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SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SO-CALLED COMPLEX CONDENSATION IN MODERN ENGLISH*

One of the most outstanding features characterizing the English sentence is the tendency to word its predications nominally rather than verbally (see, e. g., G. O. Curme,[1] who points out the preference of English for saying *The matter is under consideration, After dinner we had a quiet smoke, I got a good shaking up*, etc., instead of *The matter is being considered, After dinner we smoked quietly, I was shaken up thoroughly*, etc.). The said tendency is brought into particular prominence if the structure of the English sentence is confronted with those found in some other European languages which, in their turn, show preference for verbal predication.

A typical example of such a language is Modern Czech whose outspokenly verbal character was often opposed to the nominal character of English by the late V. Mathesius. More than once he pointed out the important part played in good Czech style by the finite verb, and stressed the fact that this style is notoriously averse to complicated nominal constructions, fairly common in the good style of English.[2] Moreover, in his unpublished lectures he duly emphasized the part played in Modern English by what he called complex condensation phenomena. By this term he meant the introduction into a sentence of a nominal element or phrase enabling the said sentence to do without a subordinate clause the use of which would otherwise be indispensable. As a specimen of such a process of complex condensation one may quote the well known English proverb *Barking dogs rarely bite*. Its comparison with an equivalent Czech proverb *Pes, který štěká, nekouše* (A dog that barks does not bite) proves that the English present participle acts here as a means of complex condensation, enabling the sentence to do without a dependent adjective-clause, actually found in the Czech equivalent of the proverb.

It appears that a more detailed examination of English and Czech materials, undertaken from the indicated angle, may throw some light on the place and importance attaching to nominal (and also verbal) constructions in English and Czech. An attempt at an examination of the kind is given below: it lies in the nature of the subject matter discussed that within the narrow frame of the present paper we shall often have to confine ourselves to pointing out existing problems and to leave their definite solution to further research.

I. A rich store of complex condensation cases can be found especially in literary contexts, rather pretentious both from the point of form and contents. To turn to a specialized context first, in A. L. Morton's well-known History of England[3] the following simple sentence can be found:

> The French plan, viewed in retrospect, might seem to have been designed with the purpose of ensuring a German victory (orig. p. 524).

In the Czech version of the book, however, the idea is expressed by a complex sentence:

> Francouzský plán, když jej zkoumáme retrospektivně, vypadá, jako by byl určen k zajištění vítězství Německa (transl. p. 383).

It will be seen that two nominal constructions of the English sentence have been replaced in Czech by dependent clauses.

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* *Dedicated to Prof. F. Kalda on the occasion of his seventieth birthday.*

If submitted to closer analysis, the above examples will be found to give ample justification to Mathesius's term of complex condensation. The fact that a sentence can dispense with a subordinate clause undoubtedly results in a closer cohesion of its elements, which may justly be regarded as a greater condensity. The importance of the fact reaches far beyond the limits of the theory of language — it has some consequences for the practice of reading, and listening to, English contexts. Obviously in deciphering an English context the reader's (or listener's) attention can and must be concentrated so as to grasp the sentence as one compact whole, grouped around one single nexus of subject and predicate. The relations of at least some sentence elements to this central nexus must necessarily be of rather complex character.[4] Thus the term of complex condensation really appears to be a very apt designation of the factor lying behind the above-said compact character of the English sentence.

In his university classes Mathesius laid particular stress on the part played in English complex condensations by three types of nominal expressions derived from verbal bases, viz. by participles, infinitives, and gerunds.[5] The importance of that part can be assessed, with at least approximate reliability, by comparing English literary contexts with the Czech contexts translating them. We attempted a comparison of the kind by confronting Chapter XVII of the above-quoted A. L. Morton's book with the Czech translation of the same chapter (in the original version the chapter takes up pp. 324—344, in the translation pp. 383—397). The results may be summarized as follows: In the English original were found 168 cases of complex condensation using the three word-types enumerated above. (The word-types will be referred to as means of condensation or, for short, condensators.) Out of the total number of 168 there were 66 cases using infinitives, 38 cases employing present participles, further there were 42 cases of past participles, and 22 cases of gerunds. On the other hand, the Czech version presented only 75 cases of complex condensation, the ascertained condensators being infinitives in 33 cases, indefinite present participles (the "přítomné přechodníky" of Czech grammars) in 8 cases, definite present participles ("příčestí přítomná") in 18 cases, and definite past participles ("příčestí minulá trpná") in 16 cases; gerunds, as is commonly known, do not exist in Czech. Naturally, the chapter contained also other condensators than the three types pointed out by Mathesius, such as verbal nouns, adverb-phrases etc. But even if these other types of condensators are included in our compared materials, the above-established ratio of 168 : 75 will not be affected to any substantial degree: it will be replaced by that of 199 : 108, again in favour of English. — The quoted figures are the more convincing in view of the fact that the Czech translators have often preserved the sentence structure of Morton's book with conscientiousness almost bordering on slavish imitation, with the result that their translation contains more condensators than good and clear Czech style can absorb. Another translator, endowed with finer feeling for the requirements of Czech stylistic norm, would have undoubtedly resorted to Czech dependent clauses as equivalents to English condensators much more frequently than our translators have ventured to do.

One might expect *à priori* that in narrative prose the difference concerning the use of condensators in English and Czech will be less pronounced than in specialized contexts. It will be readily admitted, that is, that conceptual thinking, lying behind such specialized contexts, favours the use of nominal constructions to a much higher degree than rough-and-ready, more emotionally coloured, and thus necessarily less accurate thinking lying behind narrative prose. In other

words, one would be led to believe that English narrative prose will reveal a more verbal character than scientific or specialized prose contexts, and that, in this respect, it will show some resemblance to Czech narrative prose. It is certainly most interesting to find that this expectation is not borne out by concrete language facts; and it can hardly be due to a mere chance that the expectation is most bitterly disappointed in comparing pieces of English narrative prose with such English translations as have been elaborated by highly skilled translators, delicately responsive to all grammatical and stylistic values of both English and Czech. In such translations English condensators mostly appear to be rendered by dependent clauses.

One of the English literary works that may claim to have obtained such a high-ranking translation is undoubtedly Katherine Mansfield's novel At the Bay (the Czech version is entitled V zátoce).[6] Our analysis of the first six chapters of the novel (in the original they take up pp. 7—33, in the Czech version pp. 326—348) disclosed no less than 83 cases of condensators which the translators did not hesitate to interpret by means of finite verb forms. Among the condensators found in the text the participial constructions occupy the foremost place. It is fair to point out that also contrary cases have been ascertained in the text, i. e. those in which an English finite verb form corresponds to a Czech nominal expression. Such contrary cases, however, are comparatively scarce; altogether we came across no more than 18 (out of the number not a single instance was found employing a Czech indefinite participle form; there were 7 instances of definite participles, 2 of them present, 2 past active, and 3 past passive).

As has already been stated, the foremost place among the English condensators used in K. Mansfield's text is occupied by participial constructions. In 41 cases (that is to say in almost one half of the total number of condensation cases) it is the form of the present participle that acts as condensator. It deserves to be noted that the Czech finite verb form translating the present participle is not necessarily brought into a hypotactical relation to the finite verb of the principle clause. On the contrary, the mutual relation of the two finite verbs is not infrequently shaped as paratactical. Here is at least one specimen (to which others could be added) of such notable difference in structure between the English and Czech wordings of the same content:

> But the old sheep-dog, not looking up, waggled past, flinging out his legs from side to side (orig. p. 10).
> Ale starý ovčácký pes se po ní ani neohlédl, plouhal se dál a motal nohama sem tam (transl. p. 328).

Obviously one has to do here with something more deep-reaching than a mere difference in syntactical forms: what is involved is two different ways in which the two languages tackle the realities of the outside world. In Czech one observes the tendency to dissociate the reality to be expressed into a number of actions or processes, which may be mutually either coordinated or subordinated; in English, on the other hand, a different tendency is at work, viz. one that endeavours to grasp the same reality as a single, basic action or process, absorbing all other potential actions or processes as its elements or concomitant circumstances. A more detailed examination of the different ways in which English and Czech cope with task of framing the sentence might provide a hardly insignificant contribution to the comparative characterology of these two languages as regards the mutual relation of language, thought, and reality in the two language communities; such an examination, however, would reach far beyond the limits laid down to this paper.

The difference of approach to extralinguistic reality by the two language systems discloses another interesting aspect which also calls for some comment.

Even a superficial examination of the Czech version of K. Mansfield's novel, and even a passing comparison of that version with the English original, is bound to show convincingly that the predicative finite verbs of the Czech translation have a notable preponderance over the English predicative finite verbs not only in regard to number but also in regard to significance. In his time, V. Mathesius stressed the important part played in English predication by what he called verbal phrases, i. e. by combinations of verbs of general meaning and nominal elements (nouns, adjectives, and even adverbs) that act as specializing factors concretizing that general meaning. Such verbal phrases often express in English what in Czech is denoted by the form of a finite verb alone.[7] To quote only a few commonly known specimens of such verbal phrases: the English combination *he got hold of* is translated in Czech by a sole finite verb form, viz. *zmocnil se*; similar pairs of expressions are *we are taking a rest — odpočívámе*, and *get ready — připrav se!* (the list of such pairs, of course, could be extended indefinitely). The comparison of members of such pairs shows convincingly that what may be called the semantic centre of gravity within the Czech predication lies in the verbal form; in the English predication, however, the centre is shifted on to the nominal element.

It undoubtedly follows from the established difference that the Czech finite verb form is endowed with very strong dynamism. It should be realized that the Czech finite verb form fulfils two important tasks at a time: in addition to containing the semantic centre of gravity it also serves as an unmatched instrument of predication. Contrary to this, the English finite verb form appears to be much less dynamic in character. This is partly due to the above-mentioned frequent shift of the semantic centre of gravity from the finite verb on to the nominal element of predication, and partly to the fact that the English finite verb form frequently ceases to be the unmatched instrument of predication, being often reduced to something that very closely resembles a copula. For this fundamental difference, too, there is some evidence in our material drawn from K. Mansfield's novel. At least one of the most typical cases of evidence shall be quoted here:

> And she gave her strange neighing laugh and grimaced at the other women (orig. p. 27).
> Zařehtala se jako kůň a ušklíbla se po ostatních ženách (transl. p. 242).

The reduced dynamism of the English finite verb is doubtlessly responsible also for those cases in which an English sentence dispenses with the finite verb form altogether, however vague its meaning might be. The Czech translators again felt is necessary to introduce the finite verb. Thus:

> Black hair, dark blue eyes, red lips, a slow sleepy smile, a fine tennis players, a perfect dancer, and with it all a mystery (orig. p. 26).
> Měl černé vlasy, tmavomodré oči, rudé rty, usmíval se vláčně a ospale, hrál dobře tennis, skvěle tančil a při tom všem vypadal záhadně (transl. p. 340—1).

The nominal tenor of the English sentence, clearly opposed to the verbal sentence tenor prevailing in Czech, also glimmers through the English sentences using a mere copula (the Czech equivalents employ a finite verb of full meaning). Such is the case of the framing clause in the following complex sentence:

> Her lack of vanity, her slang, the way she treated men as though she was one of them, and the fact that she didn't care twopence about her house and called her servant Gladys "Glad-eyes", was disgraceful (orig. p. 25).
> Nic na sebe nedbala, mluvila nevybíravě, k mužům se chovala, jako by k nim patřila, na domácnosti jí ani zbla nezáleželo, své služce Elišce říkala Pampeliška — hanba mluvit (transl. p. 340).

One interesting point attaches to the comparison of the above sentence and its Czech equivalent. The basic tenor of the English sentence is undoubtedly nominal, despite the fact that the sentence includes no less than four dependent clauses with their finite verb forms. Similarly, the basic tenor of the Czech equivalent sentence remains verbal, although the sentence is concluded by a verbless nominal predication *(hanba mluvit)*. To this it should be added that the extralinguistic reality to be expressed is again worded paratactically in the Czech sentence, being dissociated into a number of parallel actions or processes; in the English text, on the other hand, the same extralinguistic reality is worded so as to be framed within one principal clause, modified of course by a number of dependent clauses incorporated into it. Here again the translators wisely conformed to the well-known tendency of Czech, observed in simple narrative style, to favour paratactical sentence structure. But the problems involved in following paratactical and hypotactical tendencies found in Czech and English narrative styles would claim a separate treatise and cannot be developed in the present paper.

Our tentative conclusion gained from a passing review of Czech materials obtained by translating English prose pieces, specialized as well as narrative, amounts to an ascertainment of totally opposed attitudes to complex condensations, and to equally opposed degrees of dynamism of the finite verb forms in the two languages. The validity of this conclusion can be tested on other materials, gained from the opposite source, viz. from English translations of Czech original prose. To take up narrative prose first, we undertook a cursory examination of the English version of K. Čapek's Letters from England.[8]

Although the translator made every possible effort — justifiable in this case — to preserve the sentence structure of the original text, so typical for the Czech author's individual style, even he could not altogether ignore the nominal tenor of the English sentence, and not infrequently he had to yield to it. Let us observe, e. g., the condensation effected by the gerund in the following specimen:

> Je ti někdy úzko, jak se cítíš osamělý ve středu těchto vlídných a ochotných lidí (orig. p. 123).
> Sometimes you have a sense of uneasiness at feeling so lonely in the midst of these kind and courteous people (transl. p. 174).

The absence of the copula, too, can be attested:

> Jejich zamlklost je taková, že ani nenadávají veřejně na vládu, na vlak nebo na daně; je to celkem neveselý, uzavřený lid (orig. p. 122).
> Their taciturnity is such that they do not even publicly abuse the Government, the trains or the taxes; on the whole, a joyless and reticent people (transl. p. 173).

As an example of a specialized Czech context translated into English one may quote here an essay by Dr Zdeněk Wirth, a prominent Czech historian of fine arts; it analyses the *vedute* of Prague dating from the period that extends from late 15th century down to the present day.[9] As it happens, Dr Wirth's Czech style has a strongly nominal turn, in conformity with the very special nature of the theme discussed, and with the elaborate manner in which the author's arguments are presented. Despite this, however, not a few instances can be found showing that the style of the English version of the essay is still more nominal. Here is at least one of them:

> Výsledek, k němuž tehdy dospěl vývoj renaissanční krajiny od středověkých tuhých bočních kulis a vysokého nadhledu, od neumělé perspektivy a jednotného koloritu, dá se shrnouti asi takto: . . . (orig. p. 33).
> The results attained by the Renaissance development of landscape from stiff laterals and high view from above, from inartistic perspective and uniformity of colouring, may be summarised thus: . . . (transl. p. 37).

The absence of the copula is also evidenced (see the parenthesized passage):

> Je-li přepis původní technikou, zvolenou portretistou města jako vlastním interpretem kresby — je to v nejdokonalejší formě u Hollara, pak u Pucherny, Prouta a u moderních našich grafiků — můžeme jej považovati za rovnocenný projev umělcův (orig. p. 19).
> If there is an original copy in the technique chosen by the portraitist of the town as an accurate interpretation of the drawing — as in the most complete form with Hollar, Pucherna, Prout and with our modern graphics — we must consider it of equal value with the work of the artist (transl. p. 20).[10]

All our materials, taken from both Czech and English sources, thus obviously point to the conclusion that the very moderate amount of predilection enjoyed by nominal constructions in Czech goes hand in hand with the strong amount of dynamism present in the Czech finite verb and, *vice versa*, that the obviously nominal tenor of English sentences is closely associated with the greatly reduced dynamism of finite verb forms in English.[11] The conclusion holds good primarily for narrative prose, the style of which is justly regarded as unmarked, i. e. not burdened by specialized functions. But even in specialized contexts, whose style — definitely of marked character — necessarily tends to be much more nominal, the above ascertained tendency favouring nominal expression appears unquestionably more outspoken in English than in Czech.

II. If this is so, then we find ourselves faced with a problem of historical perspective: do the different degrees of dynamism, established in ModE and ModCz finite verb forms, represent a state of things inherited from the earlier stages of the two languages or have we to do here with a result of some previous processes ascertainable in the course of their respective developments?

A fully satisfactory answer to this question cannot be given, naturally, without thoroughly investigating the historical evidence to be collected from various stages of development of the two languages. Needless to say, such investigation is altogether outside the scope of the present lines. At present hardly more can be done than a tentative ascertainment of some of the main points of the development in the two languages, and of the general trend the development has so far followed in them. Our main concern here is naturally the development of English, and therefore its problems should be discussed first.

Again, even a cursory examination of OE prose texts (the texts of OE poetry, involving some special problems, cannot be considered here) appears to reveal that in the OE period verbal constructions used to play a more important part than they do in ModE. Dependent clauses, especially the relative ones, were obviously plentiful. Further, the number of condensators in OE was fairly limited: no less than six condensators known from ModE were non-existent in the old period. There was no gerund (present or past, active or passive), no past infinitive, and no pre-present participle (equivalent to ModE *having seen*). True, there was the dative absolute construction but its character was manifestly bookish: it usually translated the Latin ablative absolute.[12] Thus the only OE condensing element unknown to ModE was the inflected infinitive (sometimes referred to as the gerundive) which, later on, became merged with the common infinitive category. — Clearly, the limited number of condensators in OE seems to endorse the view of the predominantly verbal tenor of the OE sentence.

One would expect this verbal tenor to stand out with particular clearness in the comparison of OE texts with their ModE translations. If this expectation is disappointed in most cases, this should be attributed to the scrupulous approach to OE language materials, which seems to be typical of many modern transla-

tors. The result of that approach is a particular aesthetic effect which might be denoted as primitive monumentality.

Still, our method of comparing the original text and the translation can obtain here, too: it will reveal the predominantly verbal character of OE if it is applied in proper setting. We have in mind here the achievements of those OE translators from Latin who were led not by the ambition to keep to the Latin original as closely as possible, but by an earnest desire to transmit to the reader the subject matter of the original in the most accessible and most intelligible manner. The wording of such good OE translations is often consistently verbal, while the Latin original abounds in nominal constructions. As a specimen of such independent translational procedure we are quoting here a sentence from the Alfredian translation of the well-known story of Cadmon, together with the corresponding sentence from Bede's Ecclesiastical History, its Latin prototype (both quotations are taken from Mossé, l. c., p. 241f.):

> Bede: At ille suscepto negotio abiit et mane rediens, optimo carmine, quod iubebatur, compositum (sic!) reddidit.
> Alfred: *þá* hé *þá* hæfde *þá* wísan onfongne, *þá* éode hé hám tó his húse, ond cwóm eft on morgenne, ond *þý* betstan léo*þ*e geglenged him ásong and ágeaf *þ*æt him beboden wæs.

It will be noticed that two Latin nominal constructions were replaced in OE by dependent clauses characterized by their own finite verbs. Moreover, it is well worth pointing out that the finite verb forms were resorted to in spite of the presence in the OE grammatical system of the dative absolute and the present participle; the two forms obviously stood in a very close relation to the two nominal constructions of the Latin original, and yet the translator did not avail himself of them. It is clear that the fact can hardly be due to a mere chance.

It was only in the course of the future development of English that due prerequisites came to be established for strengthening the nominal tendencies within the domain of the English sentence. The most essential of the prerequisites was undoubtedly the rise of new condensators, so typical of Present Day English. Thus gerund came to crystallize as a distinct category by the end of the 14th century, but its differentiation according to tense and voice was deferred until the close of the 16th century.[13] Similarly, the rise of the pre-present participle and of the past infinitive presuppose the establishment of the pre-present tense as a paradigmatic entity within the verbal system of English. The same must apply, naturally, to the rise of the passive pre-present participle.

The facts so far considered seem to suggest a plausible hypothesis: the increasing importance of the part played by condensators in English went most probably hand in hand with the decreasing dynamism of the English finite verb form[14] (it will be agreed that our above remarks concerning the state of things in OE have made the conclusion of the comparatively high dynamism of the OE finite verb form fairly certain). Further studies will have to test our hypothesis by detailed investigation into the state of things typical of the EME, ME, and EModE periods and — which should not be overlooked — to assess the degree of influence exercised by French and Latin in the process of nominalization of the unmarked English style in the course of centuries. Some amount of such influence appears to be undoubted,[15] but probably it only strengthened and accelerated the operation of tendencies that had been proper to the language even before it became submitted to such external influence.[16] It is commonly known, e. g., that the birth of the pre-present tense, denoted above as a necessary prerequisite for the rise of some of the condensators, was being prepared by a number of non-paradigmatic *ad hoc* constructions, fairly common in OE.[17]

Turning now to Czech, we are asking how the dynamism of its finite verb form appears when viewed from historical perspective.

The answer to the question is suggested by a number of clues. One of them is provided by what we know about the history of Czech indefinite participles ("přechodníky"). Living elements of OCz, in the course of later development they have been relegated to the sphere of bookish style,[18] and thus have more or less become signals of the marked stylistic sphere of ModCz. Another clue can be derived from the fact that Czech has added no item to its inventory of condensators throughout the course of its history (English, as has been shown above, has greatly enriched its corresponding inventory); on the contrary, it has lost one item that originally belonged to it, viz. the present passive participle.[19] Thus the nominal tendencies in the Czech sentence, seen in historical perspective, clearly follow a decreasing line. Obviously, the prerequisites for a successful operation of such tendencies have been by no means improved (rather, they have deteriorated) in the course of centuries. One may suppose, accordingly, that the verbal tendencies in the Czech sentence have kept their positions intact (or rather, that they have even strengthened them) in the course of development. In other words, the dynamism of the ModCz finite verb form is probably just as strong as it was in OCz (and possibly even stronger).

However plausible the above suggestion may appear, it needs verifying because some facts seem to contradict it. It might be argued, that is, that by the loss of four of its tenses (aorist, imperfect, pluperfect, and "second" future) Czech has greatly reduced the dynamism of its finite verb forms. Indeed, it cannot be doubted that the remaining three tenses, preserved in ModCz (present, preterite, and future), make up a poorer scale for the classification of verbal actions, as far as their setting in time is concerned, than did the OCz scale comprising seven tense categories.

Still, the objection must be denoted as erroneous. It should be recalled, first of all, that two of the lost tenses, pluperfect and second future, had periphrastic forms. From this it follows that in these two tenses the semantic centre of gravity did not rest in the finite verb form, which acted more or less as a copula, but in the other element of the periphrasis, which in OCz continued to be regarded as a nominal form *(byl jsem viděl, budeš viděl)*. The cancellation of these two tenses thus did not result in weakening the position of simple finite verb forms, to which strong dynamism undoubtedly attached. On the contrary, the cancellation contributed efficiently to a further restriction of the strongholds held by nominal constructions and by the dynamically weak finite verb forms included in them. — As for the loss of the other two tenses, aorist and imperfect, one cannot deny that it really did affect the system of simple finite verb forms. But the semantic difference between the two tenses may be said to have concerned rather aspect phenomena than the setting in time of the action or process predicated, so that the function of the Czech verb to express that setting in time was in no way affected by the disappearance of the two tenses from the Czech grammatical system. Needless to say, the semantic difference formerly covered by the two tenses could be easily expressed in Czech, from that time on, in terms of differences of verbal aspect.

One should realize here that by the dynamism of the finite verb forms is meant the ability of the finite verb form to express the predicated action or process in its totality. This totality is not limited to the setting in time of that action or process; it also includes the quantitative features, i. e. the so-called phenomena of verbal aspect (implying, among other things, whether the concerned action or process takes place once or repeatedly, further its perfective or imperfective character, etc.). And it is exactly the richness of simple finite verb forms, standing at the disposal of Czech for the purpose of expressing aspect differences, that yields an additional proof of the high degree of dynamism characteristic of the Czech finite verb.

In English the situation is, of course, altogether different. In the absence of any system of simple finite verb forms for the expression of aspect differences, the English grammatical system either takes recourse to periphrases employing various lexical means (such as *used to, came to, would*, and the like) or simply charges the whole context of the sentence with the task of bringing about the intended shade of aspect[20] — thus, e. g., the form *I saw* may have, in various contexts, either the perfective or the imperfective meaning. Obviously the task of expressing aspect differences is shifted here from the finite verb form on to the contextual, i. e.

syntagmatical, factors — a fact testifying again to the reduced degree of dynamism in the ModE finite verb form, which by itself is unable to express differences of verbal aspect. Incidentally, it is sometimes asserted that the OE finite verb was still able to express such differences, though to a limited extent: it is said to have often used the prefix *ge-* to denote perfectivity.[21] If this theory is valid, it might yield additional support to our theory that the OE finite verb form possessed a higher amount of dynamism than its ModE counterpart.

Our thesis concerning the strong dynamism of the Czech finite verb form might be liable to another objection. Drawing all consequences from what has been said above of the loss of pluperfect and second future in Czech, one might justly point out that out of the three tense forms left in ModCz only one, the present tense, has a simple form (e. g. *vidím* I see). In the other two tenses, the preterite *viděl jsem* (I saw) and the future *budu vidět* (I shall see), the semantic centre of gravity again appears to have been shifted on to the nominal element (on to the infinitive *vidět* or the past active participle *viděl*, respectively).

One is certainly justified to ask whether the verbal dynamism, if typical of only one of ModCz tense forms, could be given much prominence in characterizing Czech finite verb forms. Nevertheless, our formula may be safely upheld. Apart from the fact that the present tense, being the unmarked, basic element of the tense system, counts for its most important member, there are some other facts to be considered.

First, as regards the form of the future, it should be recalled that by the side of the periphrasis *budu vidět*, the meaning of which is imperfective, there also exists a simple perfective form *uvidím*, equally applicable to a future action. Further it is worth recalling that the form *budu vidět* prevailed, in the course of development, over the OCz form *budu vida* (*vida* being the form of the indefinite present participle) whose nominal character was still more conspicuous than that of *budu vidět*, as the nominal element *vida* was bound to agree with the subject of the sentence in gender and number. Needless to say, the infinitive form *vidět* was not subject to concord regulations and its nominal character was thus less apparent.[22]

The other case, that of the preterite *viděl jsem*, is even more interesting. In the 3rd person — which, as is generally admitted, presents the case of pure unmarked predication — the copula has disappeared *(on viděl, oni viděli)*; not infrequently the copula is also omitted in the 1st person *(já viděl, my viděli)*. Obviously the form of the active past participle *viděl*, nominal by descent, has been revaluated in ModCz into a finite verb form. This theory is borne out by one interesting fact. The negative element *ne-*, which in Czech verbs is regularly prefixed to the finite verb form, in the preterite tense is not joined with the copula, as might be expected and as was still the case in OCz *nejsem viděl*, but exactly with the form of the (so-called) participle: *neviděl jsem*. The differentiation of this *l*-form — now a finite verb form — according to gender (cf. the forms masc. *viděl*, fem. *viděla*, ntr. *vidělo*, concording with their subjects) is admittedly an isolated phenomenon in the verbal system of Czech; it is supported by the equally differentiated pronouns *ten — ta — to* 'the', *on — ona — ono* 'he/she/it' which often stand in close syntactical relations with the *l*-forms. The formal abolishing of gender differences in the plurals of the two pronouns, effected in popular dialects, was matched there by a parallel abolishing of the differences in the endings of the *l*-forms.[23]

To turn to English again, it is worth noting that from what has been said above about the loss of four tense forms in the history of Czech a lesson may be drawn for the proper understanding of the development that has occurred in English and, generally, of the situation now prevailing in that language. The development of tense systems in English, if evaluated from the indicated angle, shows convincingly how fallacious would necessarily be any conclusion establishing a sort of direct proportion between the increase or decrease in verbal dynamism in a language and the rise or loss, respectively, of a certain number of paradigmatic tenses that may be observed in that language. The increase in the number of tenses from two in OE to six (and possibly twelve, if continuous tenses should be included in the number) in ModE certainly cannot be taken for a sign of the increased dynamism of English finite verb forms. As a matter of fact, the newly arisen tenses added nothing whatever to that dynamism, because all of them were expressed by periphrastic forms, and it has been shown earlier in this paper that in any such form the semantic centre of gravity lies in the nominal element. Further, it is well known that the finite auxiliaries found in such tense forms are often

omitted, especially in colloquial and popular speech: *Have you got it? > Got it?, I am travelling in wool > Travelling in wool* (especially in introducing oneself, in telegraphic style and the like). The new tense forms may even be said to have considerably diminished the dynamism of English finite verb forms: it will be easily seen that with the rise of the new tenses the old simple forms, present and preterite, found themselves reduced to a minority in the system which used to be wholly dominated by them.

III. What has been said so far does not imply, naturally, that English should be incapable of expressing, if need be, the dynamic character of the predicated action or process, or, vice versa, that Czech should be unable to word exact conceptual thinking in specialized contexts whose preference for nominal constructions has often been noted. The aim of the above arguments only was to document the existence of the two opposed syntactical tendences, the one being typical of English, the other characterizing Czech, and to point out some interesting connections ascertainable between the two tendencies and some other features of the two language systems involved.

It will be of interest to find out what means each of the two language systems employs if faced with the task of expressing extralinguistic reality in the style that, so to speak, runs counter to the tendency typical of the respective language system. To take up Czech first, the ability of that language to avail itself of rich nominal inventory in specialized contexts (i. e., in the marked style) has often been pointed out.[24] Not to mention other categories (such as verbal nouns, some special sorts of substantives and adjectives), the condensators discussed in the opening paragraphs of the present paper can be amply made use of. No doubt, the amount of their use in Czech will always notably lag behind the corresponding amount ascertainable in English; this, however, detracts nothing from the ability of Czech to express the conceptual content in a satisfactory manner, no matter how high the level of abstraction may be. One point deserves emphasizing here: the Czech condensators are genuine nouns, in no way fundamentally different, either in form or in function, from other Czech nouns belonging to the concerned morphological category (thus, a participle behaves as any other adjective, a verbal noun as any other noun of the concerned paradigm, etc.).[25]

English, when placed in an analogous situation, has to face a different task, viz. how to give due prominence to the dynamic character of the action or process to be depicted in words. With the more or less formal character of its finite verb, English must look for some other device enabling it to transmit to the listener or reader some idea of the dynamism and intensity of the predicated action or process that has to be depicted as vividly as possible. Strange to say, it finds such device exactly in its own means of condensation which, unlike Czech condensators, are able (at least to a degree) to express the setting in time of the actions or processes implied by the condensators used. The differentiation according to time of the English infinitive and gerund forms, as opposed to the non-differentiated character of the Czech infinitive and verbal noun forms, can hardly be due to a mere chance.[26] The effective part played by English condensators in imparting to the English sentence some amount of dynamism is greatly facilitated by the fact that, thanks to the reduced importance of the finite verb in English, the attention of the listener or reader is attracted rather by the condensators than by the more or less formal predicative verb. It should also be noted that after having acquired grammatical features originally typical only of verbal forms (such as tense and voice) the English condensators, so to speak, necessarily

overstep the limits originally imposed on them by their nominal character (it has been shown above that in Czech such overstepping is absolutely unthinkable). — It is, of course, true that English condensators provide only for one part of the tasks performed in Czech by the dynamically potent finite verb: they inform only of the setting in time of the predicated action or process, but do not give any primary indication as to its quantitative side, i. e. of the phenomena falling under the heading of verbal aspect. But for all that, even the setting in time alone is able to impart to the English sentence something of that lively and vivid character which, by general consent, the Czech sentence acquires from the presence of its finite verb form.

The conclusion arrived at in the preceding paragaph is singularly confirmed by another piece of evidence, gained from the analysis of the materials discussed in the present paper. In the Czech original one sometimes finds a nominal construction not containing any noun derived from a verbal basis; still, its English translation is often worded so as to include a nominal element of that category (such as are usually found to act as condensators). Two specimens of such translational approach are given below (both are again drawn from P. Selver's translation of the Letters from England):

> Jaká škoda toho krásného hnoje! (orig. p. 52).
> What a pity to waste such splendid manure (transl. p. 80).
>
> Když se jednou přednormanským Britům povedlo postavit náramné chrámové lodi s dřevěným stropem, zůstali na tom i v gotice, patrně z pravěké konservativnosti (orig. p. 71).
> When the ancient Britons had once contrived to build enormous church naves with a wooden ceiling, they kept to it in Gothic as well, evidently prompted by a primitive conservatism (transl. p. 95).

In the above two quotations no cases of condensation are involved — as a matter of fact, no Czech finite verb corresponds in them to the supposed condensators in English (the infinitive form *to waste* in the first instance, in the second, the past participle *prompted*). The only reason that can justify the emergence of the ascertained nominal forms in the English translations is obviously an effort to impart a more vivid and lively character to the English context. — Sometimes such a nominal form can occur even in a sentence containing a predicative finite verb, especially when the meaning of the latter is so vague and general as to demand a complement concretizing its meaning. The increase of concreteness in the finite verb must clearly result in the increase of its dynamism. Thus, a Czech sentence like *Předseda pokračoval* is translated into English *The chairman went on to say* (the final infinitive form being a specimen of the concretizing element just referred to).

Thus the analysed examples appear to endorse our theory that, to some extent at least, the setting in time observable in ModE condensators is capable of making up for the distinctly reduced dynamism of ModE finite verb forms.

By way of concluding the above arguments, let us add two final remarks which may be of some importance.

In the first, we should like to touch the problem of interdependences between the analytical structure of language and the reduced dynamism of the finite verb form (together with the preference for nominal constructions) and, vice versa, between the synthetical language structure and the strong dynamism of the finite verb form (together with the lack of preference for nominal constructions). From what has been so far presented in this paper it seems to follow that such interdependences do exist. Undoubtedly they do[27], but one should be warned against accepting them with uncritical and oversimplifying naivety. English and Czech seem to represent exceptionally clearcut antipodal types of such interdependences. In most languages, however, the interdependence is likely to present a more complicated aspect. In general it may be expected that the style of specialized contexts will always be characterized by a comparatively high amount of nominal

constructions even in those languages whose finite verb forms display an imposing degree of dynamism. Russian and Latin seem to be specimens of languages presenting such a more complicated state of things: the comparatively strong amount of dynamism of the finite verb appears to be accompanied there by a surprising predilection for using nominal elements in building up sentences. When studying concrete languages, one should thus beware of aprioristic conclusions regarding the interdependence: a careful examination of the particular language structure, along with all its complexities, can alone yield a satisfying solution of the problem.

The other remark wants to register a penetrating contribution devoted recently to the problem of the English infinitive and the dependent clauses often replacing it in the English sentence. Prof. Ivan Poldauf, the author of the paper,[28] tries to find out the onomatological difference between the two grammatical items. His arguments are full of highly interesting observations, and his onomatological evaluation of the infinitival function, as well as his assessment of the place occupied by the infinitive in the structure of English and in those of some other languages, are undoubtedly sound. Unfortunately, Poldauf has paid little attention to the problems of the sentence (taken as a whole) of which the infinitive forms a part, i. e. he has failed to evaluate the condensing function of the infinitive. It is probably for this reason that Poldauf does not succeed in solving some partial problems implied by his theme. Thus he does not explain why in English "the infinitive is distinctly preferred" to the dependent clause, the fact which he appears to take for granted (see p. 17 of his paper). Poldauf's thesis, too, that "the dependent clause usually serves the purpose of distinguishing the meaning of the verb" can hardly be regarded as proved by the examples he is quoting. In our opinion, full justice can only be done to the problem of the English infinitive if also its syntactical function, viz. its ability to serve as a means of complex condensation, is duly taken into account.[29]

NOTES

[1] G. O. Curme, A Grammar of the English Language, III (Boston 1931), see esp. p. 22.

[2] See, e. g., his treatise Řeč a sloh in: Čtení o jazyce a poesii I (Prague 1942), pp. 11 ff., and his paper O nominálních tendencích v slovesné predikaci novoanglické, Sborník filologický 4, (Prague 1913), pp. 325 ff.

[3] A. L. Morton, A People's History of England (London 1948). Translated into Czech under the title Dějiny Anglie (Prague 1950) by Šárka Nováková and Dr Radovan Tesař.

[4] And thus, they may not always be easy to grasp; but the difficulty arising from this is outweighed by the fact that the reader's (or listener's) attention need not be scattered on a greater number of nexuses of potential subordinate clauses.

[5] His argumentes concerning these three word types were published only in popular form, i. e. in his booklet Nebojte se angličtiny (Prague 1936); see esp. pp. 74 ff. On condensators in Czech see his treatise Řeč a sloh, pp. 87—91.

[6] Katherine Mansfield, The Garden Party and other stories (publ. by the Albatross Co., Leipzig 1941). Translated into Czech under the title Zahradní slavnost (Prague 1952) by Hana Skoumalová and Aloys Skoumal. The examined novel may be found on pp. 7 ff. of the original, and pp. 326 ff. of the Czech translation.

[7] See V. Mathesius, Nebojte se angličtiny, p. 70 f.

[8] Karel Čapek, Anglické listy (23rd ed., Prague 1947). Translated into English under the title Letters from England (London 1947) by P. Selver.

[9] Zdeněk Wirth, Praha v obraze pěti století (Prague 1932). Translated into English under the title Prague in Pictures of Five Centuries (Prague 1933), by F. P. Marchant.

[10] Slight inaccuracies of the translations are not noted here if they do not interfere with the issues discussed in the present paper.

[11] In another of our papers, Obecný zápor v angličtině a v češtině (provided with a detailed summary in English), Práce z vědeckých ústavů filos. fakulty university Karlovy 51 (Prague 1947), we pointed out that also the problem of the so-called double negation in Czech negative sentences expressing universal statements (opposed to single negation in English sentences of the kind) can be successfully tackled if all consequences are drawn from the unequal amount of dynamism characterizing the finite verb form in the two languages. — The small amount of dynamism, typical of ModE finite verb forms, is also amply proved by the materials collected in G. Kirchner's book Die zehn Hauptverben des Englischen im Britischen und Amerikanischen (Halle 1952; reviewed by the present writer in Deutsche Literaturzeitung 76, 1955, 432 ff).

[12] See, e. g., F. Mossé, Manuel de l'anglais du moyen âge I (Paris 1945), p. 141.

[13] Cf. B. Trnka, On the Syntax of the Modern English Verb from Caxton to Dryden (Prague 1930), pp. 82 f.

[14] The degree to which the dynamism of the finite verb form has sunk in ModE is strikingly revealed by G. O. Curme (l. c., p. 22) who believes that the preference for nominal predications in ModE should be attributed to "a tendency to more concrete forms of expression". In his opinion, "a noun seems nearer to popular feeling than the more abstract verb". If Curme is right, then the ModE finite verb form has completely abandoned all dynamism, and the relation of noun and verb has been altogether revaluated; the former opposition of entities of static vs. dynamic order (such as is still manifest in Czech) is believed to have been replaced by the opposition of entities of concrete vs. abstract character. It seems rather doubtful, however, whether the process has reached the advanced stage Curme seems to take for granted.

[15] See B. Trnka's remarks on the influence of OFr in the rise of the English gerund form (l. c., p. 92), as well as on the rise of the absolute participial construction which, according to his opinion, was modelled on analogous OFr and Latin phrases (l. c., p. 88).

[16] Cf. the thesis of V. N. Yartseva (in her paper "O vnutrennikh zakonakh razvitiya yazyka v svete trudov I. V. Stalina po yazykoznaniyu", Izv. AN SSSR, otd. lit. i yaz., 11, Moscow 1952, pp. 193 ff.) to the effect that only such structural features or elements are taken over from a foreign language "as do not contradict the structure of the language taking them over, or — more exactly — as become easily incorporated into the grammatical system of that language" (see p. 195).

[17] See F. Mossé, l. c., p. 150.

[18] See J. V. Bečka, O přechodníku v současné beletrii. Naše řeč 25 (Prague 1941), p. 129 ff.

[19] The few extant remnants of the category, like *vědomý, vidomý* etc., have been revaluated into isolated adjectives.

[20] It is hardly necessary to explain why we do not mention the categories of Continuous and Simple Tenses in this connection: the difference of actual vs. non-actual processes or actions which is denoted by them does not fall under the heading of aspect in ModE.

[21] See F. Mossé, l. c., p. 148. — Some scholars, however, are opposed to this view (most recently, e. g., H. Pilch, Das ae. Präfix *ze-*. Anglia 71, Tübingen 1953, pp. 129 ff.).

[22] Incidentally, there may be some connection between the less apparent nominal character of the Czech infinitive and the fact that of all Czech condensators infinitive appears to be most popular. — The historical development of the syntactical function of the Czech infinitive has been recently commented upon by F. Trávníček, K předmětnému infinitivu. Naše řeč 38 (Prague 1954), pp. 71 ff.

[23] For these and some other reasons, F. Kopečný goes so far as to assert the synthetical character of the Czech preterite tense form (see his paper Povaha českého preterita, Naše řeč 34, 1950, 85—89).

[24] See especially B. Havránek, Úkoly spisovného jazyka a jeho kultura in Pražský linguistický kroužek: Spisovná čeština a jazyková kultura (Prague 1932), pp. 32 ff., see esp. p. 49, and V. Mathesius, Řeč a sloh, see esp. p. 55.

[25] Cf. V. Mathesius, Nebojte se angličtiny, p. 74 f.

[26] The only Czech category showing differentiation in time, the participle, is gradually acquiring a bookish tint in ModCz (see above Note[18]); its eclipse is also documented by the loss of the present passive participle, also commented above (see Note[19]).

[27] The nominal tendencies of French were discussed by H. Mannhart in Zeitschr. f. neuere Sprachen 1944, pp. 103 ff. (see brief notice by V. Šmilauer in Český časopis filologický 3, Praha 1945, p. 171).

[28] Ivan Poldauf, Infinitiv v angličtině (with a detailed summary in English). Časopis pro moderní filologii 36 (Prague 1954), pp. 9 ff.

[29] The present paper had already been handed over for print when another important treatise appeared, discussing some problems of complex condensation cases (J. Nosek, Několik poznámek k polovětným vazbám v angličtině XVII. století [Some Remarks concerning 'Semi-Sentence' Constructions in 17th Century English], Acta universitatis Carolinae, Prague 1954, vol. 7, 23—36). Dr Nosek gives an acute analysis of (especially) infinitival and participial constructions of EModE, characterizing them both from the formal and functional point-of-view. He does not, however, confront them with any non-English equivalents, and thus does not face the problems discussed in the present paper.

NĚKOLIK MYŠLENEK O T. ZV. KOMPLEXNÍ KONDENSACI V NOVÉ ANGLIČTINĚ

Komplexní kondensací rozumíme s V. Mathesiusem takové užití nominálního prvku nebo nominální vazby ve větném celku, které ušetří jinak nutnou větu vedlejší. Jako kondensační prostředky (stručně: kondensátory) fungují zvláště často jmenné tvary od slovesného základu (v angl. hlavně infinitiv, participia a gerund, v češt. infinitiv, participia a podst. jméno slovesné). Srovnání anglických textů odborných i beletristických s jejich českými překlady ukazuje, že v angličtině je obliba kondensátorů jasně vyšší než v češtině. S tímto rozdílem patrně souvisí skutečnost, že české verbum finitum má zřetelně vyšší dějovou dynamičnost než anglické. O tom svědčí i srovnání českých textů odborných i beletristických s jejich anglickými překlady.

Historický vývoj obou jazyků ukazuje, že v češtině počet kondensátorů během vývoje poklesl, kdežto v angličtině pozoruhodně vzrostl. Srovnání situací v gramatických systémech obou jazyků v průběhu vývoje se zdá dále svědčit o tom, že dějová dynamičnost anglického slovesa od doby staré do nové zřetelně poklesla, kdežto české určité sloveso v průběhu vývoje na dynamičnosti spíše získalo.

Z konstatovaného stavu věcí ovšem nijak neplyne neschopnost angličtiny vyjádřit dynamičnost děje vůbec nebo selhávání češtiny při formulaci pojmového myšlení, svou podstatou vysoce nominálního. Oba jazyky si tu dovedou vypomoci: čeština pro svůj pojmově zaměřený odborný styl vytváří různé kategorie nominálních výrazů, angličtina pak pro navození dějové dynamičnosti využívá časové a slovesně-rodové rozrůzněnosti svých kondensátorů. Tato rozrůzněnost (staré angličtině zcela cizí!) umožňuje časově zařadit děj kondensátorem vyjádřený a dodává tak anglické větě jisté živosti a plastičnosti, připomínající tu, již české větě propůjčuje její verbum finitum.

Je patrně jistá závislost mezi synthetičností gramatické stavby, malou oblibou kondensátorů a značnou dějovou dynamičností verba finita, a naopak mezi analytičností gramatické stavby, velkou oblibou kondensátorů a utlumenou dějovostí finitního tvaru. Nelze však pojímat tyto závislosti mechanicky: v jednotlivých jazycích tu půjde často o spojitosti složitější, jež nutno zkoumat vždy s bedlivým zřením k specifické situaci příslušné jazykové soustavy.

НЕСКОЛЬКО ЗАМЕЧАНИЙ ПО ПОВОДУ ТАК НАЗ. КОМПЛЕКСНОЙ КОНДЕНЗАЦИИ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

Под термином комплексная кондензация мы понимаем, вместе с В. Матезиусом, такое употребление именного элемента или именного оборота в рамке предложения, которое замещает соответствующее придаточное предложение. В качестве конденсационных средств (кратко: конденсаторов) особенно часто используются именные формы глагольных основ (в английском языке, главным образом, инфинитив, причастия и герундий, в чешском инфинитив, причастия и отглагольное существительное). Сопоставление английских текстов научной и художественной литературы с их чешскими переводами обнаруживает несомненно большее тяготение к употреблению конденсаторов в английском, в отличие от чешского. С этим различием обоих языков стоит в связи, повидимому, то обстоятельство, что чешская определенная глагольная форма обладает отчетливо более высокой динамичностью действия, чем английская. Об этом свидетельствует, в свою очередь, сопоставление чешских текстов научной и художественной литературы с их английскими переводами.

Историческое развитие обоих языков показывает, что в чешском языке, в ходе его развития, численность конденсаторов понизилась, в то время как в английском языке замечательным образом возросла. Сравнение грамматических систем обоих языков на протяжении их развития свидетельствует далее, вероятно, о том, что динамичность действия, выражающаяся английским глаголом, с древнего времени по настоящее явно понизилась, между тем как динамичность чешской определенной глагольной формы скорее увеличилась.

Из установленного положения дел, конечно, отнюдь не вытекает неспособность английского языка выражать динамичность действия вообще, или же непригодность чешского языка для формулировки понятийного мышления, в высшей степени номинального (именного) по своему существу. Оба языка располагают особыми средствами: чешский язык создает при выражении понятий, свойственных научному стилю, различные категории отыменных форм, английский же для выражения динамичности действия прибегает к разнообразию временных и залоговых значений своих конденсаторов. Это разнообразие значений (совершенно чуждое древнеанглийскому!) делает возможным временное отношение действия, выраженного конденсатором, и, тем самым, придает английскому предложению определенную живость и выпуклость, напоминая аналогичные свойства чешской определенной формы глагола.

Существует, по всей вероятности, определенная взаимосвязь между синтетичностью грамматического строя, редким употреблением конденсаторов и значительной динамичностью действия, присущей определенной глагольной форме, а, с другой стороны, между аналитичностью грамматического строя, весьма частым употреблением конденсаторов и ослабленным значением действия в определенной форме. Эти взаимосвязи, однако, нельзя воспринимать механически: в отдельных языках имеются часто более сложные связи, которые всегда следует рассматривать с тщательным учетом специфического положения во всем строе соответственного языка.