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Language and Semogenesis in Philosophy: Realizational Patternings of Ideology in Lexico-grammar

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Realizational Patternings of Ideology in Lexico-grammar

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by

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ABSTRACT

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By Joe Fincham

This thesis hypothesizes that the semogenetic properties of language belonging to the stratum of social context known in Systemic Functional Linguistics as 'ideology' are realized (at least partly) in the lexico-grammatical features of a text relating to non-categorical and grammatically metaphorical use of modality and non-categorical uses of polarity. To test this hypothesis, a section of a text by philosopher A.J. Ayer was selected. It was selected because it presents an argument in favor of a differing philosophical sense-making framework from that commonly held in society, thus making it a text more conducive to study of semogenetic properties of language and the realizational patternings thereof. The text is analyzed in terms of its lexico-grammatical features, as well as how those lexico-grammatical features are a realization of semogenesis on the stratum of ideology.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Within the Western philosophical tradition, there continue to be competing sense-making frameworks which attempt to understand the relationship between mind and world, especially as it relates to perception, knowledge, and certainty. Among these is a general framework called "Idealism", which argues that material objects are not directly perceived, but rather only "sense-data" are directly perceived.

One proponent of this school of thought was the British philosopher Alfred Jules (A.J.) Ayer. He states that the main goal of his text[1] is "…to resolve the philosophical problems which are commonly brought under the heading of 'our knowledge of the external world'. (vii)" The argument begins with a distinction between 1) the "ordinary man's" understanding of perception and 2) the "philosophical" understanding of perception (Idealism). Ayer argues that within the ordinary understanding of perception is a level of uncertainty, which presents a philosophical problem; and that further, the "philosophical" understanding of perception that he presents is a remedy to this problem because sense-data (sense-perceptions, sensory-data), while they may or may not be in accordance with the material world, are not doubtful as to being perceived.

This thesis hypothesizes that the stratum of context in Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter 'SFL') known as "ideology", as a constraining factor on meaning-potential and thus as a concept embedded in the way lexico-grammar is used as a social semiotic (see below), is realized in the lexico-grammatical features of a text relating to non-categorical and grammatically metaphorical use of modality and non-categorical uses of polarity. To test this

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[1] *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* (1955)

1

hypothesis, a section of Ayer's text was selected for analysis using the framework developed in SFL.

The analysis of this text will primarily focus on how the presentation of and transition between sense-making frameworks are realized in the lexico-grammar. Based on this analysis, it will then consider the mechanisms by which ideology is realized in the lexico-grammar in order to develop useful abstractions on how sense-making frameworks and shifts in sense-making frameworks are realized in language.

This analysis is not a metaphysical analysis—neither in terms of its scope nor in terms of the analysis itself (or the analytical tools used in the analysis). The text is analyzed insofar as it makes use of lexico-grammatical or paradigmatic features "in a meaningful functional context (Halliday and Matthiessen 2007: 4)".

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW – A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF SFL

This chapter is aimed at providing a brief overview of the theory of SFL, with particular focus on its view of language as social semiotic, and its stratified model of social context and language. In particular, the most abstract level of social context known as 'ideology', first proposed in Martin (1992), and later reproduced with revisions in Martin (1997), will be drawn out in greater detail in order to see what role it plays in Systemic Functional theory.

In discussing language as social semiotic from an SFL perspective, Suzanne Eggins enumerates SFL's "four main theoretical claims about language:

1. that language use is functional

2. that its function is to make meanings

3. that these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged

4. that the process of using language is a *semiotic* process, a process of making meanings by choosing" (2004: 3).

Eggins explains that this approach to language is functional in two ways: it is interested in how language is used, and how language is structured for use. This attention to language use stems from SFL's stance on, and studies of, language from both syntagmatic structures and paradigmatic choices—it investigates how people use language to negotiate interpersonal, textual, and ideational meanings. Furthermore, since there are a variety of realizational patterns to communicate meaning, SFL is also concerned with the systemic delicacy in its lexico-grammatical descriptions, which then can be connected to language and context (or, "semiotics"). Thus SFL views language 'as social semiotic'.

Halliday (1973) explores the ways in which this social semiotic perspective is rich in its potential for language descriptions. As SFL views language as being a social process (or social behavior), this means that SFL views language "as a form of behavior *potential*. It is what the speaker can do" (Halliday 1973: 49). However, since 'behavior potential' or what one 'can do' is not exclusively a linguistic concept, the intermediate step in which this broad 'behavior potential' is realized in language is the concept of '*meaning* potential' or what one 'can mean'. This is, in turn, realized in the lexico-grammatical potential of language, or what one 'can say' against the background of the ways in which one 'could' mean (Halliday 1973).

Building upon the view of language as 'choice' or 'social semiotic', these paradigmatic and syntagmatic options that are available as 'potential' can be further explored as more abstract sets of meanings that "derive from and are relatable to three very generalized functions of language"—the interpersonal, textual, and ideational (Halliday 1973). As these three are 'generalized functions of language', SFL gives them the name of 'meta-functions'. The *interpersonal* metafunction relates to how language negotiates social roles between language participants; the *textual* metafunction enables language to be organized in a way that scaffolds levels of comprehension; the *ideational* metafunction is concerned with how experience (of the external world, our internal consciousness, and logical relations between processes, participants and circumstances) is construed in language. These three metafunctions occur simultaneously in all semiotic planes; thus language as a social semiotic is always multi-functional. The relationship is diagramed in Figure 2.1 below.
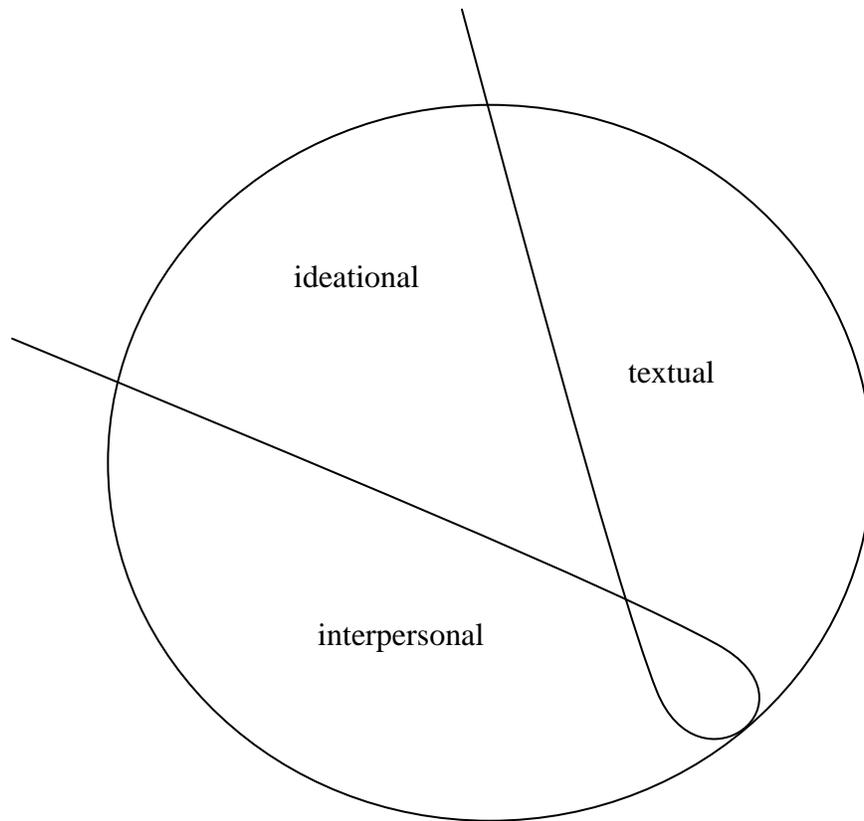
Figure 2.1: Lexico-grammatical metafunctions

Within SFL, language is viewed as being made up of various metaredundant levels, or *strata*. Broadly, this view can be represented as a stratified relationship between two strata: social context and language. The relationship between these strata is expressed by Jay Lemke (1995) and J.R. Martin (1997) as two concentric circles with a double-arrow line, representing the metaredundant relationship between these two strata. Figure 2.2 below shows diagrammatically how language instantiates and is instantiated by social context. Thus, language and social context are inexorably intertwined—each forms and is formed by the other.
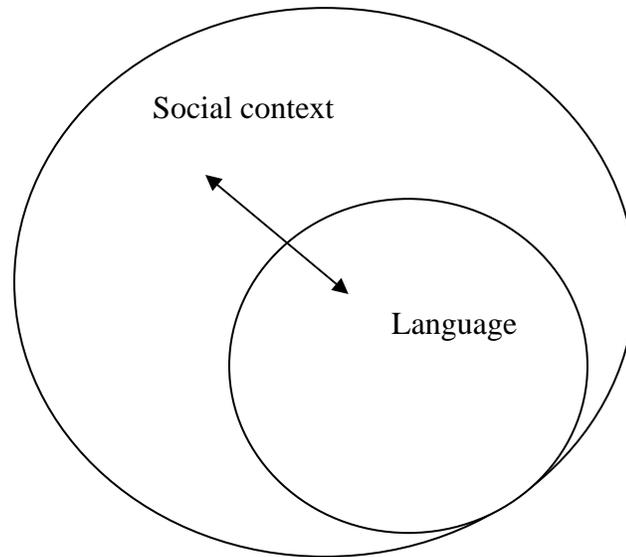
Figure 2.2: "Language as the realization of social context" (Martin 1997: 4)

SFL further divides this realizational patterning of language and social context with a more

nuanced stratification, which is represented as follows:
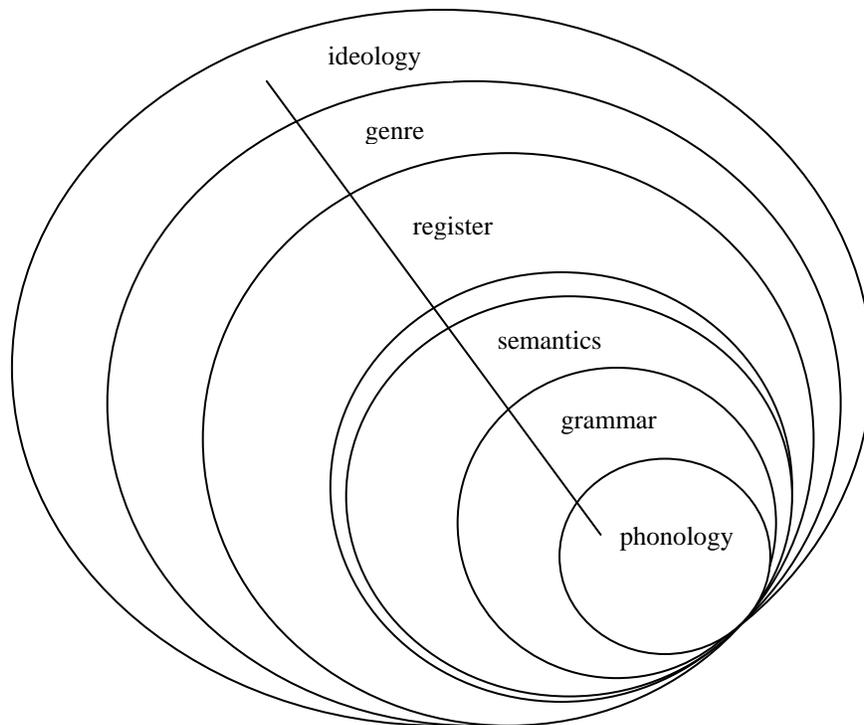
Figure 2.3 "Language and its semiotic environment" (Martin 1992: 496, from Martin and Matthiessen 1991)

The productions of language (or 'texts') are viewed in SFL as manifestations of the cultures which create them and as creators of these cultures. Because of this, J.R. Martin argues that SFL, as well as having a theory of language, must also have a theory of the contexts which realize and are realized by language (1992: 493). This recognition informs Martin's modeling of a theory of stratified context for SFL.

The first level of context is the 'context of situation', or 'register'. Register is realized by three variables: 'mode', 'tenor', and 'field'. According to Martin, "[m]ode refers to the role language is playing in realising social action. Within register, it is the projection of textual meaning, and so is realised primarily through the textual metafunction in language" (1992: 508). Mode is thus dependent on such situational variables as the medium comprised. For example,

written language and spoken language are modes with varying degrees of interpersonal meanings. Thus while written language may use more 'prestige' lexis, have a monologic organization, and be independent of interactional context, spoken language will tend to use common or everyday lexis, be organized by turn-taking, and be situational context-dependent.

The second register variable is tenor. Tenor, according to Martin, "refers to the negotiation of social relationships among participants. Within register, it is the projection of interpersonal meaning, and so is realised primarily through the interpersonal metafunction in language" (1992: 523). Tenor is realized in three dimensions. One of these dimensions is status, which may be equal or unequal. Another dimension is contact, which can be involved or distant. The last dimension is affect. When affect is marked, it may be positive or negative. Status is mainly concerned with social hierarchy, and contact is concerned with the level of involvement among the participants. According to Martin, affect differs from status and contact in the sense that it is not manifested in all texts. Martin states that there do not seem to be "any obvious linguistic criteria for classifying types of affection" (1992: 533).[2]

The third register variable is field, which is the projection of experiential or ideational meaning. Broadly, field construes what language is being used to talk about, the focus of the activity the participants are engaged in. More specifically, Martin defines field as "sets of activity sequences oriented to some global institutional purpose (1992: 536)". Eggins notes (2004: 103) that although field can sometimes be glossed over as the 'topic' of a text, Martin's broader definition is more useful in situations where language is accompanied by action. In his definition of register, Martin extends the notion beyond its use by Halliday. Whereas Halliday

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[2] But see Martin and Rose (2007) where they developed 'Appraisal Theory', in which the language of affection is the key feature.

uses the term 'register' to refer to language as the expression plane of content, Martin offers the

following:

> *English Text* extends the notion to cover in addition part of contexts's content plane; **register** is used in other words to refer to the semiotic system constituted by the contextual variables field, tenor, and mode. …This means that instead of characterising context of situation as potential and register as (context's) actual, *English Text* treats register as a semiotic system in its own right…
> (1992: 502).

As has been stated, the three variables of register correspond (though not in an exclusive

1:1 relationship) to the three metafunctions of Halliday's lexico-grammar. Martin expresses their

"relative proportionalities" as follows:

> metafunction:context::
> experiential:field::
> interpersonal:tenor::
> textual:mode
> (1992: 494)

This relationship can be diagrammed as follows:
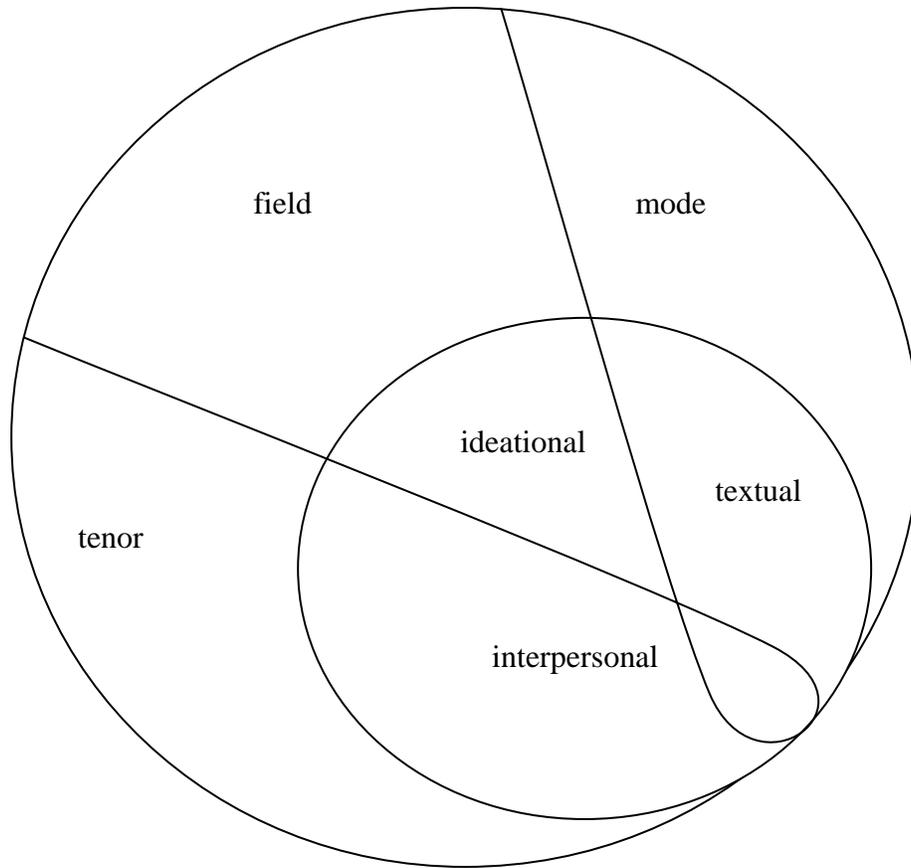
Figure 2.4 "Functional diversification of language and social context" (Martin 1997: 5)

Above this level of register, or context of situation, is the context of culture 'genre'.

Genre, for Martin, is a staged, goal-oriented social process. Although genre is defined in terms of

goal-oriented systems of social processes, Martin is careful to explain that their purpose (or

'telos') is social, not psychological. He explains precaution by stating that this definition does

not "imply that the cultures as a whole are goal-directed, with some over-riding purpose

governing the interaction of social processes" (1992: 503). Martin explains that viewing genre in

this teleological manner is useful for accounting for how texts move through 'stages', and are

considered incomplete when any there is an absence of any stage, including when closure is not

attained in a text.

These stages of genre are in a structural relationship with one another—they are ordered. However, their sequence may vary. Martin's proposal to view text structure as being generated at the level of genre allows genre networks to be constructed based upon similarities and differences between generic structures of texts, on the basis of which text types could be defined. "Text structure is referred to as **schematic structure** in Martin's model, with genre defined as a staged, goal-oriented social process realised through register" (1992: 505).

Martin explains the five primary advantages he sees of this model of genre as a regular pattern of register variables. First, with genre not being metafunctionally organized, texts can be classified in ways that cross the metafunctional components of language. As Martin states, "[g]eneric labels such as narrative or exposition are impossible to tie satisfactorally to any one type of meaning; their realisation cuts across metafunctions" (1992: 505-6). It also has the advantage of being able to account for the fact that not all combinations of register variables may occur within a particular culture.

Also, this model more easily handles changes in metafunctional meaning from one stage of a text to another. It also accounts for differences between a text's sequential unfolding as a process (genre) and the notion of activity (field). Finally, Martin addresses genre agnation. This concept can be explained, superficially, as the fact that the combination of mode, tenor, and field choices are more than the sum of their parts, which this model allows for.

The last stratum of context is that of 'ideology'[3]. Martin was the first to propose ideology as a level of language stratification in SFL (1992), and argues this level is necessary

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[3] The term 'ideology' is a specialized term in SFL used to refer to a stratum of social context. It is not to be thought identical with a 'sense-making framework' or a 'philosophical school', which refers to a system of metaphysics. Although a particular sense-making framework may be realized in the stratum of ideology, "ideology", as a schematic construct, has no ontological status (see p. 16 below).

"because a culture's meaning potential is distributed unevenly across social groups and so constantly changing. Tension among the discourses of these groups means that to achieve metastability, the system must evolve" (1992: 507). Thus Martin proposes the level of ideology in order to account for this "dialectic of difference".

Ideology can be viewed in two ways: synoptically and dynamically. "Viewed synoptically, ideology is the system of coding orientations constituting a culture" (Martin 1992: 507). These coding orientations are realized by how groups of speakers differing generation, gender, ethnicity, and class have differing "contextually specific semantic styles" (Martin 1992: 507). In fact, most of Martin's considerations with respect to ideology have to do with Marxist concerns for how these specific socially disaffected groups have their identity realized in their language.

From the dynamic view, "ideology is concerned with the redistribution of power – with semiotic evolution" (Martin 1992: 507). Martin states that this feature is most easily viewed in this way when there are actively contesting discourses. Part of this view, the negotiation of coding orientations, is a necessary part of the system for Martin in that it accounts for how contratextuality in opposing or contesting texts foregrounds social differences. However, Martin further notes that "tension among discourses is a feature of all texts – they are heteroglossic in Bakhtin's terms. Dynamic open systems evolve, with or without revolution…" (1992: 508).

Despite Martin's defense of the need for the system to evolve in recognizing this new level of 'ideology' and the elaboration of that level, it was not picked up in the discourse of the SFL community. David Butt explains it thus:

> Martin's important volume of discourse proposals (1992) also included a stratum of ideology. This was motivated by the observation, clear from the work of Bernstein,
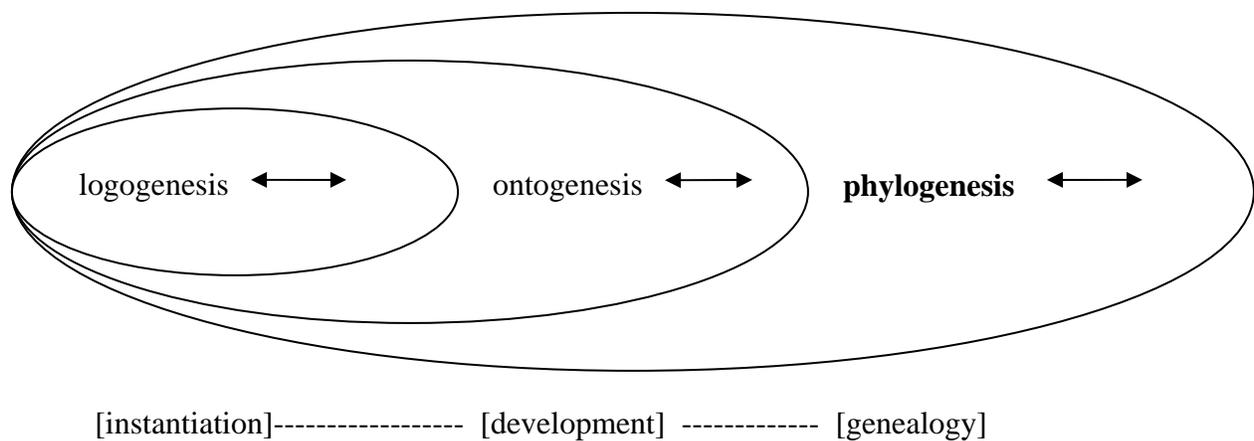
Hasan and others, that meaning potential was not equally available to all members of a community or similarly deployed.
(2001: 1831)

Butt continues by noting the subsequent attempt to resurrect this notion:

Martin's disappointment at the lack of dialogue around this extension (Martin 1997: 7) has brought him to a modification which is based on the dynamic of time, and so returns to Halliday's three histories of the text – logogenesis (the unfolding of the text); ontogenesis (its relation to the development in the individual); and phylogenesis (the relation to change and development across the semiotic history of the community).
(2001: 1831)

Martin's elaboration of these three concepts focuses on how these three facets of his re-imagining of the stratum of ideology relates to three lower levels of strata: the lower contextual strata of genre and register, and the stratum of language. This approach to subjectivity is dynamic—concerning genesis and change in subjectivity. Martin explains the realizational patterning within this type of model: "Language change in this model is read in terms of an expanding meaning potential, a key feature of semiotic systems as they adapt to new discursive and non-discursive (physical and biological) environments" (1997: 9).

In Figure 2.5 below, the way in which phylogenesis provides the environment for ontogenesis, and ontogenesis provides, in turn, the environment for logogenesis, is diagrammed to show how the stage of evolution reached by a culture gives the social context for the individual's linguistic development.

```
    _____
  /                                                              \
 /    _____                                 \
/   //                          \\                                 \
|  ///   logogenesis  ←——→       |     ontogenesis  ←——→    **phylogenesis**  ←——→   |
|  \\\                          //                                  |
\   \_____//                                 /
 \                                                                /
  _____/

      [instantiation]------------------ [development] ------------- [genealogy]
```

**Figure 2.5** "Time frames and semogenesis" (Martin 1997: 9)

Martin offers this view in order to attempt to overcome objections that the subjects he was concerned with[4] did not have this dynamic potential to resistance and transformation in his original proposal for this stratum (1992). Martin explains the features of this model and attempts to engage the SFL community in a discourse around this proposal as follows:

> This would enable us to foreground the ways in which subjects engage dynamically with texts as they unfold (logogenesis), the ways in which they are positioned and repositioned socially throughout their life (ontogenesis) and the ways in which a culture reworks hegemony across generations (phylogenesis).
> (1997: 10)

In this model, the lower strata of genre, register, and language are to be interpreted as "the projection of semohistory (across all three time frames) than as realizing an abstract and reified ideology (as Martin's model has at times been read to imply)" (1997: 10). An outline of this new conception of ideology, which projects as the semohistory of language, register, and genre is presented as Figure 2.6 below.

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[4] These subjects were socially disaffected groups (gender, class, etc.).

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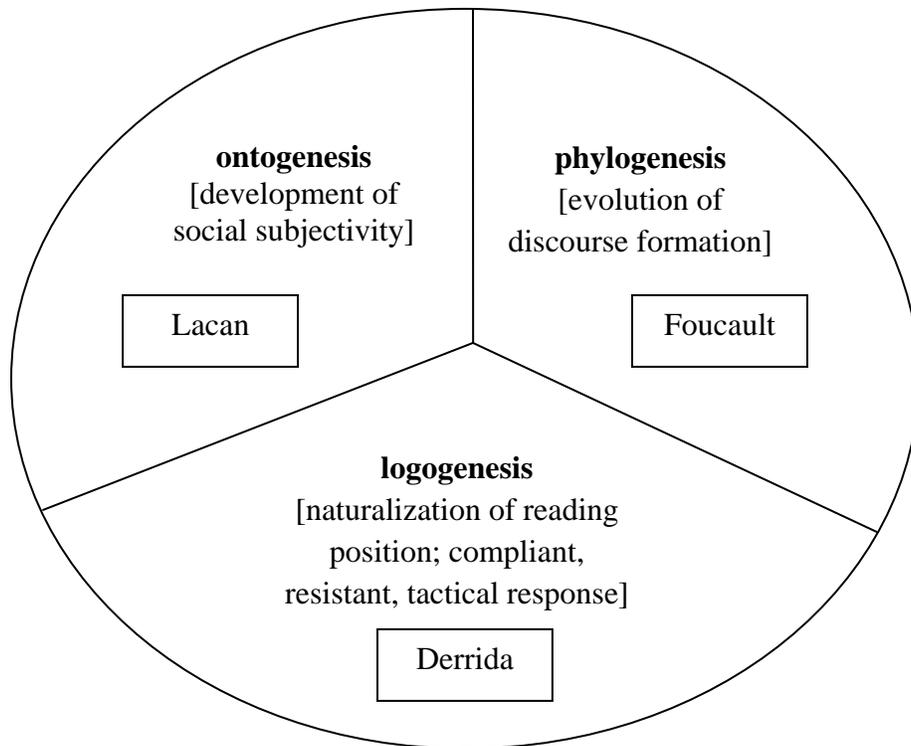
Figure 2.6 Ideology as semohistory (adapted from Martin 1997: 11)

Finally, it may also be advantageous to mention the linguistic and philosophical significance of the 'instance' within the functional linguistic model, as well as the metaphysical nature of the schematic constructs discussed above. The common metaphor used in SFL is that of the weather (instance), and its relation to the climate (system of possibilities) may shed some light on the significance of this particular term linguistic term. The system of possibilities simultaneously realizes and is realized by the particular instance—the climate is realized in the particular weather event, which in turn (with the accumulation of other variable instances) is realized in the climate. As David Butt notes, "[t]he theorizing of instance allows linguistic theory to escape that cul-de-sac in philosophical semantics by which no progress can be made on the description of language games beyond, that is, recognizing and enumerating their diversity and individuation" (2001: 1809).

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This theory of language gives a level of delicacy and significance to the treatment of the particular 'language-games'[5] being analyzed, as well as language-games in general. The tools and concepts used to analyze these texts also have no metaphysical significance in themselves. As Firth stated, "[o]ur schematic constructs must be judged with reference to their **combined tool power** in our dealings with linguistic events in the social process. Such constructs have no ontological status and we do not project them as having being or existence. They are neither immanent nor transcendent, but just **language turned back on itself**" (1957 [1950]: 181, quoted in Butt 2001:1808). Thus, while SFL provides an ever-evolving schematic scaffolding for analyzing language as a social semiotic, the respective tools and concepts, whether well established, as with the metafunctions, or novel as with the stratum of 'ideology', remain that— 'tools'. They have no metaphysical status within the theory itself, and are only significant in that they are used to analyze the way in which meanings are negotiated in society through language.

Within the philosophical community, the linguistic approach and focus of this paper may be seen as a sort of 'hair-splitting'. After all, from a philosophical perspective, what is of concern is not *how* a philosopher expresses his or her meaning, but *what* s/he is trying to express. Halliday notes his observation about this level of idealization in the philosopher's approach to language (1973). But as Wittgenstein remarked:

> The aspects of thing that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something—because it is always before one's eyes.) The real foundations of his enquiry do not strike a man at all. Unless *that* fact has at some time struck him.—And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful.
> (2001, §129)

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[5] A term borrowed from Wittgenstein.

CHAPTER THREE: LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS[6]

This chapter analyzes Ayer's presentation of the opposing views of perception[7] in order

to see what role Ayer's own language plays in the emergence of the philosophical "problem"

with the ordinary conception of perception, and how that use of language relates to his treatment

of the philosophical conception of perception. This chapter hypothesizes that the origin of the

philosophical problem of perception stems from the choice of lexico-grammatical features, in

particular grammatical metaphors, used by Ayer in discussing the two opposing views. By

making the argument for the ordinary conception weaker and more doubtful in comparison to the

philosophical view, the grammatical and lexical choices metaredound within the social contexts

understanding perception. In the case of the ordinary perception, these weaker and more

uncertain choices reconstrue the ordinary conception of perception as weaker and more unsure,

as opposed to the choices made in presenting the philosophical conception, which reconstrue the

philosophical conception (Idealism) as more categorical.

In Texts 3.1 and 3.2, categorical polarity markers are used differently in the presentations

of the two conceptions of perception. The use of these polarity markers in Text 3.1 (1-3 below)

functions to negate varying degrees of modality. For example, the negative particle in the

opening sentence, (1) below, functions to negate the modal expression "normally" or "normally

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[6] This chapter was originally presented as "Mental Process Clauses and the Perceived Problems of Philosophy" (later titled "Analyzing Philosophical Discourse") at the *35th International Systemic Functional Congress* at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia: July 2008. It was published as Fincham, J. (2008). Analyzing philosophical discourse. In C. Wu, C.M.I.M. Matthiessen, & M. Herke (eds.), *Proceedings of ISFC 35: Voices Around the World.* Sydney, Australia: 35th ISFC Organizing Committee. 371-5.

[7] A passage was selected from the beginning of Ayer's text passage which presents the two contrasting conceptions of perception. The presentation of these two conceptions, which appears as consecutive paragraphs in the text, has been divided into Texts 3.1 and 3.2 for the purposes of this thesis (see Appendix).

occur". This use of negation is not saying that "It never occurs to us", but rather "It is rare that it occurs to us". In (2), the concessive "but" functions to differentiate between "recognizing" that deception of the senses occurs and this recognition leading him "to suspect" that his senses "cannot in general be trusted"; and again, the latter negations are directed toward modality, as his use of negation does not mean that his senses are trusted, rather only that he does not "suspect" that they "cannot in general be trusted". Finally, in (3), the negation is directed toward the relative exceptionality of the attitude being presented. Again, as opposed to a comment on the concrete validity of this attitude, this expression only says that it is not exceptional. The negation of the attitude's relative rarity does not add much content to the discourse either, since to say this attitude is "not exceptional" is the same as saying that it is "common" or "ordinary"—it only restates that this attitude is the "ordinary" conception of perception.

(1) **(S…) It (F) does <u>not</u> (mood Adj.) normally** *(P) occur (Adj.) to us (**fact Cl./…S) [[that (S) there (F) (C) is any need [[for us to justify our belief [in the existence of material things]]]]]*.

(2) **(S) I (F**/*P) recognize (mood Adj.) indeed (fact Cl.) [[that (S) people (F) are (mood Adj.) sometimes (P) deceived (Adj.) by their senses]]*,

(3) (conj.) *And '* β **(S) this (F) is <u>not</u>**, α <<I believe>>, *(C) an exceptional attitude*.

Whereas in Text 3.1 modal items were negated, in Text 3.2 it is the concreteness of the validity of the ordinary conception which is negated. In (4) below, which contains the only use of negative polarity in Text 3.2, what gets negated is the allowance of the relative validity granted by philosophical perception to the ordinary conception. The first use "But even so", despite being a concessive rather than an adversative, signals that whatever was granted previously in terms of the validity of the ordinary perception granted by philosophers is now negated.

Secondly, the statement that philosophers would agree with the ordinary conception of perception is negated—the philosophers do not concede that material objects are directly perceived.

(4) **(S) It (F) is** *(C) true* **[[that (S) they (F) do, (comment Adj.) in general, (P) allow [[that (S) our belief [in the existence [of material things]] (F) is (Adj.) well (P) founded]];**

α **(S) some of them, (comment Adj.) indeed, (F) would** *(P) say*

" β *|| that (S)* **there** *(F)* **were** *(C) occasions [[on which (S) we (F/P) knew (mood Adj.) for certain (C) the truth [of such propositions as [[' (S) this (F) is (C) a cigarette']] or [[' (S) this (F) is (C) a pen']]]].*

α **But (conj.) <u>even so</u> (S) they (F) are <u>not</u>, (Adj.) for the most part,** *(P) prepared to admit*

" β *||that (S)* **such objects [as pens or cigarettes] (F) are (Adj.) ever** *directly (C)* **perceived.**

There is also a contrast between Texts 3.1 and 3.2 in the certainty of truth in expressions made by the ordinary and philosophical conceptions in regards to perception. In Text 3.1, these expressions are modalized. However in Text 3.2, the mental process (perception) clause becomes a Thematized comment functioning as the Value of a relational process clause.

In Text 3.1, claims and expressions of the ordinary perception are modalized through various means. Returning to (5) below, the ordinary conception is brought into doubt by the rank-shifted fact-clause of the ordinary conception's certainty. Whereas a proposition of the certainty of the ordinary conception would be a negation of the rank-shifted Subject, e.g., "there is not any need", thus denying the existence of any need, the rank-shifted expression presents the need for justification as existent, but as one that "does not normally occur to us". This modality

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moves the need for justification from the negative pole of certainty to a less certain position near

the negative pole.

> (5) **(S…) It (F) does <u>not</u> (mood Adj.) normally** *(P) occur (Adj.) to us (**fact Cl./…S)** [[that (S) there (F) (C) is any need [[for us to justify our belief [in the existence of material things]]]]].*

In (6) below, a proposition of the ordinary conception ("I really am perceiving the

familiar objects…) is metaphorized by means of the interpersonal grammatical metaphor "I have

no doubt whatsoever". Whereas the projected clause itself represents a claim to definite

perception of material objects, this certainty is undermined by the use of the preceding

metaphorized clause. This leads to the conclusion based upon this statement, "they (the material

objects) exist," which is fundamental to the validity of the ordinary conception, also becoming

uncertain. This is reflected in the use of the appraisal lexis ("satisfied") instead of an ideational

expression, such as "know".

> (6) α **(circ. Adj.) At the present moment, for example, (S) I (F**/P) have (C) no *doubt (Adj.) whatsoever*
>
> ' β || that **(S) I (Adj.) really (F) am** *(P) perceiving (C) the familiar objects, the chairs and table, the pictures and books and flowers [[with which my room is furnished]].*
>
> **(conj.) and (S) I (F) am** *(text Adj.) therefore (C) satisfied (fact Cl.) [[that they exist]].*

From the beginning of Text 3.1, it is taken for granted that *some-thing* is perceived. In

Text 3.1, it is said that material objects are believed to be perceived, but the certainty of that

conception of perception, especially the certainty of identifying the Phenomenon of perception,

is cast in doubt not only through modalized means of expressions, but also in the opening clause of Text 3.2:

(7)   **x** *β* || (text Adj.) *When, (text Adj.) however*, **(S) one (F/P) turns *(Adj.) to the writings [of those philosophers [[who have recently concerned themselves with the subject of perception]]]*

         α **(S) one (F) may** *(P) begin to wonder [[whether this matter is quite so simple]].*

Up until the last clause complex of Text 3.2 (8 below), the object of perception is still an undefined variable—it is not "known" what this object *is*. In (8) the entire process of perception, including the Phenomenon, becomes a Thematized comment. This Thematized comment realizes the position of the Carrier in the relational process clause.

(8)   **(S) [[What, in their opinion, we directly perceive]] (F) is (mood Adj.) always** *(C…) an object [of a different kind [from these]]*;

     (…C) one [[to which it is now customary [[to give the name [of 'sense-datum']]]]]

As opposed to the uncertain, modalized expressions of perception in Text 3.1, Text 3.2 concludes with an expression of the philosophical conception of perception which is presented as much more concrete. Whereas in (6) the mental process clause "I really am perceiving…" is projected by an interpersonal grammatical metaphor, thus making it uncertain, in (8) the mental process clause becomes a Thematized comment, thus presenting the mental process (especially the Phenomenon) as more concrete and emphatic.

By tracing the discussion of objects of perception in order to observe lexico-grammatical patterns, the objects of perception are seen to be presented first according to the ordinary conception and in no need of justification, as (1) above shows. This conception is then presented

with a weaker argument in support of it, both through modalizations such as is the case in (1) and (6), and the use of negation is directed towards modal items, giving the proposition only a low degree of certainty, which is seen in (1), (2), (3).

The ordinary conception is then challenged in terms of its validity in comparison to the philosophical conception in (7). In (4), the philosophical conception is presented with a stronger argument, as the use of negation is directed towards concessions made to the validity of the ordinary conception. Finally, with the ordinary conception of objects of perception now in the modal area, the philosophical conception of "sense-datum" is presented as a concrete, even "customary" alternative to the ordinary conception in (8).

From the analysis of the data, it may be argued that the origin of the philosophical dilemma is not one that stems from the ordinary conception of perception itself, but rather is one constructed by the author in order to undermine the certainty of the ordinary conception and to replace the ordinary conception with the philosophical (that is, Idealism).

In terms of J.R. Martin's model of language as the realization of social context[8], it can be seen that these uses of language about the two conceptions of perception serve to undermine the ordinary conception and reinforce the philosophical conception. In this way, the uncertainty of the ordinary language can be understood to metaredound itself within the entire ordinary conception of perception. The uncertain use of language in presenting the ordinary conception in turn casts the entire ordinary conception of perception into doubt. By replacing the ordinary conception's use of "material", "physical", or "familiar" objects with the philosophical term "sense-datum", what has changed is not the mere importation of a new term into the ordinary
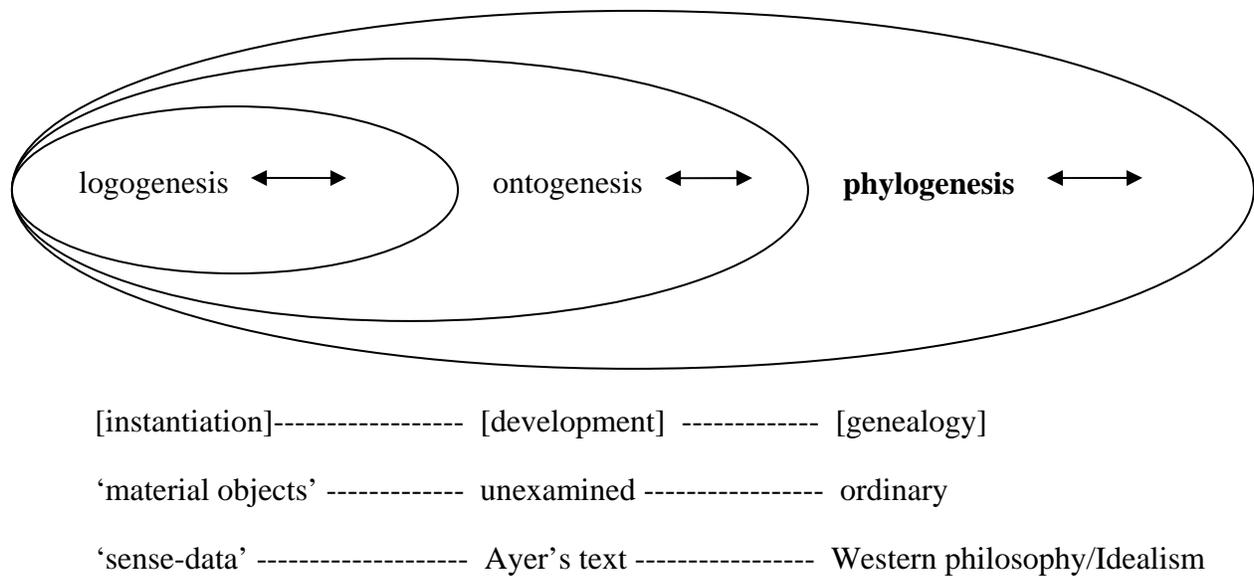
---

[8] See Figure 2.2

conception; rather, by using the philosophical language, what is also granted is the entire

philosophical conception (or social context). This new conception is reinforced by fewer uses of

modality and the use of a Thematized comment in presenting the philosophical conception.

CHAPTER FOUR: IDEOLOGY AND SEMOGENESIS

As was summarized in Chapter Two, ideology can be viewed in two ways: synoptically and dynamically. Viewed synoptically, Ayer's text is representative of the philosophical school of Idealism and has realizations of specific lexico-grammatical patternings of this context.
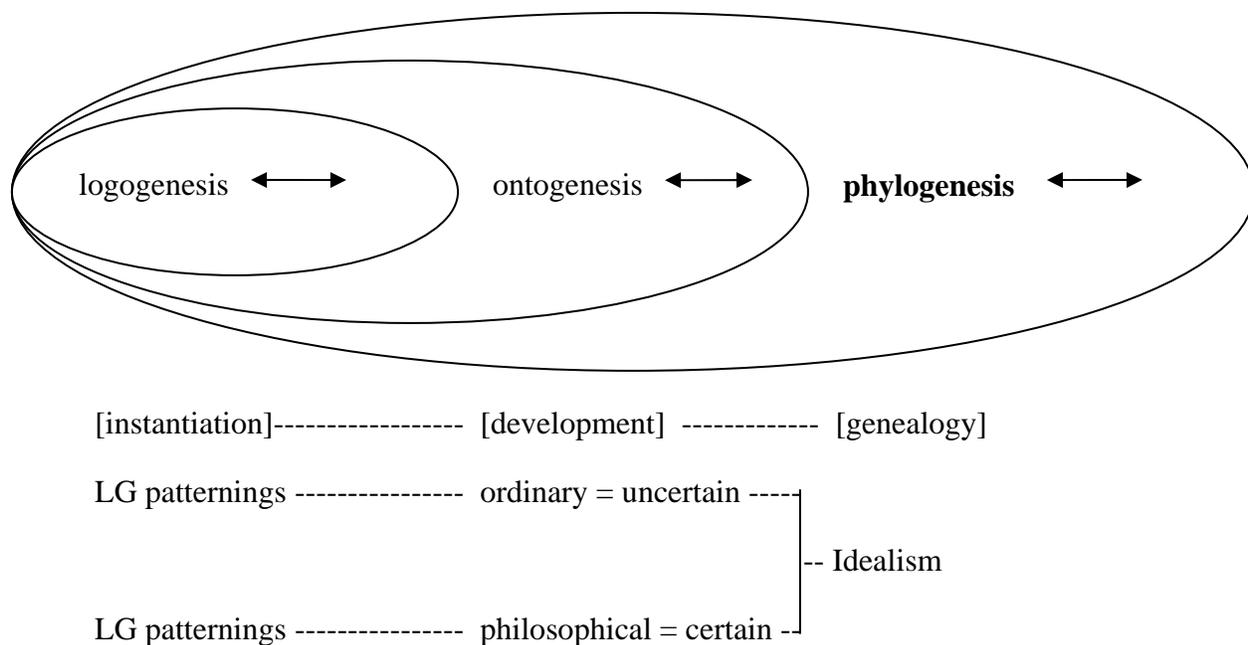
These lexico-grammatical patterns can be synoptically viewed as a sort of static, heteroglossic expression of tension between two opposing sense-making frameworks (or 'philosophical schools'). Ayer's text is a realization of two opposing sense-making frameworks , or 'contexts', each of which, for the purposes of examining the heteroglossic nature of this particular text, has its own ideological developments and realizations.

At the level of logogenesis, the ordinary conception expresses itself as perceiving 'material objects'. This causes and is caused by what is, according to Ayer, an unexamined view (ontogenesis), which in turn realizes and is realized by the ordinary conception of perception (phylogenesis). Opposed to this is the 'philosophical conception'. This view comes from the history of Western philosophy, especially the school of Idealism (phylogenesis). This view is developed and ultimately expressed in Ayer's text (ontogenesis). The realization of this view, at the level of logogenesis, is expressed by perceiving 'sense-data'. The relationship of the levels of ideology realized in these contexts can be expressed as in Figure 4.1 below.

[instantiation]------------------ [development] ------------- [genealogy]

'material objects' ------------- unexamined ----------------- ordinary

'sense-data' -------------------- Ayer's text ----------------- Western philosophy/Idealism

Figure 4.1 Ideology as realization of opposing contexts

Ayer's affiliation with one of these schools (Idealism) would, for the purposes of analyzing this text, be the phylogenetic properties of ideology. The unfolding of the text, with the ordinary conception being downplayed by the use of modality, appraisal lexis, and being put into rank-shifted clauses, and the reinforcement of the philosophical (Idealistic) perspective, would constitute the ontogenetic properties, and the instantiation (lexico-grammatical patterns) would form the logogenetic properties. This synoptic view of ideology in Ayer's text can be represented as Figure 4.2 below.

```
logogenesis  ←→        ontogenesis  ←→        phylogenesis  ←→

[instantiation]----------------- [development] ------------- [genealogy]

LG patternings --------------- ordinary = uncertain ----┐
                                                         │-- Idealism
LG patternings --------------- philosophical = certain --┘
```

Figure 4.2 Synoptic view of ideology as realization of context of Idealism

This synoptic view of ideology understands Ayer's text as the expression of the context of Idealism. That is, the development of the uncertainty of the ordinary conception, realized in particular patterns of modalization and negation of modal items, and the development of the philosophical conception as certain, realized in particular patterns of lack of modalization, Thematized comments, and categorical use of negation, are themselves realizations of the context specific semantic style of how the proponents of the philosophical school of Idealism *can mean*.

As an Idealist, Ayer's particular expressions of the uncertainty of the ordinary conception, or certainty of the philosophical conceptions, are realizations of the system of coding orientations that constitute the culture of 'Idealism'. Also, as the realizational patternings among the three areas of ideology are metaredundant, the particular instantiations and the subsequent

development of the relative certainty of the two conceptions throughout the text ultimately express themselves as forming an argument or basis for Idealism.

Along with this synoptic view, which is much more of a constraint on how members within a given context can or do mean, is the dynamic view. Viewed dynamically, Ayer's text can be seen as a "semiotic evolution" (Martin 1997: 507). Whereas the synoptic view provides us with how Ayer has his identity as an Idealist realized in his language, including his presentation of the 'ordinary' conception, the dynamic view provides us with a perspective on the evolution of Idealism as a way in which one can mean.

Viewed dynamically, the unfolding of Ayer's text realizes and is realized by a change in the way in which one would understand 'perception' (i.e., from the 'ordinary conception' to the 'philosophical conception'). This would in turn realize and be realized by a change in the semiotic history of the philosophical community. Ayer's text is an instantiation of the development from the ordinary to the philosophical conception of perception, which has gradually changed and developed across the semiotic history of the Western philosophical community as 'Idealism', thus expanding the ways in which one *could mean*. This dynamic view can be expressed as in Figure 4.3 below.

logogenesis ⟷   ontogenesis ⟷   **phylogenesis** ⟷
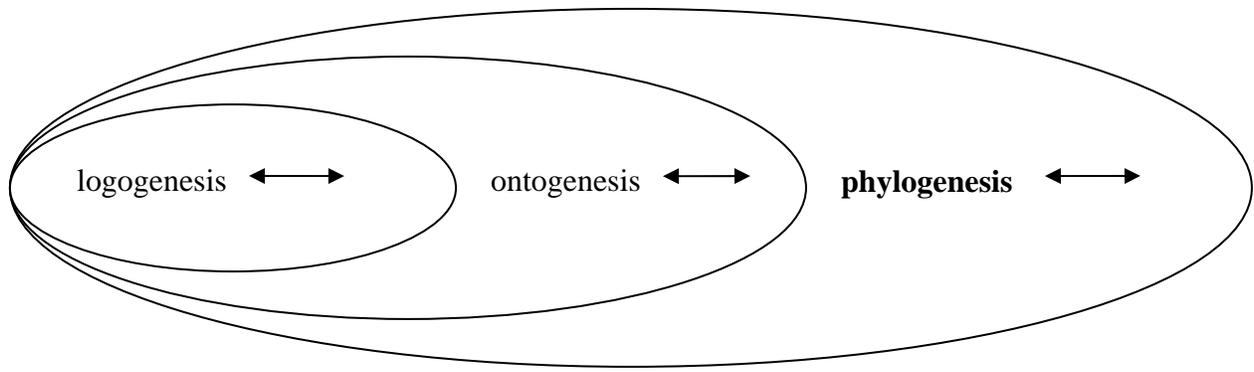
[instantiation]------------------- [development] -------------- [genealogy]

Ayer's text --------------------- ordinary-to-philosophical -- Idealism

Figure 4.3 Dynamic view of ideology as realization of context of Idealism

It should be noted, however, that Idealism as a philosophical sense-making framework does not originate with Ayer. Ayer's text is rather an instantiation, representative of the development of Idealism as a result of semiotic evolution within the individual and/or within Western philosophy.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

From a functional perspective, ideology (as a linguistic realization of sense-making frameworks) is a part (or, 'in the strata') of language. Its role as a choice in the social semiotic process limits, while also semogenetically expanding, meaning potential in analyzable ways (in this analysis, in lexico-grammatical features affecting the semantics of modality and category, and their relation to synoptic and dynamic views of ideology), and thus falls within the realm of linguistic study.

As can be seen when viewed synoptically, ideology (or the instantiation of a particular philosophical sense-making framework) is itself a limitation on this meaning potential. A particular sense-making framework (Idealism) will limit the ways in which a text can talk about a differing sense-making framework (the 'ordinary man's' understanding), in this case by making the claims of the opposing paradigm more uncertain. Also, the text as a whole can be seen as a way in which to limit lexico-grammatical expressions of the 'ordinary man's' sense-making framework ('material', 'physical', and/or 'familiar objects'), and to replace them with choices from its own paradigm (i.e., 'sense-data').

When viewed dynamically, ideology develops the semiotic potential of a speech community and individual. The development and expression of historically and/or evolutionarily new sense-making frameworks, new ways of meaning, expands the ways in which one 'can mean'. From this perspective, the development and elaboration of the philosophical school of Idealism offers new ways for individuals and members of the community at-large to talk about the act, mechanisms, and understanding of perception, including terms such as 'sense-data'. In

this way, Ayer's text expands the meaning potential of the 'ordinary man' to include ways of meaning which belong to Idealism.

The stratum of ideology has traditionally been focused on the socio-semantic concerns for the development of identities such as generation, gender, ethnicity, and class. The concern has not only been with how these identities are developed, but also the unequal access to ways of meaning to people with certain of these identities.

By contrast, this thesis is less concerned with the stratum of ideology in terms of these kinds of socio-semantic concerns, but rather with an area that has not yet been widely studied in SFL—philosophical discourse. This comment is not meant to imply a deficiency, but rather an opportunity for SFL to not only find another use for this (relatively) new tool, but also to facilitate discourse around Martin's extension of the schematic tools available to SFL.

This thesis shows that the stratum of ideology can be used to account for the genealogy, development, and instantiation of sense-making frameworks. Of importance to note also is that the stratum of ideology allows for the discussion of the genealogy, development, and instantiation of ontologies without floating into the realm of metaphysics—although ideology represents the most abstract stratum of social context, as a set of schematic tools, SFL is able to account for it as part of language as social semiotic.

This ability has certain therapeutic value as well. Just as it was shown that Ayer's philosophical 'problem' was existent only insofar as it was created by his language, the stratum of ideology can account for the ways in which philosophical 'problems' (more accurately termed 'misunderstandings') arise in the production of text. It also has the power to show this in a way which does not simply fall in favor of a particular ideology, a particular limitation on meaning

potential, but rather in a way that allows for the simultaneous existence of contradictory sense-

making frameworks, which in turn represents a broader meaning potential for speech

communities and individuals.

APPENDIX

Text 3.1:

"It does not normally occur to us that there is any need for us to justify our belief in the existence of material things. At the present moment, for example, I have no doubt whatsoever that I really am perceiving the familiar objects, the chairs and table, the pictures and books and flowers with which my room is furnished; and I am therefore satisfied that they exist. I recognize indeed that people are sometimes deceived by their senses, but this does not lead me to suspect that my own sense-perceptions cannot in general be trusted, or even that they may be deceiving me now. And this is not, I believe, an exceptional attitude. I believe that, in practice, most people agree with John Locke that 'the certainty of things existing *in rerum natura*, when we have the testimony of our senses for it, is not only as great as our frame can attain to, but as our condition needs." (Ayer 1955: 1)

Text 3.2:

"When, however, one turns to the writings of those philosophers who have recently concerned themselves with the subject of perception, one may begin to wonder whether this matter is quite so simple. It is true that they do, in general, allow that our belief in the existence of material things is well founded; some of them, indeed, would say that there were occasions on which we knew for certain the truth of such propositions as 'this is a cigarette' or 'this is a pen'. But even so they are not, for the most part, prepared to admit that such objects as pens or cigarettes are ever directly perceived. What, in their opinion, we directly perceive is always an object of a different kind from these; one to which it is now customary to give the name of 'sense-datum'." (Ayer 1955: 1-2)

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