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NOTES ON THE FUNCTION OF THE SENTENCE
IN THE ACT OF COMMUNICATION

(Marginalia on Two Important Studies in Syntax by Anna Granville Hatcher)

Towards the close of the fifties Professor Anna Granville Hatcher of the Johns Hopkins University published two, or rather three, important syntactic studies (an article, *Syntax and the Sentence, Word* 12/1956, pp. 234—250, and a monograph, *Theme and Underlying Question, Two Studies in Spanish Word Order*, Supplement to *Word* 12/1956, 54 pp.). These studies should not pass unnoticed by Czechoslovak scholars, as they display an independent approach to problems to which Czechoslovak linguistics, inspired by the pioneer work of the late Professor V. Mathesius, has devoted no little attention. Professor Hatcher's studies concern the semantic and the grammatical structures of the sentence in their relation to the context — a field cover- ed by the theory of functional sentence perspective (FSP). In the present article we propose to acquaint the reader with the salient points of Prof. H's studies (in Section I), to add some comment (in Section III), chiefly with a view to compare, at least in some points, her approach with our own (briefly outlined in Section II), i. e. with one based on the achievements of Czechoslovak scholarship, and to point out some of Prof. H.'s important contributions to the common cause.[1]

I

Disagreeing with the descriptivists, Prof. H. launches an ardent plea for a thor- ough study of the relationships between form and meaning in language. She believes in the possibility of constructing several semantic systems (each based on one main criterion) which could be appealed to in the analysis and classification of sentence meaning. One such system is outlined in *Syntax and Sentence* (referred to in quota- tions as Sx), another is described in *Theme and Underlying Question* (Th).

The system outlined in Syntax and Sentence is based 'on the classification of the unknown element' (i. e. the element of highest informative value within the sentence; in other words, the one conveying the truly new piece of information). According to this criterion, sentences may be grouped systematically on the assumption that any one of them may be conceived as replying to an underlying question asked from the point of view of the unknown (not given) element. Thus, e. g., the underlying question of the sentence *He saw a mosquito* — provided everything is known (given) except the object — will be *What did he see?*

Regarding the Subject (S), Verb (V) and Object (O) as the main elements of the sentence,[2] Prof. H. postulates three basic (sets of) questions: (I) What is the activity?, (II) What (who) is the object?, (III) Who (what) is the subject? The widest range of 'givenness' is afforded by the first type. For here nothing may be known (*What is the*

activity? There was a scream of laughter) or we may know the subject (*What does S do? She bit her lips*) or the object (*What is done to O? Somebody kicked me*) or both the subject and the object (*What does S do to O? I discouraged her*). The range of givenness covered by the second type is narrower, for in order to know enough about the object, the verb must already be given. In consequence there are two basic II-questions (*What, who is ... ed?*[2] *In Spain, they use a lot of garlic*, if only the verb is known — *What does S ...? I see a mosquito*, if both the verb and the subject is known). The narrowest range of givenness is displayed by the third type. For "in order to know enough to inquire into the identity of the subject we must already know the activity — which means, with transitive constructions, both verb and object" (Sx 244): there is only one basic III-question (*Who, what ... s* [O]? *Hopkins won. Mary found it*). Taken together, the three discussed types yield seven basic questions.

The schema of questions, however, can be developed further. Sentences which present the three main elements (S, V, O) as given may offer new information through other elements. New information is conveyed either by an adverbial expression or consists in predicating true or false. The corresponding questions, e. g. *When did you see him?* and *Did you see him?*, are respectively termed adverbial and *W-N* (whether — or — not) variants of the basic questions. In this way a total of 21 questions has been reached. But each of the seven adverbial variants admits of a further *W-N* variant (*When did you see him*, e. g., permitting of being converted into *Was it on Tuesday that you saw him?*). And each of the 14 ('straight') *W-N* variants so far mentioned admits of an indefinite *W-N* variant. (Thus, e. g., beside the straight *Did you see him? is the indefinite *Did you see anybody?*, and beside the straight *Was it on Tuesday that you saw him?* the indefinite *Did you see him at any time* [*ever*]?) Thus the total of all the underlying questions devised from point of view of the unknown element amounts to 42.

Prof. H. is well aware that the schema requires further modifications if it is to cover the variety of utterances in any language. In a footnote (Sx 243, note[14]), for instance, she devises an additional set of questions pertaining to the indirect object; elsewhere she points out that a modification would be necessary to make the schema cover constructions with copula, dependent clauses, imperative sentences (cf. also Sx 240 note[10], commented upon here on p. 135).

The question may naturally be raised as to how the suggested schema (the Point-of-View system) is applicable in linguistic analysis. An answer is provided by the monograph *Theme and Underlying Question*, in which Professor H. sets out to inquire into another semantic system, examining it in its relation to the suggested schema of questions.

The basic phenomenon of the other system is the theme. Prof. H. intentionally offers no definition of this phenomenon, nor does she attempt a classification of possible types; the themes of language can be established only hand in hand with the increase of knowledge of the Point-of-View system.

A sufficiently clear idea, however, of what Professor H. understands by 'theme' can be obtained from the First Chapter of *Theme and Underlying Question*. She treats of one single theme there — that of existence of the subject —, as it is found in one particular Spanish construction — in that of an intransitive verb preceding a thing-subject. In this construction the mentioned theme is conveyed by verbs that are — either explicitly, or sometimes only in a somewhat veiled manner — capable of expressing the existence or presence, absence, beginning, continuing, production, occurrence, appearance, or coming, of a thing-subject. (Cf., e. g., the explicit expression of the theme of existence in *Porque entre nuestros espíritus existe una afinidad*

tan grande, que ... ['As between our souls exists a resemblance so great that ...' —
Th 8],[3] and in *De la calle viene ruido de sartenes, de latas* ... ['From the street comes
noise of saucepans, of tins ...' — Th 10], and its somewhat veiled, i. e. relatively
less self-evident, expression in *En la taberna resonaban broncas voces de marinos.*
['In the tavern resounded rough voices of sailors.' — Th 16]) Verbs coming under
this heading are subjected to a very extensive and detailed semantic analysis by
Professor H. A special section is also devoted by her to verbs that deny the existence
of the subject, i. e. to verbs of the *desaparecer* (to disappear) type. Including this type
along with the other 'existencial' types, Professor H. finds that 80 per cent of the
verbs that occur in her examples (i. e. in those of the inverted thing-subject with
intransitive verbs) convey the existential theme. (Professor H.'s material is drawn
from over 70 books of modern Spanish prose.) The importance of this theme is fur-
ther heigtened by the fact that it may be expressed by transitive verbs as well (see
below).

Whereas the First Chapter of *Theme and Underlying Question* was devoted to the
inverted Thing-Subject, the Second Chapter takes up the inverted (non-prepositional)
Thing-Object, both with and without the 'redundant' pronoun. (The material is
limited to independent declarative sentences of Modern Spanish prose.) The construc-
tion with the pronoun (for short denoted as $O+loV$) and that without it (for short
denoted as OV) may respectively be exemplified by the sentences *Los muebles del
comedor los puso en el hall* ['The pieces of furniture of the dining-room them he-placed
in the hall' — Th 26] and *Peseta y media he sacado hoy* ['Peseta and half I-have gained
today' — Th 26]. In regard to the I and II questions of the schema, Prof. H.
finds that the two constructions reveal remarkable differences. As to the basic sets
of these questions, $O+lo$ answers I, but not II, whereas OV answers II, but not I.
As to the variants of the I and the II questions, OV answers only variants of II,
whereas $O+loV$ answers variants of both I and II. On the other hand, both construc-
tions answer III and the corresponding variants. It is the distinctions (especially
those concerning the basic questions) between the two constructions that Prof. H.
concentrates on in the Second Chapter of *Theme and Underlying Question*, intention-
ally treating of the OV construction in greater detail. The mentioned distinctions
are principally due to the following facts. Within the sphere of the basic questions,
the object of $O+loV$ is known (or at least taken for granted) and its verb unkown,
whereas the object of OV is unknown and its verb known (cf. the examples quoted in
the present paragraph and the account of the schema of questions given above).
Within the sphere of the variants, however, the object becomes known. This accounts
for the possibility of using $O+loV$, which is the sign of 'object given' (Th 42), not
only in answer to I, but also in answer to II.[4] (As an example cf. the following $O+loV$
construction used in answer to a variant of II: *esto lo dijo en un susurro* ['That it I-said
in a whisper' — Th 41.] It also accounts for the growth of $O+loV$ at the expense of
OV. The latter continues to be used within the sphere of variants because of its
capability of distinguishing, e v e n i n t h e v a r i a n t s, the original II-questions
from the I-questions. (As an example cf. the following OV construction used in answer
to a variant of II *esto añadió ... con arrogancia* [' ... that he-added ... with arro-
gance' — Th 41]).

As to the themes conveyed by the two constructions, $O+loV$ employs verbs that
express — under conditions specified in the monograph — transformation, alloca-
tion, disposal, destruction, theft and acquisition. The themes displayed by OV are
phrased by Professor H. as *make, give, say, have*. These 'four ideas (continually melt-
ing into one another)' (Th 36) may be further reduced to two great concepts of

producing and of *having*. As 'producing' is to be interpreted here as 'bringing into existence', and 'having' suggests 'existing in someone's possession', the common denominator of the four ideas appears to be the Existence of the Object, and is in . fact a complement to the theme of the Existence of the Subject. — As in Chapter One, Professor Hatcher adduces numerous examples and subjects them to a minute semantic analysis (cf. also the nine-page Appendix with a full list of verbs that occurred in the author's *OV* material and with further semantic comment on these verbs). By way of illustration let us cite at least another two of her quotations, the first exemplifying *O+loV* with a verb of 'transformation', the second exemplifying *OV* with a verb of 'having': *Esta casa es mía y puedo ... no admitir en ella a quien me plazca.* — *Esta casa la ha convertido usted en un establecimiento público, no se ha reservado usted el derecho de admisión, y ...* ['This house is mine and I-can ... not receive (i. e. I am free not to receive — J. F.) in it (preposition signalizing an analytical accusative) whom me pleases. — This house it have converted you into an establishment public, not (refl. pronoun) have reserved you the right of admission, and ...' — Th 28], *Con mujeres no se puede viajar. Nueve maletas traemos!* ['With women not (refl. pronoun) it-is-possible to-travel. Nine pieces-of-luggage we-are-carrying' — Th 33].

Professor H. also compares *OV* with *VO*, i. e. the inverted with the non-inverted order. Although both types display the same themes and answer the same II-questions, *OV* sentences decidedly differ from *VO* sentences. This is because the former never answer a II-question quite purely. Presenting the unknown object in a special way, 'throwing' it at the reader, as it were, they are to be considered emotional. In any case they at least indicate 'some concern of the speaker with the truth (significance, relevancy, importance) of what he is saying, as he appeals to his partner for belief, sympathy, or confirmation' (Th 41). This brings the *OV* sentences very near the sphere of *W-N* variants.

We have come to the end of our rough sketch of Professor H.'s main ideas presented in the two, or rather three, studies under discussion. It may perhaps be added that she intentionally applied her 'semantic method' to small areas within the language system, in this way setting out to inquire systematically into the place of meaning in the system of language.

II

In our comments on Prof. H.'s studies (to be given below in Section III) we shall use as our point of departure the FSP theory as we have arrived at it,[5] continuing in Prof. V. Mathesius' researches[6] and adopting Prof. D. L. Bolinger's idea of sentence linearity.[7] As the reader may not be familiar with our papers on the subject, we think it necessary to give at least a very brief outline of this theory.

The basic assumption of the theory is that — in accordance with the character of human thought and with the linear character of the sentence — known elements are followed by unknown elements, or to put it more accurately, sentence elements follow each other according to the amount (degree) of communicative dynamism (CD)[8] they convey, starting with the lowest and gradually passing on to the highest. (The more an element has to contribute towards the further development of the communication offered by the sentence, the higher the degree of CD appears to be.) There occur, however, deviations from this basic distribution of CD. They take place on account of grammatical structure, for emotive reasons, for the sake of the rhythm, etc. But being signalized in two definite ways, the deviations only bear out the existence of the basic distribution of CD.

One way of signalizing deviations is provided by the context: any element already mentioned in the preceding context normally conveys the lowest amount of CD within a sentence irrespective of the position occupied in it. The other way of signalizing deviations manifests itself within the section of the sentence unaffected by the context. The means of signalization are provided here by the semantic content of the word and possibly by the semantic relations into which this content may enter. (Thus provided that it is only the subject that is known in the following two sentences, the object, expressing the goal of the action, will carry a higher amount than the verb, expressing the action: *He wrote an interesting book*, *Er hat ein interessantes Buch geschrieben*. See more on this in the comments below.) It follows that in the very act of communication, the sentence elements do not appear homogeneous as to the degrees of CD they convey. Viewed as constituting a complete sentence, they function in a definite kind of perspective.

Such perspective is the outcome of an interplay (tension) between the basic distribution of CD on the one hand, and the context and the semantic structure of the sentence on the other. Full understanding of this interplay, however, cannot be reached without the knowledge of the possibilities and requirements offered by the grammatical structure. Following Fr. Daneš,[9] we maintain that the function of the sentence in the act of communication can be successfully interpreted if three levels are kept separate: those of the semantic and grammatical structure of the sentence and that of FSP.

As to the position of FSP within the structure of the sentence, we consider it superimposed upon the semantic and the grammatical structures. To our mind, the theory of FSP makes it possible to understand how the semantic and the grammatical structures function in the very act of communication, i. e. at the moment they are called upon to convey some extra-linguistic reality reflected by thought and are to appear in an adequate kind of perspective.

III

Prof. H.'s question schema being based on the classification of the unknown element, we propose to open our comments by taking up some of the problems related to the known (given) and the unknown (not given) elements of a sentence. (Prof. H. intentionally refrains — at least for the present — from using some such designations as 'psychological subject' or 'psychological predicate' [Sx 239 note[6]]. The term 'theme', which we use to denote elements of lowest CD within a sentence — and which consequently covers the known elements of a sentence —, is employed by Prof. H. in a different way. (In the light of our three-level approach, Prof. H.'s term pertains to the semantic level, ours to that of FSP.) In this connection, it is worth observing how sentence types pass from one sphere indicated by the question schema into another. Examples illustrative of this phenomenon are adduced below. In discussing them, we shall confine ourselves to the subject-verb and to the subject-verb-object relations as they manifest themselves within the field that is roughly indicated by the seven basic questions of the schema. (A more accurate delimitation of this field will be attempted later on.)

Two cases in point, coming under the heading of subject-verb relations, are the types *Llegó el tren* ('Arrived the train' — Th 6 note[1]), *Llegó la noticia de . . .* ('Came the news of . . .' — ibid.). As Prof. H. points out (ibid.), they can be used in answer both to the 1st I-question, *What is the activity?*, and to the III-question, *What is the subject?*, allowing of the interpretation as containing no given element or as contain-

ing one given element. The same undoubtedly holds good for the English types *The telephone rang* (adduced by Prof. H. in answer to the lst I-question (Sx 240]) and [*the door opened and*] *John appeared* (adduced by Prof. H. in answer to III [Sx 244]). — The FSP theory bears out Prof. H.'s argument. Under the circumstances, all the subjects convey a higher amount of CD than their verbs. They function as rhemes (i. e. as conveyers of the highest degrees of CD within their sentences). This may be accounted for as follows. The verbs express 'existence' or 'coming into existence'. Now provided the subjects of such verbs convey new information, the verbs, as it were, recede into the background, for in such cases, the item which expresses a person/thing existing or coming into existence is communicatively more important (i. e. of greater importance for the further development of the communication) than the item which merely expresses existence or coming into existence of such a person/thing.[10]

Turning to the phenomenon of sentence types passing from one sphere into another as it can be observed in regard to the subject-verb-object relations, we find that our interpretation would somewhat differ from Prof. H.'s. This will become evident from the comments on the following three examples, all of which are classified by Prof. H. as *OV* sentences answering II. — (1) '∴ *las* Torrijas[11] ..., *esta joya insuperable ..., y la gente cayó sobre ellas con la voracidad de un Pizarro en el Peru ...* Ocho docenas de torrijas se llevó un día el señor Duque *de Tovar a su finca ...*' ['the " torrijas" [slices of bread specially fried — J. F.) ..., this treat insuperable ..., and the people fell upon them with the voraciousness of a Pizarro in the Peru ... Eight dozen of "torrijas" (refl. pron.) took one day the Señor Duke from Tovar to his estate ...' — Th 32], (2) Encomio merece *esta labor divulgadora del profesor argentino* ['Praise deserves this work popularizing of the professor Argentine.' — Th 33], (3) *Dame la mano.* — El corazón te doy ['Give-me the hand. — The heart to-you I-give.' — Th 34].

In all these examples Prof. H. regards the objects as unkown[12] and the verbs as known. As to the subjects, they are known in (2) and (3), which does not, however, fully apply to that in (1). The subject of (1) is not actually given, but, as it were, „brought in suddenly" (which is rare with *OV* cases) (Th 32). Thus (1) oscillates between the 2nd II-question, *What does S ...?*, presupposing a given verb and a given subject, and the lst II-question, *What, who is ... ed?*, presupposing only a given verb. — In our own interpretation, we regard the object as conveying new information in (3), (2), (1); the verb in (2), (1); and the subject in (1). In none of the three cases does the verb exceed the object in CD, for a verb does not convey a higher amount of CD than the object, provided the latter conveys new information. This is due to the relation between the semantic content of the verb and the semantic content of the object, the latter functioning as an essential amplification of the former. Provided the object is unkown, the action expressed by the verb is communicatively less important than the 'goal' of the action expressed by the object.[13] Neither do the subjects of the examples exceed the verbs and objects in CD. This is evident in (2) and (3), where the subject is known. As to (1), where the subject — together with the verb and the object — is unknown, it applies that the unknown agent expressed by the subject appears communicatively less important than the unknown action and the unknown goal expressed by the verb and the object.

We think that our interpretation allows of a more gradual arrangement of the above examples according to the gradual decrease/increase in CD within them than Prof. H.'s interpretation does. (See the tabular arrangement below in which italics are used for given elements.)

	Prof. H.'s interpretation	Our interpretation
(1)	Object, *Verb*, Subject (or *Subject?*)	Object, Verb, Subject
(2)	Object, *Verb*, *Subject*	Object, Verb, *Subject*
(3)	Object, *Verb*, *Subject*	Object, *Verb*, *Subject*

The fact that in the above examples, the verb conveys a lower amount of CD than its object is in complete agreement with Prof. H's observation of the verb serving as a 'tray on which the object (or its quality or its quantity) is served up to us' (Th 36). Owing to its semantic relation to the object, the verb need not always be given (or taken for granted) in order to function as such a tray: this function does not prevent it from conveying new information.

Thus in (1) it is not known from the preceding context that the duke was bringing the 'torrijas' to his estate (he could, e. g., have sent them there); in fact we do not know from the preceding context that he was taking (or sending) them there at all. (Incidentally, even he himself is 'brought in rather suddenly' [cf. Th 32]. Similarly in (2), other verbs than mere cer could have been chosen, and give the further development of the communication a more or less different turn. The 'turn' given by the choice of the verb (or by the choice of the entire verb-object group) to the communication is not known here from the previous context.

If our interpretations of (1) and (2) are correct, then OV sentences enter into the sphere of the lst I-question, *What is the activity?*, (presupposing neither a given subject, nor a given verb, nor a given object) and certainly answer the 2nd I-question, *What does S do?* (presupposing a given subject, but neither a given verb nor a given object). This would point only to partial exclusion of OV from I, i. e. from the spheres of the third and fourth I-questions (*What is done to O?* and *What does S do to O?*), which both presuppose a given object. (OV cannot obviously answer these questions, for — as Prof. H. has convincingly established — its object is never given, nor — let us add — is it ever thematic.[14]) This induces us to add some notes on the $O+lo\,V$ type, which according to Prof. H. contains a given object, and consequently answers both these questions, but is excluded from II. Let us compare the position of the $O+lo\,V$ type with that of the OV type within the field pointed to by the basic I and the basic II-questions.

Although Prof. H. states that $O+lo\,V$ answers I, she specifies this statement by excluding $O+lo\,V$ from the sphere indicated by the lst I-question and practically, also from that indicated by the 2nd I-question. Applying the theory of FSP, we should vote for a total exclusion of $O+lo\,V$ even from the sphere indicated by the 2nd I-question. In consequence we should exclude from this sphere even the border-line cases of $O+lo\,V$ interpreted by Prof. H. as passing into the 2nd I-question sphere, and the only one case of $O+lo\,V$ interpreted by Prof. H. as having passed into that sphere completely. Let us briefly comment at least on this last-mentioned special case. It occurs in the following passage: *Así me gusta, chaval! El día que salgas en Madrid,* las dos jacas más bonitas *que hay en España, y que son mías,* las engancharé *a una jardinera, pa que, llenas de cascabeles, te lleven a la plaza.* ['Thus me it-pleases, boy! The day that you-appear in Madrid, the two ponies most beautiful that there-are in Spain, and which are mine, them I-will-put to a (light-open-) carriage, so that, full of little-bells, you they-may-take to the square.' — Th 30]

Although conveying a new piece of information and in this way further developing the communication, the object *las dos jacas ... mías* surpasses in CD neither the verb *engancharé* nor the adverbial element *El día ... en Madrid.* Together with the morpheme *-é* of *engancharé*, which refers to the speaker and functions as a substitute for the subject, it constitutes the starting point of communication within the second sentence of the quotation. It can do so, for the 'redundant' pronoun *las* marks it out as thematic. And we even think that it is in this special case that the function of the 'redundant' pronoun as a means of FSP stands out most clearly. Why should that be so?

Owing to its semantic character, a personal pronoun is anaphoric, referring to some item previously mentioned, such an item as a rule occurring outside the sentence (clause) in which the pronoun itself appears. In the case of the $O+loV$ construction, however, such an item, though still preceding the pronoun, occurs within the sentence (clause), in which the pronoun appears. Grammatically speaking, the pronoun may to a certain extent appear redundant in $O+loV$ sentences (clauses); on account of this anaphoric character, however, it may play an important role in effecting their FSP. By referring back to an item, it relegates it to the thematic section of the sentence, accordingly marking it out as thematic.[15] In this way, the 'redundant' pronoun becomes an important landmark within the field indicated by the basic I and the basic II questions: it keeps the area of $O+loV$ separate from that of OV. For should the object become non-thematic, it would surpass its verb in CD, which is a characteristic feature of OV.

It follows that instead of regarding the 'redundant' pronoun as a sign of givenness ('the sign of "object-given"'[Th 42]), we prefer to interpret it as marking out as thematic the element to which it refers. In denoting elements conveying the lowest degree(s) of CD within a sentence, 'thematic' has a wider connotation than 'given' (or 'known'). As it has been shown,[16] it can also cover elements that may be characterized as not given (nor taken for granted), i. e. as conveying new information, though merely forming the starting point of the communication within a sentence (clause). In this way, 'thematic' takes account of the heterogeneity of degrees of CD as it is caused by the basic distribution of CD and by the semantic structure within that section of the sentence which has remained unaffected by the context, or in fact within a sentence conveying only new information. (Such sentences are rare, but not infrequently occur at the very beginning of a communication, cf., e. g., *A boy wished for a motor bike.*)[17]

Our notes on the OV and $O+lo$ types may be summarized as follows. Although somewhat differing from Prof. H. as to the distribution of the OV and $O+loV$ types within the field pointed to by the basic I and II questions, they fully subscribe to her keeping separate these two types within the indicated field. They differ from Prof. H.'s conclusions in that they place OV partly within the I-sphere, and exclude $O+loV$ even from the sphere of the 2nd I-question. This means that they suggest the following distribution of the OV and $O+loV$ types within the field pointed to by the basic I and II questions.

The sphere indicated by question	characterized by	taken up by OV	taken up by O+loV
1st I	no given element (non-thematic object)	yes	no
2nd I	a given subject (non-thematic object)	yes	no
3rd I	a given object	no	yes
4th I	a given subject and a given (or in any case thematic) object	no	yes
1st II[18]	a given verb (non-thematic object)	yes	no
2nd II	a given subject and a given verb (non-thematic object)	yes	no

We hope that the preceding argument, together with the tabular arrangement, has shown that Prof. H.'s studies testify to the existence of a number of important phenomena closely connected with the function of the sentence in the very act of communication. Both the argument and the table disclose how a sentence type can vary in its dependence on the context, i. e. in the amount of the already given, and in the amount of the newly conveyed, information, as well as in the manner in which these kinds of information can be presented. We propose to speak here of varying degrees and of varying quality of c o n t e x t u a l d e p e n d e n c e. And as to the range of degrees of contextual dependence a sentence may cover, we propose to term it the c o n t e x t u a l a p p l i c a b i l i t y of the sentence type. The concept of contextual dependence enables us to add a word on what we have elsewhere called i n s t a n c e l e v e l s.[19] By an instance level we understand the degree and quality of contextual dependence as revealed by a sentence in the very act of communication. (Thus the tabular arrangement above shows some of the instance levels on which OV and $O+loV$ may appear, at the same time illustrating the differences in contextual appli- cability as displayed by the two sentence types.)

As we see it, the question schema devised by Prof. H. actually bears out the existence of a system of instance levels. But as we are on virgin ground here (to our knowledge, Prof. H. is right in claiming to be the first scholar to have devised such a schema), it is only natural that there will not be perfect agreement on all points. In this respect, interesting problems arise if an inquiry is made, for instance, into how adverbial elements enter into the subject-verb or subject-verb-object relations and how the resulting relations manifest themselves on the FSP level. In order to suggest a possible answer to these questions, let us examine the following sentences containing the adverbial elements *in Prague, for Prague* and *yesterday:* (1) *I met two friends in Prague,* (2) *I met two friends yesterday,* (3) *He lives in Prague,* (4) *He left for Prague yesterday.* Provided the only known element is the subject,[20] the adverbial element *in Prague* conveys a lower degree of CD than the co-occurring verb-object group expressing activity (the action and the goal) in (1), but functions as rheme in (3). Similarly, the adverbial element *for Prague* functions as rheme in (4). In (1) *in Prague* is a mere adverb of situation as it expresses the local setting (background) of the activity, the activity appearing to be communicatively more important than the setting. In (3) it occurs with a verb expressing existence and states the place of existence, the place appearing to be communicatively more important than the existence itself. In (4) *for Prague* is linked up with a verb of motion, the direction or goal of the motion appearing to be communicatively more important than the motion itself. As to the adverbial element *yesterday,* it is both in (2) and in (4) a mere adverb of situation, expressing the temporal setting of the activity. Under ordinary circumstances the positions of *in Prague* in (3) and *for Prague* in (4) are fixed; not fixed in the indicated sentence, however, are the positions of *in Prague* in (1), and of *yesterday* in (2) and (4). But should the positions of these adverbial elements in (1), (2) and (4) change, the relation between each of these adverbial elements and the other elements of the sentence in regard to CD will practically remain the same. This is due in each case to the semantic content of the adverbial element and to the character of the semantic relations between this element and the rest of the sentence. The matter would be different, for instance, with adverbial elements of purpose[21] or with those of manner.[22] Let us compare the following pair of instances: *In order to meet some friends, he left for Prague yesterday, He left for Prague yesterday in order to meet some friends; He quietly left for Prague yesterday, He left for Prague quietly yesterday.*

Provided that the only known element is the subject, the semantic character of the adverbial element of purpose/manner and its semantic relation to the rest of the sentence is in the discussed specimens such as to allow the sentence position (strictly speaking, the basic distribution of CD) to influence the amount of CD conveyed by the adverbial element: in the discussed specimens the amount of CD has risen as the adverbial element of purpose/manner has been shifted nearer the end of the sentence.

The above notes have offered a glimpse of how the semantic character of the adverbial element and the character of the semantic relations into which the adverbial element may enter with the subject and the verb, or with the subject, verb and object, affect the resultant FSP. They have also illustrated that the semantic phenomena are not the only factors in operation. The resultant FSP is co-determined by the basic distribution of CD (which factor should in fact have been stated first) and the extent to which these factors may operate naturally depends on the context (i. e. on the contextual applicability and on the actual degree of contextual dependence of the sentence in question).[23]

Much painstaking work, however, will have to be done before the semantic function of the adverbial element in regard to FSP is fully established in all its aspects. Undoubtedly, Prof. H.'s method of keen and detailed observation could render much valuable service here. It is not without interest to mention in this connection that even within the adverbial sphere the notion of existence seems to play an important part. For one may wonder whether the purely situational adverbs of place/time cannot be brought into relation with this notion as they may state the place/time in/at which a person or thing is reported to exist (*There was a large garden in front of the house*) or simply in/at which something is reported to happen (*I read a couple of interesting books during the summer holidays*). But even if the function of the adverbial element on the FSP level has not yet been fully established, the above notes seem to indicate clearly that even an abbreviated schema of questions should take into account the various and varying degrees of contextual dependence displayed by sentences with adverbial elements. Such sentences whose subject, verb and object are known (and which are the only types covered by the adverbial variants of the schema) are neither the sole nor the most important representatives of sentences containing adverbial elements. (Prof. H., of course, is aware of the existence and importance of other types of sentences with adverbial elements than those covered by the abbreviated schema. She states [Sx 240 note[10]] that the seven basic questions could be doubled if in each case account were taken of a known adverbial element. But even if the seven basic questions were doubled that way, a number of essential types would remain outside the scope of the schema.) Nevertheless, we do not think that sentences · containing adverbial elements call for a special sphere of variants (sentences with adverbs of the *even* and possibly other types being an exception on which see below). In this respect we do not see a clear-cut difference betwen the ways in which the adverbial elements on the one hand and the subject, verb and object on the other operate on the FSP level. True enough, in contrast to the adverbial elements, the subject, verb and object may be considered the main elements of the sentence grammatically; this contrast, however, will not apply to the FSP level. We do not refer sentences with adverbial elements to any special sphere within our tentative system of instance levels, keeping them within the sphere of basic instance levels.

On the other hand, a special sphere seems to be taken up by negative sentences provided the negation actually conveys new information. (It would not do so in the enumeration occurring in the following passage: *There were many things I did not know. I did not know the author's name, I did not know his most important books, I did*

not know the century he lived in.) With the proviso just stated, negation is a rhematic element and may be imposed on any positive sentence, putting its semantic and grammatical structures, already complete in themselves and capable of showing some definite contextual dependence, into a special kind of perspective. In Prof. H.'s schema, negative sentences are covered by the *W-N* variants. There are other elements, the adverbials *even* and *only*, for instance, whose function is similar to that of the negativing elements. Sentences containing them would be referred by us also to the sphere of special instance levels.[24] Would such sentences be covered by Prof. H.'s indefinite *W-N* variants? (Could *Even grandfather's alarm-clock went to pieces* be interpreted as *Did anything go to pieces? Yes, it did. Even grandfather's alarm-clock?* But the sentence *Verás, verás* ..., hasta pinos hay *en la Dehesa de la Villa!* ['Indeed, indeed, ..., even pines there-were in the Common of the Townlet!' — Th 33], which we should refer to the sphere of special instance levels, is interpreted by Prof. H. as belonging to the sphere of the seven basic questions.)[25]

Prof. H.'s remark (Sx 243 note[13]) that 'certain II-questions are not apt to get asked under any circumstances: *Whom did you anticipate?, whom did you reassure?, what did he darken?, what did he treat with care?* — except, of course, by one who is hard of hearing' induces us to mention still another sphere of instance levels belonging to what we call after Prof. D. L. Bolinger second instance. We think that the mentioned questions could possibly also be asked by one who has failed to understand a particular word in a sentence (or has understood it well enough, but asks for the repetition of the sentence out of sheer incredulity). In such cases the sentence is repeated with a heavy stress on the element in question, e. g. *I reassured the "teacher.* The special quality of contextual dependence, characteristic of second instance types, is evident.[26]

In our opinion, both Prof. H.'s schema of questions and our system of instance levels (both proposed tentatively) point to the possibility of ascertainig the actual contextual dependence at the moment of communication, and the general contextual applicability not only of sentences, but also of various sentence elements — phrases, words, and even simple morphemes. (As we have seen above, under various conditions certain elements enter into the process of communication at different levels and with different informative values. In studying the function of some elements in the very act of communication, we may — for the sake of greater accuracy — confine ourselves to certain instance levels. It was the basic instance levels to which we confined ourselves in our discussion of the part played by subject, verb, object and adverbial elements in producing FSP.) The determination of such phenomena could perhaps also be turned to practical use in machine translating.

Throughout our comments we have endeavoured consistently to observe three aspects, or rather three levels: those of the semantic and grammatical structures and that of FSP. We believe that this consistent three-level approach makes it possible to draw from Prof. H.'s valuable findings some further useful conclusions concerning the structures of the examined languages. As has been pointed out, Prof. H.'s researches establish the thematic character of the object in Spanish $O+lo\,V$ sentences. As to the English counterparts of these sentences, they cannot as a rule open with the thematic goal of the action (conveyed by the object in Spanish) unless the goal is expressed by the subject and the action by a passive verb (and the agent, if mentioned, by an adverbial *by*-phrase). This points to an important difference between Spanish and English (reminding us of a similar difference between Czech and English), due to a different kind of co-operation between the semantic and the grammatical structure of the sentence in bringing about the FSP. For the sake of a consistent three-level approach, it would be desirable to distinguish between

semantic, grammatical and FSP concepts. Thus the terms subject and object would have to be applied only in their strictly grammatical meaning, and not also in reference to the agent and the goal of the action respectively.

Another interesting phenomenon especially clearly revealed by the three-level approach is the influence FSP and the semantic structure may mutually exert upon each other. In order to illustrate, let us recall that in none of the types of the OV sentences discussed above does the verb exceed the object in the amount of CD. In the types of $O+loV$ sentences, however, it is the other way round, the amount of CD conveyed by the verb always exceeding that conveyed by the object. Further recalling Prof. H.'s discovery that in OV sentences, V functions as a verb of existence, whereas in $O+loV$ sentences as one of disposal, we find that the described difference in the amounts of CD corresponds to a difference in the semantic character of the verb. This correspondence exists even in cases where a verb is capable of occurring both in OV and in $O+loV$. A verb of this type is *dar* (to give), occurring in the following pair of sentences: *Esposa te doy y no sierva* ['Wife to-you I-give and no slave.'—Th 34], *Mira, este talón se lo das a Silvestre Réus ... que vendrá por él esta tarde.* ['Look, this receipt him it you-give to Silvestre Réus ... who will come for it this afternoon.'—Th 28.] Whereas in the first sentence, an instance of OV, *dar* 'represents the act of producing, bringing on the stage,'[27] in the second, an instance of $O+loV$, it is 'a verb of Disposal, of determining the fate (of what is already there)'.[27] In our opinion, the quoted pair shows what influence FSP may have on the semantic content of the verb, and vice versa, what share semantic structure may have in moulding FSP.

The three-level approach may also throw some valuable light on why OV sentences decidedly differ from VO sentences, even if the relations within their semantic structures are the same and OV and VO appear on one and the same instance level (i. e. show the same degree of contextual dependence). Inquiring into the relations of FSP to the semantic and grammatical structures, the three-level approach must necessarily raise the question to what extent the basic distribution of CD manifests itself in word-order. Languages may considerably differ in this respect. As to Spanish, the grammatical structure of its sentence seems to be such as to allow ordinary non-marked, and hence non-emotional word-order to attain a comparatively high degree of conformity with the basic distribution of CD.[28,29] Such a high degree of conformity is evidently attained in regard to the order of the subject, verb and object in the non-emotional types examined by Prof. H. Consequently, a deviation from the conformity with the basic distribution of CD as displayed by OV sentences must necessarily become marked and hence emotional. In this way the three-level approach bears out Prof. H.'s observation concerning the emotional character of the OV construction.

If our interpretation of the position of FSP within the structure of language is right, the question schema—if it is to be fully adequate—has to conform to the three-level approach. We fear, however, that this requirement of adequacy will render the schema rather unwieldy. This unwieldiness would also be due to the fact that—as sentences—the questions themselves are not always limited in their contextual applicability to one degree of contextual dependence only.[30] Seen in the light of the three-level approach, the schema will perhaps not always be readily applicable. Applied by Prof. H., however, it has already posed and solved problems that open new vistas for further research into language functioning in the very act of communication.

Prof. H. has evidently written her two (or rather three) studies independently

of the European work on the problems of FSP, which to our knowledge was given its first solid theoretical foundation as early as 1844 by H. Weil in his pioneer work, *De l'ordre des mots dans les langues anciennes comparées aux langues modernes*.[31] Upon the whole, this fact is not so deplorable as it might seem to be, for on account of their originality Prof. H.'s studies prove to be a welcome check on, and a highly suggestive supplement to, the work of European scholars. (The present article could not do justice to all the ideas offered by Prof. H. in her studies. A wealth of them is presented even in the footnotes.) One of the most valuable contributions of Prof. H. to the common cause of those European and American scholars who do not neglect meaning are her semantic inquiries. Not only Anglicists and Hispanicists, but studensts of word-order and FSP in any language, will benefit by studying them thoroughly.

NOTES

[1] Professor Hatcher is an Anglicist and Hispanicist in one person, which can by no means be claimed by the author of the present marginalia, who happens to be only an Anglicist. (The material in *Syntax and Sentence* is English, in *Theme and Underlying Question* Spanish.) The ample Spanish material, however, is presented by the monograph in such a way as to enable even a non-Hispanicist with some experience in the theoretical study of languages to venture some comment on such Spanish phenomena as are of interest to the linguistician in general. — For consultation on Spanish usage, the present author has to thank Mr. L. Bartoš, Dr. J. Dubský, Dr. J. Kudrna and Dr. J. Rosendorfský, all members of the staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty.

[2] It should be pointed out that Prof. H. uses " 'subject' not only of the grammatical subject but also of the agent with passive verbs; and 'object' not only of the grammatical object but also of the subject of passive verbs" (Sx 239, note[7]).

[3] Not expecting all our readers to have a ready command of Spanish ! we add literal translations of the Spanish examples.

[4] Cf. '. . .: when a II-question with unknown object is converted to a variant; when *what did he say?* becomes *how did he say this?* . . . then the object becomes, for the first time, known.' (Th 24)

[5] See esp. the papers *K otázce nezákladových podmětů v současné angličtině (On the Problem of Non-Thematic Subjects in Contemporary English)*, Časopis pro moderní filologii 39/1957, pp. 22-42, 165—173; *Some Thoughts on the Function of Word-Order in Old English and Modern English*, Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské university 1957, A5, pp. 72—98; *Bemerkungen über einen deutschen Beitrag zum Problem der Satzperspektive*, Philologica Pragensia 1/1958, pp. 49—54; *Thoughts on the Communicative Function of the Verb in English, German and Czech*, Brno Studies in English I, Prague 1959, pp. 39—63; *On the Communicative Value of the Modern English Finite Verb*, Brno Studies in English III, Prague 1961, pp. 79—104.

[6] See, e. g., Prof. V. Mathesius' paper *Zur Satzperspektive im modernen Englisch*, Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen, 84. Jahrg., 155. Band, 1929, pp. 200—210; and V. Mathesius, *Čeština a obecný jazykozpyt (The Czech Language and General Linguistics)*, Prague 1947, a selection from Mathesius' papers, where also other contributions dealing with FSP can be found. See also V. Mathesius, *Obsahový rozbor současné angličtiny na základě obecně lingvistickém (A Functional Analysis of Present Day English on a General Linguistic Basis)*, edited by J. Vachek, Prague 1961, pp. 91—97 and 183—186. For further literature on the subject, see the papers quoted in note[6], and P. Novák's paper *O prostředcích aktuálního členění (On the Means of Functional Sentence Perspective)*, Acta Universitatis Carolinae, 1959, Philologica I, pp. 9—15.

[7] D. L. Bolinger, *Linear Modification*, PMLA, 1952, pp. 1117—1144.

[8] Prof. H.'s term would probably be 'informative value' (cf. Sx 239, note[6]).

[9] See, e. g., F. Daneš's paper *Vedlejší věty účinkově přirovnávaví se spojkou „než aby" (Consecutively Coloured Comparative Subclauses with the Conjunction NEŽ ABY)*, Naše řeč 38/1955, esp. p. 50, and his monograph *Intonace a věta ve spisovné češtině (Sentence Intonation in Present-Day Standard Czech)*, Prague 1957, p. 56. Cf. also F. Daneš — M. Dokulil, *K tzv. významové a mluvnické stavbě věty (On the So-Called Semantic and Grammatical Structures of the Sentence)*, published in *O vědeckém poznání soudobých jazyků (On the Research into Contemporary Languages)*, Prague 1958, pp. 231—246.

[10] See our paper on . . . *Non-Thematic Subjects* . . . (note[5]), pp. 31 ff.

[11] Words that are spaced out here are italicized by Prof. H.

[12] In regard to (1), however, it is not the entire object, but only the 'amount of the object' that is unknown (Th 32).

[13] See *Thoughts* ... (note[5]), pp. 46 ff.

[14] On the unknown (not given) elements not being in all cases non-thematic, but occasionally appearing as thematic, see the note in small print further below in the body of the text.

[15] For the use of the doubled object for the purposes of FSP in Spanish and other languages, see G. T. Fish, *The Redundant Construction in Standard Spanish*, Hispania 41/1958, esp. p. 326; and P. Novák, *K zdvojování předmětu v albánštině (On the Problem of the Doubling of the Object in Albanian)*, Sborník slavistických prací věnovaných IV. mezinárodnímu sjezdu slavistů v Moskvě, Universitas Carolina, Prague 1958, pp. 27—32.

[16] Beside the interpretation of the special *O+loV* case, cf. also that of (1) on p. 131.

[17] For the problem of sentences occurring at the very beginning of communication, see also our ... *Non-Thematic Subjects* ... (note[5]), pp. 39—40.

[18] The reader may have noticed that in its section based on our interpretation, the tabular arrangement on p. 133 does not contain the Object-*Verb*-Subject type. This would belong to the sphere indicated by the lst II-question. It follows from Prof. H.'s observations that the most frequent Object-*Verb*-Subject type is 'that in which the impersonal verbs *haber* and *hacer* figure' (Th 32). The question, however, arises whether sentences with the impersonal *haber* or *hacer* actually are of the Object-*Verb*-Subject type. Thus in the sentence *Cuatro baños hay en la casa* ['Four bath-rooms there-are in the house'] — provided the morpheme *-y* of *hay* is interpreted as a substitution for the subject —, the only given element seems to be *en la casa*; all the rest conveys new information, though the amount of CD observed with *hay* is very low. Strictly speaking, we should interpret the sentence as one of the Object-Verb-Subject kind. If we are right, it may be asked whether the Object-*Verb*-Subject type is actually occurring at all.

[19] In our *Thoughts* ... (note[5]), pp. 51ff.

[20] This proviso (in fact, a statement of contextual dependence) holds good for all the subsequent interpretation of the four sentences.

[21] See E. Dvořáková, *Poznámky k postavení příslovečného určení situačního v angličtině a češtině z hlediska aktuálního členění větného (Notes on the Situational Adverbs in English and Czech from the Point of View of Functional Sentence Perspective)*, Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské university 1961, A 9, p. 143.

[22] Cf. G. O. Curme, American Speech, 2/1957, pp. 341—342, and E. Kruisinga and P. A. Erades, *En English Grammar*, Vol. I, First Part, 8th ed., Groningen-Djakarta 1953, pp. 84—87.

[23] The above notes show that an unknown (not given) adverbial element does not attain a higher amount of CD than the verb merely because following it. In this sense we have to correct our own observations put forth in *Thoughts* ... (see here note[5]), p. 50. Cf. also our *Ještě k postavení příslovečného určení v angličtině a češtině z hlediska aktuálního členění větného (Another Note on the Position of the Situational Adverbs in English and Czech from the Point of View of FSP)*, Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské university 1961, A 9, p. 149.

[24] *Thoughts* ... (note[5]), p. 53.

[25] We cannot claim to know enough about this tentatively established sphere of special instance levels. In inquiring into problems connected with this sphere, a student will benefit by consulting J. Mistrík's paper *K realizácii aktuálneho členenia (On the Exteriorization of Functional Sentence Perspective)*, Slovenská reč 24/1959, esp. pp. 205—210 and B. A. Ilyish's paper *Развитие способов выражения смыслового предиката в английском языке (Ways of Expressing the Sense Predicate in English [Historical Outline])* published in Материалы второй научной сессии по вопросам германского языкознания, Moscow — Leningrad 1961, pp. 194—215 (beside other studies by K. Boost, Fr. Daneš, M. Schubiger, quoted in ... *Non-Thematic Subjects* ... [note[5]], p. 29).

[26] The second instance type has been suggested to us by an observation in Prof. D. L. Bolinger's article *Linear Modification* (note[7]), p. 1123. It was this observation that has prompted us to develop, at least tentatively, the system of instance levels. — Within the second instance sphere, any sentence element may become rhematic, the rest of the sentence forming an extensive theme. Prof. J. Vachek has drawn our attention to the fact that some of the grammatical words may become rhematic within this sphere in order to function not in an ordinary communication, but in one about language, i. e. in a metalinguistic communication; cf., e. g., the sentence '[I did not say] I reassured *a* teacher, [but] I reassured *the* teacher'. The contextual dependence of such a sentence is certainly of a very particular kind.

[27] Following the wording of Prof. H. in Th 38, note[9].

[28] This is borne out by the following studies: D. L. Bolinger, *Meaningful Word Order in Spanish*, Boletín de Filología, Universidad de Chile, 1954—1955, pp. 45—56; J. Dubský, *L'inver-*

ЗАМЕЧАНИЯ О ФУНКЦИИ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ В АКТЕ СООБЩЕНИЯ

(По поводу двух синтаксических исследований А. Г. Хэчер)

В статье Syntax and the Sentence (Синтаксис и предложение), Word 12/1956 и в монографическом исследовании Theme and Underlying Question, Two Studies in Spanish Word Order (Тема и соответственный вопрос, Два исследования о порядке слов в испанском языке), Supplement to Word 12/1956, американская англистка и испанистка А. Г. Хэчер рассматривает вопросы, связанные с отношениями грамматической и семантической структуры предложения к порядку слов контекста. Можно сказать, что проф. Хэчер подходит к анализу этих вопросов почти полностью в отрыве от европейской лингвистики, в том числе и чехословацкой, которая со времени основополагающего труда проф. В. Матезиуса интенсивно занималась ими в работах об актуальном членении предложения, или же функциональной перспективе предложения (ФПП).

В первой части своей статьи автор знакомит читателя с главными мыслями и итогами, изложенными в приведенных исследованиях проф. Хэчер. Согласно ей в контексте любое повествовательное предложение можно воспринимать как ответ на вопрос, относящийся к той части, которая в данном повествовательном предложении является коммуникативно наиболее веской (т. е. — в соответствии с чехословацкой терминологией — образует ядро высказывания). Проф. X. пытается создать систему таких вопросов и исследует, в каком отношении к ней находятся прежде всего три типа испанских предложений, а именно предложения с непереходным сказуемостным глаголом, предшествующим неодушевленному подлежащему (Глаг Подл), предложения с неодушевленным дополнением (объектом), выраженным „двойственно" с помощью существительного и местоимения, и предшествующим сказуемостному глаголу (Доп + + допГлаг) и предложения с неудвоенным объектом, стоящим перед сказуемостным глаголом (ДопГлаг). Весьма серьезного внимания заслуживает ее положение о том, что появляющиеся в подобных типах глаголы выражают — если употребить термин проф. X. — одинаковую „тему" (т. е. одинаковый семантический признак), в частности: в широком смысле слова „наличие" какого-либо предмета (эвент. „приведение в наличие" предмета), причем последний выражается в первом типе подлежащим, во втором и третьем типах — дополнением.

Во второй части статьи автор в сжатом виде объясняет свою теорию ФПП, опирающуюся на результаты чехословацкой лингвистики. В третьей же части он сопоставляет теорию проф. X. со своей теорией. Оказывается, что оба подхода, в сущности, вскрывают и подтверждают существование тех же языковых явлений. По мнению автора система вопросов отражает систему инстанционных плоскостей, образуемую различными степенями конкретного включения (эвент. включаемости) типов предложения в контекст. (Инстанционная плоскость обусловлена степенью и способом контекстного включения предложения в данном акте сообщения.) В связи с этим автор останавливается на вопросе о контекстной включаемости испанских предложений типа ДопГлаг и Доп + допГлаг, а также английских предложений с обстоятельствами. Он приходит к выводу, что предлагающаяся со стороны проф. X. система могла бы полностью постигнуть контекстную включенность (эвент. включаемость) типов предложения только при условии, если бы она делала различие между грамматическим строем предложения, семантическим строением предложения и функциональной перспективой предложения. Отсутствие учета этих требований, пожалуй, лишает самую систему вопросов убедительной ясности. Вопреки этим своим критическим возражениям автор подчеркивает, что проф. X. с помощью своей системы вопросов добилась ряда ценных положений, которые не могут не учитываться при дальнейших разысканиях в области ФПП.

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