-43. Junge’s definition of theme and rheme as ‘immediate constituents of the sentence’ noted above is, of course, commit-

particular, she is concerned with disputing any configurational account of predication, such as that commonly developed within Government-Binding theory⁴⁷.

In common with most approaches, Napoli notes that:

A clause typically corresponds to a proposition, in which we have some state or action expressed and a group (which may consist of one or more) of participants or role players in that state or action. (p. 7)⁴⁸

Treating states and actions together under the term ‘event’, she then proceeds to offer an event-structure account of predication (p. 7ff.): predicates are ‘event words’ which take on one or more role players. Here ‘event word’ is construed very widely to cover any state or action, whether realised by a verb or by some predicative non-verbal expression. Since predication is a fundamentally semantic relation, predicates (event words) can appear in a wide range of syntactic positions and functions (p. 89). Thus, in common with many approaches, Napoli considers ‘red’ in 7) to be an event-word and thus to be a predicate in her sense (p. 20):

(7) = Napoli’s (1-29) We *Painted* the barn *red*.

Predication, then, in Napoli’s view, in common with many others, is not restricted solely to the sentence/clause level (cf. references on p. 87). However, Napoli does recognise that sentences/clauses have a *primary predicate* – the predicate which *heads* the sentence/clause and is particularly relevant to the grammar of the sentence/clause and to the organisation of the event-structure of the proposition (pp. 87ff. – in 7 this is the expression ‘painted’). Of course, it is this primary predicate (as opposed to other ‘secondary predicates’ such as ‘red’ in 7) which is of chief concern in this paper (and indeed in the Egyptological

ted to a particularly strong isomorphism between syntax and discourse pragmatics; an isomorphism, incidentally, which is not held by any of the theories discussed in this paper.

- 47 Napoli adopts the GB framework because it is a framework particularly geared to configurational accounts of grammatical phenomena and hence, she argues, if even GB requires a non-configurational semantic account of predication, then there is much to recommend such a view. More mainstream configurational accounts of the syntax of predication can be found in, for example, E. Williams, “Predication,” *Linguistic Inquiry* 11 (1980), 203-38 and N. Chomsky, *Knowledge of language: its nature, origin and use*, New York 1986, 161. Characterizations of ‘subject’ such as SPEC of I’ (or more generally SPEC of X’) or [NP, IP] are the lineal descendents of the old [NP, S] definition found in N. Chomsky, *Aspects of the theory of syntax*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1965 and used by Junge himself in *Syntax der mittelägyptischen Literatursprache*, Mainz 1978, 28-29. Junge’s characterization of theme/subject and rheme/predicate as binary *immediate constituents of the sentence* still seems to be haunted by this position, for all his talk of discourse pragmatics. It is important to note, however, that the standard GB configurational account of grammatical relations does not lead to the ST position on the verb subjugation hypothesis and predication (cf. the paper by Sproat referred to in fn. 30). I do not discuss the GB configurational account here because there are a number of well-known technical difficulties in applying this account to VSO languages (such as the landing-site for V-movement).
- 48 Similarly with FG, other GB theories, and Givón’s approach below. Actually, this is not as innocuous as it might at first sight seem to be. There is indeed a question mark over just which semantic entity most appropriately corresponds to the clause/sentence. Thus in HPSG, and work in Situation Semantics, this is the ‘situation’ or ‘state of affairs’ (cf. Pollard and Sag noted below and J. Barwise - J. Perry, *Situations and attitudes*, Cambridge [Mass.] 1983).

literature in general). In the following, 'predicate' is to be taken to refer to 'primary predicate' unless otherwise noted.

For Napoli, the (primary) predicate is itself headed by a *lexical event word* (which might be termed the *predicator*⁴⁹). This lexical event word assigns *thematic-roles* (often otherwise termed *semantic roles*⁵⁰) to the various role players. Thus in (8) below:

[...] the event is the action of lending and the role players are a lender, an object lent, and someone who has received the object lent (p. 7):

(8) = Napoli's (1-1) Jean *lent* Mary books.

Napoli continues:

In this book I analyse a sentence such as (1-1) as containing the predicate *lent* (marked in boldface in (1-1)) and the three role players for that predicate: *Jean*, *Mary*, and *books* (and see Halliday 1970 and Matthews 1981, among others, for a similar event structure analysis of propositional structure). Immediately, then, we can see a first formulation of an informal definition of predicate: an event word which takes one or more role players, where the term "event" covers both states and actions. (p. 7)

Because Napoli's characterisation of predication is semantic in nature, her account allows predicates to be either:

single words, continuous strings of words that do not form syntactic constituents, discontinuous strings of words that do not form a syntactic constituent, as well as entire phrases (p. 59).

That is to say predicates are not restricted to being phrasal or to forming continuous immediate constituents of the sentence (Napoli devotes much of chapter 1 of her book to articulating this position). So predicates can, through other syntactic concerns, form phrases but they need not necessarily do so. From the perspective of predication, such phrasal predicates, for other grammatical reasons, 'just happen to comprise an entire phrase' (p. 58). Such a distinction is clearly of considerable use in dealing with predication and the VSO word order of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* in Ancient Egyptian.

This account also covers non-verbal predications:

(9) = Napoli's (1-93) Mary is *inside* the house.

Here the concept of 'inside' is:

a coherent whole: we view *inside* as denoting an event in itself. Thus *inside* is a predicate in (1-93). And it takes two role players: *Mary* [as entity located (Author's note)] and *the house* [as place of location (Author's note)]. (p. 56)

49 Her account thus has a considerable amount in common with certain dependency-based accounts of predication such as that of Halliday, as Napoli herself notes (p. 7). On the term 'predicator', see P. Matthews, *Syntax*, Cambridge 1981, chapter 5, particularly p. 101.

50 There is, alas, considerable terminological confusion in the literature about semantic roles such as 'agent', 'patient' and the like. In Generative Grammar, they are commonly referred to as 'thematic roles' or 'theta-roles', whereas others such as Givón refer to them as 'case roles'.

There are two interesting points here. First, a predicative preposition differs from a non-predicative preposition in taking two role players instead of one. Second, ‘to be’, in this usage, is not considered to be part of the predicate (it is merely a ‘grammatical word’ – p. 56) (and, of course, this holds also for an adjectival or nominal primary predication). The usefulness of such an account for the study of Middle Egyptian non-verbal sentences should be clear.

Napoli devotes the rest of her book to working out her theory of predication indexing, its relationship with barriers and with binding, its interaction with theta-assignment and the like; cf. the reprise on p. 349. However, these are far too detailed and localised matters for the rather general discussion of predication here.

Napoli concentrates on predicates and does not devote much space to the notion of ‘subject’ (but cf. the work of Grimshaw considered below). However, her notion of ‘subject’ is clear (and once again this view finds wide agreement within the GB camp, albeit with a more configurational flavour). For Napoli, the clausal subject is the external argument of the lexical predicate head projected into syntax (recall that this holds for both verbal and non-verbal predications)⁵¹:

N(1-121) *Subject Role Player*: The external argument of a lexical item at SS [S- Structure (Author’s note)] is the subject role player of a predicate headed by that lexical item. (p. 67)

Here ‘external argument’ is very similar to the notion of ‘most prominent argument’ which we have already met in Dik’s FG (although in GB there is no inherent commitment to interpreting this as ‘primary perspective’, simply that it will be cast in some form of cognitive or conceptual terms).

Of course, just which expression will be chosen to hold this function is influenced by a number of factors. For example, Napoli recognises the importance of the interaction between semantic role assignment by a lexical predicate head and the grammatical function subject. In this particular case, the influence is that of the ‘theta-criterion’, widely held in one form or another in contemporary Linguistics:

Every argument of a lexical head is assigned one and only one theta role by that lexical item
Every theta role of a lexical item is assigned to one and only one of its arguments. (p. 80)

In essence, this simply reflects that the fact that all the referential participants in a proposition will play some semantic role in that proposition and situation depicted. For GB theory, along with those other theories considered in this paper, this is seen as having a major influence on the choice of grammatical subject (through some species of the semantic role hierarchy). This will become clear below in Grimshaw’s work.

51 As Napoli recognises (p. 69), this will, ultimately have to be cast in cognitive or conceptual terms. On different approaches to the nature of such cognition or conceptualisation compare R. Jackendoff, *Semantics and cognition*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1983 within the GB tradition with that of Langacker and Lakoff within the framework of Cognitive Grammar (references below section 2.5).

2.3 *Government-Binding theory* (Jane Grimshaw)

Although very useful for a discussion of predication, Napoli's account, as we have seen, is rather less explicit in terms of the notion 'subject' and its relations to argument structure (although the general contours are clear). Thus, to complement Napoli's discussion of predication, I would like to discuss a recent more detailed GB-based account of argument structure and its projection into syntax, that of Jane Grimshaw⁵². Grimshaw simply assumes some standard version of predication (because her work is not concerned with predication *per se*), but I hope that it will become clear that this assumed notion of predication is one very similar indeed to the views noted above from the work of Dik and Napoli.

As we have seen, certain lexical items lexically-select their dependents (and predicates clearly form a subset of such lexical selectors) and it is this lexically-determined structure and its projection into syntax which concerns Grimshaw. An example would be the verb 'to give' which, for Grimshaw, lexically-selects an agent argument, a theme argument and a beneficiary argument: 'someone gives something to somebody', or more formally, using Grimshaw's notation (p.14)⁵³:

(10) give (agent (beneficiary (theme⁵⁴)))

This, then, is the *argument structure* (*a-structure*) of the lexical item 'give' in English and it is this argument structure which will be projected overtly into syntax with 'give' unless some grammatical process (such as passivisation) or the like intrudes to alter the particular syntactic reception of these arguments. The notion of argument-structure (lexical frames), as we have already seen, is widely accepted within Linguistics and is common to a range of different frameworks (of course, there are many differences in detail but not at the general level we are dealing with here). The focus of Grimshaw's work, therefore, is not to argue for the value of such a notion, but to argue for a particular version of a-structure: an a-structure of a lexical item which is structured hierarchically as noted in the representation above; that is to say that the arguments of lexical items are not randomly organised in the lexicon but obey a hierarchy of order. Grimshaw argues that there are two principle concepts governing this ordering which are important for accounting for certain grammatical effects resulting from a-structure:

52 J. Grimshaw, *Argument structure*. Linguistic Inquiry monograph 18, Cambridge (Mass.) 1990.

53 This representation of argument-structure displays a hierarchical organisation of the lexically-selected semantic-roles. As we shall see below, it is one of Grimshaw's major aims to defend such a hierarchical account and to demonstrate its value for grammatical description and explanation.

54 This use of the term 'theme' to label a semantic role is a peculiarity of GB-theory and some of its close relatives and is not to be confused with the more general practice, adopted by Junge, of using this term for the pragmatic notion 'theme'. 'Theme' in the GB sense is either used for the role of 'the thing moved by the action expressed by the predicate', with 'patient' covering the 'person or thing undergoing the action expressed by the predicate' or is used to cover both these roles applied to 'the entity affected by the action or state expressed by the predicate' (L. Haegeman, *Introduction to Government-Binding theory*, Oxford 1991, 41-42. This usage goes back to unpublished work in the early 1960s by Gruber, cf. R. Jackendoff, *Semantic interpretation in Generative Grammar*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1972, 29-31.

- a. the thematic hierarchy, i.e. the *hierarchy of semantic roles*.
 b. *the hierarchy imposed by general properties of the event-structure of the lexical items themselves* (e.g. whether causation is implicit in their event-structure or not).

The hierarchy of a-structure is thus determined both by properties assigned to the dependent argument (according to the hierarchy of semantic-roles) and by properties of the selecting lexical item itself (according to the hierarchy imposed by general properties of the event-structure of the lexical item). As noted, the thematic hierarchy is simply the semantic-role hierarchy now familiar to Egyptologists through work in functional schools of Linguistics, albeit in a slightly different guise developed within generative grammar:

As we have already seen (and as we shall see further below), many Linguists invoke the relevance of the hierarchy of semantic-roles in terms of the relationship between the lexical frame (argument-structure) and grammatical functions such as subject. Thus, in the prototypical case (and as long as this is consistent with the event-structure of the lexical-selector), the agent will be the most prominent argument of the lexical-selector and will be projected into syntax as the grammatical subject of the predicate. As Grimshaw notes:

This is not a surprising result, since the argument that is most prominent in the a-structure is also the most syntactically prominent argument, the subject. (p. 8).

There will, of course, be deviations away from this prototypical case of ‘someone doing something’, either in terms of the subject carrying some other semantic role or in terms of the subject being predicated by non-verbal predicates, which do not ordinarily assign such a richly differentiated system of semantic roles to their subjects. For example, if there is no lexically-selected agent, then the next most prominent argument on the hierarchy of semantic roles will be the most prominent and projected into syntax as the subject, e.g.:

(11) = Grimshaw’s (18a) Man fears god.

Here ‘man’ is an ‘experiencer’, whereas ‘god’ is ‘theme’. Since the ‘experiencer’ role is higher on the thematic hierarchy than ‘theme’, the ‘experiencer’ will be projected into syntax as the subject in the unmarked case.

Grimshaw’s account differs, however, in its explicit articulation of the influence of event-structure on the grammatical subject⁵⁵. As we have already seen event words are not simply restricted to verbs and include predicative adjectives, prepositions and nouns and thus Grimshaw’s notion of the event-structure of lexical items provides a close parallel in lexical terms to Napoli’s notion of a predicate; cf. her discussion on p. 26. In particular, at the sentence/clause-level this event-word will be the primary predicate of the sentence. However, Grimshaw’s discussion of the actual organisation of event structure concentrates more on verbs, since verbs display highly differentiated event-structure, whereas prepositions and the like do not normally display so richly differentiated an event structure

⁵⁵ Other approaches share this concern, for example FG also takes note of the effects effect of event-structure on predications and, once again, there is close similarity between Grimshaw’s position and that of Dik (although, of course, differences in detail). However, Grimshaw’s account is noteworthy because of its explicit attention to detail.

(although they do still, of course, display event structure). Grimshaw adopts an event-semantic analysis of event-structure based on the Dowty-Vendler classification of verbs⁵⁶ and this is effectively equivalent to the notion of *Aktionsart* now familiar to Egyptologists through the work of the likes of Vernus⁵⁷. Without going into too much detail here, Grimshaw argues that the event-structure of event-words affects the prominence of arguments within argument structure. For example:

(12) = Grimshaw's (20a) God frightens man.

Here, once again, 'god' is the 'theme' and 'man' the 'experiencer'; however, in the unmarked case, 'god' is projected into syntax as the subject, not 'man' (which would require passivisation, for example, to occur as the subject: 'man is frightened by god'). This, of course, contravenes the semantic role hierarchy and it is such apparent exceptions to the influence of the semantic role hierarchy with which Grimshaw's account is concerned. In brief, she suggests that in this case we have a mismatch between the semantic role hierarchy, which predicts that the experiencer 'man' will be more prominent than the theme 'god', and the hierarchy imposed by the event-structure of 'frighten'. In particular, 'frighten' has a causative meaning not shared by 'fear' (the theme causes a change in the psychological state of the experiencer) and it is the causative aspect of the inherent lexical event-structure of 'frighten' which renders the 'causer' the most prominent argument in the argument-structure of 'frighten', despite its semantic role as the 'theme'. Hence if an ordinary active sentence is required in which 'frighten' is the primary predicate, the theme-causer is projected into syntax as the grammatical subject.

Since a-structure is projected into syntax, there is a direct connection for Grimshaw between the most prominent argument in a-structure, as determined by the interaction of these two hierarchies, and the subject of the sentence: in terms of GB-theory the most prominent argument will be projected into D-structure as the D-structure subject (cf. pp. 33ff.), although it may well then be susceptible to certain syntactic processes recognised within GB which may affect its position in S-structure and LF. In brief, though, 'grammatical subject' is the function held by the most prominent argument in event-structure. Such a view clearly correlates with both Dik's and Napoli's views on subjects (and as we shall see below with a number of other researchers within a wide range of linguistic traditions).

56 See conveniently D. Dowty, *Word meaning and Montague Grammar: the semantics of verbs and times in Generative Semantics and Montague's PTQ*, Dordrecht 1979, chapter 2. This account also draws on work by Aristotle, Ryle and Kenny. However, Dowty and Vendler are the two sources most quoted in the Linguistics literature and so I use their names here.

57 Cf. P. Vernus, "Sujet + *sdm.f* et sujet + pseudoparticipe avec les verbes de qualité: dialectique de l'aspect et de l'*Aktionsart*," in *Festschrift Westendorf*, 197-212.

2.4 Head-driven phrase structure grammar (Carl Pollard and Ivan Sag)

A very similar conception of the notion of subject and predicate is to be found in the framework of Head-driven phrase structure grammar developed by Carl Pollard and Ivan Sag⁵⁸. HPSG is a highly formalized theory which has emerged in conjunction with work in AI. The central concept is that of *unification*, a mathematical operation ‘which yields from a set of compatible structures a structure which contains all the information present in the members of the set, but nothing else’ (p. 7). Linguistically relevant information and principles interact through unification to produce grammatical expressions. These include: the lexical frame of the word; highly schematic grammatical rules; language-specific principles of well-formedness; universal principles of well-formedness; and the language-use situation (i.e. contextual factors) (p. 7).

The other major feature of HPSG is that it is highly lexically orientated. The category of a lexical word is an assemblage of feature-value specifications encoding a wide array of information including not only the part of speech of the head and the kind of lexical dependents it selects, but such information as agreement and binder-bindee requirements (p. 11) and this obviously constrains how and with what other expressions a lexical word will be able to unify. Most importantly, lexical signs (=words) have lexical frames (encoded in the SUBCAT feature) which are particularly highly structured and rich in information. Such information contains both syntactic and semantic information – in brief a word such as ‘walks’ will only be able to unify with a 3rd person expression whose semantic properties are consistent with being able to walk (or else is treated metaphorically as being able to walk). The exact form of the semantics is one derived from Situation Semantics; however, as Pollard and Sag note, their notion of a semantic index is very close to the more familiar notion of semantic role, whose properties differ only in that it is constituted in situation-theoretic terms (chapter 4). Clearly, then, the notion of SUBCAT is very similar to, and indeed subsumes, the idea of lexical heads assigning a semantic role to their dependents which we have seen in other approaches above. However, as adopted in HPSG, SUBCAT is considered to be a central and more wide ranging feature of the grammar.

As Pollard and Sag note:

One essential function of the SUBCAT feature, therefore, is to set up the correspondence between grammatical relations (subject, object, etc.) and the roles in the described situation [=semantic roles (Author’s note)] (p. 116).

Grammatical functions, too, are dealt with in terms of SUBCAT and its projection into syntax. Indeed, the SUBCAT list is hierarchically structured to reflect grammatical relations (p. 117)⁵⁹. Thus a SUBCAT list for ‘kick’ might look like:

58 C. Pollard - I. Sag, *Information-based syntax and semantics. Volume 1: Fundamentals*, Stanford 1987. In many respects HPSG is similar to Lexical-Functional Grammar (particularly in dealing with ‘subject’), cf. the papers in J. Bresnan (ed.), *The mental representation of grammatical relations*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1982.

59 As Pollard and Sag note, this concept is very similar to that developed in Categorical Grammar (Montague Grammar) by Dowty, see D. Dowty, “Grammatical relations and Montague Grammar,” in P. Jacobson - G. Pullum (eds.), *The nature of syntactic representation*, Dordrecht 1982, 79-130.

(13) [SUBCAT <NP₁, NP₂ >]

where the index links that argument with a situation-theoretic role [=semantic role] and where the order of least oblique > more oblique restricts the combination with other expressions (most oblique first).

The most prominent argument in this hierarchy, which, in this system, we can term the 1-argument⁶⁰, will project into syntax as the subject, unless some other operation such as passivisation applies altering the nature of the SUBCAT list. If 1 links with 'kicker' and 2 with 'kicked', then, unless some operation such as passivisation applies, the 'kicker' will appear as the subject. Clearly, this is a very similar notion to that which we have seen in the work of Grimshaw. Hence once again 'subject' is defined in terms of its prominence in event-structure. Of course, with verbs, there is a close correlation between the notion 'subject' and semantic roles, but this merely reflects the point that a referential expression performing the subject function in a sentence with a verbal predication will play a semantic role in the event depicted by that verb.

However, this in no way prevents non-verbal predicates from having a most prominent argument in their event-structures which, too, through indexing behaves as a participant role-player in the event headed by that non-verbal predicate. Indeed the account of subject-predicate in HPSG is quite general. One advantage of the lexical-orientation of HPSG is that grammar rules need only be highly schematic and merely reflect the constituency of phrasal and clausal expressions in a language (all the real work is done by lexical categories and the general principles of HPSG). Thus one rule for the structure for a sentence (a rule which, because of its schematic nature, actually covers a lot more than just this type of sentence constituency) is (p. 150):

(14) [SUBCAT <>] → H[LEX-], C

i.e. an expression with a saturated SUBCAT list can comprise a phrasal (i.e. non-lexical) head and one complement expression (incidentally this rule says nothing about the order of these two expressions, this is left to *linear precedence rules*). This would meet the case, we noted above with Napoli's account, where the predicate in a sentence combines with other expressions into a phrase. Notice that the rule mentions nothing about the category of the head expression which could either be VP, PP, ADJP or NP and thus covers non-verbal sentences as well as verbal sentences.

This means that, just as in Napoli's account above, a predicative preposition will SUBCAT for two dependents, one of which – the most prominent on the SUBCAT list – will be the subject with an index linking it to the situation-theoretic role of the thing being located. To use our Egyptian example:

(15) = (2) *mtn* [S [*šps.wt*]_{subj}] [[*hr*]_{pred}] [*šdw*]_{obj}]_{predphrase}

A second rule, adapted here for use for Middle Egyptian is (p.156):

⁶⁰ And is similar to the concept 1-argument in Relational Grammar, cf. B. Blake, *Relational grammar*, London 1990, chapter 1.

(16) [SUBCAT <>] → H[SC+, LEX+], C*

In Middle Egyptian the constituency of a sentence can be composed of a lexical head (if this is a suffix conjugation verb-form [SC+]) plus the relevant number of complements determined by the SUBCAT properties of the verb (i.e. basically, in this case, the transitivity of the verb). Such an account allows a description of the VSO order of the suffix conjugation and the lexical non-phrasal nature of the verb as head:

(17) = (1c) *mk* [S [*sdm.n*_{pred}] [=i_{subj}] [-st_{obj}]]

This is a description which is fully in accord with the general apparatus of HPSG and, in particular, allows for exactly the same characterization of the ‘subject’ as the most prominent argument in the SUBCAT list of the verbal primary predicate.

2.5 Cognitive Grammar (Ronald Langacker)

Another approach from which we can benefit is that of the emerging framework of Cognitive Grammar, represented most notably in the work of Ronald Langacker⁶¹. Langacker’s work falls into the group of that which does not focus explicitly on the notion ‘predicate’, but rather on the ‘subject’. However, it is clear that Langacker’s work presupposes a notion of ‘predicate’ very similar to views discussed above⁶². For Langacker a clause profiles, or gives a perspective on, a process. ‘Process’ in this sense is very similar to the notion of event-word which we have noted in the work of others – in particular a process is understood in quite a broad sense to indicate the profiling of a relationship through some span of temporal evolution (p. CIS 212), whether or not this relationship changes or remains constant (CIS p. 224), and thus covers non-verbal primary predications such as

61 Here I draw from R. Langacker, *Concept, image and symbol: the cognitive basis of grammar*. Cognitive Linguistics research 1, Berlin 1991, chapter 9: ‘Transitivity, case, and grammatical relations’ (henceforth CIS) and id., *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Volume II: descriptive application*, Stanford 1991, particularly chapter 7: ‘Transitivity and grammatical relations’ (henceforth FCG II). Other relevant works which share much in common with Langacker’s position include W. Croft, *Syntactic categories and grammatical relations: the cognitive organization of information*, Chicago 1991 and G. Lakoff, *Women, fire and dangerous things: what categories reveal about the mind*, Chicago 1987. Thus Lakoff, for example, claims:

SUBJECT IS A CATEGORY WHOSE CENTRAL MEMBERS ARE BOTH PROTOTYPICAL AGENTS AND PROTOTYPICAL TOPICS.

This characterization of subject is semantically based, but not in the usual sense; that is, it does not attempt to predict all subjects from semantic and pragmatic properties. But it does define the prototype of the category in semantic and pragmatic terms. Noncentral cases will differ according to language-particular conventions. The subject category is thus what we will refer to in chapter 6 as a *radial category*. (p. 65)

The central points here are the notions of ‘prototype’ and ‘radial category’ which are designed explicitly to be able to deal with cases which deviate from such a prototypical characterisation without somehow ‘exploding’ the notion of ‘grammatical subject’.

62 Langacker adopts a slightly unusual terminology (derived from another strand in logic) in that he reserves the term ‘predicate’ for ‘a given meaning of any expression’ (FCG II, 4). However, I use ‘predicate’ here in its more familiar sense to cover Langacker’s ‘process’ and the like.

'John is in the house', as well as verbal primary predications such as 'John hit the ball'⁶³. In particular, it is the sign of the head of the clause which is fundamentally important in the signalling of this process ('in' as location, with 'is' as grounding predication giving temporal profiling; 'hit' as action). Clearly, then, at the sentence level this notion of profiling is very close to the notion of predicate discussed above; or, to put it another way, primary predication is a particular form of profiling at the sentence/clause level⁶⁴.

However, as already noted, Langacker is more concerned with the notion 'subject'. In CG 'subject', like other grammatical categories, is characterised by a *prototype* (a typical example based on everyday experience) and a general *schema* (based on general cognitive abilities). For our concerns, the general schema for 'subject' is the more important notion. For Langacker sentence/clause level profiling singles out some participant for special prominence. For Langacker, this is once again a cognitive issue and reflects the general cognitive model of a *trajector* within a *relational profile* (in other words the notion of subject is in this sense a particular example of a trajector), itself a result of the normal asymmetry manifested cognitively in relational profiling (CIS, p. 9):

I attribute this inherent asymmetry to figure/ground organisation (...). A relational predication [all primary predications are relational (Author's note)] elevates one of its participants to the status of figure. I refer to this participant as its "trajector"; other salient participants are referred to as "landmarks". This terminology is inspired by prototypical action verbs where the trajector is usually the initial or primary mover, but the definitions make no specific reference to motion and are therefore applicable to any relational expression [and thus include the subject of non-verbal predications and indeed the subject of any sentence (Author's note)] ... The terms subject and object are generally reserved for overt noun phrases that elaborate a relational trajector and primary landmark at the clausal level. By contrast, trajector/landmark asymmetry is characteristic of relational predications at any level of organisation, even if left implicit. (CIS pp. 9-10)

In particular, one participant – termed the TRAJECTOR – stands out as the *figure* within the profiled relationship. For instance, *above* and *below* apparently have the same conceptual content and profile the same spatial configuration. Their non-synonymy can only be attributed to figure/ground organization: whether the higher participant is construed as being located in relation to the lower one, or conversely. (FCG II p. 5)

And so:

63 In FCG II Langacker adopts a slightly different terminology distinguishing 'process' from 'atemporal relation'. However, this is not important here.

64 Similarly Lakoff who notes:

A simple proposition consists of an ontology of elements (the "arguments") and a basic predicate that holds of these arguments. The overall structure of the proposition is thus characterized by a part-whole schema, where the proposition = the whole, the predicate = a part, and the arguments = the other parts. In addition, certain semantic relations may hold among the arguments: there may be an agent, a patient, an experiencer, an instrument, a location, etc. Semantic relations are represented structurally by link schemas, and the kinds of schemas are represented by assignments of links to categories of relations (e.g. the agent category). (op. cit. 285)

If we accept this characterization, the subject and object are more aptly referred to as FOCAL PARTICIPANTS. It is well known that neither the subject nor object relation is consistently or uniquely associated with any single role archetype (such as agent, patient, or mover – any one of which may be coded by a subject). I suggest that they represent instead a separate dimension of organization, wherein certain participants are singled out for special prominence irrespective of their semantic role. Choosing a participant to be the subject or object is very much akin to focusing a spotlight on it; by making these selections, the speaker directs attention to the focused participant (as well as to the interconnections that involve them directly) and thereby imposes a particular image on the scene. Still the choice of subject and object is non-arbitrary and shows a partial correlation with semantic roles. The action-chain head and the theme ['theme' in the GB sense (Author's note)] have a measure of intrinsic salience because they serve as starting points with respect to energy flow and A[utonomy]/D[ependency] alignment, and this facilitates their selection. In canonical events, moreover, the head and theme coincide with the agent and patient archetypes, whose cognitive salience is beyond dispute. These factors conspire to make agent and patient the prototypical values of the subject and object relations. (FCG II p. 301)

On prototypes, see below.

Trajector/landmark assignment is observable at any level of structural complexity, including the clause level; it thus establishes a partial ordering, based on one kind of prominence, among the clausal participants. The trajector (relational figure) is the starting point with respect to this natural path. (FCG II, p. 308-09)⁶⁵

If all subjects do have something in common [and Langacker, along with many others, thinks that they do (Author's note)], it must be subjective in nature (i.e. a matter of construal rather than conceptual content). Since figure/ground organization is basic to cognition and important to the semantics of relational predications in general, it is natural to identify subjects as clause-level trajectors. A clausal subject is thus hypothesized to be the figure within the profiled relationship. (FCG II, p. 312)⁶⁶

This is the most explicit account we have yet seen of the cognitive basis of the notion 'grammatical subject' (and indeed of predicate), a cognitive basis which clearly underlies the other Linguistic accounts we have been discussing (albeit that they might not cast this cognitive basis quite in Langacker's terms). This schematic notion of the subject/trajector as the prominent figure/trajector is clearly a close, cognitive relation to (and indeed could be taken to underlie) the notions of 'most prominent argument' (GB, HPSG) and 'primary perspective in SoA' (FG) which we have seen above to be the general characterisation of the notion 'subject' in contemporary Linguistic theory. It is thus far from accurate to claim today that "the grammatical subject is only a syntactic phenomenon, lacking in cognitive significance altogether" (Junge, *Emphasis*, 68 quoting from an article by Chafe dating from 1976).

65 Notice that Langacker's treatment of trajectors as figures differs from Junge's discussion of 'theme' and figure in *Emphasis*, 4.3.2. Although there are interesting similarities, Langacker's account is cast in terms of general cognitive abilities and not in knowledge terms. It seems to me that Langacker's account is preferable here; cf. sections 3 and 4.

66 Langacker is deliberately being conservative here. See FCG I section 6.3.1 for a forceful and persuasive case for treating trajectors as figures.

As should be clear from the quotes above, the general schema covers the notion ‘subject’ in both verbal and non-verbal predications in a similar manner to the theories we have already discussed. Langacker, however, also offers a very persuasive account of the place of influences on ‘subject’ through the notion of ‘prototype’. The prototype for a clause – ‘the canonical event model’ (see FCG II, pp. 285-86) – is, of course, a transitive action predication (as a basic salient feature of everyday experience – people do things all around us!) and the prototypical subject is the traditional grammatical subject of such an active transitive clause, which typically is an agent/actor. As Langacker notes, however:

[...] a typical linguistic category is *complex*: it is not defined by any single unit, but comprises a constellation of units that may be quite diverse despite an overall family resemblance. Cognitive grammar conceives of such a category as a *network* [...] Usually clustered around a prototype, these units are linked by categorizing relationships of elaboration and extension [including very importantly ‘metaphor’ (Author’s note)], each unit and each relationship having some degree of cognitive salience (ease of activation). (FCG II pp. 2-3).

For Langacker, subject prominence follows a gradation as to how strongly the choice of subject/trajector is suggested by conceptual content in terms of general properties of prototype theory and thus allows an account for the variation in the properties of ‘subject’ across different constructions and lexical predicates, even to the extent that, as Junge notes, in non-verbal predications there is no actor/agent at all, whilst still being able to maintain a general and highly schematic notion of ‘subject’ as trajector. However, this is simply to say that such ‘subjects’ differ significantly from the prototype in a quite typical cognitive manner (and is in principle no different from the deviation from the prototype seen even in active transitive sentences such as ‘Line A intersects line B’).

For Langacker, the subject prototype is influenced by⁶⁷:

- a. the nature of semantic role = semantic role hierarchy (agent > patient etc.)
- b. location in empathy hierarchy (speaker > hearer > etc.)
- c. definiteness hierarchy (how much contact has been established with the expression)
- d. figure/ground: a matter of construal (related to basic event-structure of the predicate)

So, for Langacker the prototypical subject ranks highly with regard to: agentive, human, definite, + figure within the profiled relation. Clearly, this notion of the prominence of the subject in a clause over other dependents is in considerable accord with that discussed above in FG, GB and HPSG, albeit that it is constructed in more overtly cognitive terms; in particular the notions of semantic role hierarchy and the influence of the role of the lexical event-structure of the predicate is shared by all the frameworks we have discussed so far, the role of empathy and definiteness (issues of ‘topicality’) in FG at least – generative accounts tend to be agnostic about such matters. Before leaving CG, there is another issue which Langacker notes and which reintroduces a point which, to some degree, has been neglected since the discussion of FG – the relationship between ‘subject’

67 Such concerns reflect very closely the influences on the theme function discussed by Ritter. It seems to me that Ritter’s work is in considerable accord with CG. Perhaps this is not surprising since Ritter too disavows the particular ST version of the VSH. Cf. section 4.

and ‘topic’ (see FCG II, 7.3.1.3). Langacker notes that: ‘it is widely agreed that subject and topic are linked’. However, he concludes that subject is a clause-level construct whereas topic is a discourse phenomenon. The topic is the subjective reference point held over a stretch of discourse and from the examples he gives, he concludes: ‘a topic can in principle correspond to any facet of the clause’. However, in the prototypical state of affairs topic and subject will coincide, but this does not mean that we should consider the two to be the same. This is a position similar to that noted by Dik and I refer the reader to FCG II, 313 ff for discussion.

Finally, he notes Givón’s position that subjects are topics (cf. below) and sees a strong parallel between his concept of the prominence of the subject and Givón’s sense of subject as the ‘primary discourse topic’. He also points out some inconsistencies in Givón’s stance:

Finally, though Givón regards subjects as topics (1976), his statement that the “subject [...] tends to code [not that it invariably *does* code – Langacker] the most important, recurrent, continuous topic” (1984, p. 138) implies that the subject and the major discourse topic do not always coincide. His description of a subject and direct object as the “primary” and “secondary clausal topics” resonates with my own account in two respects: the term *clausal* topic suggests a lesser topic status that is perhaps equatable with the weaker “aboutness” relation; also the reference to “primary” and “secondary” topics recalls my schematic definition of subject as the most prominent clausal participant (in terms of figure/ground organization), and an object as the second-most prominent participant. (FCG II, p. 317)

On ‘aboutness’ and its relationship with Junge’s ‘theme’, see section 4.

2.6 Talmy Givón

Finally, with Talmy Givón⁶⁸, we seem to have arrived at a researcher with a position close to that of Junge. However, I think that it will be rapidly become clear that Givón’s position is, in fact, quite distinct from that of Junge and actually is more in accord with discussions above and leads to an analysis of a sentence such as *mk sdm.n=i -st* in accord with the one I am proposing: that is to say, it is clear that Givón’s system is quite compatible with, indeed directs us towards an analysis of example (1) as:

(18) *mk* [*S sdm.n_{pred} =i_{subj=1-topic} -st_{obj=2-topic}*]

Like a number of the other linguists discussed here, Givón is not terribly interested in predicates; rather his concern is with notions such as subject and topic. It is, however, clear that Givón understands predicate to mean something very close to the characterizations noted above in other linguist’s works, as the reader will be able to ascertain through the index reference ‘predicate’ in *Syntax*.

For Givón propositions are coded in syntax as sentences (p. 31). In particular:

In functional terms, simple sentences are responsible for conveying the bulk of propositional information in discourse. The information is about the nature of the

68 Here I draw from T. Givón, *Syntax: a functional typological approach*. 2 vols., Amsterdam 1984-90.

state/event ('what happened') or the types of argument/ participants ('who', 'to whom', 'how', 'when', 'where', 'with what', 'for whom', etc.). In our description of the types of simple clauses most commonly found in language, we will deal with both aspects at the same time. This is because the characterization of predicate types ('verb types') is made in terms of the "frame" of case-roles [=semantic-roles (Author's note)] that obligatorily participate in events/states coded by these predicates. And conversely, the characterization of the various semantic case-roles must be made in terms of the predicate-types with which they form propositions. We thus separate two formal aspects of the propositional-semantic meaning of sentences:

(a) The *propositional frame* ("semantic grid") giving the type of verb and type of case-roles of the participants; and

(b) The *actual lexical items* filling those type slots.

When the two are combined, we have the propositional meaning of a sentence. (p. 85-86)

Givón, rather irritatingly, is notoriously loose in his use of certain terms at certain points in *Syntax* (perhaps because he uses his sense of the prototypical example as his guide?). Thus, although he refers here to verbs, it is clear that he intends such a notion to cover non-verbal sentences as well in that, for example, he consistently refers to 'nominal predicates' in what Egyptologists would traditionally term 'a sentence with nominal predicate' (although whether he would see these as involving a deleted verb or not is less clear). To be fair to Givón, at this point in his text, he is concerned more with discussing the much richer typology of verb classes (which, as we have already noted, relates closely to the notion *Aktionsart*) as compared to that of non-verbal predicates.

Givón recognises two major components of grammar coded in syntax: propositional semantics and discourse pragmatics. The propositional semantics lead to the basic grammatical frame of the clause and discourse pragmatics gives it its actual manifestation in context. Now, of course, this shares a lot in common with Junge's position: we see the division between propositional semantics and discourse pragmatics which Junge invokes. However, when we look a little more deeply into Givón's account, it rapidly becomes clear that Junge's appropriation of linguistic theory in order to graft it onto a ST account of Middle Egyptian in fact leads Junge away from Givón's position.

It is clear, then, that the notion of a propositional frame (= predicate) is quite in accord with the essentially semantic characterization of predicate which we have seen in a number of linguistic works from a number of linguistic schools. Of course, as all linguists recognise (cf. section 4), Givón does recognise a close correlation between subject and predicate and old and new information:

Most commonly the *subject* ('main clausal topic') tends to be part of the old information, while the rest of the clause has a higher likelihood of being new information (p. 256)

However, for our purposes, the key words here are 'tends' and 'higher likelihood'. Givón also invokes what he terms the 'one-chunk-per-clause processing principle' (p. 258 (26)) which claims that:

"The majority of sentence/clauses in connected discourse will have only *one chunk* [...] under the scope of asserted new information. All other elements in the clause will tend to be topical, background or presupposed old information."

This leads Givón to recognise that a predicate (in the following case a verb) need not necessarily be part of new information (his numbering p. 259):

- (Givón's 27) a. Context: What did John see then?
 b. Reply: He saw *a dog* (object focus of new information)

NB: 'focused' does not mean 'stressed' here, simply that it is the 'core' of the new information (Author's note).

For present purposes, I am merely concerned with pointing out that Givón would analyse this sentence as having a verbal predicate ('saw') which is part of the old information of the sentence, I am not claiming here that this usage of 'given' and 'new' is that adopted by Junge (cf. section 4).

It is also clear that Givón does not consider the distribution of old and new information in sentences (in his sense) to be necessarily connected with the immediate constituency of sentences. Thus as example (22) on p. 257, he records the following:

Thus, in (22b) below, both the subject and DO are 'topics', while both verb and IO are asserted new information:

- (22) a. Context: What did they do next?
 b. Reply: He *invited her over to his house*.

Clearly the subject and the object do not form an immediate constituent, nor do the predicate and what Givón terms here the indirect object. For Givón, old and new information are dynamic functions of interpretation in co(n)text and do not necessarily form immediate constituents of the sentence.

We can now turn to the second major aspect of Givón's account – his discussion of subject and topic. Topicality, according to Givón, is concerned with topic maintenance, with topic continuity in discourse:

This is the system of tracking and identifying the *participants* in the story, the ones most likely to surface out as subjects and objects of clauses. We shall call it the system of *topic maintenance* or *topic continuity*. (p. 137)

At this point Givón notes that: 'potentially, all nominal arguments in propositions are topics in this sense. However, they rank on a scale according to their importance.' (p. 137)⁶⁹. Most importantly, Givón claims that there are two primary topical roles in the sentence – the primary topic and the secondary topic and that these equate with the traditional notions of subject and object respectively. Thus, for example:

Subjectivisation is the assignment, by whatever coding means available in the language, of the pragmatic case-role of the subject (or 'primary clausal topic' to one of the arguments/'semantic case-roles') in the clause. (p. 139)

In terms of the primary topic ('subject'), once again we see an interaction between propositional semantics and discourse pragmatics. Thus propositional semantics contributes

⁶⁹ Later, in volume 2, Givón defends a non-scalar account in terms of mental processing; but this does not concern the basic discussion of topic accessibility here.

towards ‘topic accessibility’ through the case-role hierarchy – the higher up the scale the more likely the participant will be the subject=primary topic (cf. p. 134 and 139-40):

AGT > DAT/BEN > PAT > LOC > INSTR > ?ASSOC > MAN

In terms of discourse pragmatics, many issues are relevant to topicality and concern issues we are now familiar with such as empathy and definiteness.

§ 3 *Predication and the syntax of the circumstantial sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)*

So, we have covered a number of positions within the linguistic fraternity exhibiting a very similar approach to subject and predicate. Primary predicates are ‘event words’ whose lexical head is the head of the head projection of the overall clause and lexically-selects a number of the dependents in the clause. Within these other dependents, there is a specially prominent dependent – the subject. This prominence may result from general cognitive processes (CG, Givón), through the requirement for a grammatical perspective of the clause (FG) or according to some more mechanistic concept of syntax (GB and HPSG) and reflects the influence of the semantic role hierarchy, the event-structure of the predicate and possibly more direct topicality issues such as definiteness and empathy. In the following, I shall adopt the terminology of CG, since this seems to allow a rather direct comparison with Junge’s account.

Now suppose we turn to constructions with *mk* and to my favoured example (1). Given the account of predication discussed in section 2 it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the NSST analysis of this construction is wholly consistent with, indeed strongly suggested by, this view of predication:

(19) *mk* [S *sdm.n*_{pred} =*i*_{subj} -*st*_{object}]

Here a simple event of perception is being profiled, organised around the lexical frame of the primary predicate *sdm.n* (notice that *sdm.n* lexically-selects the participants in the clause – in FG, as the ‘blueprint’ of the whole clause – and is not subordinate to any other grammatical predicate). *sdm.n* is a single word predicator, or alternatively, should one insist on a more traditional concept of predicate, of the discontinuous string *sdm.n ... -st*⁷⁰.

=*i* is clearly the subject. In terms of the subject schema it is the trajector/figure, or most prominent participant, of the event of hearing since in the unmarked case ‘hearing’ is cognitively organized around the ‘hearer-experiencer’; it also the grammatical perspective from which this clause is organised (the sentence does not read, for example, ‘it was taken note of by me’ with ‘it’ as trajector). Equally, in terms of the subject prototype, =*i* as subject is in accord with the influences we have seen on the subject prototype: it is higher on the thematic hierarchy than -*st* (the theme or undergoer of the hearing); it is also high in empathy (a good example of the tendency towards egocentric presentation of first person

70 Discontinuous in an approach without transformations that is. On the importance of the notion ‘discontinuous constituent’ in grammar, cf. G. Huck - A. Ojeda (eds.), *Syntax and semantics 20: discontinuous constituency*, San Diego 1987. Also, cf the HPSG account of VSO ordering in section 2.4 and Napoli’s GB account of predication in section 2.2.

involvement) and high in definiteness (the referent of =i is clearly known to the addressee); finally, as already noted it is the most prominent argument in the unmarked argument structure of ‘hearing’ in terms of the figure/ground organization of ‘hearing’. It is the most prominent participant in the clause and thus is the prime candidate for being considered the subject (or for Givón the primary topic = subject⁷¹) in all the theories considered above (see below for arguments against a \emptyset subject coindexed with =i). -st is the object (or for Givón the secondary-topic). This analysis should not be surprising, since everything we have seen in contemporary linguistic theory directs us to seeing such a distribution of grammatical relations in an ordinary active transitive clause (here with a verb of perception). Of course, it was up to the speaker to *choose* whether to use the experiencer or the theme as subject, but if the latter had been chosen, a more marked construction (such as a passive clause) would have been required.

Such an analysis of event-structure would seem to be equally applicable to the example of the sentence with adverbial predicate which we have been using:

(20) *mtn* [S [*šps.wt*]_{subj} [*hr*]_{pred} [*šdw*]_{p-obj}]]_{pred phrase}

Here a locational predication is profiled, a predication organised around the lexical template of predicative *hr*, with two dependent role players (*šps.wt* and *šdw*). Of these, *šps.wt* is the more prominent as the ‘trajector’ or ‘primary perspective’ – the spatial distribution of the ladies and the raft is construed with the ‘ladies’ being located (as trajector) in relation to the ‘rafts’ (as landmark) and not vice versa (and hence the sentence means ‘ladies are on rafts’ and not the rather odd, cognitively more marked ‘rafts are under ladies’). Of course, there may well be no inference of agency or causality here and so the subject differs considerably from the prototype – but the fact that predicative prepositions do not exhibit the fine event-structure (‘Aktionsart’) associated with verbs, particularly in terms of agency and causality, and hence do not assign the fine grained range of semantic roles to their subjects (surely simply a consequence of the human perception and conception of events) in no way alters the utility of the basic conception of event-structure and predication, and trajector/prominence and ‘grammatical subject’.

In both examples, we have our attention drawn to the following sentence by the initial particle *mk*. In all the theories considered here, *mk* would be treated as an ‘extra clausal constituent’ (ECC), (to use the FG term, cf. Dik, op. cit. 264-65). This notion is effectively equivalent to the uncontroversial notion that *mk* is an ‘unbound particle’.

Why is it that all these theories point to the predicative use of the circumstantial *sdm.n* in such a construction? From the NSST perspective the answer is clear: because *sdm.n*, as

71 It is, thus, not terribly important to the NSST view whether the notion ‘subject’ can be collapsed with that of ‘primary topic’. However, it would seem, as Langacker, notes that there is some incoherence here (cf. Givón’s rather vague pronouncements on pp. 187, 911 and 914 of *Syntax*) and that we do need a term to refer to what is traditionally termed the ‘subject’. I do not wish to discuss this in any detail since it is not clear at all how Givón would respond to this point. However, it is certainly the case that a more traditional notion of subject associated with a notion of topic through a prototype account such as Langacker’s does seem to solve these incoherences rather readily.

a verbal verb-form not subordinate to any other expression, heads a (non-initial) main clause after *mk* (composed of *sdm.n* + its dependents) and so the string *sdm.n=i -st* is to be treated in just the way one would any main active transitive clause in any language, particularly VSO languages. There is thus no place for the verb subjugation hypothesis.

In contrast, however, it is at best unclear, from the perspective of the account of predication in these linguistic theories, how one could motivate the extra level of predication between the deleted nominal subject (coindexed with the verbal subject) and the entire verbal expression as the adverbial predicate as required by the ST analysis of *mk* + circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* repeated here:

(21) *mk* [S [\emptyset]_{noun subject} [*sdm.n=i -st*]_{adverbial pred}]

Since we have seen that an account with *=i* as subject and *sdm.n* as predicate is strongly suggested from the perspective of predication, we might ask just why this extra level of structure is required in the ST account. The answer, of course, is that the relationship between predication and the verb subjugation hypothesis standardly posited for a construction such as *mk* + circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* in the ST is a feature purely internal to the ST based on its particular brand of paradigmatic substitution.

This then brings us back to Junge and his defence of the verb subjugation hypothesis. Let me repeat the salient section of Junge's account:

Now some of the lower-level units of meaning are verbs, and the semantic structure of a verb calls for complements [...] And actor/agent, object and "necessary" adverbials are on the same footing towards this verbal "kernel", there is nothing that privileges the actor/agent role to the "honours" of higher level propositional structure that is announced by the term "grammatical subject". Of course, in numerous cases the status of "logical subject" is given to the actor/agent role [...] but this is deliberate choice by the speaker and not due to their "subjectivity" (or else, "topicality"). (p. 42-43)

Junge, then, invokes a strict separation of verbal relations from the notion 'subject' (other than by speaker choice or grammatical rule), a separation which is vital for his defence of the verb subjugation hypothesis and the ST account of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)*. However, in the light of the linguistic discussion above, it should now be clear that Junge's account is flawed *precisely because* he is attempting to divorce expressions holding verbal semantic roles from any connection with 'grammatical subject' other than by speaker choice or by grammatical rule⁷². Such a simple taxonomy will not suffice for Middle Egyptian. In CG terms, actor/agents *are* privileged in relation to the notion *prototypical* 'subject' in Middle Egyptian (indeed 'actor/agent' constitutes part of this very prototypical characterisation) and this has an irreducible cognitive dimension⁷³. However, such

72 More broadly by trying to force too strict a divorce between subject-predicate relations and lexical relations. In event-structure, the two interact grammatically and cognitively and such interaction is indeed relevant at the level of the sentence.

73 Languages differ as to the precise characterization of the prototype of 'subject' in that language and as to the varying relevance of the semantic role hierarchy, definiteness and the like for 'subject'. However, it is abundantly clear that Middle Egyptian is not particularly unusual in this respect. That the notion "actor/agent" is important in the prototype of 'subject' in Middle Egyptian is demonstrated by the

a prototypical correlation in no way means that actor/agents *must* be subjects or that they *must* occur in a sentence for that sentence to have a subject in this sense, since in CG terms the ‘subject’ is to be characterised in terms of the trajector schema applicable to sentences without actor/agents, verbs, or agreement. Notice that such a notion (like prominence in the other theories discussed), which has nothing inherently to do with actor/ agents, verbs or agreement, when related to prototype theory offers an account of the strong correlation between ‘actor/agents’ and verbal subjects in ordinary active transitive clauses in Middle Egyptian which Junge acknowledges (*Emphasis*, 42-43) but which seems to slip away in his account between his notions of speaker choice and grammatical rule⁷⁴.

It should be clear by now that it is the extra level of structure required by the ST analysis and the verb subjugation hypothesis which requires a satisfactory defence. This then returns us to the question of the methodology of the ST analysis of the adverbial nature of the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)* which is responsible for the verb subjugation hypothesis. We can thus legitimately ask whether the evidence supports invoking such an extra level of structure which is not immediately required by issues concerned with predication.

In the ST, the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)* are analysed as adverbial verb-forms on the basis of paradigmatic substitution with simple adverbials such as prepositional phrases. Let us, then, go over the substitutional case once more⁷⁵. Since the verb subjugation hypothesis is internal to the ST, it surely must be the case that it should be coherent within the terms of the ST methodology. If this is not the case, then we might wonder whether there isn’t in fact something terribly wrong here and begin to be sceptical of the entire methodo-

perfectly regular active-passive opposition exhibited in Middle Egyptian, the typical correlation between agency, causality and ‘subject’ in ‘control’ and the strong correlation between actor/agent and subject in ordinary active transitive clauses (a correlation which can be seen to be even stronger once we recognise that *=f/NP* is the subject in constructions such as *iw sḏm.n=f/NP* and *‘h’.n sḏm.n=f/NP*, with *iw* and *‘h’.n* as grounding auxiliaries; cf. my paper in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, section 4. It would seem from the linguistics literature that these correlations involving actor/agents are by no means mandatory in human languages.

In this way, Junge’s invocation of “‘Standard-Average-European’ typology’ (*Emphasis*, 67) is more of a rhetorical move than anything. Middle Egyptian differs from these languages in that it does not exhibit case, has a restricted agreement system and uses non-verbal predications abundantly. However, this is far from sufficient to deny the status of ‘grammatical subject’ in Middle Egyptian as we have seen; nor is it sufficient to deny the importance of ‘actor/agent’ in the subject prototype.

Equally, I am not here concerned with the ‘universality’ of subject (see FCG II, 7.3.1.4 and chapter 9), since both Junge and I accept that some notion of ‘subject’ is needed for the description of Middle Egyptian. As far as I can see, Middle Egyptian shares little in common with those languages which really present a challenge to the universality of ‘subject’ (such as Tagalog, where one need look no further than a standard transitive clause for a challenge to ‘subject’ – see FCG II, 318-20).

74 Similarly, the notion of ‘grammatical subject’ does not ‘completely fall apart’ in dealing with action nominalization, as Junge claims (*Emphasis*, 68). In the account presented here, there is nothing wrong at all with the notion that the actor can be the ‘grammatical subject’ in a subordinate clause and that the whole clause can be the grammatical subject (and indeed “logical subject”-theme) to another predicate. Nor is such a notion of a ‘grammatical subject’ in a subordinate clause ‘only another term for actor/agent’, as the discussion in this paper should have made clear.

75 I have already discussed this matter in *JEA* 76 (1990), 77-80 and in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 26-29.

logy which has got us into this predicament. Thus we might, finally, feel the urge to turn away from endless attempts to salvage a rather tired and unsatisfactory theory.

Indeed, as I have argued before, the substitutional argument for the adverbial nature of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ is not terribly convincing in the case of the construction mk + circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$. Before I go over this again briefly, there is a rather general point which seems to have gone unnoticed, but which, despite its rather obvious polemical status, is not without some relevance. Over the last decade, there has been, of course, quite a rush to bring Linguistic concepts and methodology into the Egyptological study of the syntax of the verb in Middle Egyptian both to defend and to extend the ST point of view, founded on the notion of paradigmatic substitution based on non-verbal parts of speech. In such work, one will find an abundance of references to such issues as ‘theme-rheme’, ‘topic-focus’ and the like. However, one looks in vain for the Linguistic references supporting the basic underlying notion of paradigmatic substitution. There is one simple reason for this: *there is no mainstream linguistic theory today which invokes the particular ST notion of paradigmatic substitution (based on non-verbal parts of speech) as part of the architecture of that theory.*

The significance of this, it seems to me, is that the proper engagement with Linguistic theory, then, is not one where Linguistic concepts are simply added onto the basic ST view of Middle Egyptian, but one in which we recognise that contemporary Linguistic theory in fact presents a *fundamental challenge* to the entire underlying substitutional methodology on which the ST is based. It is clear, at least to me, that rather than being a base to which Linguistic concepts can be added, the ST view based on paradigmatic substitution with non-verbal parts of speech is in fact often *the barrier* to applying Linguistic concepts and methodology to Middle Egyptian in a revealing manner.

Anyway, enough of polemic. The problem for an ST account of mk + circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ is to motivate the purported necessary adverbial syntactic behaviour of this expression. This is all the more important in the case of this construction since, as we have seen, there seems to be good reason to challenge the verb subjugation hypothesis here (reducing, as it does, the verbal expression to some species of adverbial expression and thus removing the relations between the verb and its immediate dependents from participating at sentence/clause level primary predication). Since the ST view is founded on a substitutional account of this purported adverbial nature, through the ability of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ to occur in certain usages where simple adverbials such as prepositional phrases are too be found, it is far from unreasonable to expect STers to produce such an account in this case.

As we have seen the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ can occur after mk :

- (22) pBerlin 10016, 2A mk $s\dot{d}m.n=i$ -st
 “Look, I have taken note of it.”

However, in substitutional terms, we cannot simply analyse the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ as adverbial expressions on the basis of paradigmatic substitution as it stands, since simple adverbials do not seem to be found after mk in Middle Egyptian in a complete

pattern involving predication (unless taken as an example exhibiting pronoun omission or ellipse – hardly a sound basis for the ST substitutional method):

(23) **mk m pr*

Furthermore, it does not seem that true adverbial clauses (i.e. clause patterns clearly restricted to adverbial usage) are to be found after *mk* (unless fronted before some following main clause pattern):

(24) **mk hr-ntt sr m pr*

As Zeidler points out⁷⁶, there may well be cognitively orientated reasons for this: people tend to point out or draw attention to ‘facts’ (or propositions) or ‘things’. This is reflected, of course, in the well known property that *mk* either occurs before a complete sentence, the grammatical instantiation of ‘fact’/proposition or a noun phrase, the grammatical instantiation of ‘things’⁷⁷. The interesting case for us, of course, is the case of *mk* + complete sentence. Clear examples of this are provided by patterns such as the following:

(25) Sh.S 159-60: *mk hrt.i -pw im.k*
 “See, it is my due from you.”

The sentence with nominal predicate along with other patterns such as the sentence with adjectival predicate, the participial statement, second tenses and the like which occur after *mk* are uncontroversially understood to be ‘complete sentences’.

There seems little reason, then, to deny this status to the sentence with adverbial predicate after *mk*:

(26) Sin B263 *mk -wi m-b3h.k*
 “See, I am before you.”

Such a view is accepted, for example, by Junge (*Emphasis*, 11). Yet such a status is denied the pattern headed by the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ in the ST! Once again a critic of the ST might ask for positive evidence why this should be the case.

Clearly, then, there is a problem with the substitutional account of the adverbial nature of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ in the ST constructed on the basis of the actual appearance of the internal grammar of the construction with *mk*. There is at least a *prima facie* case that, since *mk* draws attention to propositions instantiated as complete sentences (complete in terms of predication that is, not necessarily in terms of being self-standing as initial main clauses⁷⁸), the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ + dependents, at least in this

⁷⁶ *Untersuchungen zum Pfortenbuch*, 204.

⁷⁷ *mk* + noun is not, of course, an example of a primary predication. Nor should such a pattern be taken as the basis for a substitutional analysis of *mk* + complete sentence. The ability of complete sentences and nouns to occur after *mk* does not depend on some substitutional relationship between the two, but, as Zeidler notes, on the cognitive properties associated with drawing attention.

⁷⁸ It seems to me that there has been a deep confusion in the ST attempt to correlate the non-initial behaviour of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ in certain usages with adverbiality or incomplete predication.

usage, constitute a complete predication, a grammatical instantiation of a proposition. This would seem readily to be in accord with the Linguistic accounts of predication discussed above (and, I claim, can be extended successfully to other usages of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$).

To salvage the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ and thus the verb subjugation hypothesis in so far as it applies to the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$, the apparent grammar of the construction *mk* + circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ must be altered. The most obvious alteration is that noted at the beginning of this paper – the invocation of a \emptyset nominal subject/theme to which the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ can behave as the adverbial rheme/predicate:

(27) *mk* [S [\emptyset]_{noun subject} [$s\dot{d}m.n=i$ -*st*]_{adverbial pred}]

Of course, a holder of the NSST view is perfectly justified in asking just what independent motivation, if any, there is for this move above and beyond a mere circular attempt to prop up this self-same adverbial analysis of the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ and the verb subjugation hypothesis.

There are two likely versions of the omitted nominal analysis. The first is that this omitted nominal is actually an omitted auxiliary. I have been critical of such an account before and so I shall not repeat this again in detail⁷⁹. Such an account is in danger of being circular (invoking on the basis of the adverbial analysis an otherwise unmotivated deleted auxiliary to salvage this very same adverbial analysis) and falters on the point of just why this auxiliary – so important in raising the circumstantial $s\dot{d}m(=f)/s\dot{d}m.n(=f)$ to the appropriate status to appear after *mk* and in the ST account of predication in this construction – is mandatorily omitted. Given the easy success of the NSST view in describing the grammar of this construction without invoking such an omitted element and given the ready correlation between the NSST analysis and the widely-held view of predication within Linguistics, the burden of argument surely lies with a proponent of the ST view with omitted auxiliary, not with the holder of the NSST view.

The second omitted nominal analysis is one with an omitted pronominal, presumably coindexed with the suffix pronoun or nominal subject of the verb:

(28) *mk* \emptyset_{pro_i} $s\dot{d}m.n=i_i$ -*st*

In this case a proponent of the NSST view is surely justified in asking whether such an invocation of a deleted pronoun matches the grammatical conditions exhibited by the distribution of omitted pronouns elsewhere in Middle Egyptian. I have attempted elsewhere to describe pronoun omission in Middle Egyptian through the twin notions of omission under agreement and omission under relevance⁸⁰, notions casting long understood properties of pronoun omission in Middle Egyptian in terms derived from the Linguistics literature. On the basis of these notions (indeed on the basis of the more informal account in Gardiner's

⁷⁹ Cf. my review of Schenkel's introductory grammar in *DE* 16 (1990), 87.

⁸⁰ Collier, *JEA* 77 (1991), 35ff. and id., *DE* 18 (1990), 87-89. In terms of licensing, these two notions collapse together.

Grammar), it is clear that an invocation of an omitted pronominal here in an ST account does not meet these criteria.

Thus, there is clearly no case for omission under agreement here since the pronoun is not governed by a morphological agreement carrier agreeing with this pronoun.

Omission under relevance is, of course, possible. However, for this account to work we would need a relevance-based account of just why this pronoun is *always* omitted with the circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)*⁸¹. This is surely all the more problematic given that this omitted pronoun would presumably be the logical subject for Junge in this construction (if we were to analyse this as some species of simple logical subject-logical predicate pattern along the lines of Junge's analysis of noun + *sdm(=f)*). Since it holds such an important sentence level grammatical relation, is it not odd that this pronoun is mandatorily omitted? Surely, we require some principled account of why this should be, an account independent of the very verb subjugation hypothesis it is has been invoked to defend. This would be even more problematic were we to attempt to analyse this omitted pronominal as some form of frontal extraposition (cf the discussion in *Emphasis*, chapter 5). Given the important pragmatic effects described by Junge in that chapter, would it not be odd for an omitted pronominal to be asked to perform such valuable pragmatic tasks (and would this not conflict with the principles of omission under relevance)?

It is thus far from clear in both cases whether there is indeed independent motivation for these face-saving devices for the verb subjugation hypothesis and the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* after *mk*.

Zeidler has offered a third account (one drawing on remarks by Schenkel):

Aber selbst wenn der Konstruktion ursprünglich eine verbale Transposition zugrunde gelegen haben mag, bedeutet das nicht, daß nicht in späterer Zeit (spätestens MR) die obsolet gewordene verbalen durch geläufige adverbiale Verbalformen ersetzt worden sein können. Die Satztempora mit einleitenden Situativen sind sicherlich nicht mehr "analytisch" verstanden, sondern als ein "Komplex" (Makrostruktur) behandelt worden, wie etwa *jw jrj=f* als "Aorist" auf demselben Niveau wie *jrj=f* als "historisches Perfekt".

Für die Konstruktion der Präsentation von Handlungen (Vorgängen) gibt es, der Struktur des ag. Tempussytem entsprechend, zwei Möglichkeiten: Die Verwendung von (einfachen) AUSDRUCKStempora und die von (komplexen) SATZtempora. Innerhalb des Systems der Ausdruckstempora stehen nach dem Polotskyschen System die jeweiligen adverbialen Tranpositionen zur Verfügung, also z.B. *prj=j* für (subst.) *prrr=j*. Innerhalb des Systems der Satztempora können nur ganze Sätze hypotaktisch konstruiert werden, also z.B. *#jw=j hr sdm* nur als ... =*j/wj hr sdm* (= Colliers "NINT"), nicht aber als *... *hr sdm*, dem der Agensausdruck fehlt. Nur bie Satztempora (und anderen vollständigen Sätzen) könnte man von der "unbound nature of the particle [*mk*]" sprechen (Johnson 1984: 85).

Beide Bildungsweisen sind semantisch gleichwertig. Aus den verschiedenen syntaktischen Strukturen ergibt sich allerdings eine gewisse Asymmetrie, die der Autor zum Ausgangspunkt seiner schematisch vorgeführten Substitutionsanalyse nimmt. Aus dem glei-

81 Similarly, with the circumstantial *sdm(=f)* once we recognise that noun + *sdm(=f)* is a more complex pattern which does not license an analysis *mk ø sdm(=f)* for the simple *sdm(=f)* construction after *mk*. Cf. Collier, in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 37ff.

chen Grund ist auch die Einführung eines \emptyset -Subjekts (1990:78 Anm. 26) vor der adverbialen Form unnötig. (p. 205)

This account relies on the Schenkelian notions of “Komplex” constructions and “Satztempora” and “Ausdruckstempora”, which it would clearly take us beyond the bounds of this already lengthy paper to discuss in detail. However, it is clear that Zeidler’s account rests on the assertion that the ‘Satztempora’ with introductory ‘Situatives’ are no longer understood ‘analytically’, a situation claimed to be analogous to *iw ir=f* (and hence, presumably, *iw=f ir=f*). He requires such a notion because, if *mk* draws attention to ‘facts’ (i.e. some semantic notion such as propositions), as he claims, then it would indeed seem that there is a *prima facie* case that the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* can head the linguistic representation of such ‘facts’/propositions. However, this would clearly conflict with their purported ‘adverbial’ nature (for Zeidler, adverbials do not denote facts/propositions). He gets around this by claiming that *mk* + *s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* might have originally contained a ‘verbal transposition’, but that this was later replaced by the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* (an adverbial transposition of the verb), because the original verbal ‘transposition’ had become ‘obsolete’ – a change which, Zeidler claims, had no effect on the internal grammar of the construction because it was now “sicherlich nicht mehr ‘analytisch’ verstanden”. For a proponent of the NSST this analysis comes across as a rather unsatisfactory, indeed rather contorted, attempt to preserve the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* and the verb subjugation hypothesis by stating that the purported ‘adverbial’ nature of the form is not relevant to the grammar of the construction.

As far as I can see, this analysis could only be sustained if we could find principled accounts of the two central elements of this analysis: the adverbial nature of the morphological form of the verb which we identify as the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)*; and a principled defence of the ‘non-analyticity’ of the construction *mk* + *s \underline{d} m.n(=f)*. But of course, there is nothing inherent in the morphology of the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* which makes them syntactically ‘adverbial’ (their morphology simply tells us what morphological shapes these verb-forms take!)⁸²; the determination of the syntactic properties of the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* is a matter of the syntactic analysis of the distribution of these forms. Zeidler thus presumably accepts a Polotskian substitutional account of the basic adverbial nature of these forms (perhaps based on constructions such as ‘someone found someone doing something’⁸³). Yet he is not prepared to allow the syntactic status of the circumstantial *s \underline{d} m(=f)/s \underline{d} m.n(=f)* be so defended in the construction with *mk*.

82 Unless one accepts the mandatory presence of some largely unwritten extra affix such as Kammerzell’s ‘adverbial transpositor’ – see “Norm, Relikt oder Fiktion? Zweifel an der Existenz einer morphologisch-syntaktischen Kategorie ‘indikativ-perfektisches *s \underline{d} m=f* im Mäg.’” *GM* 102 (1988), 41-58. As yet this idea has only been presented in preliminary form. For an alternative account, see my remarks in *JEA* 77 (1991), 37-38 with fn. 66.

83 For a critique of the ST analysis in the very environments in which it was first conceived, see Collier, in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 48-49 and my paper ‘Pro-Verb’ delivered at the Sixth International Congress of Egyptology and to be published in the proceedings.

On the notion ‘not understood analytically’, consider *iw=f sdm=f* in Middle Egyptian. It would seem that this concept is invoked because aspects of the meaning (here, for example, the tense/aspect) of the construction are not formed by a summation of the properties of its parts; rather there is a holistic, simpler meaning of the whole. Well, one might agree with this (then again one might not), but it is far from clear that this somehow renders this construction to be ‘not understood analytically’. Compare G. Lakoff, *Women, fire, and dangerous things* (Chicago 1987), especially pp. 489-91 for the concept of *Gestalt* effects in grammatical constructions. A *Gestalt* effect, for Lakoff, is indeed the very occurrence where the meaning of a whole is simpler than the sum of its parts. As Lakoff makes clear in his cognitively-based account, however, this in no way affects the ability to analyse just what those parts are and for them to play fully fledged grammatical roles in the sentence. Thus the purported ‘aorist’ tense of the *iw=f sdm=f* construction in Middle Egyptian, for example, in no way precludes us from recognising (or from it being ‘understood’ in Middle Egyptian) that the construction is composed of *iw*, a preverbal noun or pronoun, and the circumstantial *sdm(=f)*, and from recognising that these components play a fully fledged grammatical role in the internal grammar of this construction (as they clearly do). It is extremely difficult to sustain this notion of ‘not understood analytically’ in the face of other constructions such as *mk -sw sdm(=f)* (indicating the ‘analycity’ of *iw* in *iw=f sdm=f*), *iw sdm(=f)* (indicating the analycity of the preverbal nominal) and the apparently unlimited ability for morphologically productive verbs to be inserted in this construction in the circumstantial *sdm(=f)* form (showing the analycity of the circumstantial *sdm(=f)* element in this construction). Clearly, this ‘analycity’ is quite unaffected by whether or not *iw=f* is taken to procliticise onto the following verb or not (morphological units comprising more than one syntactically relevant unit are still analysable into these parts). In short, with Lakoff, the *gestalt* effect of the purported ‘aorist’ tense of the *iw=f sdm=f* construction (or its Komplex/Makrostruktur) does not free us from having to provide an account of the internal grammar of this construction.

To return to *mk + circumstantial sdm.n(=f)*. It might be the case that this construction is some form of ‘Satztempora’, but is far from clear why such a *Gestalt* effect should free Zeidler from having to provide a principled account of the internal grammar of this construction⁸⁴. Indeed, if Lakoff is correct (as he surely is), then exactly the opposite is the case: *Zeidler is still committed to producing an account of the internal grammar of the construction and thus of the purported adverbial nature of the circumstantial sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)*. Once again, the ability for a wide range of verbs productively to adopt the circumstantial *sdm.n(=f)* in this construction (rather than the verb appearing as an infinitive after a fixed unanalysable *mk-ir.n=f* or whatever) makes it abundantly clear that this construction is not unanalysable: it is composed of *mk* (whether proclitic or not) + circum-

84 In fact it not clear to me that the tense/aspect properties of *mk + sdm.n(=f)* do, in fact, exhibit *Gestalt* effects not attributable to standard contextual inferences according to relevance following from the collocation of *mk* and the following construction.

stantial *sdm.n* + its subject + any other dependents and we require a coherent account of the internal grammar of this construction.

This is especially so in terms of predication. Zeidler is silent on his analysis of predication in this construction (he is content with merely being dismissive of mine). Does he think that this too is ‘not understood analytically’ or is somehow a property of the complex verbal sentence (and if so, what is the predicate? – as we have seen there is a strong case for analysing *sdm.n* as the predicate here)? It is surely up to him to provide some defence of this, or to supply some alternative analysis of predication, especially since the NSST analysis has such a clear correlation with the widely-held view of predication in contemporary Linguistic theory.

§ 4 *Theme, subject and the construction mk + circumstantial sdm.n(=f)*

What, then, finally of issues such as theme and rheme, given and new and topicality? Let us turn to our example 1 in context – In his letter Horemsaf has noted that the *w3g*-festival will take place on day 17 of the second month of *smw* and he requests that a long-horned bull be delivered as a contribution for this festival. In a reply, the following is noted by (or on behalf of) the recipient –:

(29) pBerlin 10016, 2A: *mk sdm.n=i -st*

“Look, I have taken note of it (lit. ‘I have heard it’).”

As we have seen, the Junge of *Emphasis* would presumably, given his stance on the verb subjugation hypothesis and his claim that ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ are immediate constituents of the sentence, suggest that following analysis:

(30) *mk* [\emptyset]_{THEME} [*sdm.n=i -st*]_{RHEME}

It would clearly take a paper the length of this one to discuss the issue of ‘theme-rheme’ and immediate constituency in detail, not least to disentangle the notions of ‘immediate’ in the sense of domination (i.e. the primary parts or divisions of a sentence) and ‘immediate’ in the sense of continuous versus discontinuous strings standard in the linguistic conceptions of immediate constituency. However, I hope to have indicated on a number of occasions that there are grounds for being suspicious of any structural definition of ‘theme and ‘rheme’ as immediate constituents of the sentence, at least in the strong form implied in Junge’s account as immediate continuous constituents in particular structural positions assigned by the underlying ST analysis and, in particular, the verb subjugation hypothesis. Once again, I think that this conflation can be traced to Junge’s attempt to utilise the notions of ‘theme-rheme’ in order to support his underlying ST position. Given the other problems I have identified with the verb subjugation hypothesis in this paper and elsewhere, such a position seems, once again, to be inspired by the ST view of grammar and thus to fall foul of the criticisms discussed here.

However, if we look at such an account of given and new/theme and rheme from the NSST point of view, then *=i* is surely the ‘thing talked about’, the ‘given starting point of the discourse’ to which *sdm.n ... -st* is added as the ‘assertion’ or ‘added knowledge’ about

=*i* (as a discontinuous rheme, cf. the discussion above and fn. 30). In terms of ‘given’ and ‘new’ this analysis seems perfectly acceptable (on the contextual givenness of *-st*, see below). However, treating ‘theme-rheme’ in this sense would clearly require dropping Junge’s particular structural and immediate constituency account of ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ as well dropping the ST invocation of the verb subjugation hypothesis, as indeed I have already suggested should be done in any case. Given the discussion in this paper and the problems with the ST account, the NSST account of theme-rheme relations in this sentence seems somewhat preferable, even with this brief discussion, highlighting as it does the correlation between experiencer, subject, and theme in a typical ordinary unmarked active transitive clause with a verb of perception. Once again, everything we have seen from our discussion of Linguistic theory should in fact suggest that this is very much what we should in fact expect in such a simple example of an active transitive main clause.

There is one final point to be made about ‘given’ and ‘new’. There are at least two ways at looking at these notions. As well as the account just presented, ‘given’ and ‘new’ can be treated in terms of topicality with Givón as discussed in section 2.6 above. From this perspective, it is clear that his analysis of primary and secondary topics must be correct – both =*i* and *-st* are clearly given topics in the discourse (= *i* as the situationally-given ‘speaker/writer’ – whether directly or by quote – and *-st* as contextually given), with =*i* presented as being more prominent (and hence as the 1-topic) than *-st* (as 2-topic).

These two approaches look at ‘given’ and ‘new’ in two rather different ways, although it is not clear that this renders them incompatible (other than terminologically that is) – merely that we should be aware of this difference. It is, alas, widely recognised that the issues concerned with such notions are very confused in the literature, because of the lack of anything like precise characterisations of just what these notions are meant to mean, especially in terms of issues such as ‘known and unknown’, ‘old and new’ and the distinctions between ‘speaker’ presentation and ‘hearer’ knowledge (cf. Langacker, FCG II, p. 313 for a typical example of the exasperation of most non-committed linguists on this issue).

It seems to me that Junge makes contradictory remarks on these issues of ‘given’ and ‘new’ particularly in terms of the ‘shared knowledge’ between ‘speaker’ and ‘hearer’ and the connection between this and the notion ‘subject’, or else I have misunderstood something of his account. Thus in his discussion on pp. 44-45 and p. 62 of *Emphasis* he seems to equate ‘rheme’ with the new information to the addressee added by a response in a Q/A pair. Similarly in the passage on p. 44 he seems overtly to equate ‘subject/theme’ with part of the “addressee’s knowledge”. If this is so, then there seems to be little likelihood of collapsing the two notions ‘subject-predicate’ and ‘theme-rheme’ together. Consider the following question/answer pairs:

- (31a) Who saw a play yesterday? (32a) What did John do yesterday?
 (31b) JOHN saw a play yesterday. (32b) John saw a play yesterday.

In (31b) and (32b), it is uncontroversial in the theories discussed here that 'John' is the grammatical subject in both responses⁸⁵. If 'theme' is related to givenness to the 'hearer' and 'rheme' to newness to the 'hearer' (at least as assumed by the 'speaker'), then clearly 'John' will be the theme in 32b), but not in (31b) – in (31b) 'John' should be the rheme by this account (the sentence is 'about' seeing the play and the added new information is 'John'⁸⁶). Clearly, such an account would not collapse 'subject-predicate' and 'theme-rheme' together, although we would expect typical correlations.

Yet elsewhere in *Emphasis*, Junge seems to me to come close to adopting a different position. For example on pp 44 and 43, he refers to 'given' in the sense of what the speaker calls to mind as the 'starting point of the discourse' (although not necessarily in the sense of initiality in word order), what he is 'talking about', about which new knowledge is added (as rheme) – the speaker's presentation of the utterance. In this sense of 'given', it seems to me that both 31b) and 32b) can be taken to be 'about' 'John' – the speaker is 'talking about' 'John' (albeit that in 31b 'John' at the same time also supplies unknown information to the 'hearer') and adds new information about 'John' that the 'hearer' did not know (that the contextually known rheme holds of 'John'), or better 'asserts' this predicate of 'John'⁸⁷; in both 'John' is called to mind by the speaker and used as the 'starting point' of the response in terms of organising the presentation of that response. Clearly, a rather different sense of 'given' and 'about' is involved here.

However, Junge seems to be of the opinion that a unitary account can be provided, one which privileges the first sense of 'given' and 'new' (cf. his assertion that the 'speaker' is constrained to choose as 'theme' something which is part of the 'addressee's knowledge', *Emphasis*, p. 44). It seems that this issue is intimately connected with Junge's attempt to collapse 'subject-predicate' and 'theme-rheme' together in terms of an informational account as 'given-new', cf. *Emphasis*, pp. 18-20 and 44-46. However, it is not at all clear to me that Junge's account suffices to rescue him from the ambiguity noted here. He seems to claim that 'John saw a play yesterday' (his E11a) and 'JOHN saw a play yesterday' (his E11c) should be treated as radically different sentences:

Although superficially alike, examples (E11)a and (E11)c are two different sentences; their formal similarity is of no informational/logical or analytic importance. (*Emphasis*, p. 45)

It seems to me that Junge has fallen foul once more of an overly strict bifurcation. Although these two sentences certainly are not absolutely synonymous, their formal similarity is indeed of importance and is anything but superficial. From the account in this paper, it should be clear that both sentences share a similar event-structure with 'John/JOHN' as trajector (subject), 'saw' as predicate and 'a play' as landmark (object). I can see no reason

85 See fn. 88 for a defence of this position.

86 Cf. Junge, *Emphasis*, 62:

the focus "says" something "about" the non-focal part ... Thus, it is a "logical predicate" after all.

87 Cf. Junge's claim that 'new' 'does not necessarily imply factually new information; the newness may lie in the speech function' (*Emphasis*, 19).

why this event-structure should be somehow erased or somehow become unimportant or superficial just because 'JOHN' is stressed in Junge's E11c (albeit that important other effects *are* brought about by such stressing)⁸⁸.

What this shows us, I think, is that the issues concerning such matters as 'given' and 'new', 'aboutness' and their relation to notions such as 'subject' and 'theme' are rather complex and subtle and that it is far from clear, in fact, that they can be collapsed into the single account offered by Junge.

As a final point, notice that in the second account of 'given' and 'aboutness', there must be the suspicion that whatever would be the 'grammatical subject' (in the sense discussed here) would also be the 'theme' in a sentence, at least in relatively simple constructions (although this may turn out to be merely a typical correlation – I remain agnostic on

88 That this is so is indicated by the fact that 'John/JOHN' in such examples seem to have a lot in common grammatically. For example, 'John' remains the controller of the subordinate non-finite form in the following example regardless of whether 'John' is stressed or not:

FN(6a) John_i saw a play/Bill_j yesterday before leaving_i for Paris.

FN(6b) JOHN_i saw a play/Bill_j yesterday before leaving_i for Paris.

contrast:

FN(7) Bill_j was seen yesterday by John/JOHN_i before leaving_j for Paris'

In this construction 'Bill' does the leaving regardless of whether 'John' is stressed or not. Notice that the simpler sentences 'JOHN saw Bill yesterday' and 'Bill was seen yesterday by JOHN' are both suitable (if long winded responses) to the question: 'Who saw Bill yesterday?'. However, they reflect different ways of organising the response (i.e. speaker presentation), including the particular choice of 'grammatical subject' ('John' or 'Bill'), which seems to be somewhat different from Junge's 'theme' here, and which has a clear effect on 'control' relations.

Similarly in binding constructions. Contrast:

FN(8a) John is easy to please.

FN(9a) John is eager to please.

FN(8b) JOHN is easy to please.

FN(9b) JOHN is eager to please.

In (8a-b) through binding John/JOHN is interpreted as the undergoer of the 'pleasing' with an arbitrary control 'pleaser', whereas in (9a-b) through control John/JOHN is interpreted as the agent of the 'pleasing', both regardless of whether stressed or not (and compare the more agentive interpretation of the subject of 'eager' over that of the subject of 'easy' and the inability for 'please' in (8) to occur in anything other than its transitive sense, whereas (9) can take either the transitive or intransitive sense of 'please' – compare 'John/JOHN is eager to please Bill').

The binding relation is rather robust:

FN(10a) John is easy for BILL to please

FN(11a) John is eager for BILL to please.

FN(10b) JOHN is easy for Bill to please

FN(11b) JOHN is eager for Bill to please.

In (10) 'John/JOHN' is still interpreted as the undergoer of the 'pleasing' despite the introduction of an overt controller in 'Bill'. In (11) 'Bill' becomes the controller of intransitive 'to please' and in these cases 'John/JOHN' clearly cannot be interpreted as the undergoer of 'to please' – this would require the overt use of a pronoun (with ordinary coreference) as in 'John is eager for Bill to please him'. This is all, of course, independent of focal stress and suitability as responses in Q/A pairs.

So the 'formal similarities' between these examples *are* clearly of informational/logical and analytic importance in understanding the grammar of such sentences, just as are the formal differences caused by stressing (as evidenced by suitability in Q/A pairs and a range of important presupposition effects noted by Junge). This really should not come as a surprise. What we require, clearly, is an account which allows both these aspects of grammar to play a full role. So we *do* need some notion which covers both 'John' and 'JOHN' in (6) and, of course, 'grammatical subject' as discussed here seems to be just that notion.

this). At the very least, there is clearly some underlying similarity between the linguistic notion of the grammatical subject as the ‘most prominent dependent/trajector/figure’ or ‘grammatical perspective’ outlined below and theme ‘as point of departure’, ‘the thing talked about’ (a convergence which seems to accord well with the work of Ritter on ‘theme’). However, if taken this way, then just what exactly is the notion of ‘point of departure’ or ‘aboutness’? We have already seen that this is not simply a matter of the subjective choice of the speaker, issues such as the event-structure of heads, the semantic role hierarchy, empathy and the like do have a genuine cognitive role to play in grammar. Langacker for one believes that the only satisfactory notion is in fact his schematic definition of ‘grammatical subject’:

[...] it might still be argued that there is some sense in which these sentences are “about” their subjects... Can we find some other, less stringent characterization of the notion *topic*, one to which every subject might conform? Perhaps so. I suggest, however, that the only explicit characterization with any chance of proving viable is the one offered earlier as the schematic definition of subjects: *figure within the profiled relationship* [and hence the *trajector* - see section 2.5 (Author’s note)]... I thus conclude once more that the universally applicable definition of subjecthood can only be a matter of construal (not of content), and that *relational figure* is by far the most plausible candidate. FCG II, 316-17.

However, if this is the case, then in terms of *mk* + circumstantial *s_{dm}.n(=f)* we are returned to the event structure analysis of subject and predicate presented in this paper, or at the very least to a strong overlap between the notions ‘theme’ and ‘grammatical subject’; both positions are, of course, clearly compatible with the NSST account.

To sum up

The NSST account of predication in the construction *mk* + circumstantial *s_{dm}.n(=f)* is in fact well founded in terms of contemporary Linguistic theory and reflects the event-structure analysis of predication currently dominant in the field. The ST analysis, on the other hand, seems poorly motivated, whether in terms of Linguistic theory or in its own terms (the substitutional account of the adverbial analysis of the circumstantial *s_{dm}(=f)/s_{dm}.n(=f)* after *mk* is weak to say the least). Of course, there is much that still remains to be done in promoting the NSST account of the circumstantial *s_{dm}(=f)/s_{dm}.n(=f)* as verbal verb-forms, notably in terms of a detailed defence of the extension of this analysis to other usages of these forms, and, most importantly, in a detailed defence of the notion of ‘minimal sentence’ which this analysis clearly implies. These issues I leave for another occasion.

Even at this early stage, I think that a *prima facie* case is emerging that there is something fundamentally flawed in the ST approach to the grammar of Middle Egyptian. This flaw lies in the substitutional methodology and the particular form of the associated verb subjugation hypothesis which stands at the very heart of the ST account of the syntax of the verb in Middle Egyptian; it is thus not merely some trivial matter of detail which is at issue here. Could we at last be reaching the point where we recognise that endless cosmetic adjustments to the ST are not the answer to these problems? The Standard Theory, for all its vital insights which have pushed forward the boundaries of our understanding of Middle Egyptian grammar (and without which this paper could never have been written), seems to

have at its core a fundamental and fatal methodological error: the notion of paradigmatic substitution based on non-verbal parts of speech. In my own work, I hope to have indicated that the insights of the ST can be preserved and perhaps possibly improved on, even as we dispense with the paradigmatic substitutional methodology of the ST. In so far as the circumstantial *sḏm(=f)/sḏm.n(=f)* are concerned, that most implausible of views – that the syntax of these verb-forms in Middle Egyptian can be reduced via substitution to that of simple adverbials such as prepositional phrases – should be cast out and our grammatical talk liberated from its effects. We can, in fact, get by perfectly well without it!