HALLIDAY'S GRAMMATICAL METAPHOR, CONCEPTUALIZATION AND LINGUISTIC CONSTRUAL [1]

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ABSTRACT

This paper reappraises the Systemic-Functional Grammar notion of grammatical metaphor from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics. More specifically, we attempt to show how Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor and Langacker's notional characterization of grammatical categories can help us to refine the less clear aspects of Halliday's standard account, which has been assumed and further developed in the systemic-functional literature. In this way, we intend to make this interesting construct a more useful and cognitively plausible instrument for linguistic analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Grammatical metaphor is one of the most interesting theoretical notions developed by Halliday (1985/1994) within Systemic-Functional Grammar (SFG). In this research paradigm, language is regarded as a semiotic system which comprises three different strata (discourse-semantics, lexicogrammar, and phonology) related to each other by means of subsequent realizations. Each realization involves making meaningful choices within the different systems which make up each stratum. Thus, discourse-semantics is realized through the lexicogrammar, which is in turn realized phonologically. With this general framework in mind, grammatical metaphor may be defined, broadly speaking, as a variation in the grammatical forms through which a semantic choice is typically realized in the lexicogrammar. Halliday makes a distinction between two main types of grammatical metaphor: interpersonal metaphors (or metaphors of mood), and ideational metaphors (or metaphors of transitivity); only grammatical metaphors of the latter kind will concern us in this paper.

First, we shall critically review the most significant features of the standard account of grammatical metaphor which Halliday offers in his well-known book *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985/1994). Given its rather programmatical status, we shall go on to examine how other authors have fleshed out Halliday's initial analysis so that we can obtain a more complete picture of this phenomenon and of its implications for linguistic analysis. To the existing proposals we want to add some tentative considerations as to the possibility of refining the notion of grammatical metaphor from the perspective of some related findings in Cognitive Linguistics, namely Lakoff's (1987, 1993) theory of conceptual metaphor, and Langacker's (1987, 1990) notional description of grammatical categories. This objective will probably be received with certain reservations by both convinced systemicists and cognitivists, but we find it quite plausible that both schools may fruitfully complement each other in many ways by virtue of their common functionalist orientation (although some cognitivists would not hesitate to invert the terms of the statement and argue that it is functionalism that may be regarded as a kind of cognitive approach; e.g. see Lakoff 1990).

2. HALLIDAY'S STANDARD ACCOUNT

In SFG the clause is the result of a simultaneous mapping of choices from the ideational, interpersonal, and textual components of the grammar.

In its ideational function the clause represents a given state of affairs. The interpersonal function has to do with the clause as exchange and the textual function with the organization of the message. The ideational function, with which we are concerned here, is closely tied to the transitivity system, which enables us to construe the world of our experience into a limited set of process types (material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal, and existential). Processes are realized as a configuration of transitivity functions which represent the process, the participants in the situation, the attributes assigned to participants, and the circumstances associated with the process. Processes are typically realized by verbal groups; participants (Actor, Senser, Phenomenon, Carrier, etc.) are usually worded as nominal groups; participants' attributes are represented by adjectives; and circumstances (of time, place, manner, etc.) are generally associated with adverbial groups or prepositional phrases. These are typical patterns of lexicogrammatical realization (what Halliday calls *congruent* forms), but other less typical encodings are also potentially available to the language user (i.e. *metaphorical* forms). By way of illustration, consider these two examples (taken from Downing 1991: 110-111):

> (1) We walked in the evening along the river to Henley.
> (2) Our evening walk along the river took us to Henley.

It may be easily observed that both clauses (1) and (2) allow us to describe the same situation. However, the process constituents in (1) have been realized in a congruent fashion, whereas (2) evidences a preference for metaphorical modes of expression. Thus, the material Process *walk*, realized by a verb in (1), is encoded in (2) as a participant (Actor) which attains lexical expression by means of a noun. The two circumstantial elements of time (*in the evening*) and place (*along the river*) become in (2), respectively, a classifier and a qualifier of the new Actor; the circumstance of time is now realized as a noun, whereas the place element remains a prepositional phrase (although at a different rank within the clause). The Actor of (1) is split into two parts; the first part functions as a clause). The Actor of (1) is split into two parts; the first part functions as a possessor of the entity (*our evening walk along the river*), the other as Affected (*us*) of a new material process expressed by the verb *took*. Halliday (1994: 346) argues that a combined analysis should match the constituents of the congruent and metaphorical versions as much as possible so that it may be easier to grasp and metaphorical versions as much as possible so that it may be easier to grasp contrasts in grammatical function; this may also help us to show the simultaneous occurrence of lexical metaphor and, most importantly, to draw justified conclusions as to the possible functional motivation for the choice of a metaphorical variant:

arrived	on the fifth day	they	at the summit
process	circumstance	participant	circumstance
Material	Time	Actor	Place
verbal group	prep. phrase	verbal group	prep. phrase group
the fifth day	saw	them	at the summit
participant	process	participant	circumstance
Senser	Mental	Phenomenon	Place
n. group	verbal group	n. group	prep. phrase

The distinction between what is congruent and what is metaphorical is not always as clear-cut as the examples may suggest. It is sometimes the case that the metaphorical version has stopped being a marked option (in the sense of less typical) in the expression of certain meanings. Thus, for instance, we have expressions with delexical verbs such as *have a bath*, *make a mistake*, or *give a scare*, in which the process type is encoded in the nominal group functioning as Range rather than in the verbal form. This is probably due to the fact that nouns are more liable to accept pre- and post-modification: *His body does a sly, slippery, and boneless dance* sounds more natural than *He dances slyly, slipperily, bonelessly with his body* (Downing 1991: 112). However, these metaphorical forms coexist with their congruent counterparts and, as will become evident later in our discussion, they also involve subtle —but important— differences in meaning or semantic variation.

In point of fact, in this paper we argue that the existence of semantic variation may be safely posited for all instances of ideational grammatical metaphor. This line of argument is not necessarily in disagreement with Halliday's standard account. Thus, he explicitly acknowledges that «different encodings all contribute something different to the total meaning» (Halliday 1994: 344), and Martin (1992: 17) argues that «taking semantics as point of departure, choosing a metaphorical realisation means encoding additional layers of meaning»; the issue of semantic variation, however, is mainly taken for granted rather than explored in a systematic fashion. Moreover, the stress upon the status of grammatical metaphor as an alternative resource offered by a given language may erroneously lead us to overlook its significant implications at the discourse-semantic level. The question will be further discussed in Section 3 in relation to additional work in grammatical metaphor carried out by Ravelli (1988); in Section 4, we shall try to show in what way a cognitive approach may shed some light upon this somewhat weak aspect of Halliday's treatment.

Another important issue concerns the substantially different role played by grammatical metaphor in spoken and written language. As pointed out by Halliday (1985/1994, 1989), grammatical metaphor tends to occur much more

frequently in written language (especially in certain registers of technical/academic discourse) and in adult speech. Grammatical metaphor is one of the factors which contribute to the higher degree of lexical density in written English. Nominalization is the main way in which this is done; ideational metaphor is often achieved by turning clausal patterns into nominal groups, as can be observed in the following examples taken from Halliday (1994: 353):

is impaired by alcohol	alcohol impairment
they allocate an extra packer	the allocation of an extra packer
some shorter, some longer	of varying length
they were able to reach the computer	their access to the computer
technology is getting better	advances in technology

This resource may facilitate textual organization and reading comprehension, for instance, by reintroducing complex passages as nouns which may function as participants in a new clause. Further, by means of nominalization, processes may occupy certain positions in both thematic and information structure which are typically associated with nouns: thus, processes can become the point of departure of the message (theme) and can be placed in the unmarked focus of information (final position in the clause). On other occasions, however, metaphorical language may be more obscure, since it is not always possible to arrive at only a congruent transitivity configuration on the basis of the information provided by the nominal form (there may be ambiguity, as is the case with *alcohol impairment*, or some backgrounded participants may be impossible to retrieve unless they are previously known by the addressee). That is why the abundant use of grammatical metaphor in certain written genres «tends to mark off the expert from those who are uninitiated» (Halliday 1994: 353). In Section 4, we shall see how this kind of observations, advanced by different authors within the systemic-functional tradition (e.g. Martin 1991, 1992; Halliday 1993; Ventola 1996), is fully compatible with the dynamic character inherent in a cognitive account of ideational metaphor.

3. FURTHER ADVANCES

In this section, we shall briefly consider how the notion of grammatical metaphor has been further elaborated by other researchers on the basis of Halliday's fairly programmatical characterization. Special attention will be devoted to Ravelli's attempt to produce a more refined model of grammatical metaphor for its use in text analysis (Ravelli 1988), as well as to the

characterization of metaphorical modes of expressions as dynamic resources with which the users of a language are provided.

Ravelli (1988) proposes a method of analysis to provide more detailed accounts of the way grammatical metaphor is used in real texts. This author establishes different types of grammatical metaphor and examines how they may be recognized through transitivity analysis to be later quantified for textual comparisons. After searching eight texts on the field of nuclear disarmament for occurrences of grammatical metaphor, Ravelli arrived at a more detailed classification, partially reproduced here with slight modifications: 1a. material process encoded as Thing, realized by a nominal group (*the APPOINTMENT of an ambassador*); 1b. mental process as Thing/nominal group (*it changed our PERCEPTION of the situation*); 1c. relational process as Thing/nominal group (*the sheer COST of it*); 1d. verbal process as Thing/nominal group (*we had no TALKS last year*); 1e. behavioural process as Thing/nominal group (*its CONTINUATION*); 2. process as Epithet, Classifier/adjective (*INCOMING Soviet missiles*); 3a. quality of a Thing as Thing/nominal group (*peace through STRENGTH*); 3b. quality of a process as Epithet, Classifier/adjective (*its INTRINSIC worth*); 3c. quality of a process as Thing/nominal group (*a sense of SECURITY*); 4. circumstance as Process/verbal group (*night FOLLOWS day*); 5a. participant as Classifier/adjective (*ECONOMIC development*); 5b. participant as Thing/nominal group (*HISTORICAL experience*). This classification is particularly useful in that it presents a more adequate picture of the scope of the phenomenon of grammatical metaphor beyond the most frequent instances typically studied under the heading of nominalization.

In a thought-provoking discussion, Ravelli (1988: 135-138) considers two different interpretations of grammatical metaphor directly related to our proposals in the following section. In the simpler interpretation, which is roughly in accordance with Halliday's standard account, metaphor is regarded as «an alternative lexicogrammatical realization of a choice in the semantics» (Ravelli 1988: 136). From this perspective, the same meaning may be realized in two (or more) ways: congruently or metaphorically. However, Ravelli (1988: 137) observes that «the grammatical category itself has a feedback into the semantics and alternative lexicogrammatical realizations may omit or include different parts of the message». In an attempt to incorporate this meaning variation into a more satisfactory model of grammatical metaphor, Ravelli (1988: 137), following some suggestions given by Halliday through personal communication, goes on to reinterpret the phenomenon as a compound of semantic features: «two (or more) meaning choices come together in the semantics, forming a compound entry condition for a (combined) meaning, which gives rise to a metaphorical realization in the

lexicogrammar [...] On the other hand, a congruent lexicogrammatical realization derives from a single choice». The latter line of argument seems to be quite promising but, unfortunately, Ravelli fails to take it much further. In addition, this sketchy characterization apparently overlooks the fact that a set of semantic components is also involved in congruent encodings of processes, so it is at least questionable whether it is possible to choose this aspect as a defining criterion for a model of grammatical metaphor (cf. Guillén 1994). However, although certain issues of the alternative proposal should be clarified and elaborated, Ravelli aptly draws attention to the relationship between selection of grammatical category and meaning.

As pointed out in the previous section, one of the main concerns of research into grammatical metaphor is the dynamism associated with this linguistic resource, especially as far as the reader's participation in text meaning is concerned. The question is mentioned in the accounts by Halliday and Ravelli which we have just examined, but it has been more directly addressed in other studies. For instance, Couture (1991: 273), although critical of the analysis of grammatical congruent/incongruent distinction, argues that the analysis of grammatical metaphor «can uncover the linguistic sources of dynamic meaning in both literary and rhetorical texts» and help us to realize how unusual syntax is often employed to foreground secondary meaning. Also Guillén (1998), in an interesting article, stresses the need for a dynamic approach by relating the use of grammatical metaphor to the in-vogue notion of intertextuality. On the basis of his analysis of nominalizations and extensive nominal groups occurring in written medical English (e.g. *stained longitudinal nerve sections, flexion withdrawal times*), this author makes a distinction between *intratextual dynamic groups*, whose congruent configuration may be retrieved from information within the text where the metaphorical forms appear, and *intertextual dynamic groups*, which require the reader to use background knowledge of the subject or to refer to cited works for their correct interpretation. In a similar way, Ventola (1996) draws attention to the special difficulty which the greatly metaphorized language of academic writing in English poses to non-native writers and tries to provide some solutions to the problem by increasing awareness of how information may be packed and unpacked in academic texts.

It is true that reading comprehension always demands the reader's activation of previous knowledge schemas, but the existing literature seems to indicate that this is especially the case with metaphorical language. As stated above, if the necessary information is not available to the reader, s/he will not be able properly to identify the processes and participants involved in a given situation and how they are related to each other. This is the cause of the inaccessibility of many scientific texts, as claimed by Halliday & Martin (1993:

21): «The language of science, though forward-looking in its origins, has become increasingly anti-democratic: its arcane grammatical metaphor sets apart those who understand it and shields it from those who do not»; Martin (1992) also refers to this phenomenon as «secret English». In contrast with this partly negative characterization, Goatly (1996) argues for the use of grammatical metaphor in the language of science by virtue of its alleged consonance with modern scientific theory (e.g. the so-called Gaia theory, which moves away from bodily-determined ontology): congruence is said to represent an anthropocentric (even infantile) ontology/ideology, whereas grammatical metaphor (especially nominalization) would appropriately underscore the primacy of processes independently of human Actors. Such an approach, however, seems to assume an objectivist view of reality which clearly contradicts current findings in the cognitive sciences. In the following section, we address the issue of grammatical metaphor from just the opposite perspective: in terms of the very anthropocentric theoretical tenets of Cognitive Linguistics.

4. INSIGHTS FROM COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

Cognitive linguists account for language phenomena by drawing on what is known about such basic human capacities as conceptualization and imagination. As opposed to other more formalist approaches, it is argued within this paradigm that language cannot be considered in isolation from its cognitive and communicative functions. Unfortunately, in spite of important theoretical affinities, systemicists and cognitivists tend to focus on their differences and rarely achieve the desirable symbiosis. However, it is possible to appreciate some cognitive overtones in the way Downing & Locke (1992: 10) remark that «[a] fundamental property of language is that it enables us to conceptualise and describe our experience, whether of the phenomena of the external world or of the internal world of our thoughts, feelings and perceptions». Guillén (1994) has made use of some of the tools provided by Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (1987, 1990) to reinterpret grammatical metaphor in terms of alternate profilings on a common base (see 4.2. for discussion of this and related terminology); our own proposal, which roughly assumes the validity of Guillén's findings, further examines grammatical metaphor in the light of Cognitive Grammar —with emphasis on Langacker's notional description of grammatical categories— and the theory of conceptual metaphor. Finally, also within the cognitive paradigm, Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 92) has put forward the parallel notion of grammatical metonymy to explain some cases of recategorization which involve a domain-subdomain relationship between generic cognitive constructs, as in the verb

author, which focalizes the agent type of a process (cf. *writer*), and *cut* (n.), which focalizes the result within an action frame.

4.1. Generic conceptual metaphor

Against the traditional characterization of metaphor as a literary device which departs from general patterns of language use, cognitive linguists have drawn attention to the frequent occurrence of conventionalized metaphorical expressions in everyday language. This is convincingly interpreted as evidence for the central structuring role played by figurative modes of thought in our conceptual system. Thus, metaphor is understood as a partial mapping (i.e. a set of one-to-one correspondences) between conceptual domains of experience, a source domain and a target domain, which allows us to speak and reason about the latter in terms of the former (see Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987, 1993; Lakoff & Turner 1989). For instance, by virtue of the LIFE-AS-JOURNEY metaphor, English speakers often conceptualize a purposeful life as a journey, people as travellers, and destinations as life goals (e.g. *I don't know where I'm going in life*, *I've already missed that boat*, etc.).

It is possible to draw some analogies between the approach to grammatical metaphor adopted in Halliday's account and the theory of conceptual metaphor that we have just outlined. Thus, Halliday (1994: 342) claims that metaphor is to be looked at «from above», as variation in the expression of meaning rather than as variation in the meaning of an expression; similarly, in Cognitive Linguistics metaphorical expressions are said to respond to a previous conceptual basis. In both models linguistic realization is preceded by some kind of choice: for systemicists this choice occurs at the level of discourse-semantics, whereas cognitivists place it at the level of cognition (since it is generally accepted within this paradigm that meaning resides in conceptualization). However, as was made evident in our discussion above, the standard account of grammatical metaphor is not clear enough as to how lexicogrammatical wording is affected by the speaker's semantic choice (i.e. whether different lexicogrammatical wordings are somehow semantically motivated). We argue that such a potential inadequacy may be solved by regarding grammatical metaphor as a special case of conceptual metaphor, more specifically of metaphor based on generic rather than basic-level or specific categories. From this standpoint, certain nominalizations, for instance, would be understood in terms of a generic metaphor which we may label PROCESSES ARE ENTITIES. By means of it processes are ontologically conceptualized as if they were entities which may in turn take part in other processes. Category variation

is thus not a random choice, but a symptom in the grammar of a mapping between two different experiential domains. Compare now the nominalization in (3a) below with the congruent version given in (3b):

>   (3)
>   (a) Mary is involved in the development of a new model.
>   (b) Mary is developing a new model.

The SFG analysis would typically account for these two clauses as different ways of expressing the same event, (3a) being a non-congruent form, and would deal with the specifics of how each choice has consequences for the organization of the clause and even of subsequent discourse. But we can further account for (3a) in terms of a combination of two generic metaphors: PROCESSES ARE ENTITIES and NON-PHYSICAL ENTITIES ARE PHYSICAL CONTAINERS. Thus, a process is conceptualized as an entity which, by virtue of the CONTAINER image-schema, is seen to have another entity («Mary», a participant in the process) in its interior. In Cognitive Linguistics, image-schemata are abstract topological concepts which may function as structuring principles for many of our experiences and perceptions (Lakoff 1987, 1989; Johnson 1987). An image-schematic model is made up of a set of basic structural elements arranged according to inherent logical constraints. Thus, the CONTAINER schema mainly consists of a bounded region, a boundary and an exterior; our experience tells us that the container may somehow affect the entities within it (e.g. by isolating them from external influence). In (3), the potential activation of this image-schematic knowledge is made possible by the generic metaphoric mapping PROCESSES ARE ENTITIES, since containers are typically entities (although it should be noted that the CONTAINER image-schema itself is a conceptualization which we impose on our spatial experience and of course it does not necessarily involve any actual physical boundary).

Other changes in grammatical category also respond to metaphoric mappings of this kind. In this sense, we can reinterpret the examples in Ravelli's classification of grammatical metaphors (Section 3) in terms of generic conceptual mappings: e.g. we map processes onto qualities of physical objects (*INCOMING Soviet missiles*), qualities onto things (*peace through STRENGTH*), circumstances onto processes (*night FOLLOWS day*), and so on.

In the standard systemic-functional account, however, phenomena of conceptual interaction involving grammatical metaphor are left unexplained. In contrast, a cognitive account along the lines presented here may help us to refine our analysis by attending to such semantically relevant aspects. Moreover, understanding ideational grammatical metaphor as the result of a conceptual

mapping responds to previous modelling shortcomings in a way which is both economical and cognitively plausible, since a satisfactory solution is provided simply by making reference to a mechanism (metaphor) which cognitive linguists have shown to be ubiquitous in language and thought.

4.2. Cognitive Grammar

Our analysis of grammatical metaphor in (generic) conceptual terms may be complemented and enriched by applying some useful notions which have been developed within the framework of Langacker's (1987) Cognitive Grammar. As mentioned above, the idea of reinterpreting grammatical metaphor in the light of this model is not entirely new, since it has already been put forward by Guillén (1994). However, we shall focus our attention upon a slightly different —if related— aspect of Cognitive Grammar.

According to Langacker (1987, 1990), a domain is a coherent area of conceptualization of any kind (a single concept, a knowledge system, a perceptual experience) which functions as a cognitive context for the characterization of a semantic unit. Such a characterization, which is made against a number of domains simultaneously, is determined by the interplay between a base and a profile. The base is the presupposed cognitive structure, the part of the relevant domains (scope of predication) against which the profiling of a given substructure is carried out. For example, if we take as the base the conception of a body of land completely surrounded by water, a specific expression may profile the land mass (*island*), a portion of the water (*the water near the island*), the boundary between the two (*shoreline*), and so on (Langacker 1990: 62). A given scene or conceptual content may be construed in different ways; in a similar fashion, as pointed out by Guillén (1994), metaphorical realizations may elevate some semantic component to a special degree of prominence while other elements may be obliterated. For instance, in a metaphorical expression such as *The realization of their importance and scope was developing very slowly*, the agent of the mental process is not actualized.

In our view, this capacity of grammatical metaphor to structure conceptual material in meaningful ways may be more appropriately understood with regard to the notional description of grammatical categories. In accordance with his basic tenet that grammar is endowed with a cognitive basis, Langacker (1990) convincingly argues that notional definitions are possible for basic grammatical categories such as nouns and verbs. Thus, at a high level of schematicity, the semantic pole of a noun designates a thing (a region in some domain, established by a set of interconnected entities); on the other hand,

verbs designate processes (relations with a temporal profile), and adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, infinitives, and participles designate different kinds of complex atemporal relations. In more general terms, nominal predications presuppose the interconnections among entities and profile the region as a whole, whereas relational predications presuppose the sets of entities and profile the interconnections among them. This distinction allows Langacker to explain the subtle meaning differences we can find between words such as *circle* and *round*, or *group* and *together*.

It should not be difficult to point out the main implications that this kind of analysis may have for a better understanding of the phenomenon of grammatical metaphor. Thus, for instance, the reification traditionally associated with nominalizations may be defined within this unified framework as a variation in construal and profiling. By way of illustration, the following expressions may be used by two different people in order to report the same event (Langacker 1990: 98):

> (4) Something exploded!
> (5) There was an explosion.

The different wordings in (4) and (5) are semantically motivated at the conceptual level. In (4), the congruent verbal form *exploded* profiles a series of states coordinated in a dynamic way through sequential scanning. These states are conceived of as a set of interconnected entities which presuppose an implicit region. In (5), however, the nominalization *explosion* makes this region conceptually more salient and presupposes the set of interconnected entities.

Similarly, in the congruent expression *Night comes after day* the preposition *after* profiles an atemporal relation (in spite of its meaning, the temporal dimension is latent rather than highlighted), and primary characterization in the cognitive domain of time only occurs when the prepositional phrase combines with a verb (here *comes*) in a higher-order structure. In the metaphorical version *Night follows day*, however, the relation between the entities *night* and *day* is construed as an entity which undergoes a sequence of stages through conceived time. The construal shift may also be found in the opposite direction, as in *incoming Soviet missiles*, where the sequential scanning which characterizes processes is replaced by the summary scanning typically associated with atemporal relations.

This kind of account is undoubtedly compatible with the dynamic character of grammatical metaphor. By making a selection as regards grammatical category, a speaker is imposing his own conceptualization of a given situation or event on the hearer. Thus, for instance, profiling the implicit

region described by a process rather than the interconnections among the involved entities enables us to focus on that process as if it were a noun, i.e. as a coherent whole regarded in isolation from its participants. This choice may respond to different communicative needs; one may want to generalize over a number of cases (as is often the case with scientific registers), or perhaps some of the participants cannot be properly identified by the speaker. If some conceptual content were not actualized in the linguistic expression, the addressee would not be able to elevate it to a position of prominence by means of construal and profiling activities, which would seriously limit his/her conceptualization potential. This capacity of grammatical metaphor to structure experiential domains in certain preferred ways is an essential facet of human conceptualization, which connects this part of our account with the analysis in terms of metaphoric mappings (mappings are always partial, i.e. not all the components of a given domain are mapped). Moreover, conceptual metaphor is obviously a matter of construal; in fact, the cognitive mechanism relating the alternate profilings imposed by words of different grammatical categories is ultimately but a mapping between the abstract schemata which those categories instantiate (e.g. PROCESSES ARE THINGS, TEMPORAL RELATIONS ARE ATEMPORAL RELATIONS, etc.).

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have contributed to the existing literature on grammatical metaphor (of the ideational kind) by pointing to some weak or incomplete aspects within the standard account of this phenomenon which is generally assumed in the systemic-functional paradigm, and by examining them in the light of some well-established ideas in Cognitive Linguistics (i.e. conceptual metaphor and notionally defined grammatical categories). It has been argued that the considerations of a theoretical nature discussed here may improve the effectiveness of this resource as a tool for text analysis, since they allow to account for otherwise unexplained meaning nuances in terms of very generic conceptualization patterns.

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