On the Dynamics of
Written Communication in
the Light of the Theory of
Functional Sentence Perspective

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The theory of functional sentence perspective (FSP) deals with how the semantic and syntactic structures of the sentence function in fulfilling the communicative purpose intended for the sentence.

For instance, outside a verbal and/or situational context the words *John has been taken ill* constitute a sentence structure, but it does not serve a particular communicative purpose, which may be, for example, to state a person's health condition (*John has been taken ill*), to specify the person affected (*John has been taken ill*), or to affirm that the information conveyed is really valid (*John has been taken ill*). In other words, different communicative purposes cause the sentence structure to function in different kinds of perspective. A change in communicative purpose affects the extent to which a linguistic element contributes toward the fulfillment of a given purpose. One of the concerns of the theory of FSP is therefore to identify the role a linguistic element plays in the dynamics of communication.

Various terms have been used in discussions of this area of linguistic studies. Apart from "functional sentence perspective,"[1] let me mention at least "contextual segmentation of the sentence," "the thematic organization of the utterance," "information structure," "theme-rheme structure," "topic-comment structure," and "topic-

focus structure." The literature on the subject has grown greatly in recent years. *A tentative bibliography of studies in functional sentence perspective* (Tyl et al., 1970), covering the years 1900-1970, lists 663 items, and *An analytical bibliography of Czechoslovak studies in functional sentence perspective* (Firbas & Golková, 1975), covering the years 1900-1972, has 302 items. The former bibliography is composed of studies irrespective of their provenance; the latter offers brief summaries of studies written by Czechoslovak linguists only, the figures testifying to a particularly intensive interest in problems of FSP in Czechoslovakia. Since the publication of the two bibliographies numerous studies have been published, particularly outside Czechoslovakia. Regardless of the terminology employed, FSP currently attracts the attention of a great number of scholars in all parts of the world.

Influenced by V. Mathesius, J. Vachek and F. Daneš,[2] I started my work on FSP in the mid-1950s and was later joined in my investigations by a number of colleagues attached to the Brno Department of English (A. Svoboda, E. Golková, E. Horová, J. Hruška, H. Chládková, J. Chamonikolasová, and L. Urbanová).[3]

Our work is now well known and has already come in both for praise and for criticism.[4] But perhaps because the results of our research have usually appeared in publications that are not always accessible, our work has been overlooked by some researchers in this field. Gratefully accepting the invitation of the editors to contribute to the present volume,[5] I therefore propose to present some of the key issues of my approach and conclude with analyses of several brief texts.

The recent considerably increased interest in phenomena and problems of FSP has not surprisingly led to an abundance of terms and varying expositions. Before turning to the analyses of texts, I shall therefore devote some space to a theoretical discussion. As FSP is a contextual phenomenon, the contextual conditions stipulated for the examples constitute an essential part of the argument. Ample context is provided by the texts presented for analysis in the second part of the paper.

As the present volume is devoted to written communication, my contribution is restricted to the written language, and only occasionally touches on the relationship between the spoken and the written language.

THE INTERPLAY OF FACTORS DETERMINING
THE DEGREES OF COMMUNICATIVE DYNAMISM

Degree of Communicative Dynamism

Communication is a dynamic phenomenon. One of the basic concepts of the theory of FSP is communicative dynamism (CD), which refers to a quality displayed by the development of information toward a particular communicative goal. The degree of CD carried by a linguistic element is the relative extent to which this element contributes toward the further development of the communication.

In reply to *What about Peter?*, the elements of the structure *He has flown to Paris* differ in the extent to which they contribute toward the attainment of the communicative goal. *He* contributes least and *to Paris* most; *has flown* ranks between the two, its notional component, *flow-*, being more dynamic than its temporal and modal exponents, the auxiliary *has* and the suffix *-n*. The communicative goal (or communicative purpose) is to state the destination of Peter's flight.

In the above formulations, "information" covers not only purely factual content, but also attitudes, feelings, and emotions. The degrees of CD are "relative" in that the degree of CD carried by an element within a sentence is always determined in relation to the contributions that the other elements within the sentence make to the further development of the communication. As I shall later explain, "development" is not to be understood as a purely linear notion.

Any linguistic element—a clause, a phrase, a word, a morpheme, or just a vowel alternation (e.g., *sing, sang, sung*)—can become a carrier of CD as long as it conveys some meaning and in consequence participates in the development of the communication (see Firbas, in press a). In fact, even a semantic feature without a formal implementation of its own is a "linguistic element" and is therefore to be regarded as a carrier of CD; for example, the contrast implicit in *Peter stayed in London, and Paul decided to go to Edinburgh*. In the written language, the contrast between *Peter* and *Paul* and the contrast between *London* and *Edinburgh* raise the degrees of CD carried by them, but do not affect their written form. Within the language

system, the carriers of CD are hierarchically organized (see Firbas, in press b). In this chapter, I shall keep to the level of sentence and clause constituents (subject, object, etc.) and deal with them as carriers of CD (but see below, for the role of the temporal and modal exponents of the finite verb).

Within written language, the distribution of degrees of CD is effected by an interplay of three factors: "linear modification," "context," and "semantic structure."

Linear Modification

"Linear modification" is a term coined by D. L. Bolinger (1952). He has appositely summed up the operation of linear modification as follows: The "gradation of position creates gradation of meaning when there are no interfering factors" (1952, p. 1125). This means that, provided there are no interfering factors, the communicative importance of the sentence elements gradually increases with movement toward the end of the sentence, the final element becoming the most important because it completes the communicative purpose of the sentence. Communicative importance determines the degree of CD: An element with a higher degree of communicative importance contributes more to the further development of the communication than an element with a lower degree of communicative importance.

Let us examine a few semantic and grammatical sentence structures, paying particular attention to the constituents in final position.

(1) He could not attend the lecture because he was ill.
(2) Because he was ill, he could not attend the lecture.
(3) He went to London in order to meet a friend.
(4) In order to meet a friend, he went to London.

In their most frequent use, the pronominal subjects convey known information. The final constituents express the communicative purpose to be fulfilled by the structures: 1 states the cause of the man's absence from the lecture, and 2 the fact of his absence; 3 states the purpose of the man's journey, and 4 the journey's destination.

Bolinger closes with the reservation "when there are no interfering factors." The interfering factors are the context and the semantic structure, which under certain conditions are capable of working counter to linear modification.

Context

An element expressing known information—information retrievable from the immediate context (the immediately relevant preceding verbal context and/or the immediately relevant situational context)—is communicatively less important. Because it contributes less to the further development of the communication, it carries a lower degree of CD than an element conveying a piece of irretrievable, new, unknown information, which brings the communication closer to the fulfillment of the communicative purpose. The following structures illustrate the point:

(5) *I* used to know *him.*
(6) *Ich* habe *ihn* gekannt.
(7) *Ich* kannte *ihn.*
(8) *Je l'*ai connu.
(9) Zna*l* js*em ho.* "Known [past participle active] I-am him."

In the most natural use of these structures, the pronouns *(I/ich/je, him/ihn/le/ho),* as well as the formal exponents of person and number carried by the verbal form, convey retrievable information. Irrespective of position they carry low degrees of CD, operating either in the same direction as linear modification or counter to it. It follows that the contextual factor is hierarchically superior to linear modification.

Information retrievable from the immediate context and the elements expressing such information are termed "context-dependent." Such information is not only conveyed by pronouns and the verbal exponents of person and number. For instance, if merely expressing a piece of retrievable information, the noun phrase *the book* in the following sentence structure is context-dependent:

(10) Yes, I have bought *the book.*

The same applies to the equivalent phrases in 11-14.

(11) Ich kaufte mir *das Buch.*
(12) *Das Buch* habe ich mir gekauft.
(13) *(Tu) knihu* jsem si koupil.
(14) Koupil jsem si *(tu) knihu.*

Irrespective of sentence position, *the book, das Buch, (tu) knihu* carry the lowest degrees of CD, together with *I* (or *ich*) and the verbal exponent(s) of person and number. They do so irrespective of their meaning and the semantic relations into which they enter. It follows that in the interplay of factors signaling degrees of CD, context proves to be hierarchically superior not only to linear modification, but also to semantic structure.

Semantic Structure

Provided that they are context-independent, some types of semantic content and some types of semantic relation are capable of working counter to linear modification.

(15) A boy came into the room.
(16) New housing estates have mushroomed on the outskirts of our town.
(17) Grobe Fehler kommen in seinem Aufsatz vor.
(18) In seinem Aufsatz kommen grobe Fehler vor.
(19) He has composed a number of powerful symphonies.
(20) Er komponierte wunderschöne Opern.
(21) Er hat wunderschöne Opern komponiert.
(22) Wunderschöne Opern hat er komponiert.

Each of the verbs in 15-18 denotes appearance or existence on the scene, each subject a phenomenon appearing or existing on the scene, and each adverbial element a local setting. If the subject is context-independent, it carries the most important piece of information. If the verb is context-independent as well, with the adverbial element being either context-independent or context-dependent, the relative degrees of communicative importance are distributed as follows: The least important element is the adverbial (setting the

scene), the most important element is the subject, and the verb ranks between the two. Under these conditions, this interpretation is certainly the most natural, the scene providing the starting point of the development of the communication and the phenomenon providing the goal. The interpretation holds good irrespective of the positions the elements occupy in the sentence.

Each verb-object combination occurring in 19-22 expresses an action and the goal of the action; the subject (which happens to be a pronoun) refers to the agent of the action. In its most natural use, the pronominal subject is context-dependent, whereas the verb and the object are context-independent. The context-independent object, which expresses the result of the action, is communicatively more important than the verb, which merely expresses the action leading to and bringing about the result. The subject provides the starting point for the development of the communication, whereas the object provides the goal reached by this development. In consequence, the element referring to the agent carries the lowest degree of CD, and the element expressing the result of the agent's action carries the highest degree. This interpretation holds good irrespective of the positions the elements occupy in the sentence.[6]

The Interplay of Linear Modification, Context and Semantic Structure

Context and semantic structure are then capable of working counter to linear modification under certain conditions and in doing so replace linear modification in signaling degrees of CD. They cannot be regarded as *interfering* factors; rather, with linear modification, they enter into an *interplay* that determines the distribution of CD over sentence elements. It is not linear modification but the context that plays the dominant role within this interplay of factors.

As linear modification is only a contributory factor, the development of the communication realized within a sentence cannot be looked upon as a merely linear phenomenon. The sentence is a field of semantic and syntactic relations that in its turn provides a distributional field of degrees of CD. This view of the sentence accords with a felicitous wording employed in the *Duden Grammar of German* (Duden, 1959, p. 599), which makes the point that a sentence does not solely operate as a "Nacheinander," but always also as a "Mitein-

ander"; in other words, both "one-after-the-otherness" and "togetherness" characterize the sentence. The sentence elements operate within a "together" that may counteract the linearity of the "one-after-the-other."

The fact that a gradual increase in CD within a sentence need not be implemented linearly makes it necessary to draw a distinction between the linear arrangement of sentence elements and their interpretative arrangement. The latter is the arrangement of the sentence elements according to the gradual rise in CD irrespective of the positions they occupy within the sentence. Sentences with different linear arrangements of corresponding elements may, nevertheless, have the same interpretative arrangement. Under the contextual conditions I have stipulated above, the interpretative arrangements of the elements in 5-9 are the following:

Interpretative Arrangement	Linear Arrangement
(5) "I him used to know."	I used to know him.
(6) "Ich ihn habe gekannt."	Ich habe ihn gekannt.
(7) "Ich ihn kannte.," or rather "Ich ihn -te kann-."	Ich kannte ihn.
(8) "Je l'ai connu."	Je l'ai connu.
(9) "Jsem ho znal.," or rather "-m ho jse- -l zna-."	Znal jsem ho.

If we compare the linear arrangements and the corresponding interpretative arrangements, we see that the two arrangements may coincide (8), or they may differ to a greater or lesser extent (the other examples) as determined by the system of word order of the language.

STATIC SEMANTICS AND DYNAMIC SEMANTICS AND THE SCALES OF DYNAMIC SEMANTIC FUNCTIONS

A functional theory requires a distinction between two angles from which a semantic and grammatical sentence structure may be viewed: the static and the dynamic. From the static angle, the structure is viewed as unrelated to any particular context; in other words, as not operating in any actual flow of communication. From the

dynamic angle, it is viewed as linked with some definite contextual conditions.

From the static point of view, verbs and adjectives express characteristics, the former tending to express transient, the latter permanent characteristics. Of particular relevance to our discussion is the characteristic that may be described as "existence or appearance on the scene." There are verbs or verbal phrases that express it with unmistakable clarity *(come into view, come on the scene, come in, come up, appear, loom up, occur, present oneself, take place, turn up)* and verbs or verbal phrases that do so implicitly (as in *A wave of the azalea scent drifted into her face; A goldfinch flew over his head; Big spots gleamed in the mist; A haze hovered over the prospect; A fly settled on his hair;* see Firbas, 1975a, p. 54).

From the dynamic point of view, if a verb of appearance/existence occurs in a sentence together with a context-independent subject and an adverbial of place and/or an adverbial of time, it introduces the phenomenon expressed by the subject into the flow of communication. The verb then performs the dynamic function of expressing appearance/existence (App/Ex), and the adverbial elements perform the dynamic function of expressing the setting (Set). The subject, on the other hand, performs the dynamic function of expressing a phenomenon that appears or exists on the scene (Ph). The functions constitute a scale that reflects rising degrees of communicative importance, and hence a gradual rise in CD. The scale constituted by these dynamic functions is the Existential Scale: Set-App/Ex-Ph. This formula reflects an interpretative arrangement, not necessarily corresponding to the linear arrangement.

Under different contextual conditions, the verb of appearance/existence need not perform the dynamic function App/Ex. The semantic and syntactic framework may be the same, but if the subject is context-dependent and the adverbial element is context-independent *(The boy/He came into the room)*, the communicative situation is different. The notion expressed by the subject has already emerged in the course of the development of the communication and has therefore already been introduced onto the scene. The sentence is not Ph-oriented. The subject and in consequence also the verb and the adverbial element perform different dynamic functions. The verb ascribes a characteristic to a notion that has already been introduced into the flow of communication; it performs the dynamic function of expressing a quality (Q). Consequently, the subject performs the dynamic function of expressing a quality bearer (B), and the adverbial element performs the dynamic function of expressing a specification (Sp); in the absence of a further specification (see below) the adverbial element completes the development of the communication within the sentence. It follows that in the act of communication, the sentence is Sp-oriented. The dynamic functions constitute a scale reflecting a gradual rise in CD, the Quality Scale: B = Q = Sp. Again, the formula displays an interpretative arrangement, not necessarily corresponding to the actual linear arrangement.

On the other hand, a verb that from the static point of view is not one of appearance/existence can perform the App/Ex function. For instance, if in a sentence consisting of a subject and a verb, the subject conveys information irretrievable from the immediately relevant context, it will show a strong tendency to become the goal of the message and to perform the Ph-function. The verb then recedes into the background, performing the App/Ex-function. (Compare *President Kennedy has been assassinated; Präsident Kennedy ist ermordet worden; London has been bombed; Die Schule brennt.*) Under these circumstances, the sentence becomes Ph-oriented, and the intonation center would fall not on the verb, but on the subject.

Like the Existential Scale, the Quality Scale can open with a setting. Provided that the sentence structure *Years ago a young king waged hazardous wars* is entirely context-independent, it implements the Quality Scale opening with a temporal setting: *Years ago* (Set) *a young king* (B) *waged* (Q) *hazardous wars* (Sp). The setting need not be temporal or local, although these represent the two most frequent types (the temporal setting being the more frequent of the two; see Uhlířová, 1978; Horová, 1976). Under these contextual conditions, the sentence structures of 2 and 4 open with settings respectively expressing a concomitant cause and a concomitant purpose.[7] The Quality Scale can also be expanded by one or more further specifications (FSp): *Years ago* (Set) *a young king* (B) *ruled* (Q) *his country* (Sp) *capriciously and despotically* (FSp).

A point worth considering is the relationship between the Ph-function and the B-function. It may be argued that in this sentence *a king* performs a Ph-function, because the sentence could be interpreted as corresponding to *Years ago there was a young king, who ruled his country capriciously and despotically.* The two versions indeed correspond to each other, but they are not functionally equivalent.

Whereas the amended version implements the Ph-function and the B-function (in that order) separately, the original version telescopes them into one sentence constituent *a king*, thereby implementing the two functions simultaneously. Whereas the amended version consists of a principle clause and a subordinate clause, the original version consists of one sentence, which is Sp-oriented and implements the Quality Scale.

It would be odd to open a story with *He ruled his country capriciously and despotically. Years ago there was a young king.* If the narrator does so, he or she would have to explain: "Oh, I mean a young king. There was a young king, you know."

On the other hand, the narrator may open the story (though not a fairy-tale) with the sentence *He ruled . . .* , adding no apologetic explanation and treating the character as known from the very beginning. He leads the listener/reader into the middle of the story (*"in medias res"*), using this type of opening as a stylistic device.

The telescoped opening, the odd opening, and the stylistically colored opening indicate that the Ph-function can be implemented simultaneously with the B-function or remain unimplemented (becoming conspicuous by its absence), but cannot be implemented *after* the B-function: A quality bearer presupposes a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene.

Since both scales can open with settings and since a quality bearer presupposes a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene, the two scales can be combined into one scale that reflects a gradual rise in CD: Set = App/Ex = Ph = B = Q = Sp = FSp(s).

The scales reflect the dynamic functions of context-independent elements.

As has been shown, a context-dependent element recedes into the background and irrespective of the character of its semantic content carries a low degree of CD. Context-dependence, then, tends to neutralize the dynamic semantic function of an element; it tends to bring it down to the level of a setting. In association with clues provided by context-independent elements, a context-dependent element may still suggest a distinctly dynamic function. But being context-dependent, it cannot exceed in CD any context-independent element. For instance, in the presence of context-independent elements, *He* still suggests the B-function in *He used to go for walks* and participates in implementing the Quality Scale. But it will not exceed in CD a context-independent setting in *In the late fifties, he used to go*

for long walks. I shall indicate the context dependence of an element by adding a superscripted ^{d} to the symbol representing the dynamic function: *He* (B^d) *used to go* (Q) *for long walks* (Sp); *In the late fifties* (Set) *he* (B^d) *used to go* (Q) *for long walks* (Sp). The problems of the neutralization and distinctiveness of the dynamic semantic functions await further investigation, but the scales reflect a central phenomenon in the system of language, as will be demonstrated by the text analyses offered in the final section of this chapter.

THE FOUNDATION-LAYING PROCESS AND THE CORE-CONSTITUTING PROCESS

Theme, Transition, and Rheme

The dynamics of the communication can be further illustrated by two important processes: the foundation-laying and the core-constituting processes.

Some sentence elements provide a foundation upon which the remaining elements complete the information and fulfill the communicative purpose. The elements completing the information constitute the core of the information.

All elements that are retrievable from the immediately relevant context—all context-dependent elements—are foundation-laying. As for the context-independent elements, those performing the Set-function and the B-function are also foundation-laying. Under the special conditions stated below, even an App/Ex-element can become foundation-laying.

A special part is played by the verb in the act of communication. Unless context dependent (which rarely happens), it performs the App/Ex-function (see, for instance, ex. 15-18) or, more frequently, the Q-function (see, for instance, ex. 1-14 and 19-22). When performing the Q-function, it can express the very core of the information and can consequently carry the highest degree of CD, but only if no element performing an Sp-function is present in the sentence (for example, *On the following day he died*). When performing the App/Ex-function, it can become the carrier of the lowest degree of CD and hence a foundation-laying element, but only if there is no Set-element present (for example, *[It was dark] and rain was falling*).

It follows that the semantic content of the verb and the semantic relations into which it enters play an important role in determining the functional perspective of the sentence. The verb shows an unmistakable tendency to carry the intermediate degrees of CD within a sentence. When it does so, it begins to build the core of the "message" upon the information conveyed by the foundation-laying elements. Strictly speaking, however, it is the temporal and modal exponents of the finite verb (TMEs) that start the core-constituting process.

The TMEs are the formal means used by the finite verb to signal the basic predicative categories of tense and mood; for instance, the verbal auxiliaries (e.g., *has been* in *has been written*), the verbal suffixes (e.g., *-en* in *has been written* or *-s* in *writes*), or the vowel alternation (for example, *write, wrote, written*). The TMEs establish a link between the grammatical subject and the grammatical predicate. Their grammatical meaning, however, is rooted in their semantic content. By indicating a temporal relation and an attitude of the speaker, they provide a link between the semantic content of the sentence and the extralinguistic reality. By starting the core-constituting process, they provide a link, and at the same time a boundary, between the foundation and the core. (As the start of the core-constituting process, they actually belong to the core. They do not, however, perform the function ascribable to the verb, the Q-function or the App/Ex-function, a function performed by the notional component of the verb.) The congruence of all these important linking functions places the TMEs in a central position within the language system.

In the development of the communication, the TMEs fulfill their linking functions irrespective of the dynamic functions performed by the other elements in the sentence.[8] Examples 23-32 illustrate this.

(23) His father was the famous musician Johann Strauss.
(24) The famous musician Johann Strauss was his father.
(25) The lion has killed the hunter.
(26) The hunter has been killed by the lion.
(27) Peter adores Eve.
(28) Eve adores Peter.
(29) Der Lehrer wird den Schüler preisen.
(30) Der Schüler wird von dem Lehrer gepriesen werden.
(31) A strange figure appeared in the doorway.
(32) Schwere Wolken waren auf dem Himmel erschienen.

Provided the subjects of 23-30 are the only context-dependent elements within their sentence structures and the subjects of 31-32 are context independent, the interpretative arrangements of the elements are the following. (The TMEs are represented by the TME symbol, and in addition given in full in square brackets behind it. The notional component of the verb is represented by the bare present infinitive stem. The abbreviations f and c stand for "foundation" and "core," respectively.)

(23) His father (f) TME [was] be the famous musician Johann Strauss (c).
(24) The famous musician Johann Strauss (f) TME [was] be his father (c).
(25) The lion (f) TME [has -ed] kill the hunter (c).
(26) The hunter (f) TME [has been -ed] kill by the lion (c).
(27) Peter (f) TME [-s] adore Eve (c).
(28) Eve (f) TME [-s] adore Peter (c).
(29) Der Lehrer (f) TME [wird -en] preis den Schüler (c).
(30) Der Schüler (f) TME [wird ge- -ie- -en] werden preis von dem Lehrer (c).
(31) In the doorway (f) TME [-ed] appear a strange figure (c).
(32) Auf dem Himmel (f) TME [waren, -ie- -en] erschein Schwere Wolken (c).

In all the arrangements, the TMEs occur after the foundation and introduce the core, simultaneously acting as a boundary and as a link. They fulfill this function conspicuously if the finite verb serves as a copula and its notional component merely ascribes a quality. They fulfill this function whatever the contextual conditions (but see Note 8), even if the notional component of the finite verb, which shows a strong tendency to participate in the linking function, is foundation-laying or conveys the very core of the message; for example, see the interpretative arrangements as shown by 33-38.

(33) Fall (f) TME [was -ing] rain (c).
(34) Expect (f) TME [is -ed] a thaw (c).
(35) Brew (f) TME [was -ing] trouble (c).
(36) He (f) TME [-ed] die (c).
(37) The rain (f) TME [has -ed] cease (c).
(38) They (f) TME [-ed] disagree (c).

In its linking function, the notional component of the finite verb may be replaced by, for instance, an adjective:

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(39) She (f) TME [was] be reluctant to admit any mistake (c).
(40) He (f) TME [is] be hesitant about trusting strangers (c).
(41) They (f) TME [are] be likely to make a mess of everything (c).

The foundation-laying elements form the *theme*. The core-constituting elements form the *non-theme*. The non-theme comprises the *transition* and the *rheme*. The transition consists of elements performing the linking function. The TMEs are the transitional element par excellence: They carry the lowest degree of CD within the non-theme and are the *transition proper*. The highest degree of CD, on the other hand, is carried by the *rheme proper*.

The theme expresses what the sentence is about and constitutes the point of departure in the development of the communication. The element or elements in the theme carry the lowest degrees of CD.[9]

THE IMMEDIATELY RELEVANT CONTEXT
AND THE TERM "CONTEXT-DEPENDENT"

In a paper published in 1957 (Firbas, 1957a, pp. 36-37; see also Firbas, 1966, pp. 30-31), I emphasized that, roughly speaking, there are two types of known information conveyed by the sentence in the act of communication: (1) information that, though forming part of knowledge shared by the writer/speaker and the reader/listener, must be regarded as unknown for the immediate communicative purpose and in this sense irretrievable from the context; and (2) information that not only forms part of common knowledge shared by the writer and the reader[10] but is for the immediate communicative purpose fully retrievable from the context.

The distinction may be illustrated from a passage in J. Harris's philosophical inquiry into language and universal grammar (1751), quoted in Brown and Yule (1983, p. 170).

'Tis here we shall discover the use of the two Articles (A) and (THE). (A) respects our *primary* Perception, and denotes Individuals as *unknown;* (THE) respects our *secondary* Perception, and denotes Individuals as *known*. To explain by an example. I see an object pass by, which I never saw till then. What do I say? *There goes A Beggar, with A*

long Beard. The Man departs, and returns after a week. What do I say then? *There goes THE Beggar with THE long Beard.* The article only is changed, the rest remains unaltered.

What Harris regards as primary perception of course conveys unknown information. His example of secondary perception conveys known information of type 1, but not of type 2. The beggar with the long beard may be well known to the speaker and the listener, but it is the appearance of the beggar that the speaker wishes to announce. Various other persons known to the speaker and to the listener could have appeared on the scene. In the development of the communication "the beggar with the long beard" conveys unknown information irretrievable from the immediately relevant context.

Any kind of information irretrievable from the preceding verbal context or the situational context is to be regarded as unknown. But even if conveying retrievable information, an element may simultaneously convey a piece of information that is irretrievable. For instance, in *At first, I was at a loss whether I should ask Peter or Paul, but eventually I turned to Peter,* the element *Peter* of the *but*-clause conveys retrievable information, but at the same time it conveys the speaker's choice, which is irretrievable information. There is a wide range of types of irretrievable information expressed by elements that in other respects are carriers of retrievable information.

The identification of irretrievable information does not seem to pose a particularly difficult problem, but further investigation is needed to establish the retrievability span—the stretch of the preceding verbal context within which an element remains retrievable after its last occurrence in the verbal context. Analyzing one of Aelfric's homilies, Svoboda (1981) came to the conclusion that an element remains retrievable for a stretch of context covering seven clauses. This finding may not have general validity, but it offers an indication of the shortness of the retrievability span.

Similarly, the situational context is highly restricted. It is constituted only by those objects of the situational contexts, or their parts or features, that have become a matter of immediate attention or concern for both the speaker and the listener. For instance, two friends see a ferocious dog, which naturally becomes the object of their immediate concern. "I do hope he won't bite us," one friend

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says to the other, making the pronoun *he* express a referent that is retrievable from the situational context.

There are also some referents that are permanently present in the situational context: the speaker/writer, the reader/listener, human beings in general, nature in general (see Svoboda, 1983, p. 55). But even these can occasionally be referred to so as to convey some additional irretrievable information; for example, contrast *(You knew about it, but I didn't)*.

Context is, of course, a complex phenomenon and comprises a number of spheres. The immediately relevant context is one of them and is embedded in the sphere formed by the entire preceding verbal context and the entire situational context accompanying it. This sphere is then embedded within one constituted by the knowledge and experience shared by the interlocutors, which in turn forms part of the general context of human knowledge and experience.

The complexity of context is increased by possible borderline areas between the spheres. There is certainly a borderline area between the immediately relevant and the immediately non-relevant verbal and situational context. For instance, in a story about Peter and Paul, both characters can become items of permanent attention and concern for the text in question. They then behave as context dependent even though not occurring within the retrievability span (compare Svoboda's "long-lived" themes; Svoboda, 1981, p. 176).

A linguistic element can be regarded as more or less dependent on all the spheres of context. The unqualified term "context dependent," however, has to be understood as referring to the immediately relevant context.

COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSE, MULTIFUNCTIONALITY, AND POTENTIALITY

The notion of "communicative purpose" plays an important role in the dynamics of the communication, for it determines the goal toward which the information is to develop within a sentence, and also the distribution of degrees of CD over the sentence elements. Communicative purpose is multifaceted, because it can be viewed

from at least three angles: the communicative purpose of the speaker/writer, the interpretation of the speaker/writer's communicative purpose by the listener/reader (which may or may not be in agreement with the speaker/writer's intention), and the communicative purpose actually implied by the sentence structure.

The distribution of degrees of CD is determined by an interplay of factors. The laws of this interplay have to be observed both by the sender and the receiver of the message; otherwise, communication would break down, sender and receiver failing to understand each other, and the sender would not be able to take over the role of the receiver and vice versa. Naturally, considering the complexity of the situation in which a semantic and grammatical sentence structure operates in the act of communication, the result of the interplay of factors may be equivocal, or the interplay may be abused by the sender, or mistakenly interpreted by the receiver, or wrongly analyzed by the linguistic investigator.

From the point of view of the user the sentence structure normally performs one function at the very moment of utterance, the one that the user intends to impose upon it. Similarly, only one function is normally performed by the sentence structure from the point of view of the receiver, the one imposed upon it by his interpretation. From each point of view, the sentence structure is monofunctional. From the point of view of the communicative act, however, the sentence structure may of course become bifunctional if each of the two imposes a different interpretation on it. It is the investigator's task to determine under which conditions a sentence structure will unequivocally perform only one function and under which conditions it will permit of more than one interpretation.

The following pair of sentence structures illustrates the distinction, the analysis assuming that *you* and *I* are context dependent and the rest context independent.

(42) While I am away, you can go on working at your paper.
(43) You can go on working at your paper while I am away.

The adverbial clause of time unmistakably functions as a setting in 42, its initial position ruling out another interpretation. In 43, on the other hand, it may serve either as a setting or as a specification. This potentiality, however, can be removed by intonation, which in the spoken language operates as an additional factor.

ANALYSIS OF TEXT 1

(1) A heavy dew had fallen. (2) The grass was blue. (3) Big drops hung on the bushes (4) and just did not fall; (5) the silvery fluffy toi-toi was limp on its long stalks, (6) and all the marigolds and the pinks in the bungalow gardens were bowed to the earth with wetness. (7) Drenched were the cold fuchsias, (8) round pearls of dew lay on the flat nasturtium leaves. (Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield, London, Constable, 1945, p. 205)[11]

Let me first establish the dynamic semantic functions performed by the sentence elements and determine whether these functions render the sentence elements thematic, transitional, or rhematic. The abbreviation "TME" has been used throughout for all the possible formal implementations of the temporal and modal exponents, which invariably constitute the transition proper. The rest of the transition has been indicated simply by "Tr." In addition, the following abbreviations have been used: Th(eme), Rh(eme), Set(ting), App(earance)/Ex(istence), Ph(enomenon appearing/ existing on the scene), B(earer of quality), Q(uality), Sp(ecification), F(urther)Sp(ecification). The rhematic elements have been italicized.

(1) *A heavy dew* (Ph, Rh) had (TME) fallen (App/Ex, Th; TME).
(2) The grass (B, Th) was (TME; Tr) *blue* (Q, Rh).
(3) *Big drops* (Ph, Rh) hung (TME; Tr) on the bushes (Set, Th)
(4) and *just* (rhematic intensifier) did (TME) *not* (negation focus anticipator) *fall* (RME; Rh); *TME*
(5) the silvery fluffy toi-toi (B, Th) was (TME; Tr) *limp* (Q, Rh) on its long stalks (Set, Th),
(6) and all the marigolds and the pinks in the bungalow gardens (B, Th) were (TME) bowed (Q, Tr) *to the earth* (Sp, Rh) *with wetness* (FSp,Rh).
(7) *Drenched* (Q, Rh) were (TME) the cold fuchsias (B, Th),
(8) *round pearls of dew* (Ph, Rh) lay (TME; Tr) on the flat nasturtium leaves (Set, Th).

Of the two rhematic elements in 6, *with wetness* carries the highest degree of CD in the whole sentence, and it is to be regarded as rheme proper. *Just* and *not* in 4 are rhematic elements. They do not normally assume the function of rheme proper, for they merely tend to

accompany the rheme proper and in terms of interpretative arrangement point to it and anticipate it.

Table 2.1 presents the elements of the sentences in the interpretative arrangement. The thematic, transitional and rhematic elements are placed in separate columns. In the right margin, the designations "Existential" and "Quality" stand for the Existential Scale and the Quality Scale.

The TMEs occupy a central position within the interpretative arrangement, which coincides with their central function in the syntactic structure of the sentence. With the exception of 1 and 4, the TMEs are joined in their mediatory role by the notional component of the finite verb. (In 1 the notional component is thematic, in 4 rhematic.) The notional component predominantly serves to introduce a Ph-element into the development of the communication. The TMEs, together with the transitional components of the finite verbs, form a string separating the thematic and the rhematic layer within the paragraph.[12] These roles of the TMEs and the notional component of the finite verb emerge also from the analyses of Texts 2 and 3.

The thematic elements mostly perform the B-function and the Set-function. Only one thematic element is verbal (in 1); as the only other element present is a Ph-element, it performs the App/Ex-function. The thematic layer does not contain any context-dependent elements, though these are normally frequent in thematic layers. With the exception of the verb *fall*, all the elements constituting the thematic layer refer to parts of the bay, the place the story is about.

Even the rhematic layer shows a high degree of semantic homogeneity. The first rhematic element, performing a Ph-function, introduces the notion of "a heavy dew" into the narration, and all the remaining rhematic elements express the various forms of wetness and the effects it has produced.

In this way, the two layers form two semantically homogeneous complexes: one—the thematic complex—presenting the bay; the other—the rhematic complex—depicting the wetness affecting it. The tabular arrangement makes this particularly clear. The thematic layer presents the bay as the subject of the description offered by the rhematic layer; the rhemes express some information about the parts of the bay. This establishes and characterizes the "aboutness" feature of the thematic layer in general and the "aboutness"

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TABLE 2.1

THEME	NON-THEME		SCALE
	TRANSITION	RHEME	
(1) fall Ap/Ex	TME	a heavy dew Ph	Existential
(2) the grass B	TME was A ΊR	blue Q	Quality
(3) on the bushes Set	TME hung Ap/Ex	big drops Ph	Existential
(4) [ellipted]	TME	not fall Q	Quality
(5) the silvery fluffy toi-toi B on its stalks Set	TME was AΊR	limp Q	Quality
(6) all the marigolds and the pinks in the bungalow gardens B	TME bowed Q	to the earth Sp with wetness FSp	Quality
(7) the cold fuchsias B	TME were	drenched Q	Quality
(8) on the flat nasturtium leaves Set	TME lay Ap/Ex	round pearls of dew Ph	Existential

features of the individual themes in particular.[13] The degree of semantic homogeneity of a thematic or a rhematic layer within a paragraph may vary; but as the analyses of Texts 2 and 3 will also show, semantic homogeneity can play an important role in the semantic structure of a paragraph and heighten the effectiveness of the message.

All the articles occurring in the thematic layer are definite; the rhematic layer, on the other hand, contains only one definite article, all the other articles used in it being nongeneric indefinite articles or their zero plural variants. This distribution of articles is not the only one possible. As has been shown elsewhere, the definite article is not excluded from the rheme, nor is the indefinite article excluded from the theme (Firbas, 1966). Nevertheless, under favorable contextual conditions they can appear in opposition and efficiently cooperate in signaling the theme and the rheme within the sentence and the thematic and the rhematic layers within the paragraph.

The extract contains three implementations of the Existential Scale and five implementations of the Quality Scale. This reflects a predominance of the Quality Scale, testified to by other analyses even more conspicuously (Firbas, 1975b, pp. 322-331; 1981, pp. 55-66; see also the analyses of the other texts). Some readers may regard 3 and 8 as implementations of the Quality Scale. If they do so,

they will place the elements *big drops* and *round pearls*, which participate in expressing various forms of wetness, in the thematic layer, which otherwise enumerates the parts of the scene, and the elements *on the bushes* and *on the flat nasturtium leaves*, which participate in enumerating the parts of the scene, in the rhematic layer, which otherwise expresses various forms of wetness. They will then reduce the high degrees of homogeneity which the thematic and the rhematic layers display.

I do not intend to deal here with the relationship between FSP and intonation, but I note that if attentive readers place the intonation center on the elements expressing the various forms of wetness (i.e., on the rhemes proper, according to the interpretation in the table) they will throw into relief the core of the information.

My analysis undoubtedly bears out what Katherine Mansfield herself has said about her own way of writing, as well as what Ian A. Gordon, the editor of a collection of her New Zealand stories (Mansfield, 1974), has said about her art,

> I have a passion for technique. I have a passion for making the thing into a *whole* if you know what I mean. Out of technique is born real style, I believe. There are no short cuts. (Mansfield, 1928, Vol. 2, p. 92; quoted after Gordon in Mansfield, 1974, p. xviii)

> I choose not only the length of every sentence, but even the sound of every sentence. I choose the rise and fall of every paragraph to fit her, and to fit her on that day and at that very moment. After I'd written it I read it aloud—numbers of times—just as one would *play over* a musical composition—trying to get it nearer and nearer to the expression—until it fitted her. (Mansfield, ibid, p. 88; quoted after Gordon, in Mansfield, 1974, pp. xviii-xix)

> There is nothing in the best writing of Katherine Mansfield that is not planned and executed with consummate skill. She is one of the most professional writers in the language and her writing can stand up to the most rigorous analysis (Gordon, in Mansfield, 1974, p. xxi)

The extract from Katherine Mansfield's short story did not contain subordinate clauses or semiclauses (consisting of a non-finite verb form and an element or elements expanding it). The remaining texts contain both types of structure.

Irrespective of its place within the network of subordination, a subordinate clause or semiclause serves as a unit within its superor-

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dinate structure, at the same time providing a distributional subfield of CD. All subordinate clauses and semiclauses that serve as units within a principal clause as well as relative clauses qualifying a headword embedded in the principal clause will be examined for the distribution of CD over their elements.[14] To simplify the analysis all such structures will be dealt with separately.

ANALYSIS OF TEXT 2

Gandhi Promises Punjab Solution but Refuses to Bow to "Cult of Violence"

From Kuldip Nayear

(1) India will solve the Punjub problem without yielding to "separatist ideologies and to the cult of violence," Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister, has told the nation.

(2) Outlining Government policy on Saturday in his first television and radio broadcast since last month's victory, Mr. Gandhi promised to give priority to resolving the problem, caused by Sikh extremist demands for a separate state.

(3) The recently appointed Cabinet committee would study various aspects of the issue and suggest a solution within a specified time-frame, he said.

(4) Despite a tough attitude to the extremists, Mr. Gandhi held an olive branch to the Sikh community.

(5) He said: "In ending the sad chapter of discord, all should cooperate. The Sikhs are as much part of India as any other community." (The Times, Monday, January 27, 185, p. 7)

(1) *India will solve the Punjab problem without yielding to "separatist ideologies and to the cult of violence"* (FSp, Rh)[i], Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister (B, Th) has (TME) told (TME; Q, Tr) *the nation* (Sp, Rh).

(2) Outlining Government policy on Saturday in his first television and radio broadcast since last month's victory (Set., Th)[i], Mr Gandhi (B^d, Th) promised (TME; Q, Tr) *to give priority to resolve the problem, caused by Sikh extremist demands for a separate state* (Sp, Rh)[ii].

(3) *The recently appointed Cabinet committee would study various aspects of the issue and suggest a solution within a specified time-frame* (Sp, Rh)[i], he (B^d, Th) said (TME; Q, Tr).

(4) Despite a tough attitude to the extremists (Set, Th), Mr Gandhi (B^d, Th) held (TME; Q, Tr) *an olive branch* (Sp, Rh) to the Sikh community (Set^d, Th).

(5) He (B^d, Th) said (TME; Q, Tr): *"In ending the sad chapter of discord, all should cooperate. The Sikhs are as much part of India as any other community"* (Q, Rh)[i, ii].

(1¹) India (B, Th) will (TME) solve (Q, Tr) *the Punjab problem* (Sp,Rh) *without yielding to "separatist ideologies and to the cult of violence"* (FSp, Rh).

(2¹) Outlining (tme; Q, Tr)[15] *Government policy* (Sp, Rh) on Saturday (Set, Tr) in his first television and radio broadcast since last month's victory (Set, Tr),

(2ⁱⁱ) to give (tme; Q, Tr) *priority* (Sp, Rh) *to resolving the problem caused by Sikh extremist demands for a separate state* (FSp, Rh).

(3¹) The recently appointed Cabinet committee (B, Th) would (TME) study (Q, Tr) *various aspects of this issue* (Sp, Rh) and suggest (Q, Tr) *a solution* (Sp, Rh) *within a specified time-frame* (FSp, Rh).

(5¹) In ending the sad chapter of discord (Set, Th), all (B, Th) should (TME) *cooperate* (Q, Rh).

(5ⁱⁱ) The Sikhs (B^d, Th) are (TME; ascription of Q) *as much part of India as any other community* (Q, Rh).[16]

In contrast with the extract from Mansfield's short story, the newspaper report consistently retains one and the same referent throughout the thematic elements of the principal clauses: *Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister; Mr Gandhi; he; Mr Gandhi; He.* Each expression of the referent carries the lowest degree of CD within its thematic section, and in consequence within the entire sentence. This accounts for a very high degree of semantic homogeneity within the thematic layer of the passage. The expressions referring to Mr Gandhi constitute a *hypertheme,*[17] conveying what the entire passage is about.

If present, other thematic elements serve as points of departure as well, but only in regard to the distributional fields in which they occur. This role raises their CD within the theme. They express various aspects of the content of Mr. Gandhi's speech (see Svoboda, 1981, 1983).

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The gist of the speech is presented within the rhematic layer of the passage, culminating in the rhemes proper of the two final complex distributional fields: *an olive branch* and *as much part of India as any other community*. Only in one case does the notional component of the finite verb appear within the rhematic layer (*cooperate* in the direct speech in 5[1]).

An interesting problem is posed by the relationship between the headline—Gandhi (B, Th) promises (TME; Q, Tr) solution (Sp, Rh), but refuses (TME; Q, Tr) to bow to 'cult of violence' (Sp, Rh)—and the text of the report. It could be argued that the notions occurring in the headline are repeated in the text and should therefore be interpreted as context dependent. However, the notions presented as rhematic in the headline are presented as the most important (i.e., they are rhematic) also within the direct speech contained in the opening sentence of the text, and *Gandhi* appears in that sentence with the title *Mr.*, the first name, and the designation of office. Hence, the reporter indicates that he is making a fresh start, so that in this news report (though not necessarily always) the headline and the body of the text fulfill two different communicative purposes. The headline summarizes the most important point, and the report independently gives the information in full detail.

ANALYSIS OF TEXT 3

Dear Resident,

(1) We have a major problem at International Students House of residents removing items of furniture and equipment from the public areas of the House ([1a] and I include Mary Trevelyan Hall as well as Great Portland Street house) for use in their own rooms.

(2) I write to inform you that this practice must cease (3) and as from the 5th November I will instruct the Housekeeper at GPS and the Domestic Bursar at MTH to remove any such items of furniture, etc. from residents' rooms, and to inform me of which items come from which rooms. (4) If a resident persists in misappropriating such items, then a charge will have to be made to the resident for replacing such items in their proper places.

(5) I appreciate that some residents will require extra pieces of furniture in their rooms and (6) have no objection to them purchasing such

pieces and bringing them to their rooms, provided that they do not impede the cleaning staff or, in shared rooms, other occupants.

Yours sincerely,
[signature]
Director

(1) We (B[d], Th) have (TME; Q, Tr) *a major problem* (Sp, Rh)[i] at International Students House (Set, Th) *of residents removing items of furniture and equipment from the public areas of the House* (Sp, Rh)[i] ([1a] and I [B[d], Th] include [TME; Q, Tr] *Mary Trevelyan Hall as well as the Great Portland Street house* [Sp, Rh]) *for use in their own rooms* (Sp, Rh)[i].

(2) I (B[d], Th) write (TME; Q, Tr) *to inform you that this practice must cease* (Sp, Rh)[i]

(3) and as from the 5th November (Set, Th) I (B[d], Th) will (TME) instruct (Q, Tr) *the Housekeeper at GPS and the Domestic Bursar at MTH* (Sp, Rh) *to remove any such items of furniture, etc. from residents' rooms* (FSp, Rh)[i] *and to inform me of which items come from which rooms* (FSp, Rh)[ii].

(4) If a resident persists in misappropriating such items (Set, Th)[i], then (Set, Th) *a charge* (Ph, Rh)[ii] will have to be (TME) made (TME; App/Ex, Tr) to the resident (Set[d], Th) *for replacing such items in their proper places* (Ph, Rh)[ii].

(5) I (B[d], Th) appreciate (TME; Q, Tr) *that some residents will require extra pieces of furniture in their rooms* (Sp, Rh)[i] and have (TME; Q, Tr) *no objection* (Sp, Rh) *to them purchasing such pieces and bringing them to their rooms* (FSp, Rh)[ii] *provided that they do not impede the cleaning staff or, in shared rooms, other occupants* (FFSp, Rh)[iii].

(1[1]) of residents (B, Th) removing (tme; Q, Tr) *items of furniture and equipment* (Sp, Rh) *from the public areas of the House* (FSp, Rh) . . . *for use in their own rooms* (FFSp, Rh).

(2[1]) to inform (tme; Q, Tr) you (Set[d], Th) *that this practice must cease* (Sp, Rh)

(3[1]) to remove (tme; Q, Tr) *any such items of furniture, etc.* (Sp, Rh) *from residents' rooms* (FSp, Rh).

(3[ii]) to inform (tme; Q, Tr) me (Set[d], Th) *of which items come from which rooms* (Sp, Rh).

(4[1]) If (Tr) a resident (B[d], Th) persists (TME; Q, Tr) *in misappropriating such items* (Sp, Rh),

(4[ii]) for replacing (tme; Q, Tr) such items (Set[d], Th) *in their proper places* (Sp, Rh).

(5^i) that some residents (B, Th) will (TME) require (Q, Tr) *extra pieces of furniture* (Sp, Rh) in their rooms (Set^d, Th)

(5^{ii}) to them (B^d, Th) purchasing (tme; Q, Tr) such pieces (Set^d, Th) and bringing (tme; Q, Tr) them (Set^d, Th) *to their rooms* (Sp, Rh)

(5^{iii}) provided (Tr) that they (B^d, Th) do (TME) *not* (neg, foc. ant., Rh) impede (Q, Tr) *the cleaning staff* (Sp, Rh) or, in shared rooms (Set, Th) *other occupants* (Sp, Rh).

A comparatively small number of items are thematic. They refer to the Director (the writer of the letter), the resident or residents, the International Students House itself, the residents' rooms, pieces of furniture; they also refer to the practice of removing pieces of furniture from their proper places, two points of time and a concomitant condition. The items of the thematic layer have a common denominator—the director of and the residents in a hall of residence, and the placing of the furniture there—and provide an appropriate foundation for the message.

The nonthematic elements are far more numerous and syntactically more complex than the thematic, as would be expected from the greater amount of CD that they carry. Furthermore, the syntactic structure of the nonthematic layer provides a strikingly greater number of distributional subfields of CD (eleven) than the thematic layer (one).

Six of the distributional subfields are provided by semiclauses. Not having a finite verb, a semiclause reduces the number of genuine TMEs within a sentence, resulting in condensation,[18] as we can see by comparing the condensed form of the first sentence of the circular with its uncondensed counterpart, see Vachek, 1955. (The interpretations in parentheses relate to the superordinate sentence level, those in brackets to the subordinate clause level.)

We (Th) have (TME; Tr) a major problem (Rh) at International Students House (Th) of residents removing items of furniture and equipment from the public areas of the House for use in their own rooms (Rh).

We (Th) have (TME; Tr) a major problem (Rh) at International Students House (Th) in that residents [Th] remove [TME; Tr] items of furniture and equipment from the public areas of the House [Rh] (Rh) so that they [Th] may [TME] make [Tr] use [Rh] of them [Th] in their own rooms [Rh] (Rh).

The TMEs occur only once in the first sentence, but three times in the second. While operating only at the superordinate sentence level in the first, they serve both at the superordinate sentence level and at the subordinate clause level in the second. Employing the TMEs only once, the first sentence makes its nonthematic section more compact and makes the linking and delimiting functions of the TMEs at the superordinate sentence level more prominent. The Director's letter shows the role that complex condensation (the use of semiclausal and nonclausal structures instead of subordinate clauses) can play in the dynamics of the communication.

The analyses of texts demonstrate the significance of the theory of FSP for composition research, even though the theory seems to be preoccupied with sentences. In fact, the theory of FSP is context oriented, paying constant regard to the way in which every sentence element is related to and eventually integrated into the context. The theory examines the context immediately relevant to the sentence and therefore explores the communicative structure of the paragraph. Analysis of the thematic and the rhematic layers of the paragraph and of the progression of communication within them leads in turn to the study of this progression beyond the paragraph to the text as a whole. Whereas the theory of FSP begins with the sentence and moves on to larger units, composition research may well choose to move in the opposite direction, taking the entire text as its starting point.[19]

NOTES

1. The English term "functional sentence perspective" is modelled on Mathesius's German term "Satz-perspective" (Mathesius, 1929a). I believe that I was the first to use it (Firbas, 1957a, pp. 171-173; 1957b), but I hasten to add that it had been suggested to me by Josef Vachek in a private communication in 1956.

2. Compare, for example, Mathesius (1929a, 1929b, 1932, 1936, 1975), Vachek (1964, 1966, 1976), and Daneš (1964, 1984). I do not refer to these scholars' earlier relevant essays, because they were written in Czech.

3. The results of our investigations have been published particularly in *Brno Studies in English* (see the bibliographies in Tyl et al., 1970; Firbas & Golková, 1975; and *Brno Studies in English 14*, pp. 15-22).

4. It is praised, for example, by Lyons (1974, p. 1006): "Current Prague school work is still characteristically functional in the sense in which this term was interpreted in the pre-World War II period. The most valuable contribution by the

postwar Prague school is probably the distinction of theme and rheme and the notion of 'functional sentence perspective' or 'communicative dynamism.'" Perhaps the severest criticism has come from Szwedek in his contribution prepared for the Conference on Contrastive Projects, Charzykowy, December 1980, which I have seen only in a preprint. The relevant part is discussed in Firbas (1983, pp. 9-36).

In addition to the Brno group there are other Czech scholars working in the field of FSP, notably the teams of Daneš and that of Sgall and Hajičová.

5. My grateful thanks are due to Sidney Greenbaum for his editorial work on my contribution as well as for his valuable comments on its preliminary version. I also wish to thank Charles R. Cooper, Tom P. Lavelle, and Cezar Ornatowski for their most welcome comments.

6. The semantic content of an object is an essential amplification of the semantic content of a transitive verb. If context independent, the amplifying content contributes more to the development of the communication than the content to be amplified (see Firbas, 1959). A context-independent object implemented by a noun conveying entirely irretrievable information cannot be replaced by a pronoun; for instance, by *him* in *You want to know what happened last Sunday. Well, I met an old friend of mine* (or: *good old Jack*, or *the man with the long beard who lives in your street*). In the spoken language, the context-independent nominal object shows a strong tendency to bear a prosodically weightier feature than the finite verb (see Firbas, 1968). This is particularly striking in German where it will do so even if preceding the finite verb *(Er hat eine hohe Auszeichnung bekommen;* see Bierwisch, 1952; Firbas, 1979, p. 37). In standard Czech, in which nonemotive word order shows a clear tendency toward a gradual rise in CD, a context-independent nominal object follows the finite verb *(Brutus zabil Cezara,* "Brutus killed Caesar"), whereas a context-dependent nominal object generally precedes it *(Cezara zabil Brutus,* "Caesar was killed by Brutus").

The same applies to the high degree of CD carried by a context-independent subject conveying a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene. Under the contextual conditions stipulated earlier, such a subject will carry the most conspicuous prosodic feature (the intonation center) in an English, German or Czech sentence (see, for example, Schubiger, 1964, pp. 259, 264).

7. Some further examples of settings: *If she comes, she will have to help us; We can always lend you the book if you wish; Although he is not very rich, he is sure to help you and lend you some money; It will be a surprise for him when he learns about it.* Provided only the pronouns and *the book* are context independent, the *if*-clauses convey concomitant conditions, the *although*-clause a concomitant concession, and the *when*-clause a temporal setting.

8. This does not apply to "second instance" sentences, see Firbas, 1968. By a second instance sentence I mean a semantic and grammatical sentence structure that is repeated or creates the impression of being repeated in order to convey a sharp contrast for only one of its semantic contents or only one of the features of such a content. For instance, *HAS* in the structure *Father HAS explained it to him,* with a heavy contrastive intonation center on *HAS,* may indicate (among other possibilities) a contrast in time. "Second instance" sentences are a comparatively rare phenomenon. Only "first instance" sentences occur in the texts analyzed in the final section of this chapter.

9. Even the theme can be subdivided. In fact, its subdivision plays an important role in the theory of FSP. For the purpose of this essay, however, I shall not use special terms for the subcomponents of the theme. For a discussion of the function of thematic elements, see Svoboda (1983).

10. To avoid the cumbersome repetition of the double designations of "writer/ speaker" and "reader/listener" I often use simple designations instead: occasionally "sender" and "receiver," or merely "interlocutor(s)."

11. The extract is taken from Katherine Mansfield's story "At the Bay." I have previously analyzed it to compare the FSP function of its grammatical subjects with those in the Czech translation, particularly for causes of potentiality in the Czech version (Firbas, 1966, pp. 35-36).

12. Instead of speaking of a string constituted by the transitional TMEs and the transitional components of the finite verbs, we could equally well speak of a transitional layer.

13. The terms "topic" and "comment" have not been used in my writings, but the general theme of the passage and the individual themes of its sentences indeed serve as "topics" in the ordinary meaning of the word, i.e. "subject for conversation, talk, writing, and so on." On the other hand, the ordinary meaning of "comment" needs to be somewhat extended for the contrasting term.

14. For instance, the relative subordinate clause in *you shall not fear . . . the arrow that flies by day.* Even an attributive structure consisting of a headword and a nonclausal attribute provides a distributional subfield of CD (e.g., *separatist ideologies;* see Svoboda, 1968). If it is context independent, an attribute (clausal or nonclausal) carries a higher degree of CD than its headword, irrespective of sentence position. A consistent analysis of all the subordinate structures would give an even more detailed picture of the way the various linguistic elements participate in the development of communication. As the analysis shows, syntactic subordination does not necessarily entail a fall in CD. On the contrary, it is frequently linked with a rise in CD.

15. If expanded by a context-independent element performing the Sp-function, the non-finite verb performs the Q-function and is transitional. Tense and mood depend on its superordinate finite verb. In this sense, its formal exponents function as transition proper, a function analogous to that of the TMEs of the superordinate finite, but they do not express the temporal and modal indications independently. The symbol "tme" has been used to represent this function, the small letters indicating that they are not the "genuine" TMEs.

16. Within this subject complement, *as any other community* is the carrier of a higher degree of CD, at the same time carrying the highest degree of CD within the entire sentence.

17. Hypertheme is a thematic element occurring in more than one of (frequently successive) thematic sections within the thematic layer; see Daneš (1974).

18. The interpretation refers to the entire semiclause, which of course provides a subfield of its own: *in misappropriating* (tme; Q, Rh) *such items* (Set[d], Th).

19. For the wider theoretical framework in which the theory is set, the reader may find it useful to consult Mathesius (1975) and Daneš (1984). For a further study of thematic progression, see Daneš (1974) and Svoboda (1981). Of special interest are the relationship between FSP and word order and the relationship between FSP and intonation. For a discussion of the former, see Firbas (1964) and for a discussion of the latter, see Firbas (in press b).

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