

Svoboda, Aleš

The analysis

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2. THE ANALYSIS

2.1 THE ANALYZED TEXT

The conclusions arrived at in the present study are based on an analysis of Ælfric's Sermon on the Lord's Epiphany edited by B. Thorpe in *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church, Homilies of Ælfric, Vol. II., Sermo in Æpiphaniam Domini*, pp. 36–52, London 1971. This kind of text seems to be well suited to the purpose of the present analysis because it represents written prose which was probably designed to be read or otherwise rendered aloud, or which is — though this is less probable — a written record of a spoken text. In any case, the text should have the characteristics of both written and spoken language, a quality not frequently found in written prose.

The full text of the above sermon has been analyzed from the viewpoint of functional sentence perspective (FSP). The FSP evaluation concerns not only thematic communicative units (theme proper, ditheme, and the rest) but also transitional and rhematic units, and for this reason the whole of the text had to be analyzed from the grammatical, the semantic, and the contextual points of view. Considerations of space prevent us from offering the full statistical results. In our discussion we shall resort to graphs and diagrams, because they are more illustrative and — at the same time — more revealing as far as the relations among the data are concerned. Yet a few opening figures seem to be necessary.

The total of distributional fields and subfields found in finite and non-finite clauses of the analyzed text is 450. The subfields represented by non-clausal attributive constructions have not been subjected to examination.

type of clause		occ.	%	occ.	%
finite clauses (inclusive of elliptical clauses)		442	98.2	442	98.2
non-finite clauses	infinitival	7	1.6	8	1.8
	participial	1	0.2		
total		450	100.0	450	100.0

Fig. 1

Fig. 1 shows that the data obtained in the course of analysis will be mainly valid for communicative fields occurring in finite clauses. Since each clause constitutes a communicative field, we shall – for the sake of simplicity – speak of clauses even when having communicative fields in mind. Similarly, we shall use the term “element” instead of the cumbersome “communicative unit”.

2.2 GRAMMAR

Under this heading come such features as are formally detectable and seem to be relevant to the analysis of thematic elements. The proportion of clauses divided according to whether they are dependent or inde-

pendent, positive or negative, and declarative or interrogative or imperative can be seen in Fig. 2.

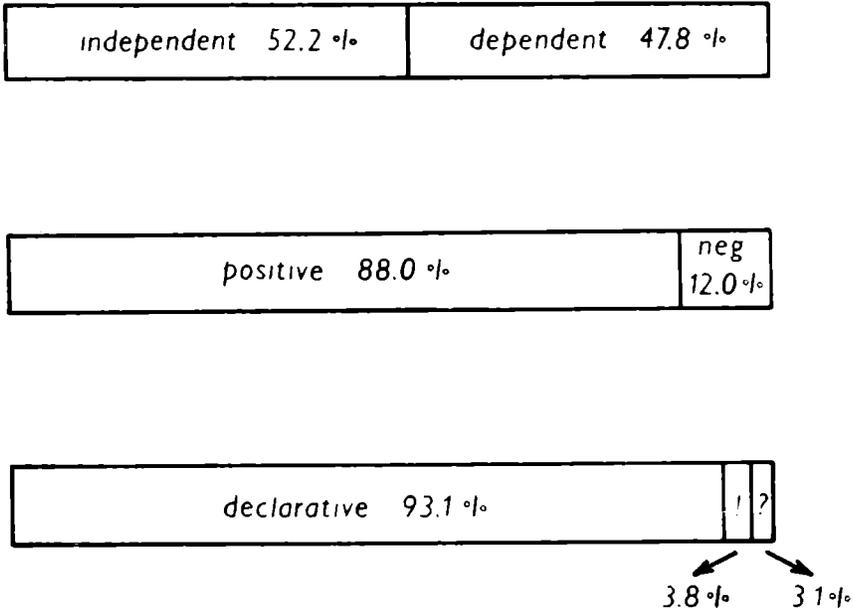


Fig. 2

For the purpose of the present analysis, the division of clauses into independent and dependent does not seem to be quite satisfactory if the positions of clausal elements are examined. In particular, the initial positions may be affected by both the coordinating and the subordinating conjunctions in that they either allow for the ellipsis of certain elements or do not allow of the presence of certain elements in their vicinity. For this reason we have re-divided the examined clauses into the following two groups:

- (i) with the straight numbering of elements (for short, straight clauses): clauses that are independent, conjunctionless, and placed initially if occurring in compound or complex sentences, and "direct speech" clauses
- (ii) with the shifted numbering of elements (for short, shifted clauses): clauses that are dependent, independent and conjunctioned, or independent but not initial within compound or complex sentences.

Figures 3 and 4 show the proportion of straight and shifted clauses as well as a comparison of the independent-dependent and straight-shifted opposition.

<i>shifted</i> 69.6 %	<i>straight</i> 30.4 %
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Fig. 3

<i>shifted</i> <i>dependent</i> 47.8 %	<i>shifted</i> <i>indep.</i> 21.8 %	<i>straight</i> <i>indep.</i> 30.4 %
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Fig. 4

The grammatical (as opposed to semantic and contextual) analysis has focussed on three properties of the examined thematic elements:

- (i) word-order position (initial, medial, final, all of them being either straight-numbered or shifted)
- (ii) word class (Pronoun, Noun, Adverb, etc.)
- (iii) syntactic category (Subject, Object, etc.).

2.2.1 WORD-ORDER POSITIONS

The word-order position of an element is one of the factors determining its FSP-function within the respective clause. Traditionally, the initial and the final positions are of special importance, and this fact has to be taken into account if the elements are to be examined. Since the clauses are of different length, there seems to be a need for two "counts": "count-up" and "count-down". For the present purpose, it is convenient to combine the two approaches and introduce a system of nine mutually exclusive positions, which will satisfy our demands.

Let n be the number of elements in a clause and let each element from left to right be associated with the respective number $1, 2, \dots, n$. Thus the positions of elements in a clause with $n = 5$ are the following:

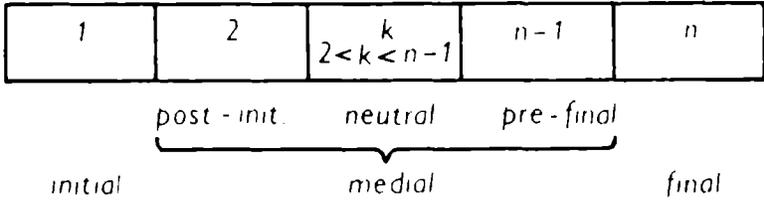


Fig. 5

This list of positions is also sufficient for describing a four-element clause.



Fig. 6

In a three-element clause there is a special position of the medial element, which is both post-initial and pre-final.

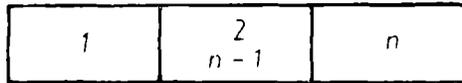


Fig. 7

The two-element clause is currently interpreted as containing positions 1 and n . This procedure has been adopted in our examination of diatheme and theme proper. As is to be shown for rheme proper (2.2.1.5), the

initial position 1 has — under specific circumstances — to be also interpreted as pre-final (e.g., in relative clauses):



Fig. 9

(Note: The distinction between positions 1 and $1 = n - 1$ was kept only during the examination of rheme proper. Otherwise, this position was regarded as 1.)

And last, the one-element clauses display a joint initial-final position.

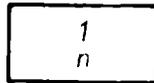


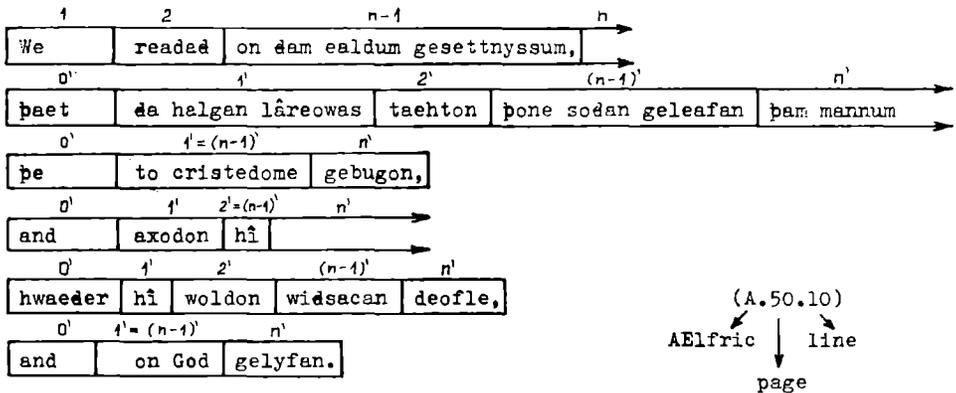
Fig. 8

We are not primarily interested in the (physically) first positions, often occupied by conjunctions and relative pronouns, but we concentrate on the first, second, etc., possible positions the other (grammatically less bound) elements may take. Hence any of the positional sequences adduced above may be preceded by an element in the 0-position.

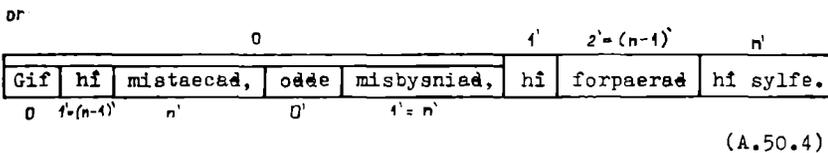
0	$1'$	$2'$	$2 < k' < n - 1$	$(n - 1)'$	n'
0	$1'$	$2'$	$(n - 1)'$	n'	
0	$1'$	$\begin{matrix} 2' \\ (n - 1)' \end{matrix}$	n'		
0	$\begin{matrix} 1' \\ (n - 1)' \end{matrix}$	n'			
0	$\begin{matrix} 1' \\ n' \end{matrix}$				

Fig. 10

In order to distinguish the latter from the formerly introduced "straight" positions, we refer to them as "shifted", because they are in fact shifted by the obligatory presence of a zero-element. Though grammatically fixed, the zero-element may also play the role of a communicative unit, which is — in that case — in the zero-position. This is the case of relative pronouns, subordinate clauses representing one unit within the field of the superordinate clause but formally outside its internal grammatical framework, etc. In the statistical analysis we also distinguish straight and shifted zero positions. (What is understood under these terms will be specified for each of the thematic units separately in the respective paragraph.) To exemplify the system of position analysis, let us take the following text in Fig. 11.



((We read in the old institutes, that holy teachers taught the true belief to those men who turned to christianity, and asked them, whether they would renounce the devil, and believe in God.))



((If they misteach, or give evil example, they destroy themselves.))

Fig. 11

In order to show the position of diatheme in Old English, we shall confront the statistical results with those obtained for theme proper and rheme proper.

2.2.1.1. Subject-object diathemes

Out of the total of 450 examined clauses, over 50 % contained subject-object diathemes (SO-diathemes) and nearly 20 % adverbial diathemes (A-diathemes); the rest did not contain any of the two thematic units:

clauses containing

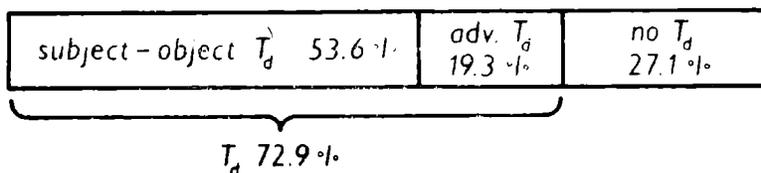


Fig. 12

The ratio of SO-diathemes in straight clauses to those in shifted clauses is approximately 2 : 3. As the general ratio of straight to shifted clauses is appr. 3 : 7 (see 2.2), there is a tendency for SO-diathemes to appear in straight clauses more often than in shifted ones.

It remains to say which SO-diathemes may occur in the 0- and 0'positions.

The SO-diatheme in the 0-position is a diathematic substantival element or a diathematic relative clause with its antecedent that is placed pre-initially and performs the same syntactic function as some other element occurring within the framework of the examined clause and referring (anaphorically) to it. (The former is sometimes called a projected element.)

ing of elements) is distinguished by different curves. Position 3, representing merely 2.5 ‰, has been left out altogether, because it would disrupt the connection between 2 and $2 = n - 1$.

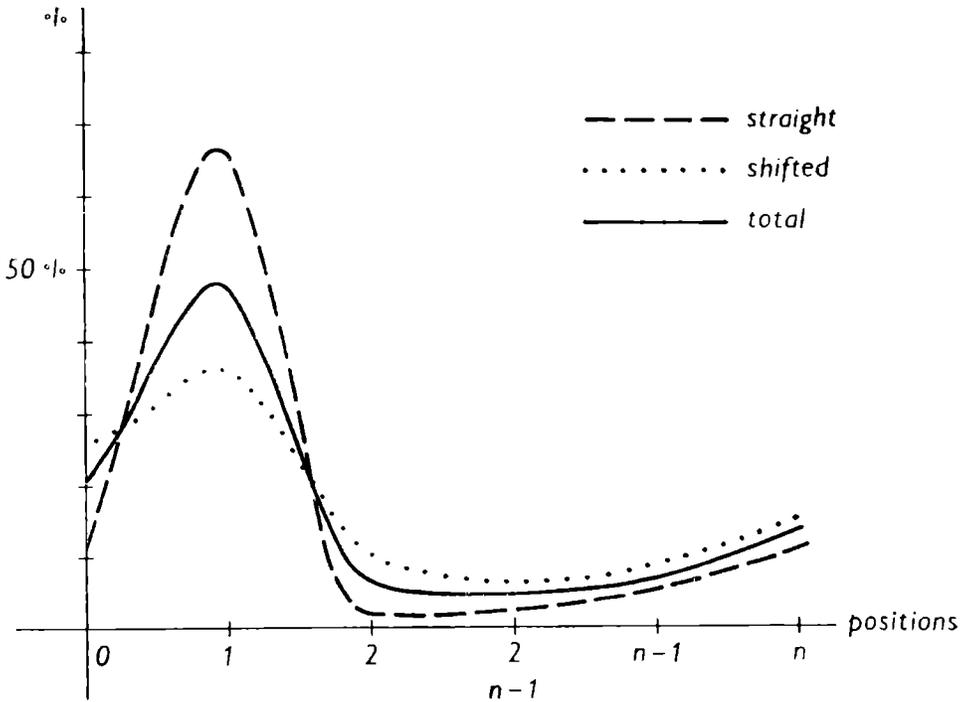


Fig. 14

In straight clauses, the SO-diatheme reveals a marked tendency to appear in position 1. Positions 0, n , and $n - 1$ (especially if taken together with $2 = n - 1$) are also worth mentioning, while position 2 (like the omitted 3) is of very low frequency. In shifted clauses, the 1-position tendency is less marked, but positions 0 and 2 are strengthened, which means that the diatheme displays a slight tendency to occur in initial position, but the medial positions are represented more evenly than in straight clauses. Nevertheless, the tails of the curves are rising, which is characteristic of longer clauses. The distribution of SO-diathemes in short clauses is more

likely to be shown in the graph which distinguishes only three positions: initial ($0 + 1$), medial ($2 + (2 = n - 1) + (n - 1)$), and final (n).

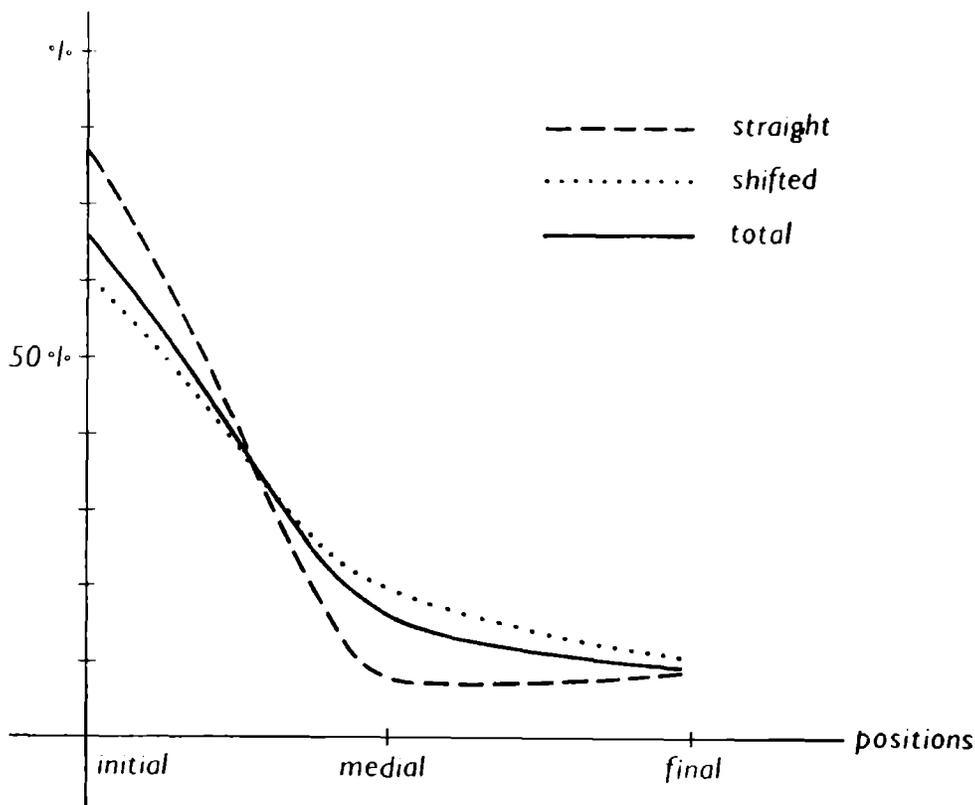


Fig. 15

Fig. 15 only confirms the general tendency of SO-diathemes to appear initially, their reluctance to appear medially in straight clauses, and their comparatively even medial distribution and final decline in shifted clauses.

2.2.1.2. Adverbial diathemes

The number of occurrences is 87, which — as is shown in 2.2.1.1. — represents 19.3 % of the total number of clauses. The straight-shifted ratio is approx. 3 : 7, which corresponds with the general ratio of straight and

shifted clauses and testifies to the comparatively equal occurrence of adverbial diathemes in clauses of either kind.

The 0- and 0'-positions may be occupied by dithematic adverbial clauses and subordinating (adverbial) conjunctions (occasionally relative pronouns). Both of them can be found in the example in Fig. 16.

0				1'	2' = (n-1)'	n'		
Gif	se lâreow	riht	tæce,	do	gehwa	swa swa	he	tæcd;
0	1'	2' = (n-1)'	n'			0'	1'	n'

(A.48.33)

((If the teacher teach right, let every one do as he teaches.))

Fig. 16

Again, the graphs in Figures 17 and 18 characterize the distribution of adverbial diathemes under the same conditions as discussed in 2.2.1.1.

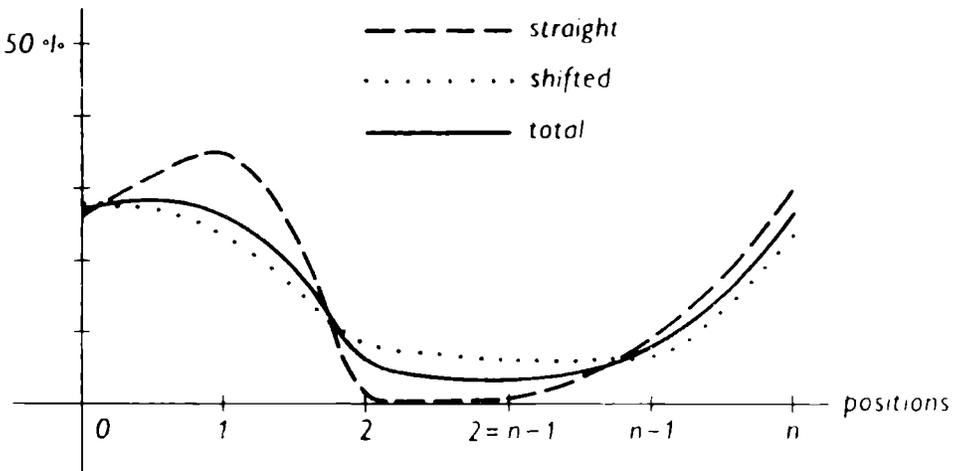


Fig. 17

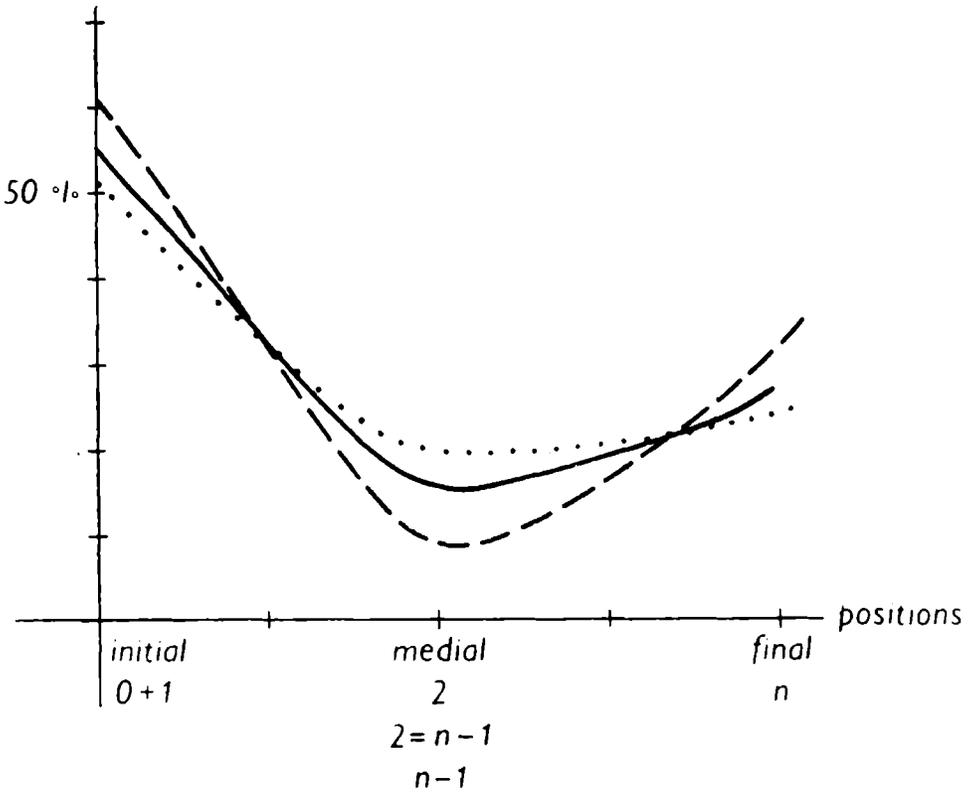


Fig. 18

The adverbial diatheme tends to occupy positions 0, 1, and n . In straight clauses, there is not a single occurrence in positions 2 and $2 = n - 1$. In shifted clauses, this distinction between medial and non-medial positions is not so sharp, but the tendency towards the initial and final positions is still pronounced.

2.2.1.3: Diathemes in general

If the graphs of subject-object and adverbial diathemes are compared or — better still — mapped one onto another, the similarity in all the respects is strikingly high. What the adverbial diatheme loses initially, it gains in the final position. Further comment is unnecessary, since the graphs in Figures 19 and 20 speak for themselves.

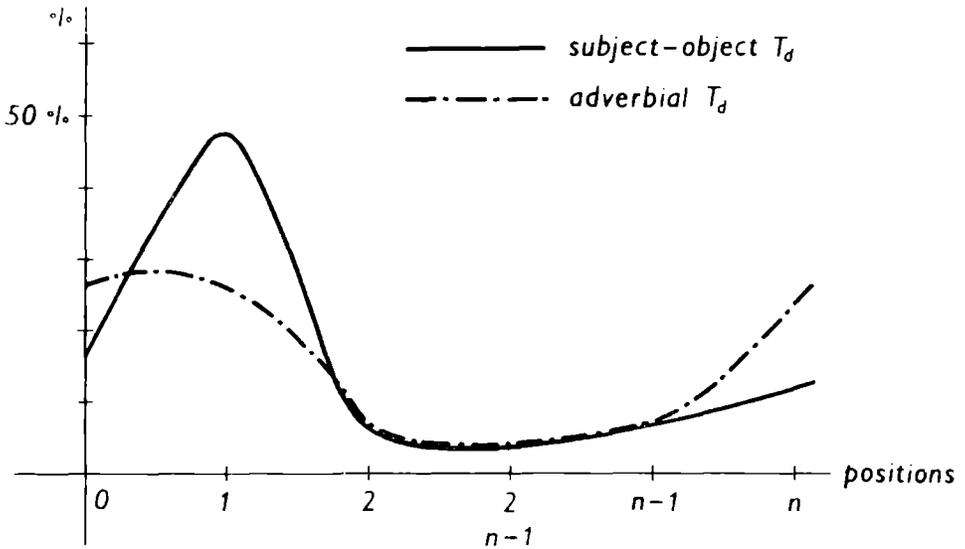


Fig. 19

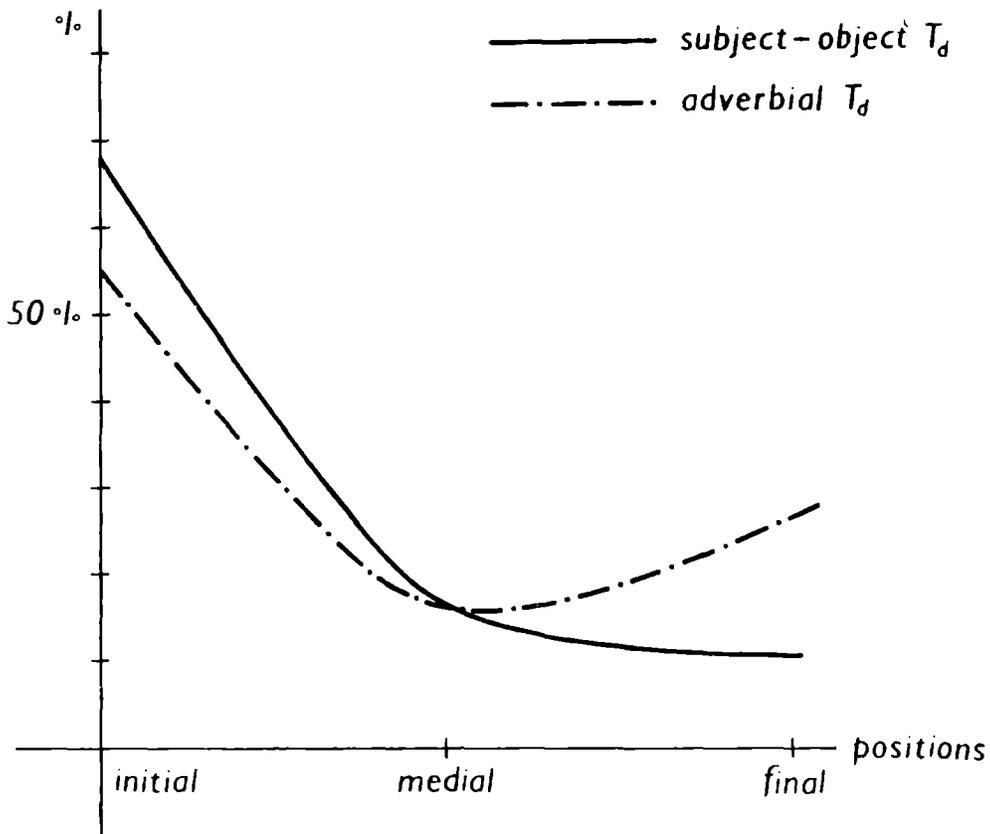


Fig. 20

2.2.1.4 Themes proper

The position analysis of the diatheme would be far from satisfactory if the results were not seen against the background of a parallel analysis of the other two important units within the communicative field: theme proper and rheme proper.

Because of its strong tendency to become hypertheme (see 1.3.1 and, more specifically, 2.4.4.5), theme proper can easily be ellipted. In the present analysis, ellipted themes proper were counted separately without their position being specified. This position was generally labelled *-k*, suggesting that the corresponding element could be found in the previous text (cataphoric ellipses of theme proper did not occur in the Old English text). Ellipted themes never occurred in straight clauses. The total number of explicitly expressed themes proper is 200, the total number of ellipted ones 62. The other introductory data are in Fig. 21.

ellipt (T_p)	T_p in shifted clauses	T_p in str. clauses	clauses without T_p
13.8 %	34.4 %	10.0 %	41.8 %

Fig. 21

The straight-shifted ratio is approx. 2:7 with ellipted themes proper excluded, and 1:5 with ellipted themes proper included, which shows that — the general ratio being 3:7 — themes proper are much more likely to

occur in shifted than in straight clauses. The shift of preference from straight clauses in the case of the SO-diatheme to shifted clauses in the case of the theme proper (inclusive of the ellipsis) can possibly be illustrated by Fig. 22.

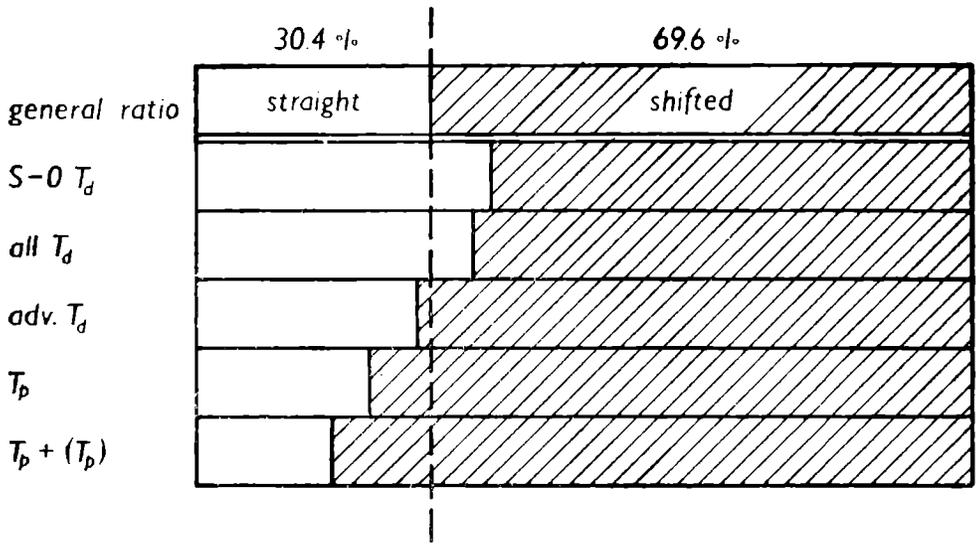


Fig. 22

The position graph in Fig. 23 shows that while in shifted clauses position 1 is undoubtedly dominant, the themes proper in straight clauses tend to leave position 1 in favour of positions 2 and 3.

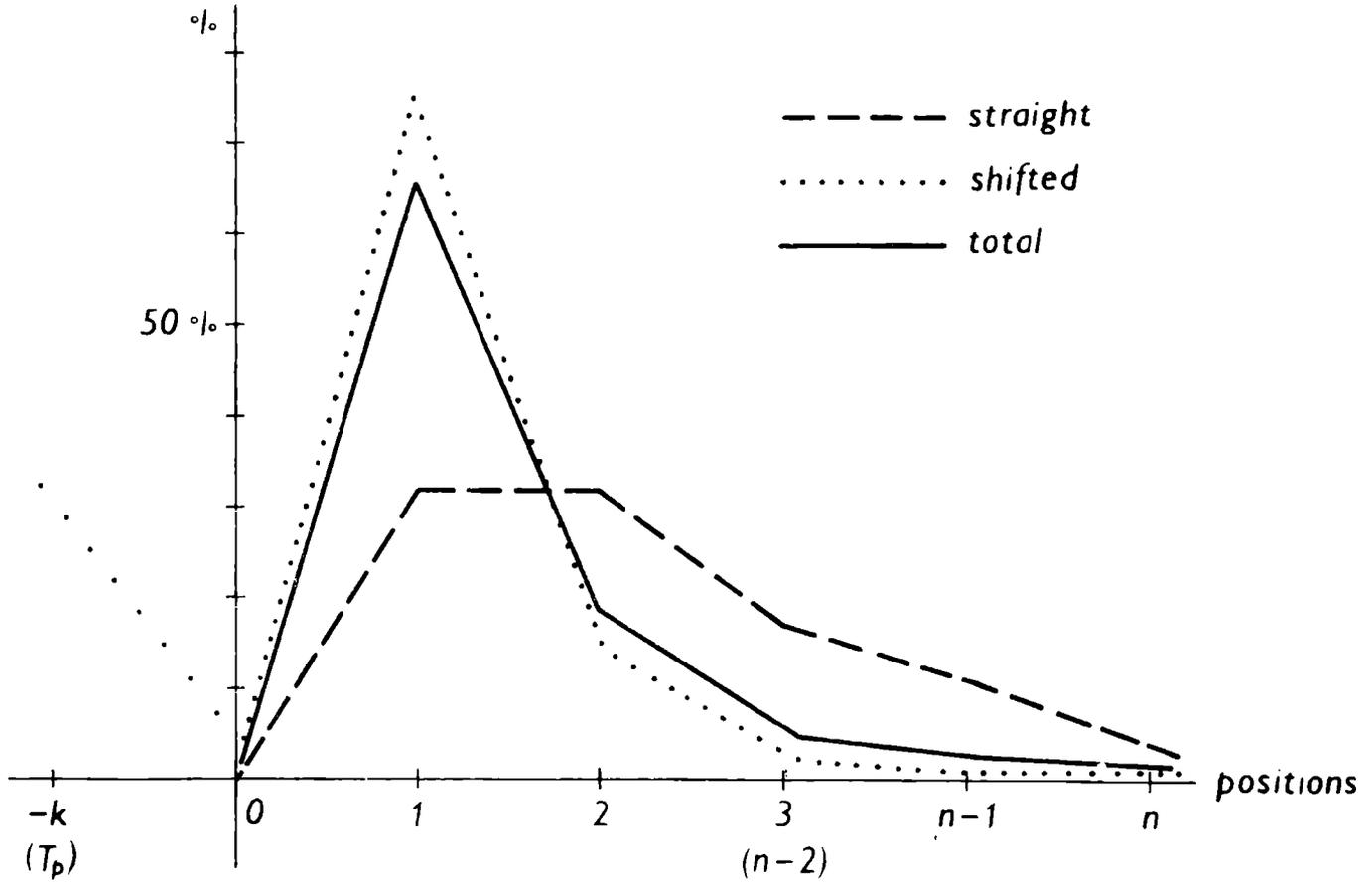


Fig. 23

Since the occurrence of theme proper in shifted clauses is 3.5 times higher than that in straight clauses, the resulting curve follows the one based on shifted clauses. The difference between the occurrence of theme proper in these two kinds of clauses is still clearer in Fig. 24 (taking into account only general kinds of position).

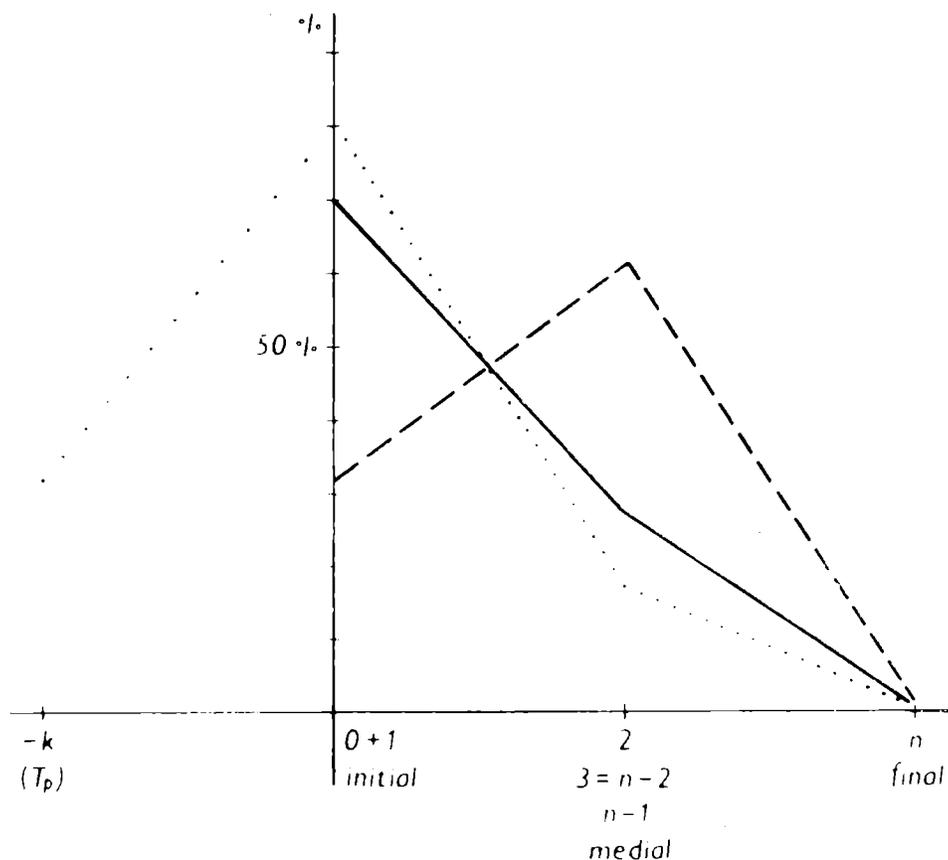


Fig. 24

A few remarks on the less frequent positions. Out of 12 occurrences of theme proper in position 3, 11 were at the same time in position $n - 2$. (In this connection it is worth mentioning that 40.5% of all occurrences of theme proper could be labelled with position $n - 2$!) There were 4 occurrences in n -position, out of which 2 were interrogative clauses and 2 were clauses with theme proper represented by the notional component of the "prop"-verb to do.

2.2.1.5 Rhemes proper

Rhemes proper have not been subjected to the same kind of thorough examination as the thematic units, but for the sake of comparison a position analysis has been made:

position	occurr.	%
1	26	5.8
1 = n	4	0.9
1 = (n-1)	31	6.9
2	4	0.9
2 = (n-1)	40	8.9
3 = (n-2)	2	0.4
n-1	32	7.1
n	311	69.1
total	450	100.0

Fig. 25

The striking difference between positions 2 and $2 = n - 1$ clearly speaks in favour of counting $2 = n - 1$ among the pre-final positions. The same cannot be said of $1 = n - 1$, since the numbers are rather close and

it is difficult (if not impossible) to decide whether the occurrence of rheme proper is due to position 1 or $n - 1$.

The position graphs of rhemes proper can be found in Figures 26 and 27.

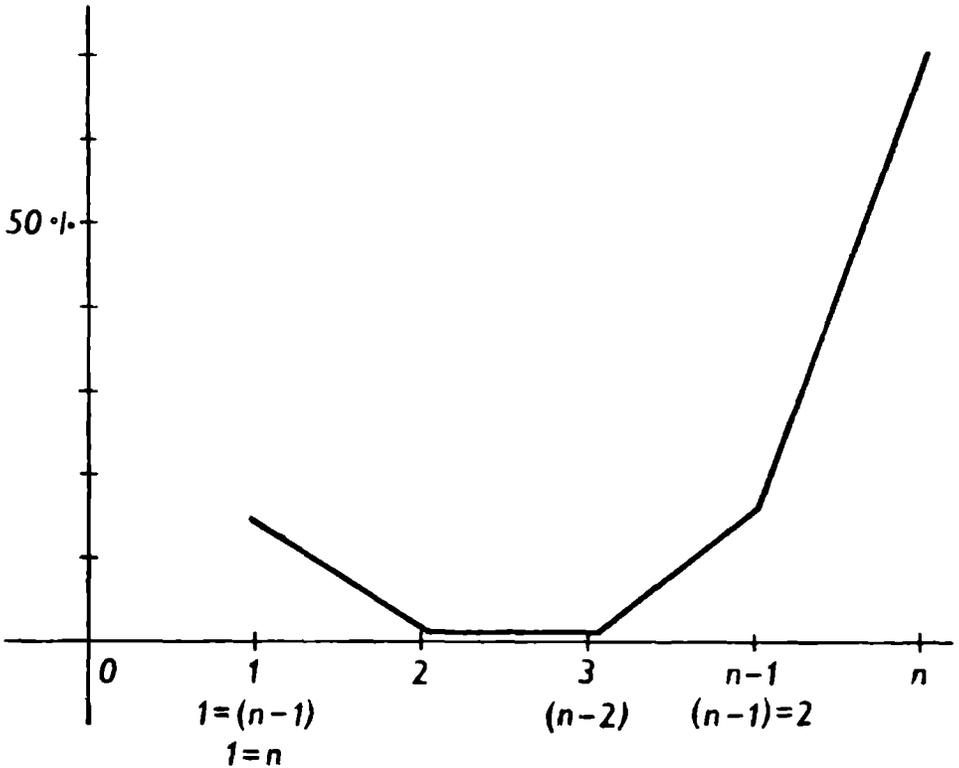


Fig. 26

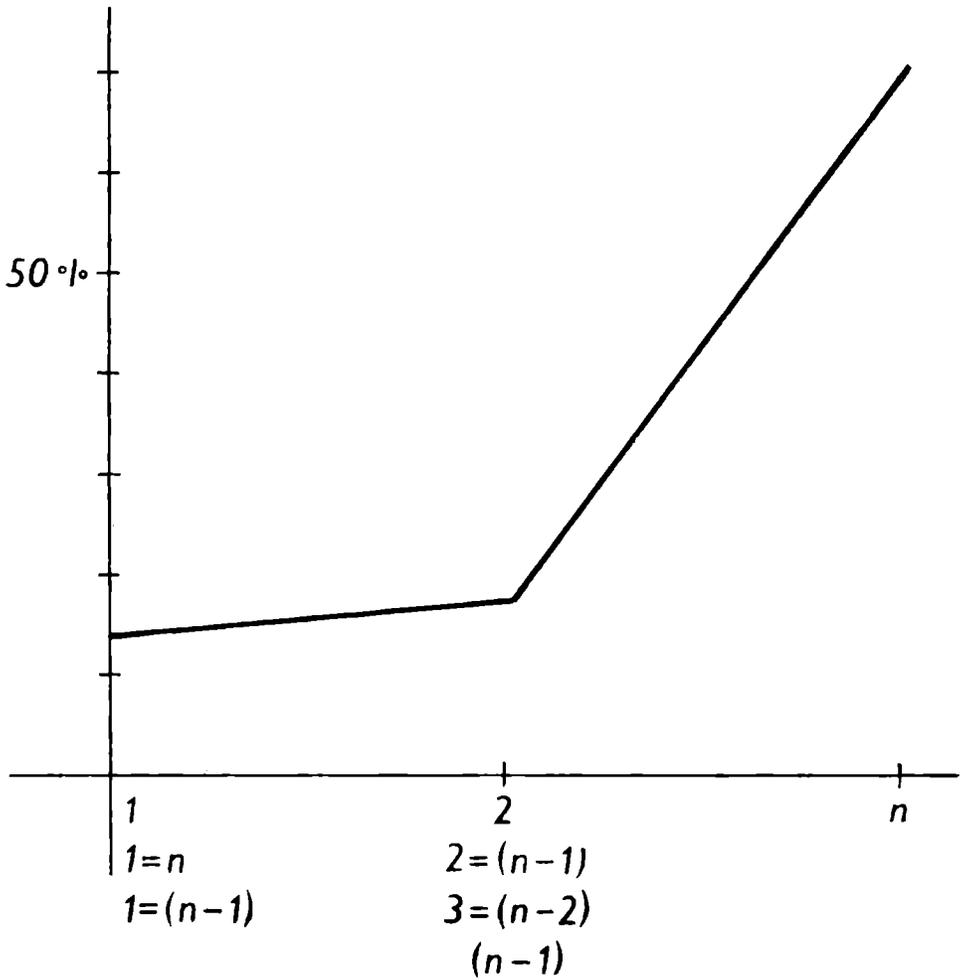


Fig. 27

If we compare the graphs of rheme proper with the resulting curves of the diatheme and those of theme proper, we arrive at Figures 28 and 29.

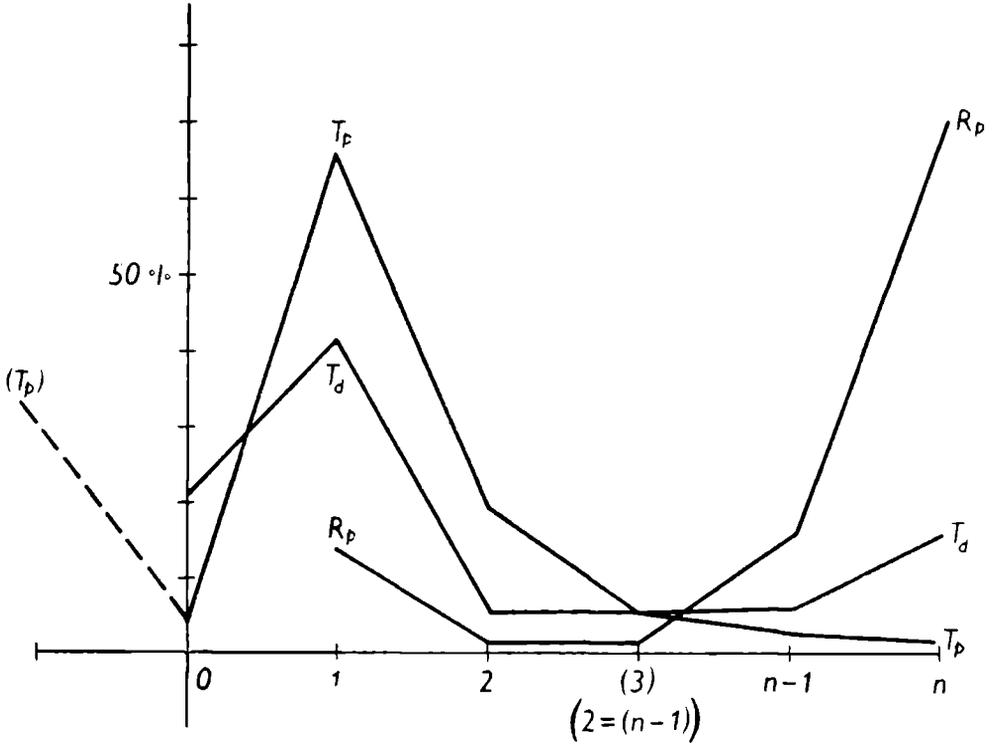


Fig. 28

The more general graph in Fig. 29 is most illustrative of the relations between theme proper and rheme proper on the one hand, and diatheme and rheme proper on the other, as far as their positions in the examined

Old English text are concerned. The general lay-out of the respective occurrences makes out a strong case in favour of the idea that diatheme and

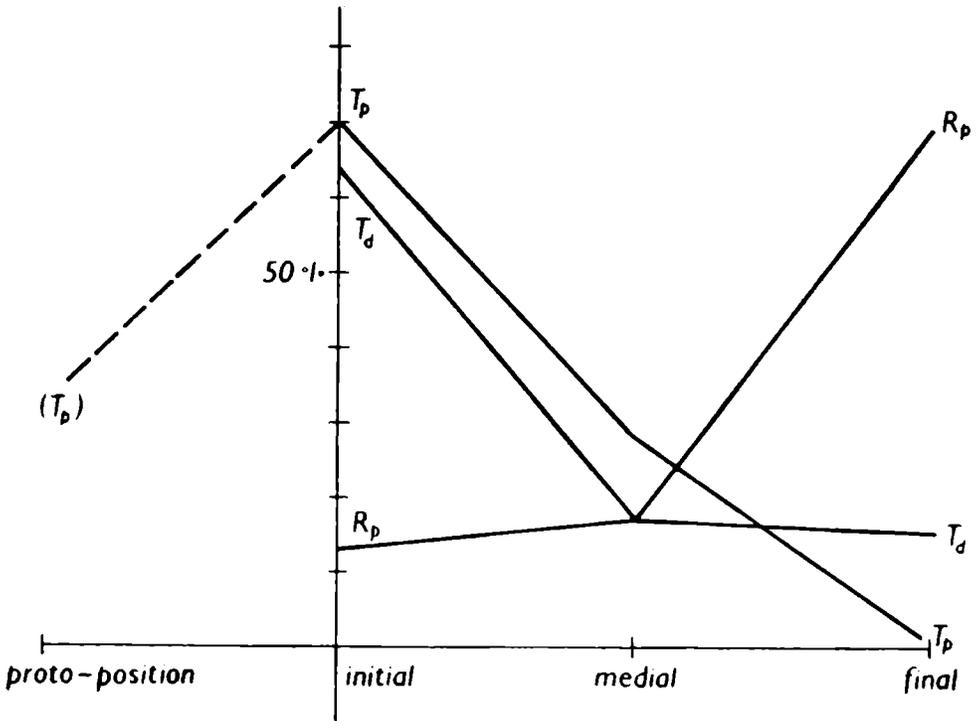


Fig. 29

rheme proper represent one kind of opposition quite different from that displayed by theme proper and rheme proper. This question will be discussed in detail in 2.3.6.1 and 2.3.6.2.

2.2.2 WORD CLASSES

On the one hand, both word classes and syntactic categories may be regarded — in Old English, at least — as (formally) grammatical phenomena and that is why they are touched upon in the present grammatical section. On the other hand, both of them have their specific semantic features and belong, therefore, to the sphere of semantics, too. Their semantic roles will be dealt with in 2.3. The main statistical results will be given here in the form of diagrams. Fig. 30 shows to what degree the separate word classes are represented by the subject-object and the adverbial diatheme.

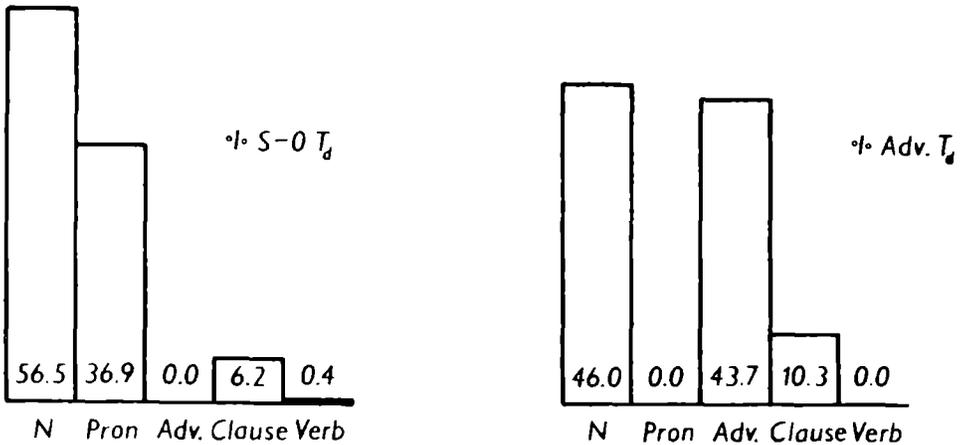


Fig. 30

It is interesting to note the radical change in the proportion of Noun and Pronoun if the overall results of diatheme and theme proper are compared:

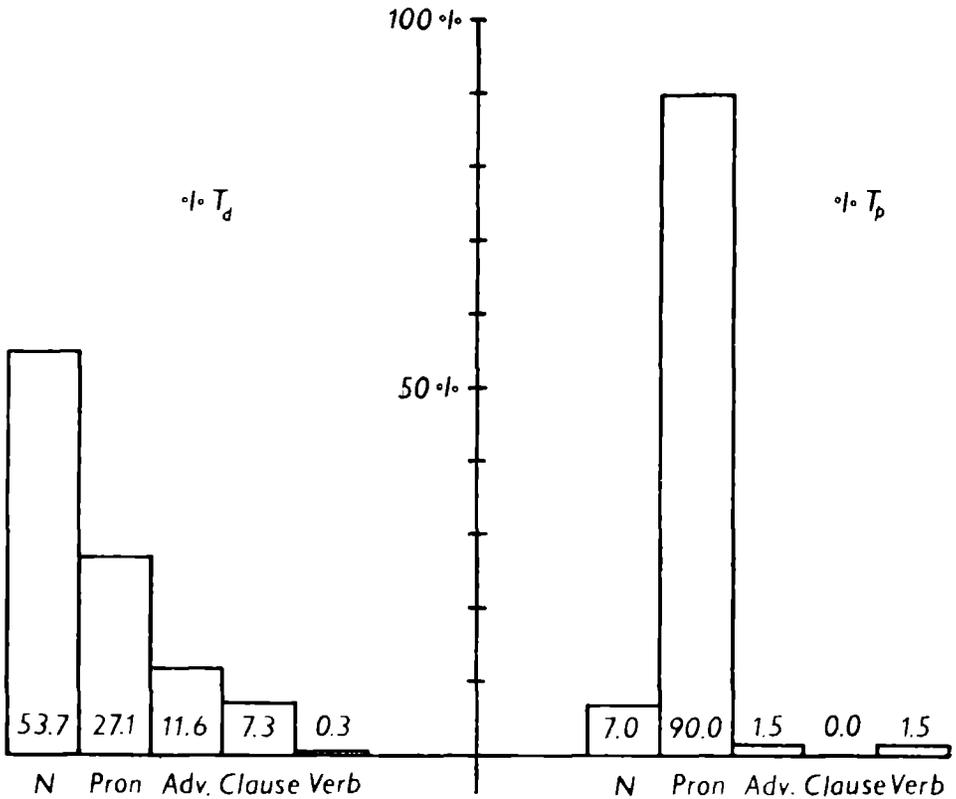


Fig. 31

There was one occurrence of Verb in diatheme, and three in theme proper, all of them being forms of "do" as "prop"-verb.

2.2.3 SYNTACTIC CATEGORIES

The syntactic categories of the subject-object and the adverbial diatheme are mutually exclusive and may therefore be presented in one diagram. (Percentually, however, the two groups are counted separately.)

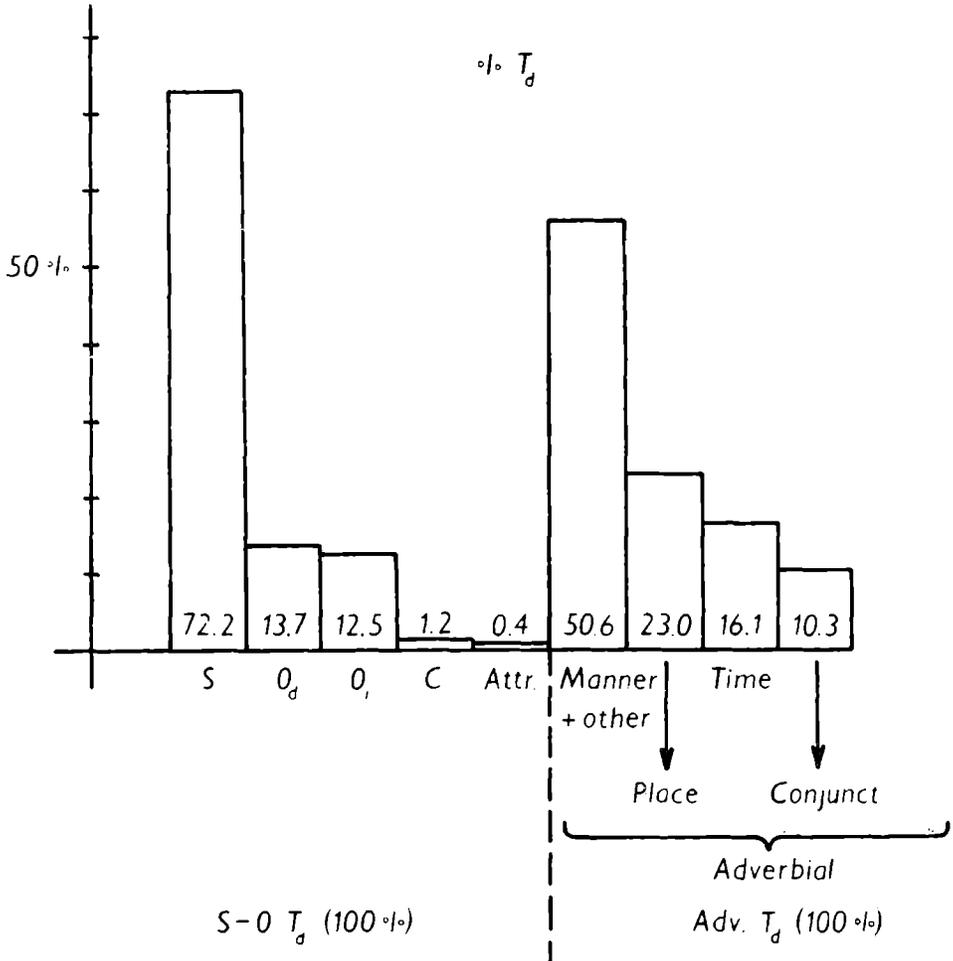


Fig. 32

Prepositional Noun Phrases that perform the function of an object rather than that of an adverbial were regarded as indirect object. (The dividing line between indirect objects and adverbials deviates from the division advocated for Modern English by Quirk 1977 (University Grammar)).

Out of 30 indirect objects, 26 were Datives and four were Genitives. There was one occurrence of a genitival attribute in its (rare) function as a separate thematic unit within the clausal communicative field:

We habbae full swutele bysne pises dinges. (A.50.26)

$\begin{array}{cccc} \dots & & & \\ \hline T_p & T_{r_p}/T_r & R_p & T_d \end{array}$

((We have a very manifest example of this thing.))

Fig. 33

(The distribution of FSP-functions becomes clearer if the context is taken into account. The clause in Fig. 33 stands at the beginning of a new paragraph: *pises dinges* refers (anaphorically) to the contents of the whole preceding paragraph, while *full swutele bysne* introduces the contents of the paragraph in question.)

The adverbials were subdivided into Place, Time, Manner and other, with the exception of conjuncts (in Quirk's sense, 1977.246), which were given a separate count.

Let us compare the distribution of syntactic categories within diatheme and theme proper, as shown in Fig. 34.

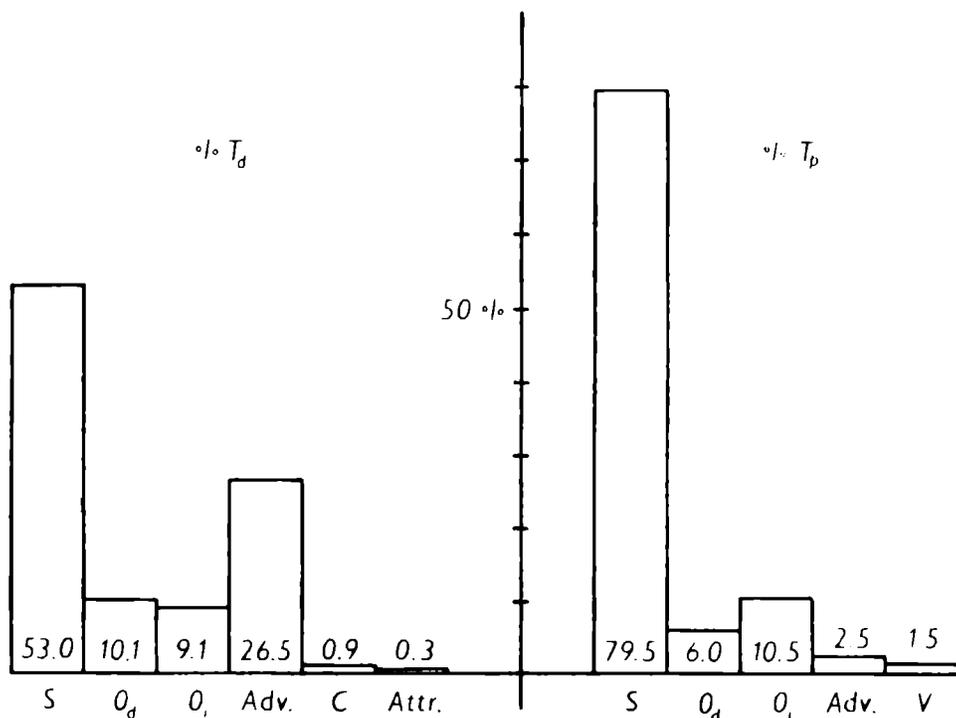


Fig. 34

A higher rate of subjects in themes proper is outbalanced by a higher rate of adverbials in diathemes. The total of objects remains basically the same (19.2 % in diathemes, 16.5 % in themes proper), but the ratio of direct and indirect objects changes in favour of the indirect objects in themes proper (the direct objects being relatively suppressed).

The theme-proper diagram in Fig. 34 is based on the number of explicitly expressed themes proper. Apart from these, there were 62 ellipted themes proper, 59 of them subjects and 3 direct objects (see Fig. 35).

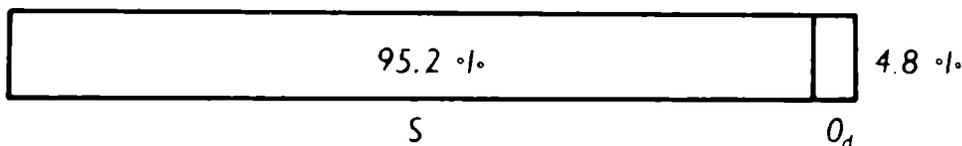


Fig. 35

Since subjects are by far the most numerous syntactic category represented by themes, it may be of some interest for the sake of future comparison to adduce the occurrence-rate of the separate kinds of subject in the body of Ælfric's text:

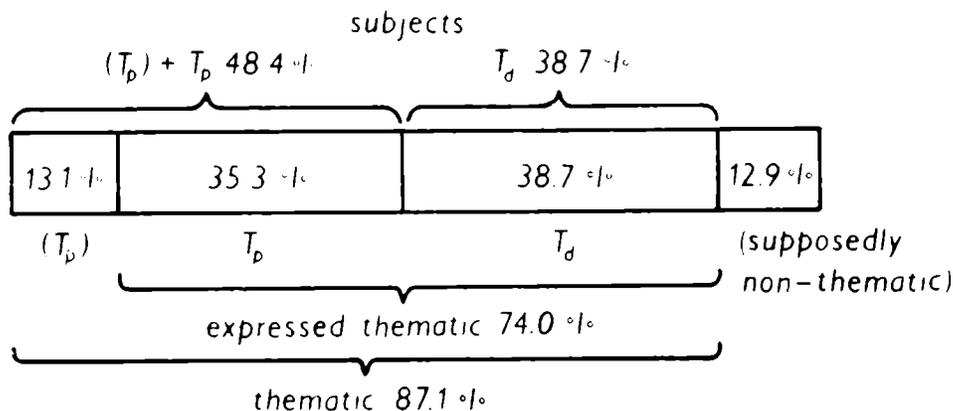


Fig. 36

The expressed themes proper and the diathemes are in approximately the same proportion. As the present research has not been carried out in the line of non-thematic subjects, the figure 12.9 % has been arrived at as the complementary part of 100 %. It is theoretically possible, though practically very unlikely, for a thematic subject in a clause to be neither theme proper nor diatheme. If such a case occurs, it may be rather regarded as the exception that proves the rule. Another feature of the examined text is that the ellipted and the supposedly non-thematic subjects are in approximately the same proportion, too.

2.3 SEMANTICS

The main task of the present section is to characterize diathemes against the background of other elements from the viewpoint of their notional contents at a high level of semantic abstraction. As has been shown in 1.1.2, Firbas arranged highly general semantic roles of elements into two scales, which reflect the gradual rise of their communicative dynamism if they are context independent:

- (i) SCENE – APPEARANCE/EXISTENCE ON THE SCENE – PHENOMENON APPEARING/EXISTING ON THE SCENE
- (ii) QUALITY BEARER – QUALITY – SPECIFICATION – FURTHER SPECIFICATION

The above semantic roles will help us to characterize the thematic elements and to show their place within the communicative structure of the text. From the viewpoint of thematic elements, one of the most important concepts is that of scene. Let us imagine that we are at the theatre and the whole text is a description of the stage (the scene) and what is going on on the stage. The stage includes not only the setting and stage props, but also the actors that have already been introduced onto and are present on the scene (prospective quality bearers). The various aspects of the scene will be made precise in 2.4.1. At present, we shall only speak of the narrow scene of one clause. This scene is represented by the thematic elements of the respective clause. Hence the thematic elements may also be called scenic elements, because they constitute the (narrow) scene of the clause.

The examination of all the thematic elements showed that, in addition to themes proper and diathemes, there were two more rather distinct types of theme, which might be called diatheme oriented themes ($T_{(d)}$) and theme-proper oriented themes ($T_{(p)}$). The distinction between the separate types of thematic unit is not so clear in the analysis of separate clauses, but it stands out when a more extensive stretch of text is examined. If the ellipted theme (T_p) is included, there are five types of thematic elements to deal with.

2.3.1 ELLIPTED THEMES PROPER

The number of occurrences as well as the occurrence rate of ellipted themes proper can be found in 2.2.1.4 (see also Fig. 36 in 2.2.3). The ellipted theme proper is always a well-established element of the scene. This element is in fact established so well that, under some circumstances, it need not be explicitly expressed at all in spite of the fact that it represents part of the grammatico-semantic structure of the clause.

All the ellipted themes proper referred anaphorically to some nominal elements in the text or situation and, semantically, all of them were quality bearers that had already appeared on the scene as quality bearers. In most cases their occurrence could be traced back to at least two successive referentially related thematic elements, which again testifies to the fact that the ellipted theme proper is a well-established item of the scene.

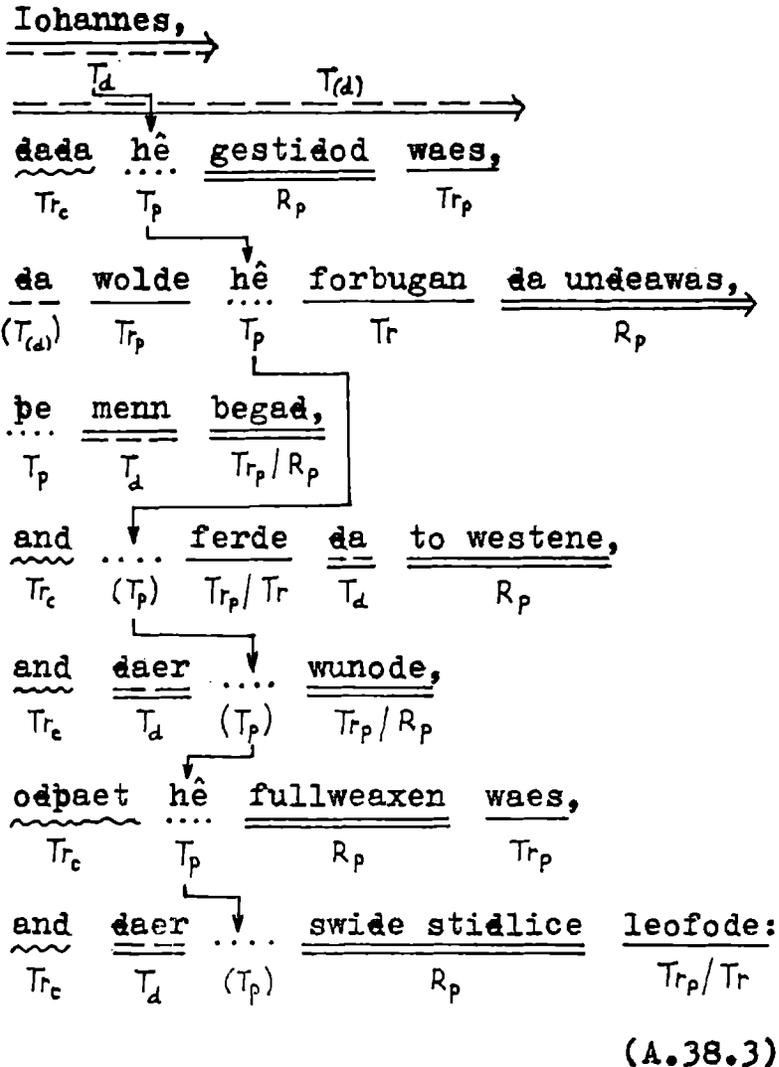
If we realize that any second (successive) occurrence of a given thematic element signals the introduction of the hypertheme, the ellipted theme proper displays an extremely strong tendency to be hyperthematic. According to the criterion just mentioned, it is in fact always hypertheme, and hypertheme, being always context dependent, represents a well known and well-established element of the scene. The question of hypertheme basically belongs to the contextual analysis and will be dealt with in 2.4.4.5.

Just two additional remarks. There were eight ellipted themes proper in the imperatives, all of them contextually dependent — some through the preceding co-text, others through the standing situation. The three ellipted themes proper representing direct objects were quality bearers, too.

2.3.2 THEMES PROPER

The explicitly expressed theme proper is of a similar semantic nature to that of the ellipted one. If not historically, then at least structurally, the ellipted theme proper can be regarded as a derivative of the theme proper. Themes proper also have a very strong tendency to become hyperthematic and to perform the role of a quality bearer that is well-established on the scene. Contrary to the ellipted theme proper, theme proper need not be always contextually preceded by a thematic (scenic) element and formally it has sometimes not even been introduced onto the scene before, but it appears in the clause as if it had been a well-established scenic element long before. If it appears in the clause for the first time, it always represents a matter-of-course item of the situational context. These cases, however, are very low in number (see the contextual statistics in 2.4.4.4) compared with those of a hyperthematic nature.

The sentence in Fig. 37 illustrates both themes proper and ellipted themes proper. (The positions of the ellipted themes proper in our examples are arbitrary. There are no positions allotted to them in the statistics).



((John, when he was grown up,
would eschew the vices which men commit,
and went to the wilderness,
and there dwelt until he was full-grown,
and there lived very rigidly:))

Fig. 37

2.3.3 DIATHEMES

The semantic analysis of the text shows that diatheme is a thematic element that is made the temporary centre of the scene. Mathesius was right in calling such an element the centre of the theme (see 1947.238). The speaker chooses, and the listener's attention is drawn to, one particular element within the scene, which represents the starting point in introducing a phenomenon onto the scene or ascribing a quality to a quality bearer. In the former case, the newly introduced phenomenon (already representing part of the scene) is made the quality bearer, or among a number of prospective quality bearers, one is chosen to perform this role *hic et nunc*.

The comparison with a performance on the stage will make things look less abstract. Let us imagine that the speaker describes both the scenery and what is going on there. If there are no actors on the scene, the speaker starts with the description of the phenomena existing on the scene by drawing the listener's attention to one place (front) and introducing the phenomenon located there, then passing on to other places (left, right, back, etc.) and repeating the procedure. When an actor appears on the scene, he is similarly introduced through the place, time or way of his appearance. Once the actor is on the stage, he is part of the scene and a prospective person to be ascribed some qualities (in the broadest sense of the word) or — in short — to be spoken about. He is the newly introduced scenic element that may become the centre of the scene if the speaker actually chooses him as such in the further description. Suppose the speaker does so, regarding the actor as a quality bearer and introducing new qualities, one after another. But if the quality bearer remains the same, he is not a newly introduced scenic element any more; he becomes well-established, in fact so established that explicit mention of him may be omitted. In the course of the description, the speaker will choose some other scenic elements to show where, when and how the single actor is displaying the ascribed qualities.

Then these place-time-way elements are the new centres of the scene, being in fact "newer" than the known and re-iterated actor (quality bearer). As it happens, there may be more actors on the scene after a while, and the speaker will in turn speak about all of them. The moment he changes the "subject" actor (quality bearer), he makes him the centre of the scene and hence he makes him a newly introduced scenic element again.

Generally speaking, the diatheme is semantically a foregrounded scenic element, which is either a newly introduced scenic element or an element that has been called up from the background to represent mild contrast with regard to some other scenic element foregrounded formerly. The diatheme is the least established scenic element, a new or changed quality bearer or a new or changed indication of place, time or way of existence or appear-

ance. (To prevent confusion, it is to be borne in mind that, according to the circumstances, any of the scenic elements may be made a non-scenic element (usually Specification). This question is touched upon in 2.4.1.3 together with references to the relevant literature. Here, only scenic elements that remain scenic are dealt with.)

Basically, there is no theoretical difference between the subject-object diatheme and the adverbial diatheme. As is to be shown in 2.3.7, even the dividing line between them is hard to draw. Nevertheless, there are some semantic tendencies that make it convenient to deal with the two diathemes in separate paragraphs.

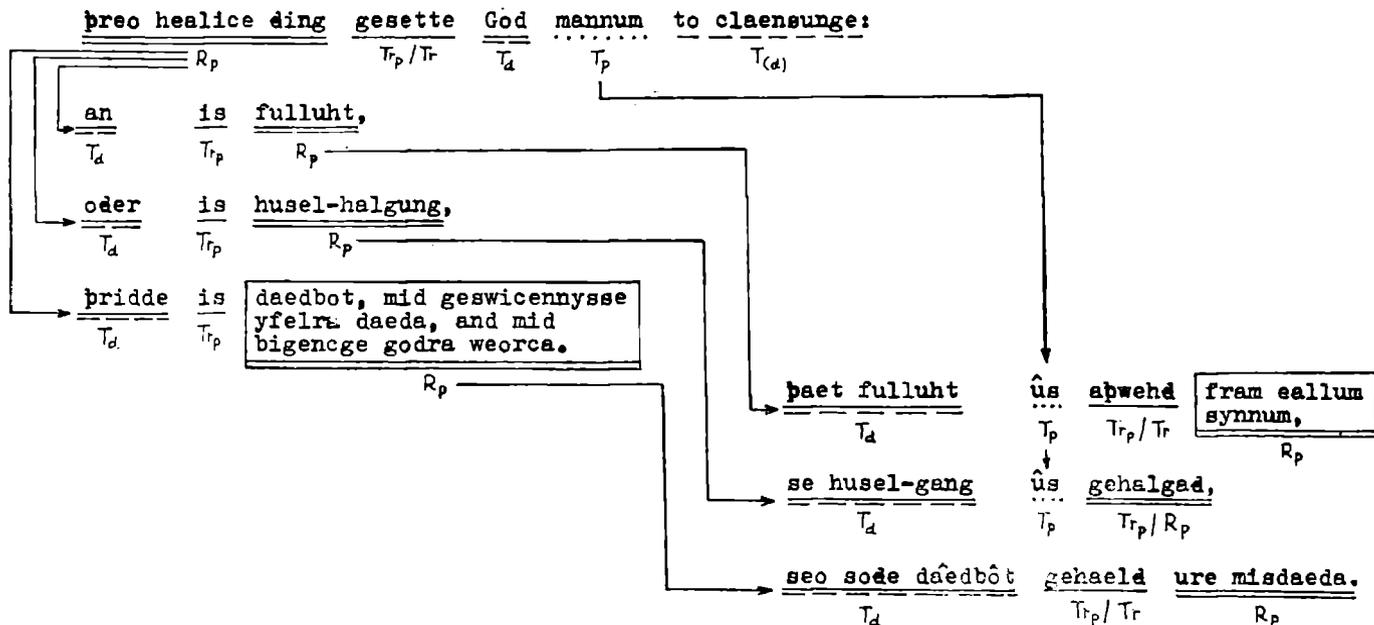
2.3.3.1 Subject-object diathemes

There are two basic semantic roles in which the subject-object diatheme appears: (i) the newly introduced scenic element employed as the quality bearer for the first time, (ii) the well-established scenic element (“old” quality bearer) picked up again after some time, most frequently in mild contrast with the preceding quality bearer functioning as diatheme.

The example in Fig. 38 illustrates the former case. (The symmetry is nothing unusual, though more often found within a larger stretch of text.) Rheme proper in the first clause is the specification of the quality borne by the quality bearer God. (For the possibility of a slightly different interpretation of this clause, see 2.3.3.2.) This specification or — more precisely — its three components are successively made quality bearers as newly introduced scenic elements in the following clauses, which — in turn — contain three specifications (prospective quality bearers) made into (actual) quality bearers in the following clauses.

In a nutshell, the example below also instantiates the case of alternating quality bearers that stand in mild contrast one to another, but this is rather an “abbreviated” version of what is frequently found in a longer passage of text. In the examined homily, we find, for example, the alternative “descriptions” of Christ and John the Baptist. Such cases clearly show that the function of the subject-object diatheme sets favourable conditions for the element to be a prospective theme proper, that is, to become a well-established element within the scene. This can be seen in the sentences in Fig. 39, which have their immediate continuation in examples adduced in Fig. 37, illustrating themes proper.

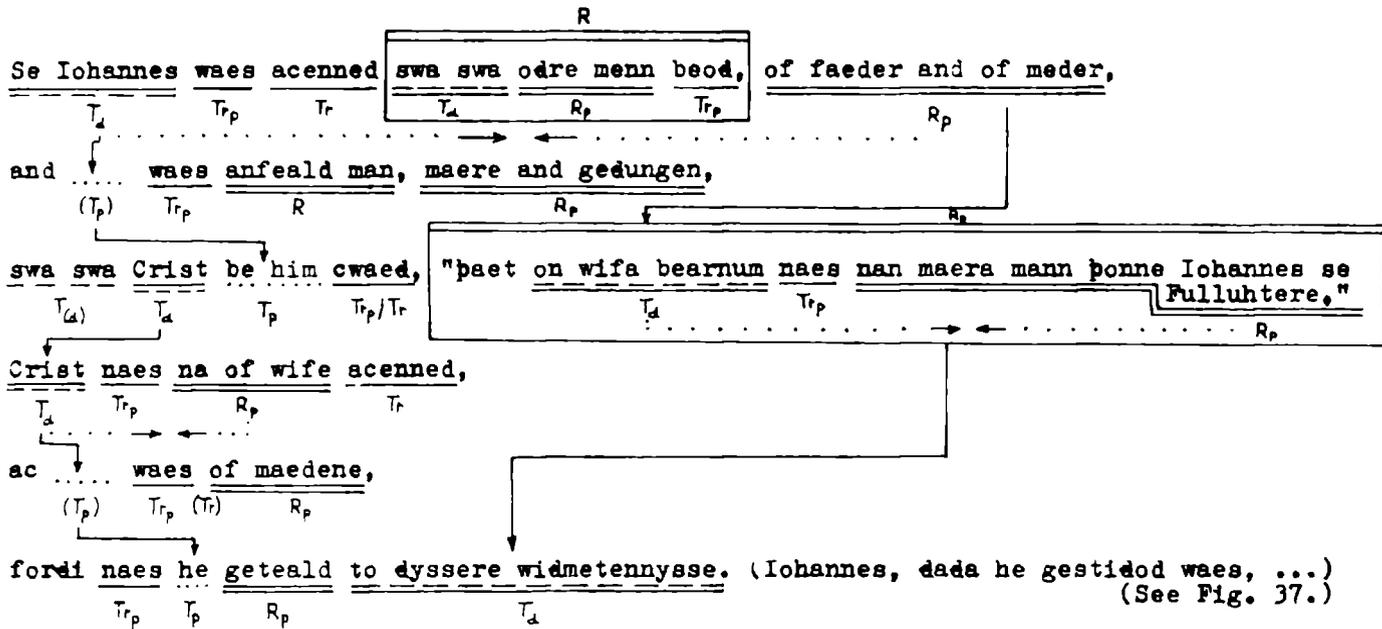
In addition to the alternating diathemes John and Christ, followed by the respective themes proper, there are two cases that belong to the adverbial diathemes, but we shall touch upon them here because they are instances of what the subject-object diathemes also do, though less often, namely, summarizing or capturing several elements that have been made scenic before, sometimes in as long a passage as a paragraph, and making them



(A.48.26)

((Three principal things God has appointed to men for purification: one is baptism, the second is housel, the third is penance, with cessation from evil deeds and practice of good works. Baptism washes us from all sins, housel hallows us, true penance heals our misdeeds.))

Fig. 38



(A.36.27)

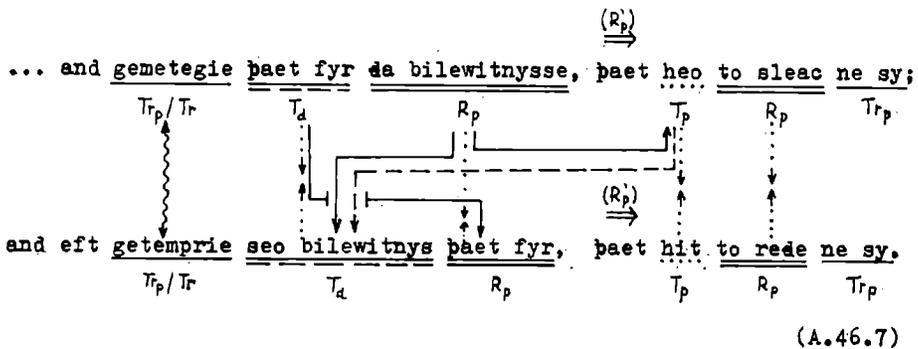
((John was born as other men are, of father and of mother, and was a simple man, great and illustrious, as Christ himself said of him, "That among the children of women there was no greater man than John the Baptist." Christ was not of woman born, but was of a maiden, therefore was he not reckoned in this comparison.))

Fig. 39

the centre of the scene. In our case, the adverbial diatheme *on wifa bear-num* relates to the quality and its specifications in the first "straight" clause, the other adverbial diatheme *to ðyssere wiðmetennysse* relates to the abstract content of the indirect speech representing rheme proper and the specification within the communicative field.

Though it is possible for a diatheme to be followed by the same element functioning as diatheme in the subsequent text, here the diatheme Christ in the third line is not immediately followed by Christ in the fourth line, their connection being interrupted by the appearance of John the Baptist as specification within the clause standing between the two.

The mild contrast between (or among) the successive diathemes has already been mentioned. Not rarely, it is combined with what might be called a diatheme-rheme proper (semantic) opposition. In the above example the oppositions are: John – human descent, human breed – John, Christ – different descent. The mild contrast between the diathemes, and the semantic opposition diatheme-rheme proper may be accompanied by the contrast of rhemes, but this is outside the scope of our examination unless the thematic elements are involved as in the example in Fig. 40.



((... and let the fire regulate the meekness, that it be not too slack; and again let the meekness temper the fire, that it be not too fierce.))

Fig. 40

As these contrasts are related to the concept of narrow scene, we shall deal with the above examples in 2.4.1.3.

The semantic findings concerning the subject-object diatheme and theme proper are fully corroborated by the statistical results (see 2.2.2), which show the proportion of nouns (as head words of a nominal phrase) and pronouns in these two types of thematic elements. Theme proper as the well-established scenic element is represented by pronouns in 90 % of cases, while the percentage of nouns is 7.0 %. The subject-object diatheme (taken alone) displays a different tendency: 36.9 % pronouns and 56.5 % nouns, half of which occur within non-clausal attributive constructions. This accords well with the idea that the diatheme (here subject-object diatheme) is a newly introduced scenic element, an element that has just been made the centre of the scene and — as such — is frequently expressed by a grammatical form more informative than the pronoun in its prevalently referential role.

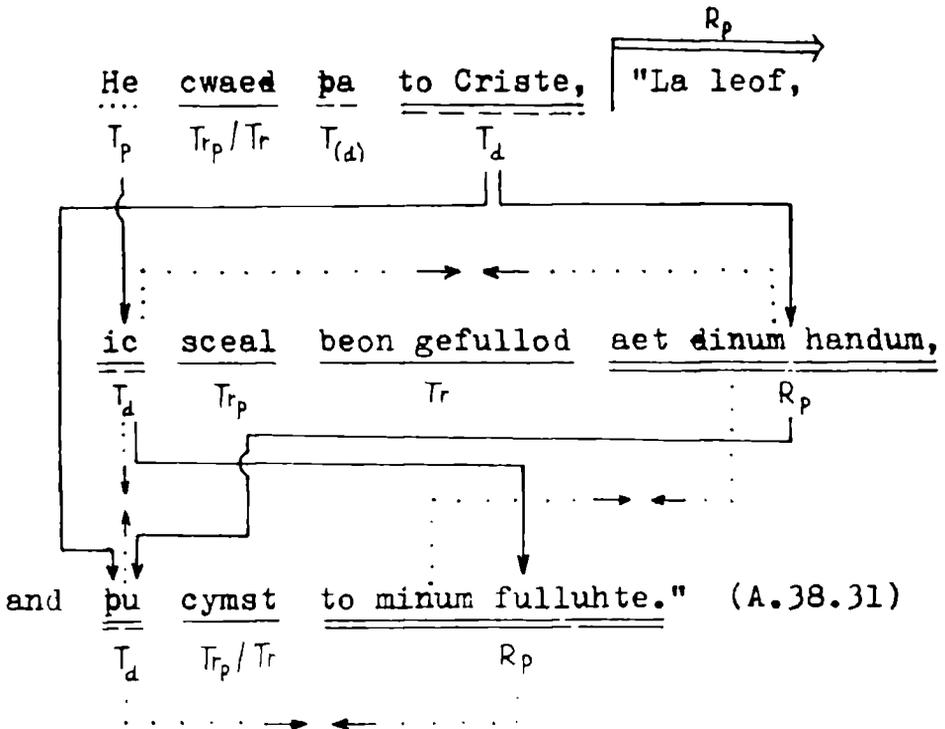
If nouns or noun phrases are better suited for expressing the diatheme, why do the pronouns occur in this role at all? Basically, there are two occasions on which the pronouns are used as diathemes. Incidentally, they coincide with the specific use of personal and relative pronouns. Let us take the personal pronouns first.

It is to be kept in mind that the nature of the pronominal diatheme is the same as that described above for any type of diatheme. The personal pronouns are most frequently used if two (less often three) well-established scenic elements are alternately and repeatedly foregrounded, that is, made the centre of the scene. These elements are often two persons associated with different formal means of personal reference (he, she; I, you). Hence the pronominal diathemes stand in mild contrast with each other, and — as it happens — they may take part in the parallel diatheme-rheme proper oppositions, as can be seen in Fig. 41.

The “direct speech” clauses do not need any comment. The interpretation of the first clause follows from the preceding context, which may be briefly characterized as: To the people standing around, he (John) said: . . . ; then turning to Christ, he said: The change of theme proper into diatheme may be called foregrounding, which is a kind of intensification of the theme. (In our example, this foregrounding is followed by further intensification, this time changing the diatheme into rheme proper, thus rhematizing it. (For further comment see 2.4.4.6.))

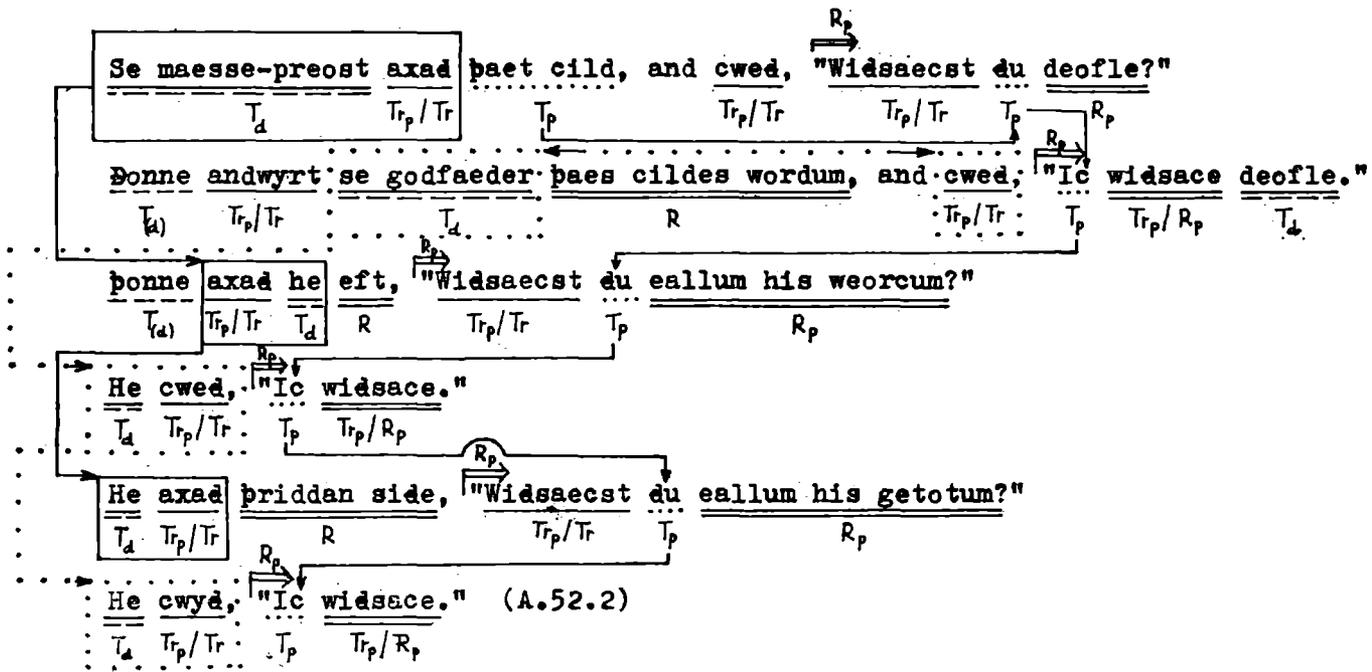
As has been said above, the alternating pronominal diathemes are in most cases formally different. But there are cases in which the two pronouns are formally the same and yet they alternately refer to different persons, bringing them (alternately) into the foreground. This can be seen most clearly in Fig. 42.

For the sake of clarity, the example shows only the progression of theme proper and that of the two pronominal diathemes. What makes them different and enables them to stand in mild contrast, although they are formally identical, are the two temporarily constant diatheme — transition



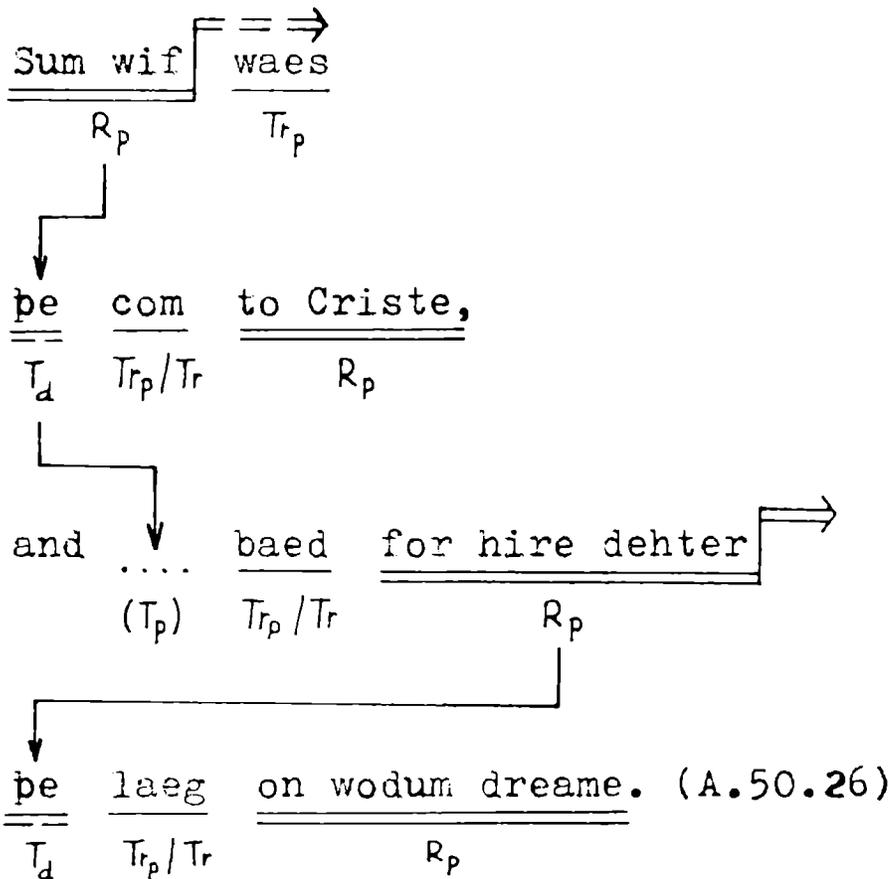
((He then said to Christ, "O beloved, I should be baptized at thy hands, and thou comest to my baptism."))

Fig. 41



((The mass-priest asks the child, and says, "Dost thou renounce the devil?" Then answers the godfather in the words of the child, and says, "I renounce the devil." Then again he asks, "Dost thou renounce all his works?" He says, "I renounce." He asks a third time, "Dost thou renounce all his vanities?" He says, "I renounce."))

Fig. 42



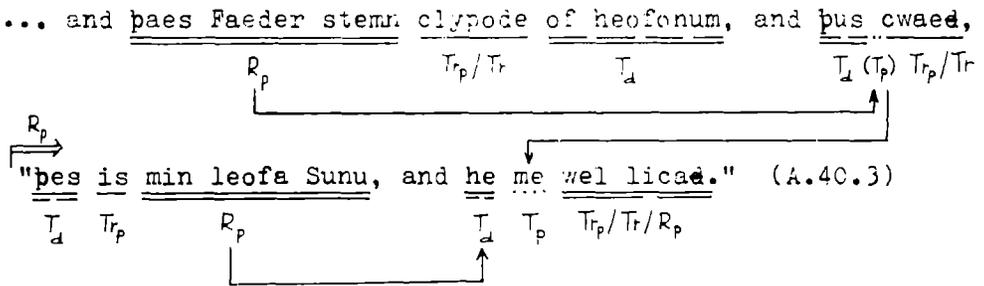
((There was a woman who came to Christ, and prayed for her daughter who lay in a fit of frenzy.))

Fig. 44

((The nature and greatness of the Holy Ghost are not dwelling in the form in which he was then seen, but he came over Christ in the form of a dove, because he would thereby betoken ...))

Fig. 46

The former of the two examples (Fig. 45) offers a unique opportunity to verify the strong tendency of the relative pronoun to become the diatheme. The sentence occurs in the same sermon again, in a slightly different wording, but the intention is undoubtedly to render exactly the same meaning as above:



((... and the voice of the Father cried from heaven, and thus said, "This is my beloved Son, and he well pleaseth me."))

Fig. 47

The relative pronoun becomes theme proper only if the relative clause contains another scenic element (different from hypertheme) that is newly introduced within the scene or has just been foregrounded because of mild contrast or opposition. The third relative clause of the example in Fig. 48 is an instance of this.

Godes æeow, see had unterfehd,

T_d T_d R_p T_{r_p}/T_r

sceal beon on æa wison gelogod

T_{r_p} R_p T_r

þe God tæhte,

T_d R_p T_{r_p}/T_r

and swa swa æa wæron

T_d R_p T_{r_p}

æ Godes geladunge aerest gestadelodon.

T_p T_d $T_{(d)}$ T_{r_p}/R_p

(A.48.30)

((The servant of God who assumes orders should be disposed in the way taught by God, and as those were who first established God's church.))

Fig. 48

2.3.3.2 Adverbial diathemes

Like subject-object diathemes, adverbial diathemes can also be found in basically two semantic roles:

- (i) If a new phenomenon is to appear on the scene, they provide its appearance with the appropriate setting, which is nothing but a scenic element denoting time, place, or way of appearance that has just been made the centre of the scene. (By the way of appearance we understand conditions, reasons, limitations, etc. of the appearance of the new phenomenon. In our analysis this set of diathemes has not been further subdivided.)
- (ii) If a quality bearer is already a well-established element of the scene (theme proper), adverbial diathemes provide the appropriate setting for the appearance of its new qualities (and specifications), often standing in mild contrast that concerns the place, time, or way of appearance.

In Fig. 49 (illustrating the role sub (i)), the central elements of the scene express the way of appearance and the place of appearance (twice), while the subjects function, not as quality bearers, but as phenomena appearing on the scene (prospective quality bearers!).

þær stod se Sunu on ðære menniscnysse,
 T_p T_d

and se Faeder clypode of heofonum,
 T_d

and se Halga Gast nider astah to Criste.
 T_d

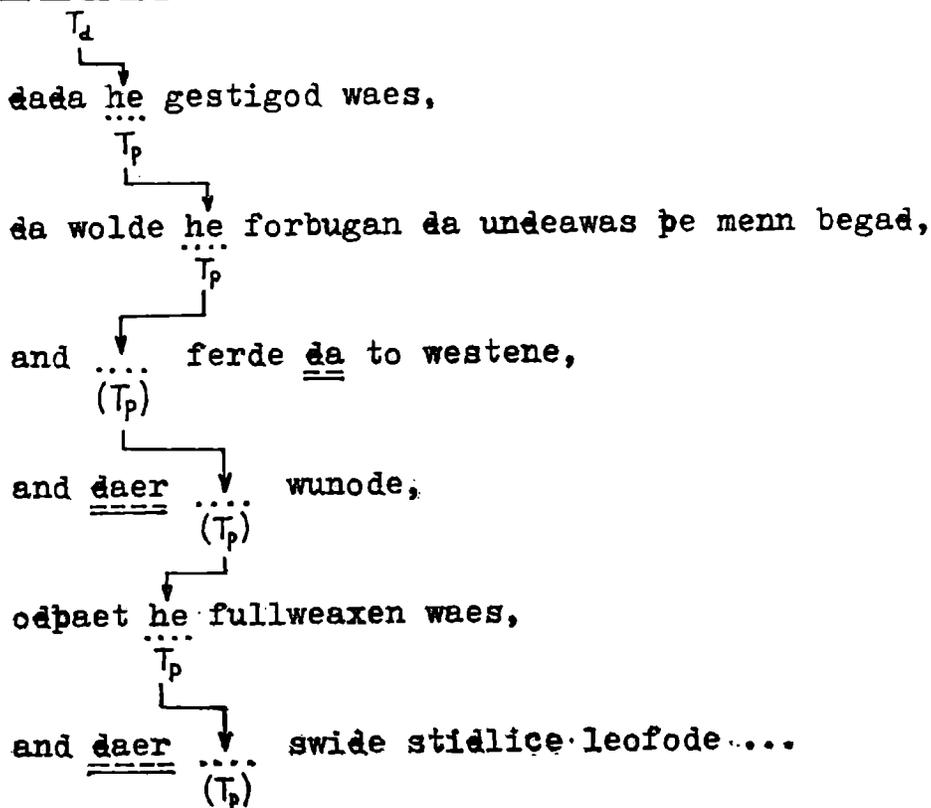
(A.42.16)

((There stood the Son in human nature,
and the Father cried from heaven,
and the Holy Ghost descended to Christ.))

Fig. 49

If the quality bearer has already been well-established in the scene (the role sub (ii)), the adverbial diathemes take over the function of the centre of the scene, thus introducing new qualities (of the (old) quality bearer) onto the scene. This may be illustrated by a passage which has already been analyzed in 2.3.3.1 (Fig. 37). Here we shall adduce it again with only the relevant diathemes and themes proper being graphically marked.

Iohannes,



(A.38.3)

((John, when he was grown up, would eschew the vices which men commit, and went to the wilderness, and there dwelt until he was full-grown, and there lived very rigidly ...))

Fig. 50

This example has been chosen because it illustrates the role of the adverbial diatheme in its "pure" form. It is necessary to add that adverbial diathemes of this kind are more often than not expressed by longer adverbial (or nominal) phrases or subordinate clauses. Nevertheless, even the *ðær* and *ða* adverbs expressed explicitly must be regarded as scenic elements that are less established and hence more central than the ellipted hyperthemes!

More frequent cases can be found in Fig. 51.

(Uton beon gemyndige hwaet we Gode beheton on urum fulluhte.)

Nu cwepst du, ^{R_p} "Hwaet behet ic
 T_d T_{r_p}/T_r T_p R_p T_{r_p}/T_r T_p

----- T_d -----
ðada ic cild waes, and sprecan ne mihte" (A.50.9)
 T_p R_p T_{r_p} (T_p) R_p T_{r_p}

((Let us be mindful of what we promised to God at our baptism.) Now wilt thou say, 'What did I promise when I was a child, and could not speak?'))

T_d

$\overbrace{\text{pada he gedogen waes,}}^{T_d}$
 $\underbrace{\text{pa}}_{T_r/T_r}$
 $\underbrace{\text{com him to}}_{T_p}$
 $\underbrace{\text{Godes bebod, . .}}_{R_p}$

T_p R_p T_r T_r/T_r T_p R_p

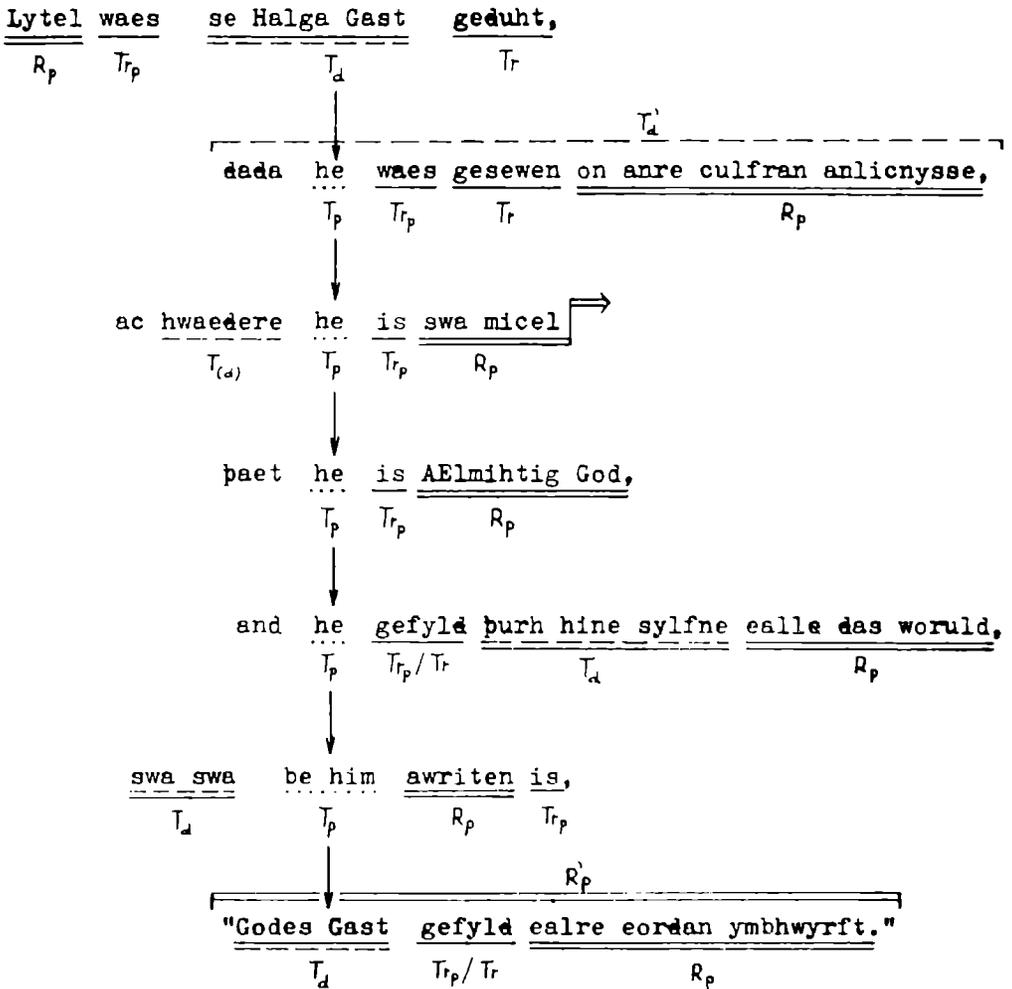
(A.38.9)

((When he was grown to maturity, God's commandment came to him, ...))

Fig. 51

In the second example (Fig. 51), the temporal clause is regarded as the diatheme within the following clause. The alternative interpretation is to regard the temporal clause as loose, as it were standing outside the communicative field of the following clause, with only *Ja* performing the role of the diatheme (as the relative pronoun does in the relative clauses). Under some circumstances, some conjunctions seem to display a tendency to become diathemes. Here we should at least mention one of them, *swa swa*, with which the above tendency is especially strong. (See Fig. 52.)

In addition to *swa swa*, Fig. 52 also exemplifies some other adverbial diathemes. Note especially the cases of what might be called loose diathemes (T'_d) and loose rhemes proper (R'_p). These units (or, better, fields) are to be dealt with in 2.3.5. For the present, let us state that they are units which under certain conditions are easily loosened or even ousted from their "mother" fields.



(A.42.33)

((Little did the Holy Ghost seem, when he appeared in the likeness of a dove, but yet he is so great that he is Almighty God, and he fills of himself all this world, as it is written of him, "The Spirit of God filleth the circumference of all the earth."))

Fig. 52

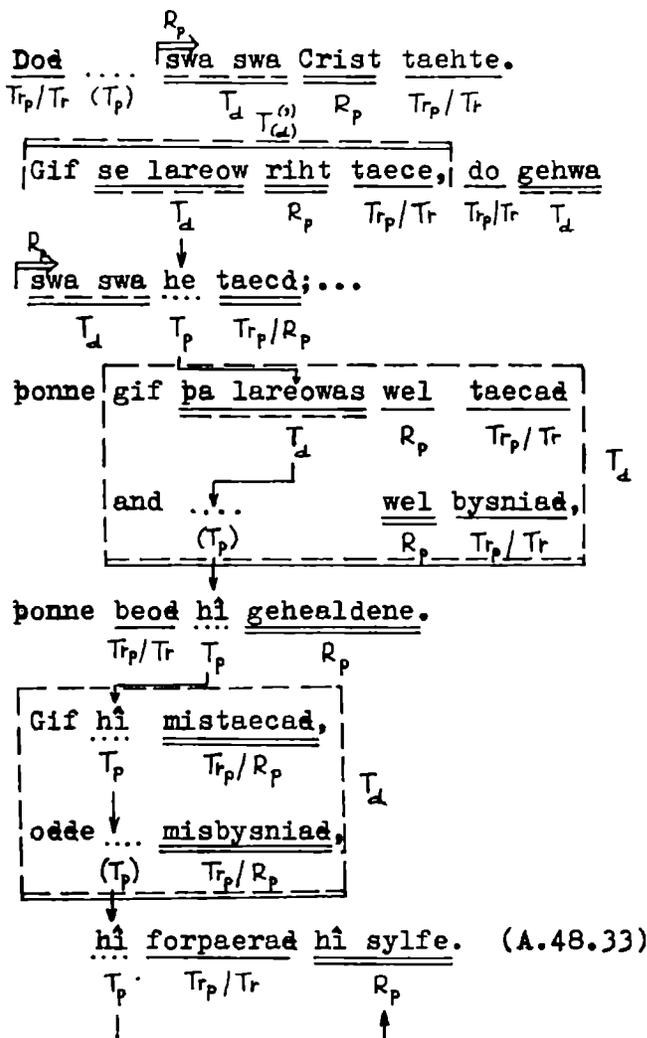
Fig. 53 offers further instances of the diathematic *swa swa* (for the bracketed sentence see 2.3.3.1, Fig. 48), and also instantiates if-clauses, which function as diathemes on the one hand, but in the presence of some other diathematic element are easily ousted from the field to become loose diathemes.

The first imperative (Fig. 53) has an ellipted theme proper referring to all the listeners. Why is the quality bearer in imperative clauses so often omitted or – perhaps more precisely – ellipted? The explanation may be seen in the fact that the speaker(s) and the listener(s) are frequently found among the most established elements of the scene. If there is no reason for their foregrounding, they perform the role of theme proper and remain – as is often the case with other themes proper – ellipted. If there is some reason for bringing them to the foreground, e.g. if a choice is to be made among several listeners or an appeal is to be directed not to all the listeners en bloc, but to each of them individually, the quality bearer is brought to the centre of the scene and performs the role of diatheme. This is what happened in the second imperative clause when the element *gehwa* was made the centre of the scene. This, however, changed the “balance” between the imperative clause and the if-clause, which would otherwise have played the role of diatheme if the subject-object diatheme had not been employed. Under the circumstances, the if-clause seems to lose the full status of the diatheme within the imperative clause and performs either the role of – for the time being unspecified – theme or loosens its bonds with the imperative clause and functions as a comparatively separate communicative field outside the scope of the field of the imperative clause, thus representing loose diatheme (see 2.3.5).

Although we have no direct statistical evidence (except some indications mentioned in 2.3.4 and 2.3.5), there seem to be certain differences among the thematic elements expressed by adverbials and their equivalents as to the tendency to become diathemes. The occurrence-rates of the adverbials of manner, place and time (dealt with in 2.2.3) are in this case of little help, because the frequency of use tells us hardly anything about the preferences if some of the elements in question meet within the same clause. The semantic examination of such cases seems to indicate that thematic temporal elements (including clauses, of course) tend to have priority over thematic local (place) elements, both of them being superseded by the occurrence of thematic elements referring to what has been called the way of appearance. (The same “hierarchy” seems to be valid for the tendency of diathematic clauses to become loose diathemes.)

The semantic explanation of this phenomenon may be related to the general character of the scene. Relatively the most stable factor seems to be the spatial arrangement of elements on the scene. This is not to say that the elements do not change their “stage” positions, but if the change of position takes place, it tends to be presented as a specification. Some other

(Godes deow, seðe had unterfehð, sceal beon on ða wison gelogod þe God taente, and swa swa ða waeron ðe Godes geladunge aereþ gestadelodon. (See Fig. 48.))



((Do as Christ taught. If the teacher teach right, let every one do as he teaches;... then, if the teachers teach well and give good example, they shall be saved. If they misteach, or give evil example, they destroy themselves.))

Fig. 53

local elements are called upon to perform the role of the centre of the scene only in case of the less numerous instances of the phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene. The temporal factor is more unstable, but the regularity of the flow of time makes it in certain respects similar to the local factor. As the relative flow of time is regularly indicated by the (co-)conveyor of quality (transition proper), the scenic element seems to be employed in a clause if there is need for some temporal indication to be foregrounded. Perhaps it is this reason that gives the thematic temporal elements relative priority over the spatial ones.

The least established (and the least predictable) of the scenic elements seem to be the ones expressing the way of appearance. With regard to all the other communicative units, these elements display a lot of features which undoubtedly place them among the scenic elements. On the other hand, however, they are elements that for the most part cannot be found on the scene before: they are — as it were — not there until they are made scenic *hic et nunc*, and that is why they in general supersede the other scenic elements in becoming the centre of the scene. The syntactic features which they have in common with other scenic elements is what “keeps them down”. Their *hic et nunc* character together with the fact that they can hardly be said to be established on the scene is what enables them to “go up”.

2.3.3.3. Diathemes in general

As has been said before, the common feature of both subject-object and adverbial diathemes is that they express the scenic element that has been made the centre of the scene. Seen at this level, their roles are the same. Seen in the light of the semantic subdivision of the scenic elements, their functions are mutually exclusive and at the same time complementary. The semantic analysis of the examined text shows quite convincingly that the tendency to employ only one centre of the scene at a time is so strong that the occurrence of one diatheme excludes the other element(s) aspiring to this role. The hierarchy of priorities (based on the semantic inquiry, but not on statistical results) seems to be the following:

- (i) foregrounded quality bearers (subject-object diathemes)
- (ii) foregrounded ways of appearance of a prospective quality bearer or of a quality (adverbial diathemes, mostly expressed by clauses of condition, concession, reason or cause, circumstances, manner, comparison, proportion and preference)
- (iii) foregrounded temporal elements of the scene (adverbial diathemes)
- (iv) foregrounded spatial elements of the scene (adverbial diathemes)

It is imperative that the proposed hierarchy should be understood more as a general tendency seen in the examined text as a whole than as a rule to be automatically applied to individual cases. Semantics is only one (although a very important) factor in determining the roles of communicative units within the communicative fields, the other factors being linearity and context (both verbal and situational).

The dividing lines between the four groups of diathemes are far from sharp. There are transitional cases between spatial and temporal elements (usually prepositional noun groups) as well as between temporal and conditional elements, especially if (when!) expressed by a clause. There is no clear-cut distinction between the subject-object diathemes (foregrounded quality bearers) and adverbial diathemes (other foregrounded scenic elements) either. The transitional cases, however, are not so numerous as to invalidate the division and the general hierarchy suggested above.

2.3.4 "ORIENTED" THEMES

As has been already mentioned (see the discussion of Fig. 53 in 2.3.3.2), there are certain thematic elements that have a tendency to become the centre of the scene, but they are prevented from playing the role of diatheme by some other thematic element that is made the centre of the scene. On the other hand, there are thematic elements that have the tendency to represent the well-established items of the scene, but they are prevented from playing the role of theme proper by some other thematic element that is regarded as "more established" or "more hyperthematic" at the moment.

It is worth mentioning that the above two types of theme, the diatheme oriented and the theme-proper oriented theme, are not theoretical constructs. The necessity of distinguishing such elements arose in the course of the analysis of Ælfric's text. Before the analysis was started, the intention was to focus attention on the diatheme (as the most dynamic thematic element of the respective clause) and the theme proper (as the least dynamic element) with special regard to thematic progression and hence to hyperthemes. The other thematic elements were meant (for the sake of the analysis) to be regarded as an indiscriminate whole. At the very beginning of the analysis, however, the necessity of distinguishing further thematic elements proved to be too strong to be ignored. After the distinction between the expressed and the ellipted theme proper, another distinction had to be made between two elements which both aspired to the role of diatheme or theme proper, but one of which — if the principle of one theme proper and one diatheme was to be kept to — had to make place for the other. The requirement that there should be only one diatheme and one

theme proper within one clause has, of course, an axiomatic character, but goes well with the idea that the speaker's or listener's attention cannot be directed to two or more items at the same time with the same intensity.

It is conceivable that two different hyperthemes may meet within one clause. If both of them are equally well-established on the scene and are equally "backgrounded" rather than foregrounded, the distinction may be difficult, if not impossible, to make. In the course of the analysis, there was only one case in which the distinction between two thematic elements was not made. Both of them were hyperthemes and both of them referred to one and the same scenic element performing the role of a well-established quality bearer.

(þa apostoli)

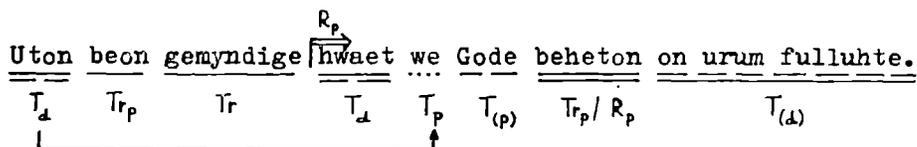
... and :hi: waeron swa gehyrte,
 ↓
 þaet :hi:him: ne ondredon
 ↓
 naðor ne haedenra cyninga þeowracan,

 ne nanes cynnes pinunga,...(A.44.10)

((... and they were so animated that they dreaded neither the threats of heathen kings, nor torments of any kind,...))

Fig. 54

To come back to diatheme oriented and theme-proper oriented elements, both of them can be illustrated by the example in Fig. 55. (The analysis of the bracketed sentence has been adduced in 2.3.3.2, Fig. 51.)



(Nu cweþst du, "Hwæt behet ic **dada** ic cild waes, and sprecað ne mihte?") (A.50.8)

((Let us be mindful of what we promised to God at our baptism.))

Fig. 55

The element *hwæt* is part of the newly appearing specification and is immediately made the centre of the scene from the viewpoint of the contents of the relative clause. *We* is at this very moment the most established element of the scene, having already appeared as diatheme and now receding (in)to the background. *God*, though well-established too, cannot function as theme proper because of *we*, but it cannot become the diatheme either, because there is already *hwæt* in the centre of the scene. So *God* as a scenically well-established element remains thematic, performing a function close to that of theme proper.

On urum fulluhte can be regarded as an either spatial or temporal (or even circumstantial) element. Under certain conditions it can be made a specification and, therefore, rhematic, but in this case *fulluht* is already established on the scene. In fact it is the subject that is preached upon, and performs the role of a scenic element. If it were regarded as a spatial element, it would most likely tend to theme proper, but if conceived of as a temporal change in the scene, it is only slightly established on it and, therefore, tends to become the diatheme. This tendency, however, is countered by the fact that the centre of the scene has already been occupied by *hwæt*. That the nominal phrase is a temporal element rather than a spatial one can be clearly seen if the following sentence, which displays — in this respect — a parallel structure, is taken into account. "At our bap-

tism" stands in mild contrast with "when I was a child". Hence *on urum fulluhte* as the (scenically) second least established element performs the function close to that of the diatheme.

The second (bracketed) sentence (Fig. 55) does not contain any "oriented" themes, but is highly instructive in another way. If the direct speech were, say, a neutral question, in which the inquirer really wanted to know what he or she had promised, the temporal clause would in all probability play the role of rheme proper, with *hwæt* performing the function of the speaker's rheme (see Firbas 1976.48).

What did I promise when I was a child and could not speak?
 $R_{(s)}$ Tr_p T_p Tr R_p

Fig. 56

Under the present circumstances, however, the question is a rhetorical one. Its temporal clause is closely connected with the preceding "temporal" element and because of the absence of any other scenic element aspiring to become the centre of the scene, it clearly plays the role of diatheme. (This can also be seen from the non-interrogative periphrase adduced in brackets below.):

What did I promise when I was a child and could not speak?
 R_p Tr_p T_p Tr T_d

(At the time of my baptism I could not have promised anything.)
 T_d T_p Tr_p Tr R_p

Fig. 57

The number of occurrences of the thematic elements under discussion is given below:

T _p -oriented T	expressing				total	% out of 450 (clauses)
	object	place adv.	time adv.	other adv.		
T _(p)	2	6	13	7	28	6.2
% out of total 28	7.1	21.4	46.4	25.0	99.9	

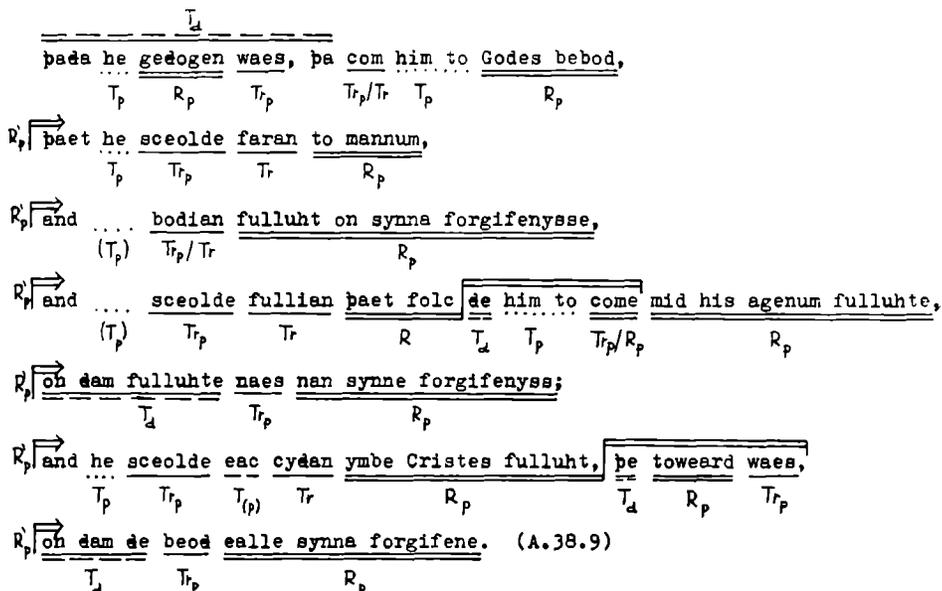
T _d -oriented T	expressing				total	% out of 450 (clauses)
	object	place adv.	time adv.	other adv.		
T _(d)	2	7	42	23	74	16.4
% out of total 74	2.7	9.5	56.8	31.1	100.0	

Fig. 58

The occurrence rate of theme-proper oriented themes is so low that it hardly enables us to draw any conclusions (except that it is low). The diatheme oriented themes are more frequent and their internal division according to the kind of scenic element they express seems to speak in favour of the hierarchy mentioned in 2.3.3.2 and 2.3.3.3. The extremely low occurrence of spatial elements in comparison with the temporal and – more particularly – with the way-of-appearance elements, indicates that they either appear as diathemes or hardly appear (as thematic elements) at all.

2.3.5 LOOSE DIATHEMES AND LOOSE RHEMES

Some diathemes and rhemes proper, especially those expressed by subordinate clauses, display a tendency to function outside the distributional field of the principal clause. Within the principal clause, they have their more or less formal representatives that perform the same functions, thus enabling the subordinate clauses to display a certain degree of semantic independence. The example in Fig. 59 will illustrate what we have in mind.



((When he was grown to maturity, God's commandment came to him, that he should go to men, and preach baptism in forgiveness of sins, and should baptize the people who came to him with his own baptism, in which baptism there was no forgiveness of sin; and he should also declare concerning Christ's baptism, which was to come, in which all sins are forgiven.))

Fig. 59

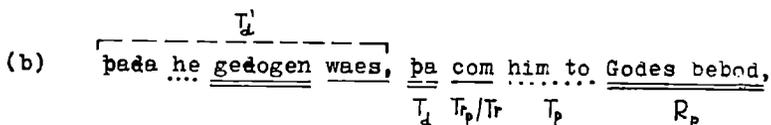
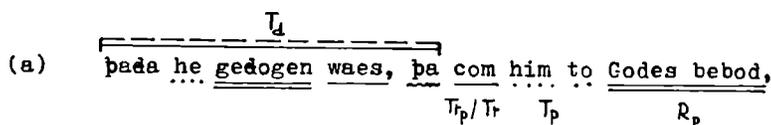
If we strictly applied only syntactic criteria, the whole passage from *Godes bebod* to the end of the sentence would constitute an extensive rheme proper represented by a number of distributional subfields (clauses).

On the other hand, *Godes bebod* may be considered to be the only rheme proper within the principal clause, representing a prop-element in relation to what follows. Hence each of the subsequent clauses may be regarded as rheme proper in relation to what precedes until the next clause appears to be more dynamic and takes over the function of rheme proper.

Thanks to their semantic (and also syntactic) representative within the principal clause, such rhematic clauses are not so closely connected with the other elements of the principal clause and for this reason we shall call them loose rhemes (R'_p). The conception of loose rhemes is based on the idea that, without losing the sense of hierarchy, the reader/listener — as it were — shifts his attention from one clause to another and concentrates on the function of the elements within the clause in focus, while the function of the whole clause within some superordinate distributional field (clause) becomes less important.

In our statistical analysis, we did not consider loose rhemes to be separate rhematic elements, but analyzed the respective clauses in the way shown in Fig. 59 (disregarding the R'_p -signs).

Loose rhemes have their counterpart in loose diathemes (T'_d). In Fig. 59 (see also Fig. 60(a)), the adverbial clause together with the next *pa* is regarded as one element of the principal clause — the adverbial diatheme. The alternative approach, however, is to regard only *pa* as the diatheme of the principal clause and the preceding adverbial clause as a loose diatheme. This solution is illustrated in Fig. 60(b). (In our analysis we adopted the solution sub (a).)

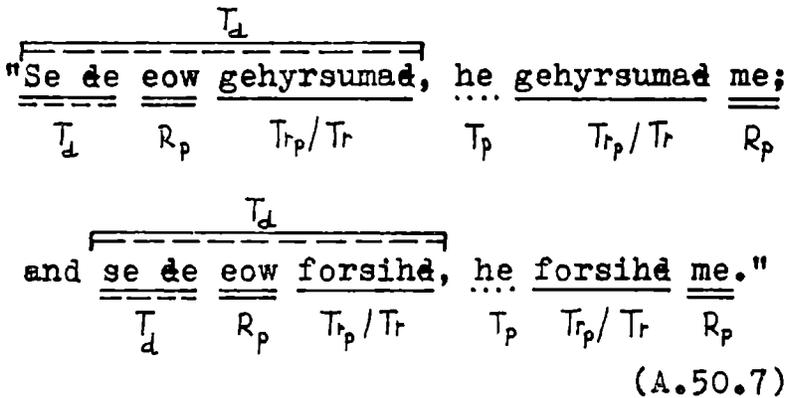


(A.38.9)

(When he was grown to maturity, God's commandment came to him,...)

Fig. 60

As is the case with rhemes proper, there is no strict dividing line between (internal) diathemes and loose diathemes. In our analysis the two diathemes in Fig. 61 were regarded as (internal) elements of the respective principal clauses.



(("He who obeyeth you, obeyeth me, and he who contemneth you, contemneth me."))

Fig. 61

The employment of *he* in the principal clause loosens the grammatical bonds between the two clauses just making the relative clause a sort of projected element. As this is a common practice in Old English (unmarked

use), we would rather adopt the interpretation above. Nevertheless, the "two subjects" may suggest the possibility that the relative clauses may be interpreted as loose diathemes:

$$\overbrace{\text{"Se de eow gehyrsumad, he gehyrsumad me;}}^{T_d'}$$

$$\underline{\underline{\text{Se de eow}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{he}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{gehyrsumad}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{me}}};$$

$$T_d$$

$$\text{and } \overbrace{\text{se de eow forsihd, he forsihd me.}}^{T_d'}$$

$$\underline{\underline{\text{se de eow}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{forsihd}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{he}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{forsihd}}}, \underline{\underline{\text{me}}}."$$

$$T_d$$

(A.50.7)

Fig. 62

The tendency to become a loose diatheme seems to be much stronger in the example in Fig. 63. (The inversion in the principal clause is to be ascribed to negation rather than to the tendency to signalize the connection with the relative clause.)

$$\overbrace{\text{Se de facn lufad, and smead hu he mage him sylfum gestrinan and na Gode,}}^{T_d (T_d' ?)}$$

$$\underline{\underline{\text{naefad he na culfran deawas, ac haefad paes blacan hremmes.}}} \quad (\text{A.46.13})$$

$$T_p (T_d ?)$$

((He who loves guile, and devises how he may gain for himself and not for God, has not the qualities of the dove, but has those of the black raven.))

Fig. 63

If there were any doubt concerning the example in Fig. 63, there cannot be any concerning the first sentence in Fig. 64, especially if this

Neither loose diathemes nor loose rhemes are the key concepts of our analysis. We touch upon the subject in order to show that the most dynamic thematic and the most dynamic rhematic elements may display a varying degree of "functional independence", based on the loosened syntactic, semantic and contextual bonds with the remaining elements of the respective clause.

2.3.6 THEMATIC AND NON-THEMATIC ELEMENTS

The statistical results of the positional occurrence of rheme proper compared with those of theme proper and diatheme (2.2.1.5) seem to indicate that rheme proper may stand in two kinds of opposition:

- (i) The rheme proper – theme proper opposition based on the greatest difference in the degree of communicative dynamism these two elements convey (the most dynamic and the least dynamic element, respectively)
- (ii) The rheme proper – diatheme opposition based on the similarities in their functions performed in two (in a sense) opposed spheres, the non-thematic and the thematic sphere of the clause.

These two kinds of opposition have their reflection in two kinds of arrangement of thematic and non-thematic elements. On the one hand, all the elements can be arranged according to their relative degrees of communicative dynamism from the least dynamic theme proper to the most dynamic rheme proper; this will be called a one-dimensional arrangement. On the other hand, all the elements can be arranged, not only according to their degrees of CD, but also according to the similarities in function within the thematic and the non-thematic sphere; this will be called a two-dimensional arrangement. Let us have a closer look at these two kinds of arrangement.

2.3.6.1 The one-dimensional arrangement

Fig. 65 shows the elements arranged according to the rise of the relative degree of CD they convey.

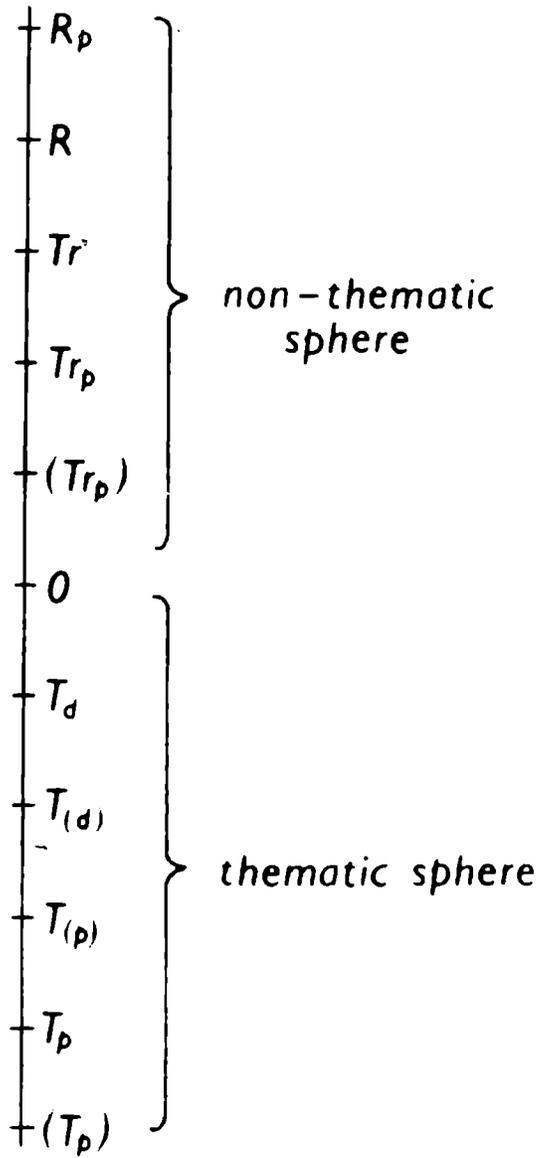


Fig. 65

The ellipted theme proper is the most-established element in the scene: it is in fact established so well that it need not be explicitly expressed at all. In this sense, it is less dynamic than the explicit theme proper, which is by definition the least dynamic expressed element of the clause.

The theme-proper oriented theme conveys a comparatively low degree of CD in the clause but is prevented from performing the role of theme proper by the presence of a less dynamic element which performs this role. Hence the theme-proper oriented theme must be higher in the scale. Similarly, the diatheme oriented theme is prevented from becoming the diatheme only by the presence of some other element playing the role of diatheme, so it has to be lower in the scale than the diatheme, which has already been defined as the most dynamic element of the thematic sphere of the clause.

The more or less neutral elements are denoted as 0 (zero); they might be regarded as belonging either to both the thematic and the non-thematic sphere or to neither of them (e.g. conjunctions). These elements have not been subjected to analysis.

Out of the two transitions proper, it is the ellipted one that has no power to change the temporal and modal indications with regard to the preceding transitions proper and has to be regarded as conveying a lower degree of CD than the explicit transition proper.

The transition is in fact a transition-proper oriented rheme. Semantically (and also grammatically) it is closely connected with transition proper, but under some circumstances (in the absence of other elements functioning as rhemes) it becomes rheme proper.

The rheme in the diagram is in fact the rheme-proper oriented rheme, which is prevented from performing this function by the presence of some other element playing the role of rheme proper. By definition rheme proper is an element conveying the highest degree of CD in the clause.

2.3.6.2 The two-dimensional arrangement

In spite of considerable differences in degrees of CD at the vertical scale in Fig. 65, certain elements of its thematic part have their counterparts in its non-thematic part, displaying similar grammatical features on the one hand and performing similar semantic roles within the respective sphere on the other. In fact, the wording of the preceding subsection (2.3.6.1) characterizing the differences in CD, was conceived of in such a way as to suggest the similarities by the use of parallel formulations for the thematic and the non-thematic sphere. What certain thematic and non-thematic elements have in common will become more apparent if the

thematic elements represent one dimension and the non-thematic elements the other dimension of a two-dimensional space as shown in Fig. 66:

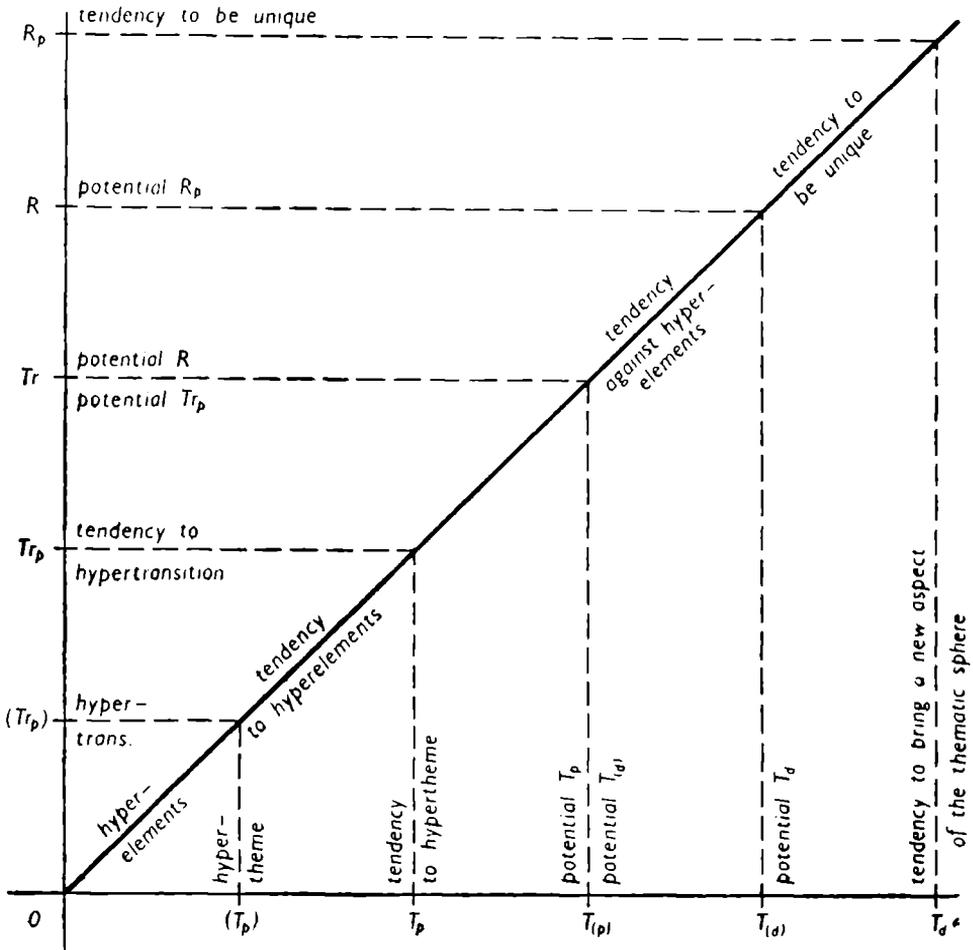


Fig. 66

Both the ellipted themes proper and the ellipted transitions proper are in fact always hyperthemes and hypertransitions, respectively, i.e. they are elements remaining the same in one or more subsequent clauses. The tendency to become "hyperclements" is also very strong with explicitly expressed themes proper and transitions proper, while with theme-proper oriented themes and transitions (non-proper) this tendency is less pronounced.

There is, however, a clear asymmetry between the thematic and the non-thematic elements: While themes proper or theme-proper oriented themes need not be present in the clause at all (the clause does not have a theme proper), the — at least implicit — presence of transition proper is a necessary condition for a clause to perform its function. This does not mean, however, that transitions proper cannot be ellipted. For the sake of comparison we also adduce the figures concerning ellipted transitions proper and ellipted transitions in Fig. 67. Their occurrence in the examined Old English text is about three times lower than that of the ellipted theme proper (cf 2.2.1.4 and 2.3.1).

ellipted Tr _p and Tr	occ.	%	occ.	%	occ.	%	occ.	%	% out of 450
(Tr _p)	14	56.0	} 14	56.0	} 22	36.0	} 25	100.0	5.6
(Tr _p) + (Tr) two words	2	8.0							
(Tr _p + Tr) one word	6	24.0	} 8	32.0					
(Tr) + expl. Tr _p	3	12.0			} 3	12.0			

Fig. 67

Theme-proper oriented themes and transitions (non-proper) are potentially either of their neighbouring elements. Theme-proper oriented themes are both potential themes proper and potential diatheme oriented themes. Transitions are both potential transitions proper (especially in their roles of hypertransitions) and potential rhemes.

The common feature of both diatheme oriented themes and rhemes (non-proper, in fact, rheme-proper oriented rhemes) is that they hardly ever become hyperthemes or hyperrhemes, respectively. They tend to become unique, they tend to perform the central roles within their respective (thematic and non-thematic) spheres, but they cannot perform these roles because they are prevented from doing so by the presence of elements that are more dynamic than they are themselves. (In this sense the diatheme oriented theme might just as well be called diatheme and its neighbouring central element, diatheme proper, to make the parallel with rheme and rheme proper perfect. Nevertheless, we shall maintain the terminology as originally introduced.)

The common tendency of both diathemes and rhemes proper is to bring a new aspect of their respective spheres, to represent the centres (foci) of these spheres and in this sense to be unique. The asymmetry of their roles rests in the fact that, while diatheme need not be present in the clause at all, rheme proper must be present if the clause as a communicative field is to be regarded as complete. (The condition of verbal explicitness of rheme proper apparently holds for written language. In spoken language there seem to be some indications of the rheme proper being exceptionally expressed by non-verbal means, e.g. gestures: "And he (gesture showing that he fell down and did not move)".)

The two-dimensional graph in Fig. 66 clearly shows that there are two — in a way competing — tendencies that may be traced in both the thematic and the non-thematic elements: the tendency to become hyper-elements (to be preserved as such) and the tendency to be unique in the respective sphere (to change, not to remain the same). There is no strict line separating these two tendencies. The elements range from typical hyper-elements (ellipted themes proper, ellipted transitions proper) via elements with which the tendency to become hyper-elements is very strong (expressed themes proper, (expressed) transitions proper) or less strong (theme-proper oriented themes, transitions (non-proper)), to elements in which the tendency not to become hyper-elements but to be unique is less pronounced (diatheme oriented themes, rhemes) or more pronounced (diathemes, rhemes proper). The symmetry is, of course, far from perfect, and it is to be kept in mind that while with diathemes the tendency to be unique still competes with the tendency to preserve, the uniqueness of rhemes proper amounts to the rule.

2.3.7 THE FIRBASIAN SCALES

The Firbasian semantic scales were briefly dealt with in 1.1.2 (see also a mention in 2.3.3). For the sake of brevity the one containing

SCENE – APPEARANCE/EXISTENCE – PHENOMENON (appearing/existing on the scene and prospective quality bearer)

will be called Appearance-scale or A-scale (existence on the scene being regarded as a special case of appearance), and the other scale

QUALITY BEARER – QUALITY – SPECIFICATION – FURTHER SPECIFICATION

will be called Quality scale or Q-scale.

In order to explain the role of the diatheme in these two scales, it is necessary to find a common denomination for their interpretation. Seen in the light of what has been said above about the thematic and non-thematic elements, the A-scale reflects the change in the quality of the scene. Having been introduced onto the scene, the new element becomes part of the (new) scene, hence changing its (old) quality. In this sense Scene is also a quality bearer (Q-bearer), which is ascribed a new Quality, and A-scale is also a Q-scale.

Conversely, the Q-bearer at the Q-scale is ascribed a new Quality (including Specification(s)), which means that a new Quality appears on the scene. In this case Scene is represented by the Q-bearer, because the Q-bearer had to become part of Scene before it could perform the function of a Q-bearer. Hence the Q-scale is also an A-scale. Both of them can be characterized as having Scene at one end and the Appearance of its Quality at the other.

With the diatheme representing the centre of Scene, transition representing Appearance or Quality, and rheme proper, Phenomenon or Specification, the basic pattern of the adverbial and the subject-object diatheme can be seen in Fig. 68.

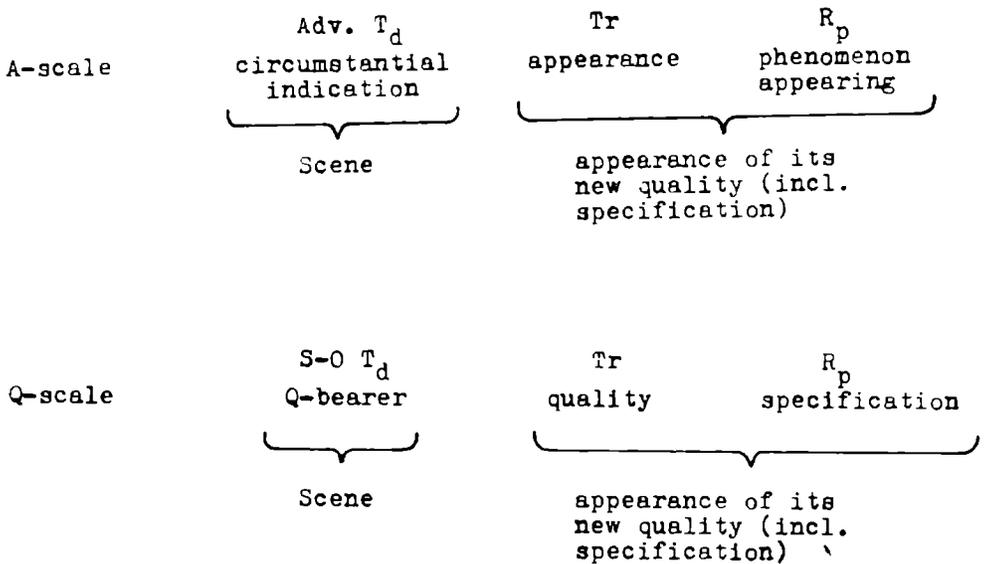


Fig. 68

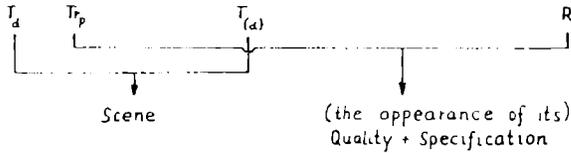
In both the cases, the aspect of appearance as well as the aspect of quality is present. We speak about an A-scale or a Q-scale according to which of the two aspects prevails, but — as a rule — they are both present there at the same time. (Cf. Firbas 1975b, esp. p. 65.)

The above scales contain only three elements and are what may be called pure scales. If further elements are added, they become augmented scales and, theoretically, there is a large number of possible ways of augmenting the scales. The analysis of the Old English text shows that the types of augmented scales are rather limited. As we are mainly concerned with thematic elements, we shall only take into account such augmented scales as contain additional elements constituting Scene. As far as other elements are concerned, we distinguish cases with and without Specification in the Q-scale. (The “A-scale without Specification/Phenomenon” cannot exist as an A-scale.)

As has been said before, both the notion of appearance and that of quality is present in either scale. Hardly any verb of appearance conveys appearance and nothing else; frequently, it conveys quality, which, under

Fig. 70 illustrates the augmented scale sub (i), Fig. 71 the scale sub (ii), and Fig. 72 the scale sub (iii).

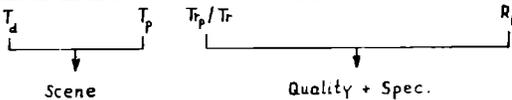
(i) ... Crist waes on daere menniscnyse swide lide and unhearmgeorn. (A.44.20)



((... Christ in his humanity was very meek and harmless.))

Fig. 70

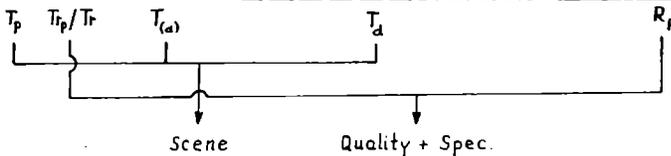
(ii) pa unsprecendan cild hi fullodon durh geleafan paes faeder and daere meder, ... (A.50.15)



((Unspeaking children they baptized through the belief of the father and of the mother,...))

Fig. 71

(iii) We raedad on bocum be dere culfran gecynde, paet heo is ... (A.44.23)



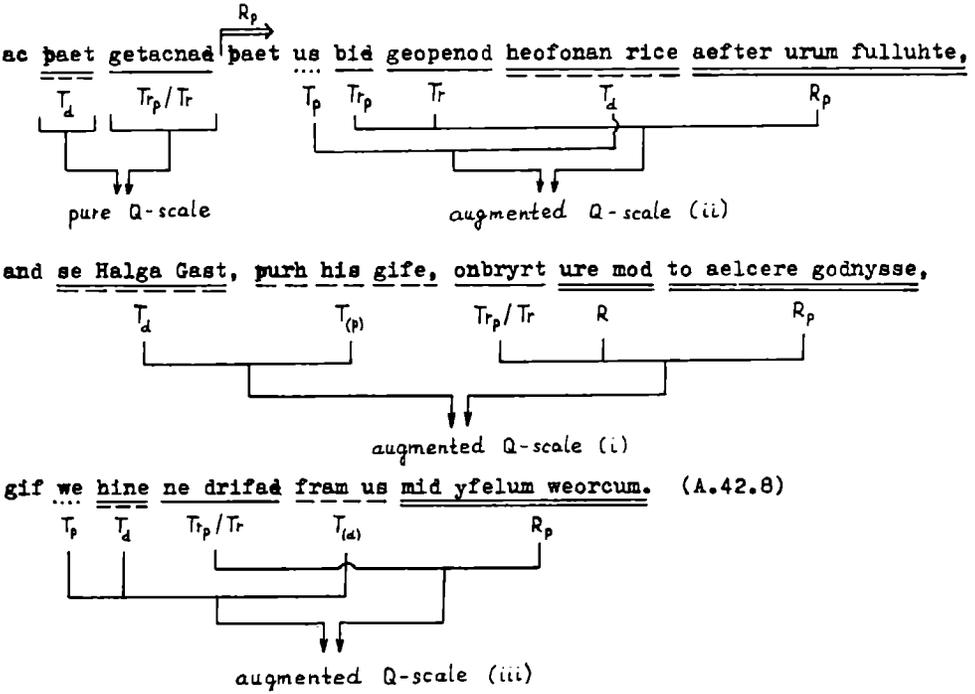
((We read in books on the nature of the dove, that it is ...))

Fig. 72

The augmented scale sub (i) may be interpreted as a contracted A-scale with the oriented theme playing the role of "Scene within Scene", and the diatheme the role of the phenomenon appearing on the scene. This

will hardly hold for instances sub (ii) with theme proper expressing either the subject or one of the objects of the clause. These cases might be better interpreted as contracted Q-scales. Clauses sub (iii) would constitute the combination of a contracted A-scale and Q-scale within their Scenes. However plausible the above interpretation may seem, the analysis of more than 100 examples shows that to look for contracted scales within Scene is often counterintuitive and more or less forced, especially in cases sub (ii) and (iii). In the following we shall regard (the newly appearing) Quality and Specification as ascribed to Scene as a whole rather than to one of its elements.

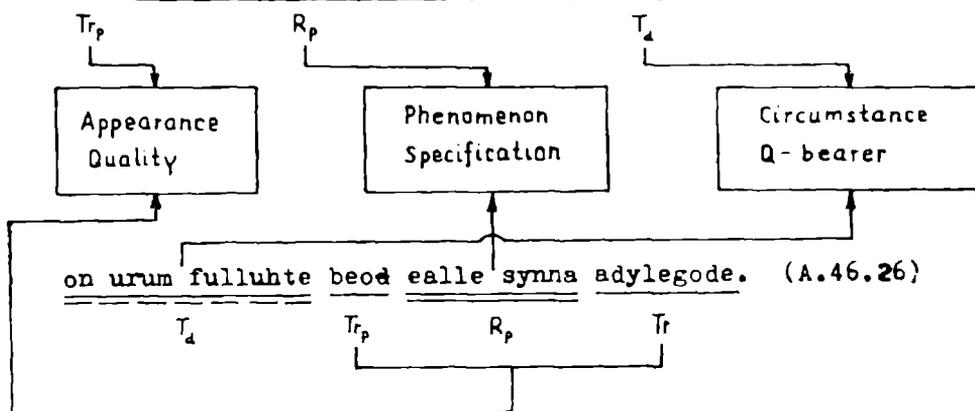
All the above discussed types of the Q-scales can be found in the passage shown in Fig. 73.



((but that betokens to us that the kingdom of heaven will be opened to us after our baptism, and the Holy Ghost, through his grace, will stimulate our minds to every goodness, if we drive him not from us with evil works.))

Fig. 73

Naes nan synne forgifens on Iohannes fulluhte;



((There was no forgiveness of sin in John's baptism; in our baptism all sins are extirpated.))

Fig. 75

scale	Q = Tr	Q = Rp	total	%	total	%
pure Q-scale	120	4	124	51.5	124	51.5
augmented Q-scale (i)	27	5	32	13.3		
augmented Q-scale (iii)	7	9	16	6.6	106	44.0
augmented Q-scale (ii)	34	24	58	24.1		
Q/A-scale	11	-	11	4.6	11	4.6
total	199	42	241	100.0	241	100.0
%	82.6	17.4	100.0			

Fig. 76

(God sette on ðære esldan æe, and het)

niman anes geares lamb aet aelcum hiwisce, ... (A.40.10)

T_{r_p} / T_r

R_p

T_d

((God appointed in the old law, and commanded) a lamb of one year to be taken of every family, ...))

Fig. 78

The pure A-scale seldom contains a verb exclusively expressing Appearance (or Existence), as is the case in Fig. 79:

... on wifa bearnum naes nan maera mann þonne Iohannes se Fulluhtere.

T_d

$T_{r(p)}$

R_p

(A.36.30)

((... among the children of women there was no greater man than John the Baptist.))

Fig. 79

In most cases the verb expresses the appearance of a new phenomenon by introducing this phenomenon by means of its quality at the very moment of introduction. Though the phenomenon is in fact a quality bearer, it is not presented as such, but – through the mediation of the newly appearing quality – is introduced onto the scene as Specification:

(Hu mihte beon mare gecyænys be Criste þonne ðær gedon waes?
 þær stod se Sunu on ðære menniscnysse,)

and se Faeder clypode of heofonum,
 R_p Tr_p/Tr T_d

and se Halga Gast nider astah to Criste. (A.42.17)
 R_p Tr_p/Tr T_d

((How could there be a greater testimony of Christ than was there given? There stood the Son in human nature,) and the Father cried from heaven, and the Holy Ghost descended to Christ.))

Fig. 80

The exact statistical data concerning clauses with adverbial diathemes are shown in Fig. 81.

scale	A/Q = Tr	Q = R _p	total	%
augm. Q-scale	38	21	59	67.8
A/Q-scale	10	1	11	12.6
pure A-scale	9	-	9	10.3
augm. A-scale	8	-	8	9.2
total	65	22	87	99.9
%	74.7	25.3	100.0	

Fig. 81

As was the case with subject-object diathemes, the augmented Q-scale clauses containing adverbial diathemes make favourable conditions for Quality becoming rheme proper in the absence of Specification. In principle, this situation cannot arise with the A-scale, because it is impossible to introduce a new phenomenon onto the scene without making it part of the clause. (The combined word-gesture speech is not taken into account.) One occurrence of Quality as rheme proper in the A/Q-scale is due to the possibility of regarding the scale as Q-scale.

2.3.7.3 Diathemes in general

It may be interesting to know what the proportion of the Q-scales and the A-scales is, for all the clauses containing diathemes. The exact proportion will depend very much on where we draw the line between the Q-scales and the A-scales, as is shown in Fig. 82. In any case, Q-scale sentences represent the vast majority of cases, while A-scales range approximately from 5 to 12 %.

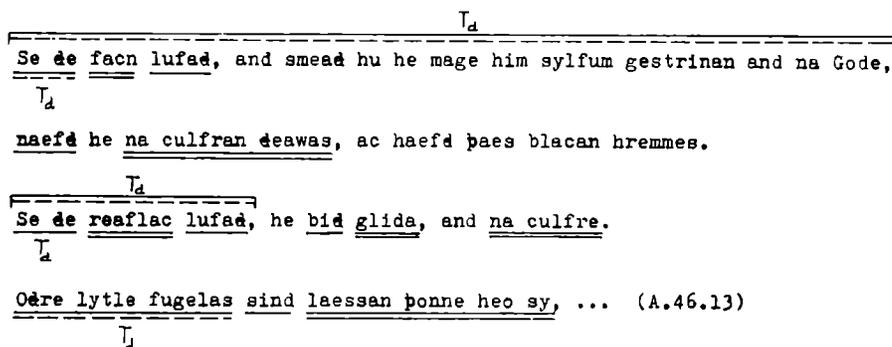
scale	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%
Q-scale	289	88.1	289	88.1	300	91.5	311	94.8
Q/A-scale	11	3.4						
A/Q-scale	11	3.4	39	11.9	28	8.5	17	5.2
A-scale	17	5.2						
total	328	100.0	328	100.0	328	100.0	328	100.0

Fig. 82

It is worth mentioning that the semantic analysis of clauses containing diathemes reveals the tendency of *ponne* and *ḍa*, functioning as conjuncts, to accompany diathemes. Owing to both their well-established character (the expected temporal succession) and their rather vague notional content, they provide the background against which some other thematic element appears in the foreground (in the centre of the scene).

Out of eight occurrences of *ponne*, seven were in clauses containing diathemes. Special mention should be made of three occurrences of *ponne*, which accompanies two alternating pronominal diathemes (both of them *he*, but referring to different persons) discussed in 2.3.3.1, Fig. 42. Out of 26 occurrences of *þa* (as an adverb), 24 accompanied diathemes, one was an adverbial diatheme itself, and only one instance was found in a clause without the diatheme. Both *ponne* and *þa* seem to tend to perform the role of grammatical particles signalling the presence of the diatheme if there is some danger of its "misinterpretation".

Another interesting tendency seems to be that clauses representing a certain type of Firbasian scale group together. They frequently go in twos or threes or form even larger groups. The passage in Fig. 83 contains five clauses with diathemes, all of them representing the pure Q-scale (the second occurrence of the "diatheme" element in the same clause as theme proper with the same syntactic function does not create the augmented Q-scale).



((He who loves quile, and devises how he may gain for himself and not for God, has not the qualities of the dove, but those of the black raven. He who loves rapine is a kite, and not a dove. There are other little birds less than it, ...))

Fig. 83

Another frequent instance of a Q-scale is that of type (ii), containing theme proper as the other Scene-element. Fig. 84 shows a sequence of five clauses representing this type of Q-scale.

The frequent type of augmented Q-scale with the adverbial diatheme makes a cluster in the passage shown in Fig. 85, with only one clause representing a related Q-scale with a subject-object diatheme. (For the analysis of these clauses see also 2.4.1.3.)

The last clause in Fig. 85 instantiates the case in which Quality is not (further) specified and becomes rheme proper.

pas word he clypode be Criste.

T_d

fordi pe Cristes fulluht dwehd pone man aegder ge utan ge innan

T_d

paet waeter _____ widutan, and se Halge Gast _____ widinnan.

T_d

(Tr_p) (T_p)

T_d

(Tr_p) (T_p)

Iohannes fulluht dwoh pone mannan widutan, and nan ding widinnan, ...

T_d

(A.38.19)

((These words he cried of Christ, because Christ's baptism washes the man both without and within: the water without, and the Holy Ghost within. John's baptism washed the man without, and not within, ...))

Fig. 84

... forðan pe on disum daege weard Crist mancynne geswutelod,

T_d

Tr_p

T_p

R_p

Tr

aerest _____ ðam prym cunegum, þe him lac brohton,

T_d

(Tr_p)

(T_p)

R_p

and eft gewislicor _____ dada he on dyssum daege gefullod waes.

T_d

(T_d)

(Tr_p) (T_p)

T_p

T_d

R_p

Tr_p

(A.36.20)

((... because on this day Christ was manifested to mankind, first to the three kings, who brought him gifts, and again, more especially, when he on this day was baptized.))

Fig. 85

A cluster of A-scales can be exemplified by the sequence of clauses in Fig. 86 (cf. 2.3.7.2, Fig. 80).

paer stod se Sunu on ðaere menniscnysse,
 T_p T_{r_p}/T_r R_p T_d

and se Faeder clypode of heofonum,
 R_p T_{r_p}/T_r T_d

and se Halga Gast nider astah to Criste.
 R_p T_{r_p}/T_r T_d

(A.42.16)

((There stood the Son in human nature,
 and the Father cried from heaven,
 and the Holy Ghost descended to Christ.))

Fig. 86

Beside the tendency to group or form clusters, the separate types of the Firbasian scales seem to appear in certain sequences more often than in others. This and related phenomena, however, will be dealt with in section 2.4.7, which will concentrate on the Firbasian scales in progress.

2.4 CONTEXT

The concept of context is closely related to that of scene. If we refer to context, we in fact refer to scene in operation, to what might be called scene dynamics. In order to assess the statistical and other data obtained in the course of the contextual analysis, we shall have to devote some space to the concept of scene.

2.4.1 CONTEXT AND SCENE

2.4.1.1 "Frozen" scenes

When dealing with the Firbasian scales in 2.3.7, 2.3.7.1–3, we divided each clause into two parts, the one representing Scene and the other representing the appearance of a new quality (and specification) of this Scene. Scene in this narrow sense will be called the narrow scene of one clause and – for the time being – will be constituted by the thematic elements of that clause.

If we take into account that the appearing phenomenon or a new quality with its specification are introduced onto the narrow scene, they must – after the introduction – become part of the scene. This scene, however, is not identical with the narrow scene: it is broader and is in fact constituted by all the thematic and the non-thematic elements of the particular clause; it is the broad scene of one clause, which is just being communicated about, and for this reason it may be also called the communicated scene (Firbas' term, personal communication).

The formation of both the narrow and the broad scene of one clause (communicated scene) is a dynamic phenomenon, because the evaluation of elements as thematic and non-thematic is based on the ever-changing syntactic, semantic and contextual conditions. In order to describe the

general character of these changes, we need to segment their continual flow, we need — as it were — to “freeze” it at equally distant points. Since the clause seems to be such a suitable point, we shall “freeze” the development of discourse at each clause and deal with both the narrow and the communicated scenes of the separate clauses as if they were not in the process of formation but in an accomplished state. Hence the narrow scene of one clause (constituted by all the thematic elements of that clause) is in fact a “frozen scene” characterizing the complex flow of thematic elements within the text at a given moment. The same can be said about the broad scene of one clause (the communicated scene).

As will be shown in the following subsection, the “frozen” scenes representing the static aspect of the respective scenes, or scene statics, are necessary concepts for examining the subsequent changes of the scenes or — in other words — scene dynamics.

2.4.1.2 Scene dynamics

The narrow scenes and the communicated scenes of the subsequent clauses do not remain the same within the text, but display two basic kinds of change: they change quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative change consists in the changing number of elements in the subsequent scenes, and the qualitative change is the reflection of the fact that certain elements within the scene are new arrivals, while some other elements are taken over from the preceding scenes (of the same kind). The qualitative aspect of scene dynamics also includes the characteristics of the scene members from the viewpoint of both their present and their preceding functions as thematic or non-thematic elements.

As we are primarily interested in the analysis of the immediate verbal context, which is closely connected with the sequences of thematic elements in subsequent clauses, we shall briefly touch upon the concept of narrow scene (constituted by these elements) in order to show what we understand under the term narrow-scene dynamics. (Otherwise, the narrow scene will be dealt with in detail in 2.4.6.1.)

2.4.1.3 The narrow scene

For the time being, the narrow scene of a clause is considered to consist of the thematic elements of that clause. Fig. 87a shows the FSP-analysis of the first sentence of the homily. Fig. 87b shows the corresponding narrow scenes of the respective clauses. Horizontally, the elements are arranged according to the membership to the narrow scenes, vertically, according to their FSP-function.

Standing $T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow R_p, Tr$
opposition

Bes daeg is gehaten on bocum Swutelung-daeg, (A.36.20)
 T_d Tr_p Tr $T_{(d)}$ R_p

$T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow R_p$

fordan þe on ðisum daege weard Crist mancynne geswutelod,

$T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow Tr/R_p$

aerest ðan þrym cynegum, þe him lac brohton,
 T_d (Tr_p) (Tr_p) (Tr) R_p T_d Tr_p R_f Tr_p/Tr

$T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow (Tr) R_p$

and eft gewislicor dada he on dyssum daege gefullod waes.
 T_d $T_{(d)}$ (Tr_p) (Tr_p) (Tr) Tr_p T_d R_p Tr_p

$T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow (Tr) R_p$

$T_d \rightarrow \leftarrow R_p$

((This day is called in books Manifestation-day, because on this day Christ was manifested to mankind, first to the three kings, who brought him gifts, and again, more especially, when he on this day was baptized.))

Fig. 87a

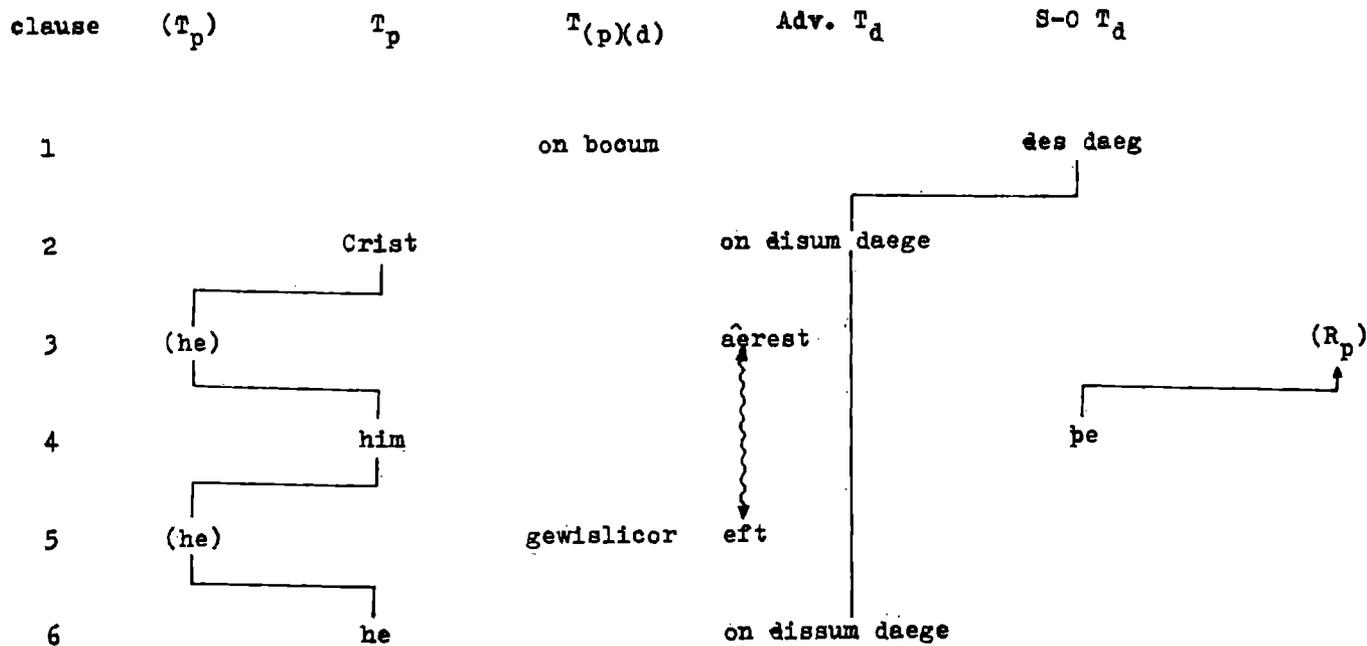


Fig. 87b

From the quantitative point of view, the separate scenes in Fig. 87b do not differ much (one or two explicitly expressed elements, two or three if the ellipted themes proper are counted). From the qualitative point of view, we can see that there are seven semantically different items entering the narrow scenes in the following way: Scene 1 – two new arrivals; Scenes 2, 3, 4 – one new arrival; Scene 5 – two; Scene 6 – none. What we are now interested in is whether these new arrivals came “out of the blue”, or whether they have some rhematic predecessors, whether they remain within the narrow scenes or leave them, whether they perform the same FSP-roles or change the roles, etc.

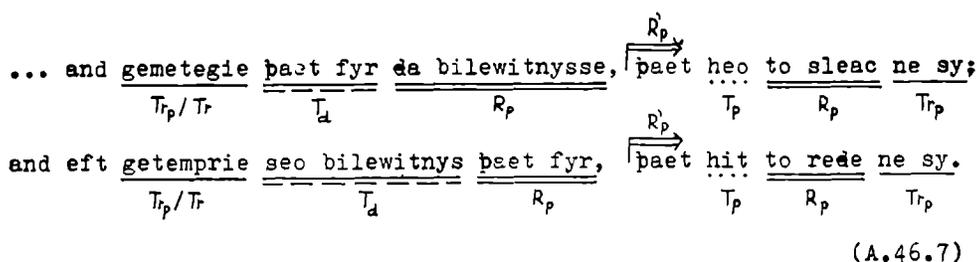
We can see in Fig. 87b that *Crist* appeared without any semantic predecessor in the role of theme proper, and remained within the following four narrow scenes alternately as ellipted and explicit theme proper. *Des dæg* appeared directly as diatheme and remained as such in Scenes 2 and 6. Except for Scene 1, *Crist* (as theme proper) stays in the background of the narrow scenes. *Des dæg* and *on ðisum dæge* stands in the centre of Scenes 1, 2 and 6, but in Scenes 3, 4 and 5, the central role is played by “new arrivals” – *ærest*, *þe* and *eft*, respectively. *Ærest* and *eft* stand in mild contrast to each other (see 2.4.4.9). *þe* is the only element within these scenes that has a non-thematic predecessor (*ðam þrym cynegum*). The elements *on bocum* and *gewislicor* are without predecessors and without successors; they are prevented from playing the role of diathemes by other diathematic elements (*ðes dæg* and *eft*, respectively). (For more comment on the element *on bocum*, see 2.4.3.1.) It is not without interest that a kind of standing opposition between the notion of *ðes dæg* and that of *Swutelung* (appearing in the non-thematic sphere of the separate clauses) contributes to keeping *ðes dæg*, *on ðisum dæge*, *ærest*, and *eft* as diathemes in the centre of the narrow scenes.

As is to be shown in the following subsections, the above qualitative aspect of the narrow scenes will be described in terms of the statistical results concerning the separate thematic elements in their relations within and to the narrow scene.

The narrow scenes in Fig. 87b are comparatively stable. There are minimum changes in their FSP-roles; only *Crist* oscillates between the explicit and the ellipted theme proper, being slightly foregrounded and backgrounded within the background of the scenes. Sometimes the oscillation within the subsequent narrow scenes is more perceptible. It is quite common for diathemes to become themes proper and – though less frequently – for themes proper to become diathemes. Such changes within the narrow scenes (putting the elements from the centre to the background of the scenes and vice versa) will be called internal oscillations of the narrow scenes.

Sometimes, however, the thematic elements leave the narrow scene to become non-thematic elements in the following clause (for such inten-

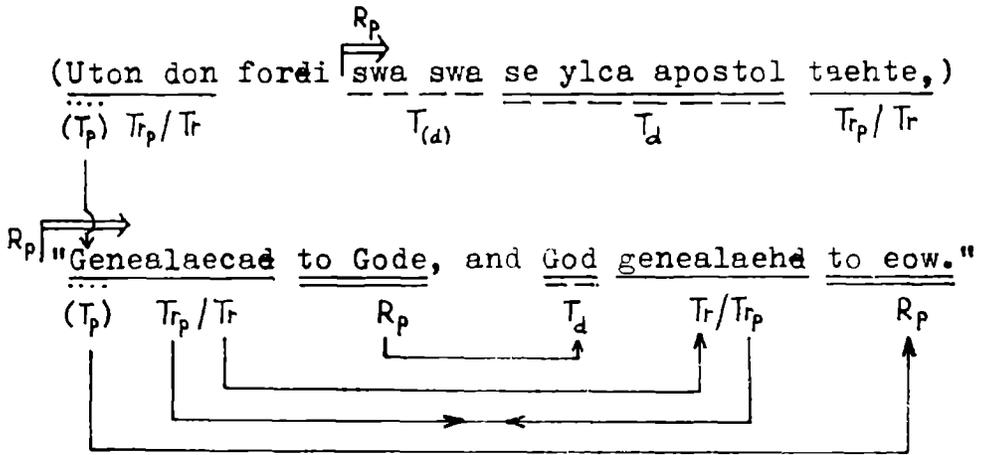
sifications see 2.4.4.6) and then they either return to the narrow scene of the next clause or they disappear altogether. Such changes exceeding the scope of the narrow scene will be called external oscillations of the narrow scenes. The example in Fig. 88 will illustrate. (Cf. the sequence *ðā bilewitnysse – heo – seo bilewitnys*, representing the non-thematic predecessor to a theme proper which functions later as a diatheme. Similarly, *þæt fyr – þæt fyr – hit*, reflecting the external oscillation diatheme – rheme proper – theme proper.)



((... and let the fire regulate the meekness, that it be not too slack; and again let the meekness temper the fire, that it be not too fierce.))

Fig. 88

A special case of the external oscillation of the narrow scenes is the one in which two neighbouring clauses completely exchange their "scenes" and "non-scenes", i.e. they make the originally thematic elements non-thematic and the originally non-thematic elements thematic. Fig. 89 exemplifies such a special case.



(A.52.26)

((Let us do, therefore, as the same apostle taught,) "Draw near unto God, and God will draw near unto you."))

Fig. 89

As was said above, this subsection is intended to offer some introductory remarks on the narrow scene dynamics. A detailed description of the progression of the separate narrow scenes can be found in subsection 2.4.6.1.

2.4.2 INSTANCE LEVELS

The concept of instance levels is based on the concept of context. More specifically, it is defined by the proportion of context dependent to context independent elements of the clause (for more detail see 1.1.3 and references therein). In this respect it is closely related to the concept of narrow scene and its oscillations. Since such an approach may clarify some aspects of the present contextual analysis, we shall briefly characterize the instance levels in terms of the oscillations of the narrow scene.

2.4.2.1 The basic level

Genuinely, the clause at the basic level is one in which all the elements are context independent. But language is not used in a vacuum and even the very opening clause of a text is more or less closely connected with the situation in which it is, or is expected to be, used. Since it is not specified linguistically, the presupposed situation or — in a sense — broad scene is rather fuzzy and the question of context independence becomes a matter of degree.

From the viewpoint of the narrow scene, however, any opening clause in the text may be regarded as context independent, because there is no narrow scene preceding it, and the clause creates in fact the first narrow scene of the (possible) sequence. As it is the first narrow scene, there can be no oscillation: it only creates favourable conditions for the oscillation to start. In the present analysis, the opening clauses will be regarded as basic level clauses and treated as such. It remains to be said what the opening clause is. Apparently, this depends on what we regard as a unit of text. Basically, we shall keep to Halliday's (1976) conception, according to which the text unit in our case would most probably be the full extent of the examined homily. Originally, for technical reasons, it was decided to treat each paragraph as the starting point of the thematic progression, statistically examined within the contextual analysis. The results of the analysis have shown that not only the first clause of the homily but also the opening clauses of the paragraphs display a tendency to "disregard" the preceding broad (and narrow) scenes and to create their narrow scenes in reliance on grammatical and — even more specifically — semantic means of their own. For this reason all the opening clauses of the separate paragraphs (18 in all) are treated here as clauses of the basic instance level.

2.4.2.2 Ordinary levels

Clauses at ordinary levels contain some context dependent elements. Being part of the text, all the non-opening clauses display the property of cohesion, all of them contain thematic elements which in some way or other are semantically related, and all of them are regarded as ordinary level clauses. The examination of ordinary level clauses is by far the major part of the present contextual analysis (cf. 2.4.4 – 2.4.6.2).

2.4.2.3 The second instance level

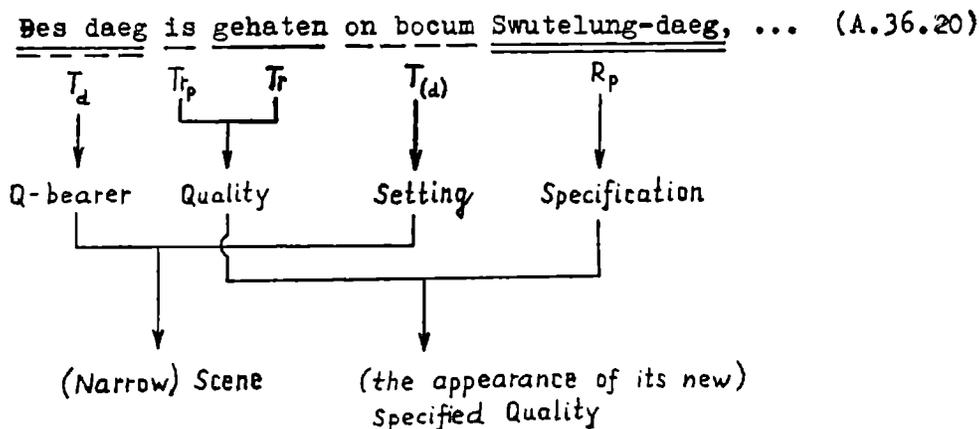
Second instance clauses are those which contain one non-thematic element (rheme proper) standing in sharp, ad-hoc contrast, while all the other elements indiscriminately represent an extensive theme. Again, there is no sharp dividing line between ordinary levels and the second instance level, but for the purpose of the present analysis the possibly transitional cases have been subsumed under the ordinary instance levels.

From the point of view of the narrow scene, the second instance represents the case in which the oscillation reaches its utmost point (the biggest amplitude) in the direction of broadening the narrow scene and then suddenly stops. The narrow scene may be conceived of as extended and frozen, close to absolute zero, superconductive. Any element that moves can be seen against the background of the immovable scene, any single component part of an element that makes a move becomes the phenomenon appearing on the scene and hence rheme proper. This also enables the “auxiliary” elements to appear on the scene and to be actually “seen”. (This can be compared with the situation in which the acting is stopped for some technical failure and a propman comes onto the scene to repair it, or there is a hitch in the play: all the actors are out and the only moving phenomenon on the scene is the spot of light of a spotlight. Note that occurrences of second instance cases in speech are often caused by “technical” defects – misunderstanding, the correction of mistakes.) There are no genuine second instance clauses in the analyzed text.

2.4.3 OPENING CLAUSES

Although there is only one genuine opening clause in the analyzed sermon, some of the features of the first clauses of the paragraphs seem to bring them closer to opening clauses than to those found in the rest of the text, and it is for this reason that these clauses are all treated as basic instance clauses and dealt with in a separate section before the contextual

ties are systematically examined (cf. 2.4.2.1). There are 18 paragraphs and, therefore, 18 opening clauses in the examined text, the one in the first paragraph being of special interest.



((This day is called in books Manifestation-day, ...))

Fig. 90

2.4.3.1 The first opening clause

Fig. 90 shows the first opening clause. Here all the elements are regarded as context independent (basic instance level) and the functions are distributed according to the roles played by separate elements in the Firbasian (merged) scale. As a local setting (circumstantial indication), *on bocum* is lowest in the scale and, therefore, in the background of the (just created) narrow scene. There is no reason why it should be interpreted as Specification. *Des daeg* – as Q-bearer – is higher in the scale and stands in the centre of the narrow scene. The remaining elements representing Quality and Specification are still higher in the scale and perform the roles of transitional elements and rheme proper, respectively. Thus the opening clause has created the first narrow scene of the possible se-

quence of further narrow scenes, irrespective of the assumed situational context, which might be – in this case – conceived of as the situation in the church just before the sermon begins.

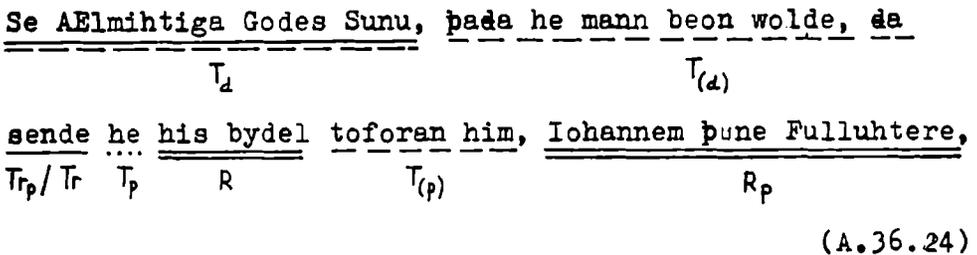
What happens if the general situation is taken into account and has a bearing on the contextual dependence or independence of the elements? Without extensive description it seems clear that for people coming to church on the 6th of January, that day is part of the broad scene; it may well be expected to be preached upon, and hence to be – from the viewpoint of the situation – context dependent. On the other hand, the element *on bocum* does not necessarily form part of the situation and has to be regarded as either context independent or – at least – less dependent than *ðes dæg*. Then *ðes dæg* as context dependent should appear lower in the scale than *on bocum*, and the latter should be interpreted as either diatheme or one of the rhematic elements of the clause. It is worth mentioning that if “the book” became part of the situation by being shown to people during the opening clause (e.g. if the preacher waved it in his hand), the effect would appear to be quite the reverse. “Book” would be foregrounded, the centre of the scene, or even made the focus of the message as rheme proper. Although there are no tonemic marks in the text (nor any videorecording to give us additional guidance), the clauses following the opening clause show quite unambiguously what the preacher’s intention at the moment of utterance really was: he consistently develops the opposition of *ðes dæg* as diatheme and different aspects of *Swutelung* as rheme proper. Having provided the background against which *ðes dæg* can be seen as the centre of the scene, the element *on bocum* disappears altogether (cf. the analysis of this example in 2.4.1.3, Fig. 87b): ... *forðan þe on ðisum dæge wearð Crist mancynne geswutelod, ærest ðam prym cynegum, þe him lac brohton, and eft gewislicor ðaða he on ðyssum dæge gefullod wæs.* (A.36.20).

Although it is not a common phenomenon, the interpretation (especially in written language) of the opening clause through the mediation of the assumed situation may appear to be spurious. With the opening clause, it is not the (assumed) scene that shapes the clause, but rather the clause that shapes the scene. It does so by employing grammatical and semantic means of its own, with the external contextual means being considerably suppressed. This is not to say that opening clauses do not shape their narrow scenes in accordance with the conditions of situational context at hand. In fact, they frequently do so, and this is what blurs their specific function, but – contrary to ordinary instance clauses where the immediate verbal context is superior to the grammatico-semantic means – in opening clauses (basic instance clauses) it is the semantico-grammatical structure that displays a strong tendency to be superior to (the assumed) context. The analysis of the opening clauses of the remaining paragraphs brings further evidence in support of this idea.

2.4.3.2 The other opening clauses

The tendency to shape the narrow scene independently of what has come before is corroborated by the fact that the opening sentences of the paragraphs exploit both semantic and grammatical means to make their diathemes clearly distinct from themes proper and other thematic elements, which – in turn – provide a suitable background for the foregrounding of the former.

The continuation of the first opening clause as adduced in 2.4.3.1 represents the whole of the first paragraph, in which "Christ" is already well-established on the scene, performing the role of theme proper. In the opening clause of the second paragraph, he is not referred to by the personal pronoun, but is foregrounded by both syntactic and lexico-semantic means with the other circumstantial elements providing the scenic background. In this way the opening sentence quite unambiguously shapes its scene with hardly any dependence on the previous narrow scenes.



((The Almighty Son of God, when he would be man, sent his proclaimer before him, John the Baptist,))

Fig. 91

The same can, *mutatis mutandis*, be said about the three opening clauses in Figures 92, 93, and 94.

Although the elements *bilewitnys* and *sleac* alternately represent the scene in the “preceding” paragraph, the opening clause in Fig. 95 shapes quite unambiguously its own narrow scene.

Sume men sind geduhte bilewite, ac hi sind sleace:...

T_d T_{rp} Tr R_p (A.46.10)

((Some men are thought meek, but they are slack:...))

Fig. 95

The same can be said about the opening clause in Fig. 96.

Sume lareowas sindon betteran ainne sume, ... (A.48.16)

T_d T_{rp} R_p

((Some teachers are better than others, ...))

Fig. 96

Out of 17 opening clauses (with the exclusion of the first), there is only one instance in which the scenic element (diatheme) ties with the whole content of the preceding paragraph:

We habbað full swutele bysne pises dinges. (A.50.26)

T_p Tr R_p T_d

((We have a very manifest example of this thing.))

Fig. 97

If the 17 opening clauses displayed the same contextual features as ordinary-instance clauses within the paragraphs, they should — at least approximately — follow the same statistical relations. And it is in this respect

that they reveal a tendency to deviate. It is typical of clauses representing the A-scale that they do not need any preceding scene. In shaping the narrow scene by their own semantic means, they are well suited to function as opening sentences of a comparatively self-contained passage of text. In general, of the total of 328 clauses containing diathemes, only 17 (5.2 %) represent the A-scale. With the opening clauses, the percentage is much higher (22.2 %) because there are four occurrences of the A-scale out of the total of 18 clauses:

Her sind hraedlice gesaede micelo Godes wundra, (A.40.6)
 T_d T_r $T_{(p)}$ T_r R_p

(and we begofiad þæt we wisra lareowa trahtunga be disum
 ðingum understandan.)

((Here great wonders of God are quickly said, (and it behoves us to understand the commentaries of wise instructors concerning these things.)))

þær com ða stemn þes Faeder of heofonum, (A.42.12)
 T_p T_r/Tr [T_d] R_p T_d

(ðus cwedende, "Þes is min leofa Sunu, ðe me wel licad.")

((There came then the Father's voice from heaven, (thus saying, "This is my beloved Son, who well pleaseth me.)))

Iu waeron some gedwolmen þe cwaedon þæt Iohannes fulluht ...
 T_d T_r R_p (A.46.23)

((Formerly there were some heretics who said, that John's baptism ...))

Heofonas waeron geopenode bufon Criste, daða he gefullod waes,
 R_p T_{r_p} T_r T_p T_d
 (and him to com se Halga Gast.) (A.42.5)

((The heavens were opened above Christ, when he was baptized,
 (and the Holy Ghost came to him.)))

Fig. 98

In Old English, the grammatical (word-order) necessity of putting the appearing phenomenon functioning as subject in the first place in the clause is far less pronounced than it is in Modern English, as may be seen from the following example and its Modern English translation (this is not an opening clause!):

Old English: *paða he gefullod wæs, þa wearð seo heofon geopenod bufon his heafde, ...* (A.40.1)

Modern English: *When he had been baptized, the heaven was opened above his head, ...* (A.41.1)

The above clause occurs in the middle of the paragraph. If it is compared with the last example of the opening clause representing the A-scale in Fig. 98, it becomes clear that the Appearing Phenomenon functioning as rheme proper in the first position renders the clause emotive or — more generally — marked.

It is hardly a coincidence that of the 18 opening clauses, four (22.2 %) are emotive (marked) while of the total of 450 clauses in the sermon there are only 21 (4.7 %) clauses that may be interpreted in this way.

The other three examples of the emotive opening clauses are adduced in Fig. 99.

Lytel waes se Halga Gast geduht, ... (A.42.33)
 R_p T_{r_p} T_d T_r

((Little did the Holy Ghost seem, ...)) (A.43.32)
 R_p T_{r_p} T_d T_r

On twam hiwum waes se Halga Gast aeteowed,

R T_{rp} T_d T_r

on culfran and on fyres, ... (A.44.34)

R_p

((In two forms the Holy Ghost appeared,

R T_d T_{rp}/T_r

in a dove's and in that of fire, ...)) (A.45.33)

R_p

preo healice ding gesette God mannum to claensunge:... (A.48.26)

R_p T_{rp}/T_r T_d T_p T_(d)

((Three principal things God has appointed to men for purification:))

R_p T_d T_{rp} T_r T_p T_(d) (A.49.26)

Fig. 99

It is interesting to compare the marked opening clauses in Fig. 99 with their Modern English counterparts, which also appear to be marked, though not through the occurrence of the rhematic element in the initial position (as has been clearly shown by Firbas 1964), but through the deviation from the accepted grammatical standard.

As has been pointed out, the inversion in Old English does not necessarily make the respective clause marked; it is used to signal quite unambiguously what the scene and the "non-scene" should be, without the necessity of having recourse to the preceding context. This can be exemplified by the two opening clauses in Fig. 100.

as context dependent and hence representing the scene, the only “non-scenic” elements would be *com* as transition (Quality) and *hwī* as rheme proper (Specification). If, however, the opening clause is interpreted as context independent, disregarding the preceding broad scene, matters assume another aspect.

According to the Firbasian scale (concerning the context independent elements), *se Halga Gast* is Phenomenon introduced onto the scene through the mediation of one of the potentially scenic elements *ofer đam apostolon* or *on fyres hīwe*, and becoming immediately Q-bearer in respect to *com* (Quality) and one of the elements aspiring to the role of Specification (*on fyres hīwe* and *ofer đam apostolon*). This undoubtedly sets *se Halga Gast* in the centre of the narrow scene as diatheme. As for the two potential scenic elements aspiring at the same time to the role of Specification, the semantic priority as mentioned in 2.3.3.2 seems to be the decisive factor in solving the problem. The local indication as a less dynamic element recedes into the background of the narrow scene, while the “manner”-indication as a more dynamic element becomes — under the grammatical and semantic circumstances — the specification of the quality *com* and consequently, rheme proper of the clause. As in most questions, the interrogative element *hwī* constitutes a rhematic unit called the speaker’s rheme. (For further explanation of this term, see Firbas 1976.48.) That the latter interpretation, based not on the preceding “broad scene” but on the grammatico-semantic properties of the clause alone, is correct can be clearly seen if this interpretation is compared with that of the following interrogative clause representing — in fact — the other part of the question:

Hwī com se Halga Gast da on fyres hīwe ofer dam apostolon,

R_s T_p/Tr T_d $[T_{(d)}]$ R_p $T_{(d)}$

and ofer Criste on his fulluhte on culfran gelicnysse?

T_d $T_{(p)}$ R_p

(A.44.15)

((Why came the Holy Ghost then in form of fire over the apostles, and over Christ at his baptism in likeness of a dove?))

Fig. 101

The examination of the above opening clauses has shown that from the viewpoint of contextual analysis they tend to behave as context independent (basic instance level), thus disregarding the preceding "broad scenes" and preferably shaping their narrow scenes through the mediation of grammatico-semantic means of their own.

2.4.4 THEMATIC PROGRESSION

Thematic progression has been briefly dealt with in 1.3. It might be conceived of as a concept enabling us to deal with the "structural" text cohesion. Since the term cohesion has already been introduced by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as a non-structural concept (and there are good reasons for their having done so), we shall speak here about thematic progression without using the term cohesion, but having always in mind the structural ties which represent one of the factors contributing to text formation. The examination of thematic progression cannot be strictly restricted to thematic elements, because these elements have to be considered from the viewpoint of what precedes and what follows, and that need not always be thematic. (For the concept of rhematic progression, see 2.4.5.)

Thematic progression constitutes the basis of the present contextual analysis. The examined text has been "transcribed" as a contextual flow-diagram, showing the sequence of all the elements according to their function in the respective clauses (semi-clauses) with special regard to thematic elements. The arrangement of columns (see p. 198) is the following:

The first column contains numbers of paragraphs and clause numbers. (The latter are to be regarded as a purely technical matter and the overt relation between 29 and 29a has no linguistic significance whatsoever.) The next column records the presence of conjunctions and the presence of some grammatico-semantic features which might possibly be relevant to the contextual analysis.

To the right of the double line are ellipted themes proper, further to the right (behind the broken line) non-ellipted themes proper, between the next two full lines the "oriented" themes, the theme-proper oriented themes on the left and the diatheme oriented themes on the right. The broad "diatheme column" is divided by a broken line into two halves: the left contains adverbial diathemes, the right subject-object diathemes. Between diathemes and non-thematic elements is no-man's-land, used for the indication of whole clauses (exceptionally, projected diathemes) functioning as one communicative unit within the distributional field of some other clause (loose themes and rhemes are not recorded). The "non-thematic columns" contain in turn the following elements: ellipted transitions proper, transitions proper, transitions (to the left of the column), rhemes (to the right), and rhemes proper.

The elements that are semantically closely related are connected with different types of line (these connecting lines should not be confused with those marking the columns): full connecting lines concern thematic elements, broken lines non-thematic elements if not connected with the above thematic elements, wavy lines denote mild contrasts and dotted lines standing oppositions (the latter two are only marked if necessary.) (Cf. Legend, p. 204.)

As the columns (and sub-columns) are ordered from left to right according to the rising degree of communicative dynamism of the various elements, the connecting line cutting the field boundary (boundaries) to the left denotes that the particular element is (partly) dedynamized, while those cutting the boundary (boundaries) to the right signal dynamic intensification. Since the focus of our present interest is scenic elements in general and diathemes in particular, the non-thematic elements (transitional and rhematic) have been analyzed from the viewpoint of their mutual ties if they had any connection with the scenic elements and/or if their mutual relations had special bearing on what was going on in the thematic sphere. (For this, see 2.4.5.2.) As to the close semantic relationship of elements, it has to be borne in mind that the primary aim of the analysis has not been the non-structural text cohesion (in Halliday and Hasan's sense), and for this reason some elements that display the "non-structural" cohesive relation (e.g. he sent his proclaimer . . .) are not connected with lines, because they denote two different (though related) semantic entities, while some other elements (e.g. "I" and "thou" referring to one and the same person in the dialogue, "thou" and "at thy hands" meaning "by you" in "Consent (ellipted thou) that I be baptized at thy hands . . .") are regarded as closely related, thus constituting part of the "structural" thematic progression. Although the thematic progression in the examined text can easily go across the paragraph boundaries, a separate contextual flow-diagram has been made for each paragraph, partly for the reasons given in 2.4.2.1 and 2.4.3.3 (the opening clauses being treated as basic level clauses), partly for technical reasons. From the viewpoint of thematic progression, all the clauses (450) have been analyzed in the way illustrated by the contextual flow-diagram of paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 adduced in the Appendix.

2.4.4.1 Diathemes and their predecessors

In order to assess the role of diathemes in thematic progression, we have to examine what communicative functions are performed by the semantically identical or closely related elements just before they become diathemes (predecessors to diathemes) and after they have appeared as diathemes (successors).

The predecessors to diathemes may be any of the thematic elements (inclusive of the diatheme itself) and any of the non-thematic elements with the exception of transition proper. In addition to that, diathemes may refer to the content of the whole preceding clause or clauses, and in this compilative function they may also be regarded as diathemes with rhematic predecessors. On the other hand, they need not have any apparent predecessor, thus appearing (within the respective paragraph) for the first time. For statistical purposes, the diathemes have been divided into four principal groups according to whether they have

- (i) no predecessor
- (ii) a less dynamic thematic predecessor (ellipted theme proper, theme proper, theme-proper oriented theme)
- (iii) an equally dynamic thematic predecessor of the diatheme kind (diatheme oriented theme, adverbial diatheme, subject-object diatheme)
- (iv) a more dynamic non-thematic predecessor (transition non-proper, rheme non-proper, rheme proper, (part of) clause(s)).

The occurrence rate of the subject-object and the adverbial diathemes with the above four kinds of predecessor is shown by the graph below:

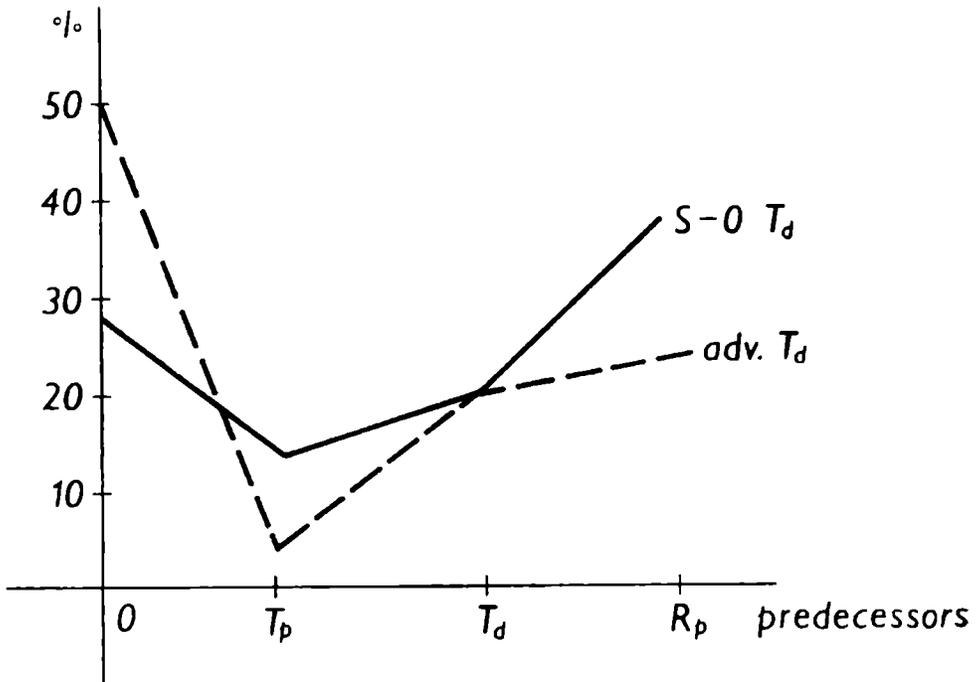


Fig. 102

Of the total of 241 subject-object diathemes, 92 (nearly 40 %) have non-thematic predecessors. If we take into account that there are only two occurrences of transitions and two of rhemes non-proper, we can say that subject-object diathemes display a marked tendency to be preceded by rhemes proper. About 20 % of predecessors are of the diatheme kind, which shows to what degree the diathemes tend to be preserved as centres of the (narrow) scene. The 13 % of themes proper preceding the subject-object diathemes gives us an idea of the extent to which the thematic (background) elements are foregrounded. As foregrounding represents an increase in the degree of communicative dynamism conveyed by the element, we shall speak here of the intensification of theme proper (see 2.4.4.6). Extreme examples of this kind of intensification (foregrounding) are to be found in the case of the subject-object diathemes without predecessors (27.8 %). Both the subject-object and the adverbial diathemes without predecessors are dealt with in 2.4.4.8.

As adverbial diathemes, they display the same general characteristics as subject-object diathemes; what they lose on preceding rhemes, however, they gain on zero predecessors. The rate of preceding diathemes is the same for both kinds. The difference in preceding themes proper shows that subject-object diathemes contribute to the intensification of thematic elements (the foregrounding of well-established elements) more decisively than adverbial diathemes.

The graph in Fig. 103 illustrates the occurrence rate of predecessors to diathemes in general.

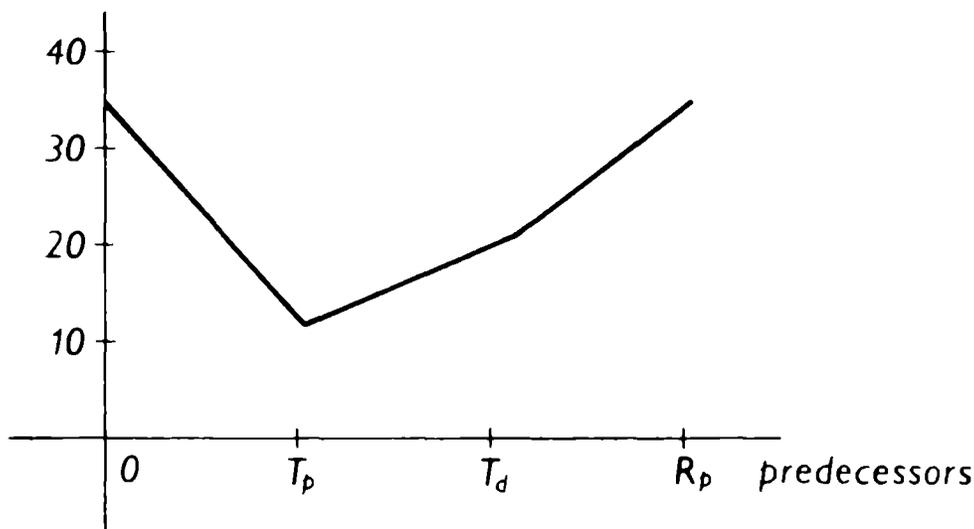


Fig. 103

While the general rate of zero predecessors is greatly influenced by adverbial diathemes, the general rate of rhematic predecessors is in turn due to subject-object diathemes. Nevertheless, it is well worth mentioning that, if seen from a more general viewpoint, the proportion of zero, thematic and non-thematic predecessors to diathemes in general seems to be well-balanced:

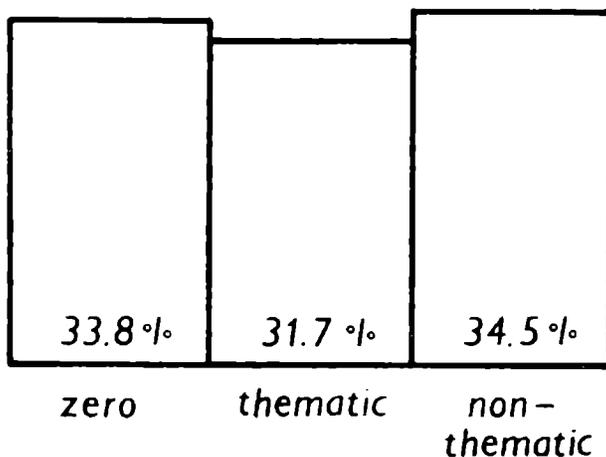


Fig. 104

2.4.4.2 Diathemes and their successors

The occurrence rate of different types of diatheme successors is shown by the graph in Fig. 105.

After having occupied the centre of the narrow scene, both the subject-object and – even more particularly – the adverbial diathemes are often not followed by any successor at all. This aspect of their behaviour will be dealt with in 2.4.4.7 in connection with the features of rheme proper. Of special interest now are the other three types of successor.

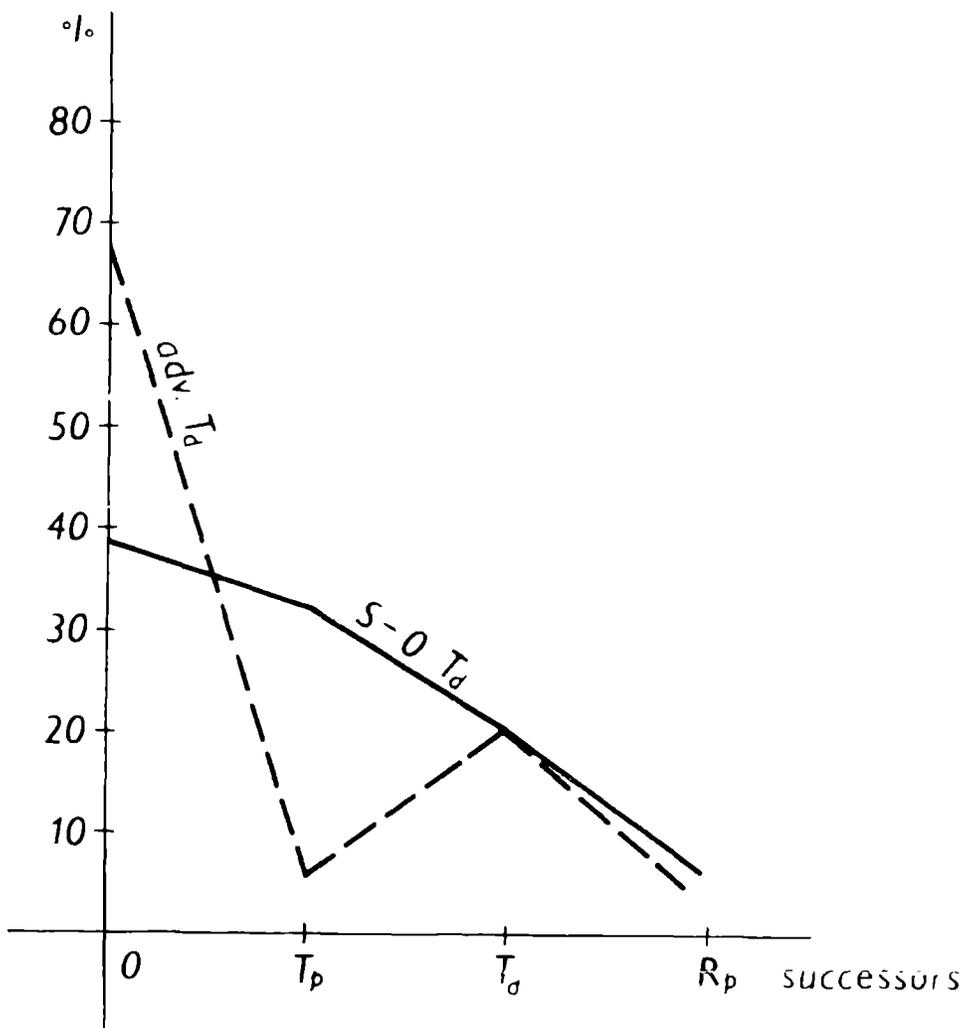


Fig. 105

A comparison of the occurrence rate of themes proper, diathemes and rhemes proper as successors to subject-object diathemes shows the tendency of these diathemes to be either dedynamized (backgrounded within the scene) or — to a lesser extent — preserved as diathemes (kept in the foreground). The low rate of rhemes proper unmistakably testifies to the fact that subject-object diathemes are only exceptionally rhematized. (The reasons for this kind of intensification are discussed in 2.4.4.6.)

The occurrence rates of successors to adverbial diathemes are, in the case of diathemes and rhemes proper, practically the same as those of subject-object diathemes. As to the successive themes proper, the two kinds of diatheme reveal a striking difference. While one-third of the subject-object diathemes are followed by themes proper, thus representing the movement of elements from the foreground to the background of the (narrow) scene, the adverbial diathemes are very rarely succeeded by themes proper and therefore contribute very little to the gradual shift of the (more or less) established elements on the scene; they rather represent a factor that brings about changes within the scene whenever the scene is otherwise comparatively stabilized. The differences between subject-object and adverbial diathemes in this respect are discussed in 2.4.4.3.

The graph in Fig. 106 shows the occurrence rate of the successors to diathemes in general:

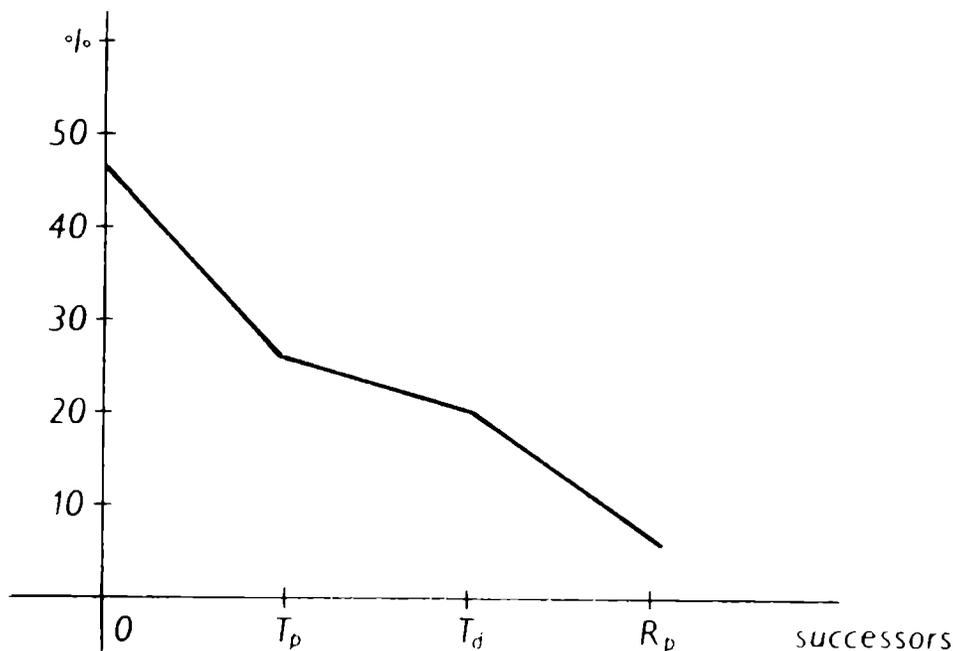


Fig. 106

In spite of the low occurrence rate of themes proper as successors to adverbial diathemes, the general rate of themes proper is kept comparatively high because the subject-object diathemes far outnumber their adverbial counterparts (the total of subject-object diathemes is 241, that of adverbial diathemes 87, cf. 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.2).

Seen again from a more general viewpoint, the proportion of the zero and the thematic successors is well-balanced, while the proportion of non-thematic (rhematic) successors is so small that it testifies to the reluctance of diatheme to be intensified (rhematized).

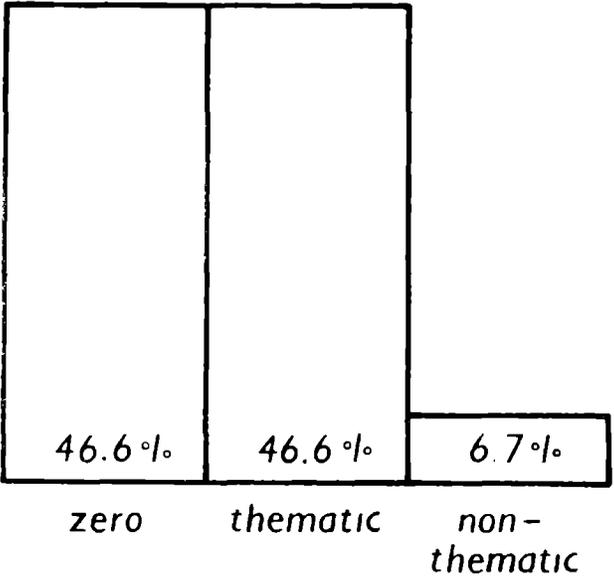


Fig. 107

2.4.4.3 Subject-object and adverbial diathemes

A comparison of the occurrence rates of both the predecessors and the successors to the subject-object diathemes reveals their characteristic features within thematic progression.

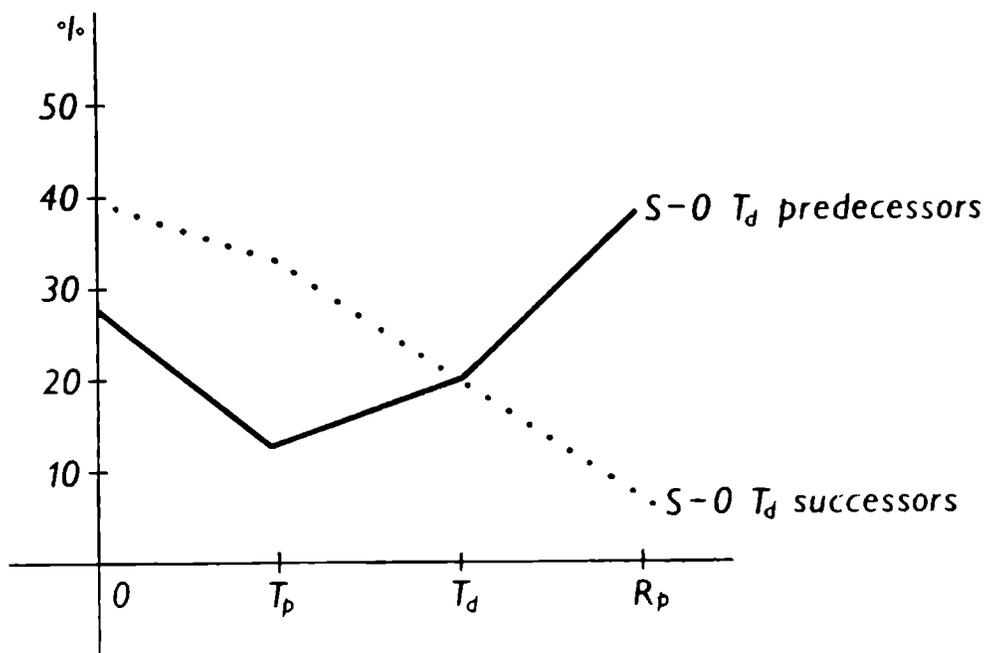


Fig. 108

Leaving apart the zero 'cessors, we see that the most frequent predecessor is rheme proper and the most frequent successor theme proper; conversely, the least frequent predecessor is theme proper and the least frequent successor rheme proper, with diathematic predecessors and successors standing in the middle. This corroborates the conclusions arrived at on the grounds of the semantic analysis: the subject-object diatheme is primarily the mediator between the non-thematic sphere of the preceding clause(s) and the narrow scene (thematic sphere) of the given clause in terms of its ability to assist in establishing the newly appearing qualities and — more specifically — specifications on this narrow scene. They are either kept for some time in the centre of the scene or — more often — shifted to the background.

The comparatively high rates of zero predecessors and zero successors do not necessarily mean that subject-object diathemes tend to stand alone. Rather, the rates may be suggestive of the average number of successions in which these diathemes are the first or the last elements, respectively. (Diathemes with zero predecessors are dealt with in 2.4.4.8, diathemes with zero successors are mentioned also in 2.4.4.7.)

With adverbial diathemes, however, the rates of zero predecessors and zero successors are so high that they become one of the main contextual features of adverbial diathemes:

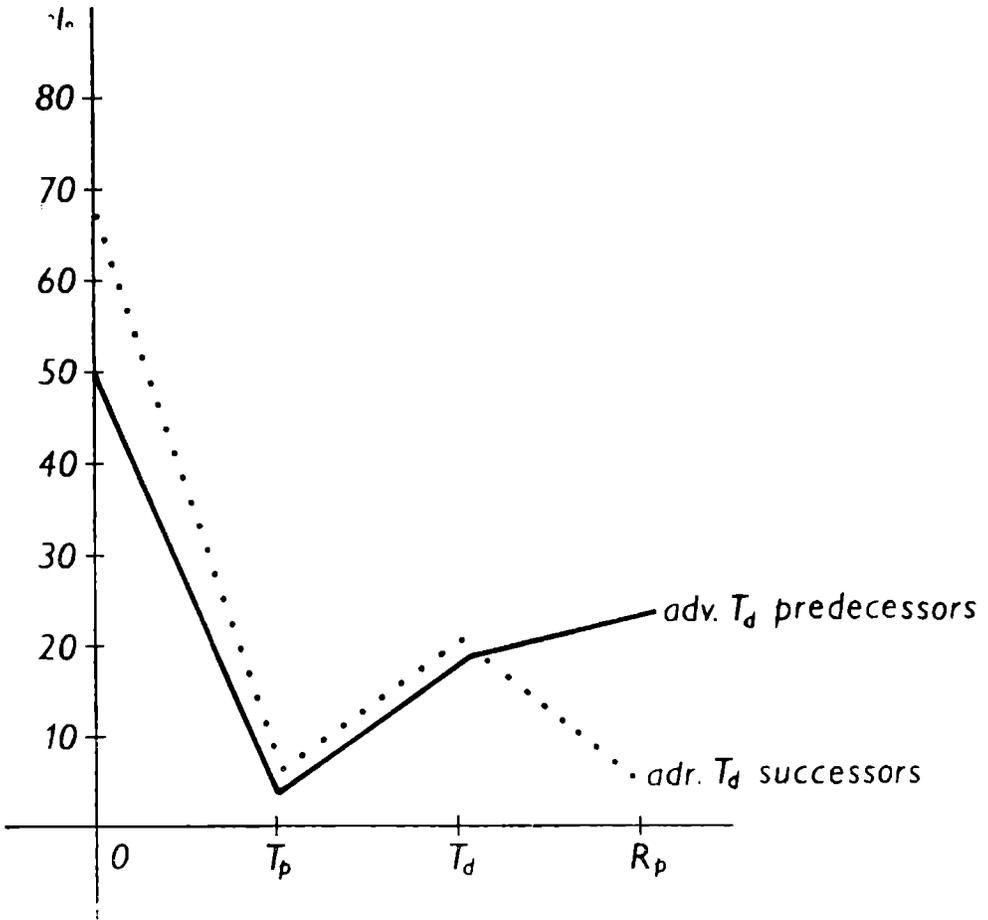


Fig. 109

At first sight it is clear that more often than not the adverbial diathemes in thematic progression stand alone, without closely related elements either preceding or following them. This, however, goes well with their

semantic characteristics: they currently express circumstantial indications concerning the appearance of a new quality and specification on the (broad) scene. Although part of the narrow scene, they express a new aspect of it, but there seems to be no need for this aspect to be first introduced as a quality or a specification. In a way, adverbial diathemes are elements conveying new information within the narrow scene, but at the same time they are meant as introductory (scenic) elements facilitating the appearance of new qualities and specifications on the (broad) scene. Since a particular circumstantial indication tends to introduce only one particular quality and specification, there seems to be no need for the adverbial diatheme to be kept within the narrow scene for a longer time either.

The semantics of adverbial diathemes may well account for the fact that they are unlikely to be either preceded or followed by themes proper. It is interesting, however, that their rate of self-preservation is the same as that of subject-object diathemes. Their reluctance to be intensified is also at the same level as that of subject-object diathemes. The relatively high rate of rhematic predecessors is due to the occurrence of compilative adverbial diathemes (cf. 2.4.4.1) that are closely related to the content of the preceding clause(s) (9.2 % out of the total rate of 24.1 %).

(There seems to be one possible successor to the adverbial diatheme which has not been reckoned with in the present contextual analysis — transition proper. It is possible for circumstantial indications of a diathematic nature to find their continuation within the temporal and modal indications of the following finite verb(s). This possible aspect of the adverbial diatheme, however, would require a more detailed analysis of transitions proper than that attempted here.)

Within the thematic progression, the diathemes, both subject-object and adverbial, perform three principal functions:

- (i) they link the (preceding) non-thematic spheres and the (following) thematic spheres by opening the way for non-thematic elements to enter the narrow scene as thematic elements and become more or less well established in it;
- (ii) they link the successive narrow scenes (thematic spheres) together by keeping a certain element in the foreground or foregrounding some of the background elements;
- (iii) they introduce a “new” aspect of the narrow scene by introducing new elements in such a way that they seem to have already become part of the broad scene before.

The two kinds of diatheme are similar in that each of them may perform — and generally speaking, performs — all these functions; the two kinds, however, lay different emphasis on the separate functions, as can be seen from the diagrams in Fig. 110.

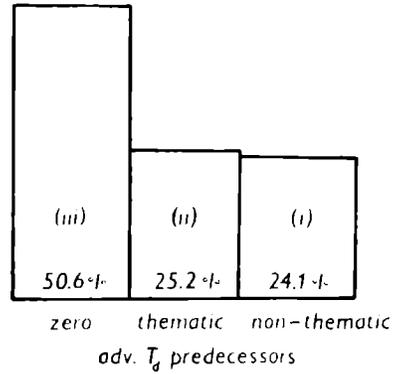
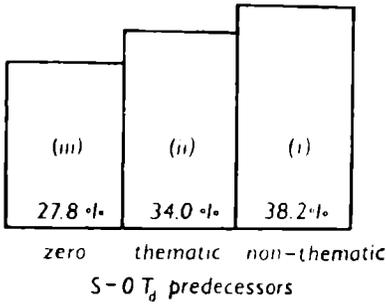


Fig. 110

The rate of non-thematic predecessors may be the criterion of function (i), the thematic predecessors of function (ii) and the zero predecessors of function (iii). With subject-object diathemes, all three functions are more or less equally represented, with a slight preference for (i) and (ii). With adverbial diathemes, function (iii) far exceeds the scope of functions (i) and (ii).

The two diagrams in Fig. 111 may be assessed in a similar way.

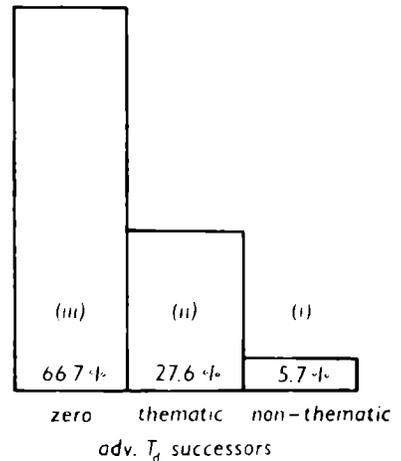
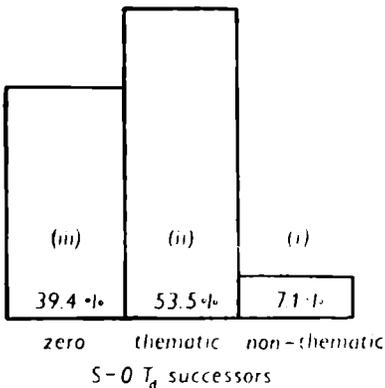


Fig. 111

With both subject-object and adverbial diathemes, the low rate of non-thematic successors shows that function (i) operates in the reverse direction only exceptionally, i.e. there is only an exceptional link between the (preceding) thematic spheres and the (following) rhematic spheres. The tendency to link the narrow scenes (function (ii)) is stronger with the subject-object diathemes than with their adverbial counterparts, while function (iii) — lacking the linking force of functions (i) and (ii) — is most readily performed by the adverbial diathemes, with the subject-object diathemes lagging behind.

Speaking about differences between the subject-object and the adverbial diathemes, we must also stress the fact that the two kinds of diatheme are complementary in performing different functions or laying different emphasis on them. From the viewpoint of the thematic progression, this phenomenon is most apparent in the diagrams adduced in Figures 104 and 107. They show how well-balanced the separate functions are if all the diathemes are taken together.

2.4.4.4 Themes proper

The role of the diatheme in the thematic progression becomes still more apparent if it is compared with the role of theme proper. (The ellipted themes proper are also included because from the viewpoint of thematic progression they do not seem to reveal different features from those displayed by the explicitly expressed themes proper, their ellipted occurrence being a matter of possibilities offered by grammar rather than anything else.)

The graph in Fig. 112 shows the occurrence rate of the predecessors and successors of theme proper.

Themes proper are the most self-centred elements within the narrow scene. In their majority, they are both preceded and followed by elements of their own kind. Quite often they are dedynamized diathemes, less often they are intensified to become diathemes themselves. The relation between themes proper and diathemes within the hyperthematic strings they form will be dealt with in 2.4.4.5. Showing the occurrence rate of different predecessors to themes proper in a general way, Fig. 113 is highly instructive of the function that themes proper perform within the thematic progression.

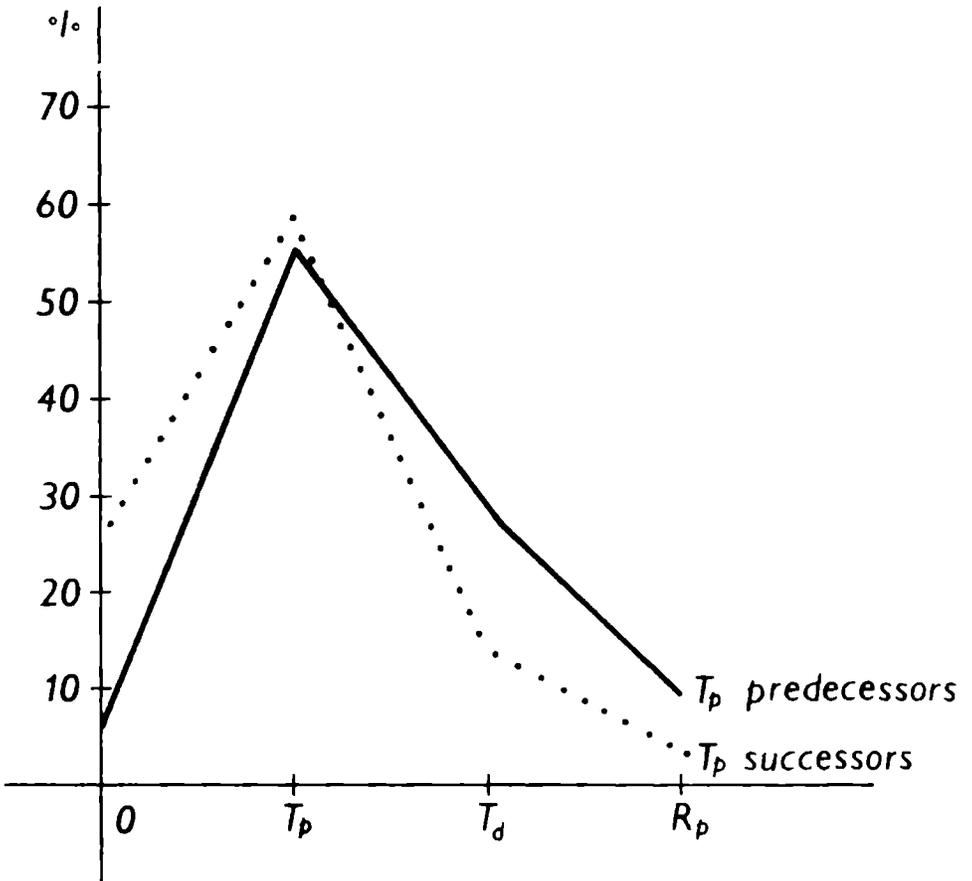
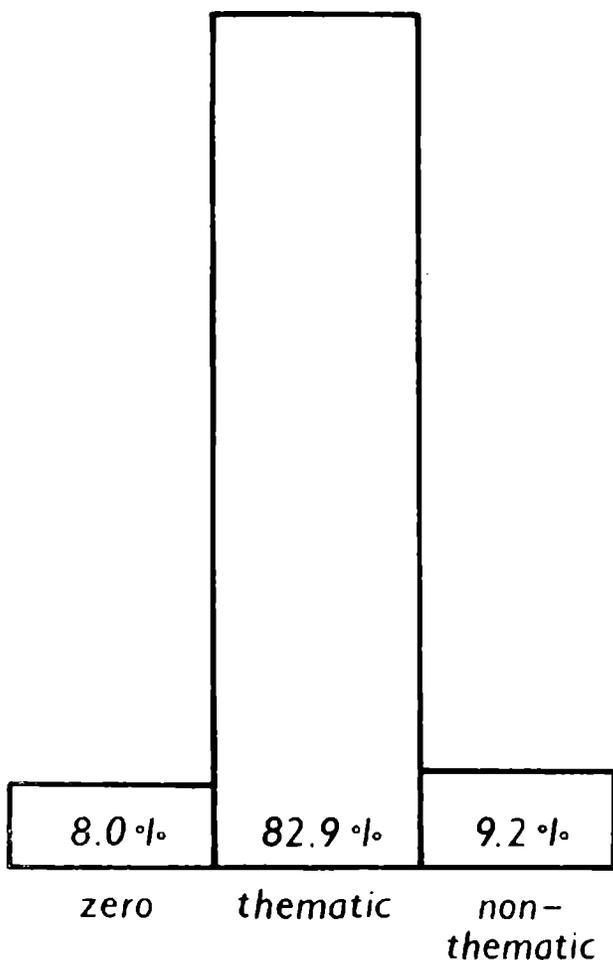


Fig. 112



T_p predecessors

Fig. 113

The high rate of scenic predecessors shows that the principal function of themes proper is to stabilize the narrow scene. The way in which themes proper contribute to the preservation of the narrow scene becomes still more apparent if we take into account the nature of themes proper without a predecessor. The table in Fig. 114 lists all such themes proper occurring in the analyzed text:

T_p with zero predecessor	occurr.	
we (1 imperative)	9	} 18 (of pronom. nature)
you (imperative)	2	
they (general subject)	1	
man (general subject)	3	
it (impersonal)	2	
there (existential)	1	
Christ	3	} 3
total	21	21

Fig. 114

The table clearly shows that 18 out of 21 are elements that are potentially present in the background of the narrow scene of any text: the speaker, the listeners, people in general and nature in general. In fact, "we", "you" and "man" are often used quite interchangeably, and the same can be said about "man" and "they" as general subjects. The only theme proper which is not a typical scenic (thematic) element is "Christ". In the context of the analyzed text, however, "Christ" is one of the well-established elements of the broad scene; the whole homily is in fact about the epiphany of Christ. Seen from this angle, all the themes proper without predecessors contribute to the preservation of the narrow scene as it is, and should be added to those preceded by thematic elements. Hence the proportion comes up to nearly 91 %.

The non-thematic predecessors are in their vast majority rhemes proper (21 out of 24). In eight cases out of 21, the following themes proper are relative pronouns that are prevented from functioning as diathemes by the presence of a more dynamic thematic element that has been made the centre of the narrow scene. It is typical of the themes proper following the non-thematic elements which are not intensified themes (12 out of 24), that they are what we shall call short-lived themes. They appear just once, and have no continuation in the thematic elements. This only

corroborates the idea that a non-thematic element can be well established on the broad scene (can become a long-lived theme) only through the mediation of the diatheme.

The general proportion of theme proper successors is shown in Fig. 115:

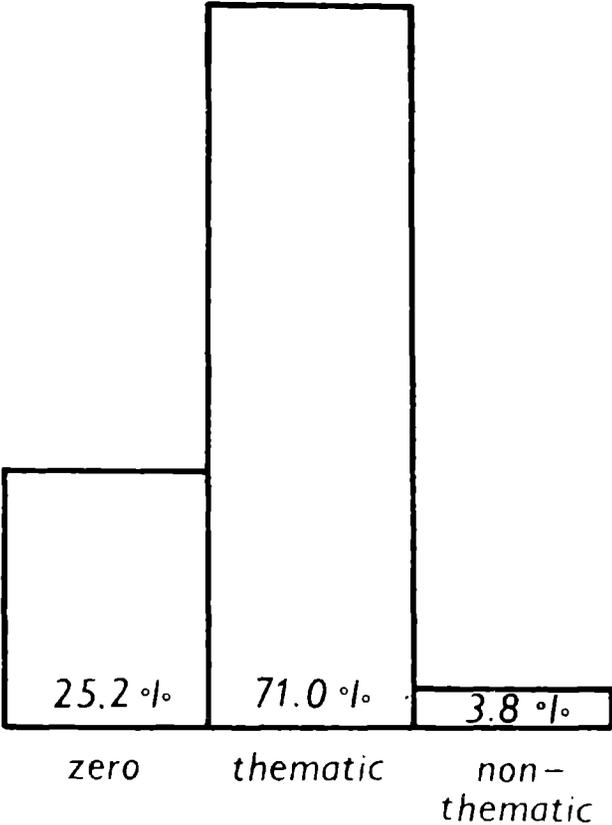


Fig. 115

The high proportion of thematic successors again testifies to the tendency of theme proper to stabilize the narrow scene. The 25 % of zero successors can be explained by the fact that themes proper very often constitute the end of a string of thematic elements (see also 2.4.4.5), this function being their last before they leave the narrow scene.

The proportion of non-thematic successors might be regarded as an indication of the extent to which themes proper are engaged in "rhematic" activities, but a closer look at these elements will reveal that they only manifest what has been called the strong oscillation of the narrow scene (see 2.4.1.3). Out of 10 occurrences of non-thematic T_p -successors, seven are immediately succeeded by a thematic element again. Of the remaining three without any continuation, one occurs at the very end of the paragraph, thus constituting the (unusual) end of a string of 13 thematic elements.

While the principal functions of diatheme are to form the link between the non-thematic and the following thematic spheres, to establish the elements on the narrow scene and to introduce new aspects of the narrow scene, the primary function of theme proper is to stabilize the narrow scene. Like diatheme, theme proper also contributes to the internal oscillation of the narrow scene, but in addition to that it also enables the well-established elements to leave the narrow scene without, so to speak, being noticed. As for its relations to the non-thematic sphere, it substitutes for the diatheme in constituting the link between the non-thematic sphere and the following narrow scene if the diatheme is engaged in performing one of its other two functions (e.g. introducing a new aspect of the narrow scene), and it also participates in cases of strong oscillation of the narrow scene (cf. 2.4.6).

2.4.4.5 Hyperthemes

Both themes proper and diathemes may participate in constituting hyperthemes, i.e., thematic elements that several clauses have in common. Hyperthemes form strings of various length, composed of various thematic elements. (Examples of such strings can be seen in Figures 50, 52, and 133.) Even a string of two elements represents in fact a hypertheme with regard to the two clauses concerned. In the analyzed text the length of strings ranged from two to 17 elements.

Hyperthematic strings may consist exclusively of themes proper (including ellipted and "oriented" ones), exclusively of diathemes (both subject-object, adverbial and "oriented"), or — most frequently — of a mixture of themes proper and diathemes. The graph in Fig. 116 shows the number of occurrences of hyperthematic strings according to the number of elements in the string and their nature.

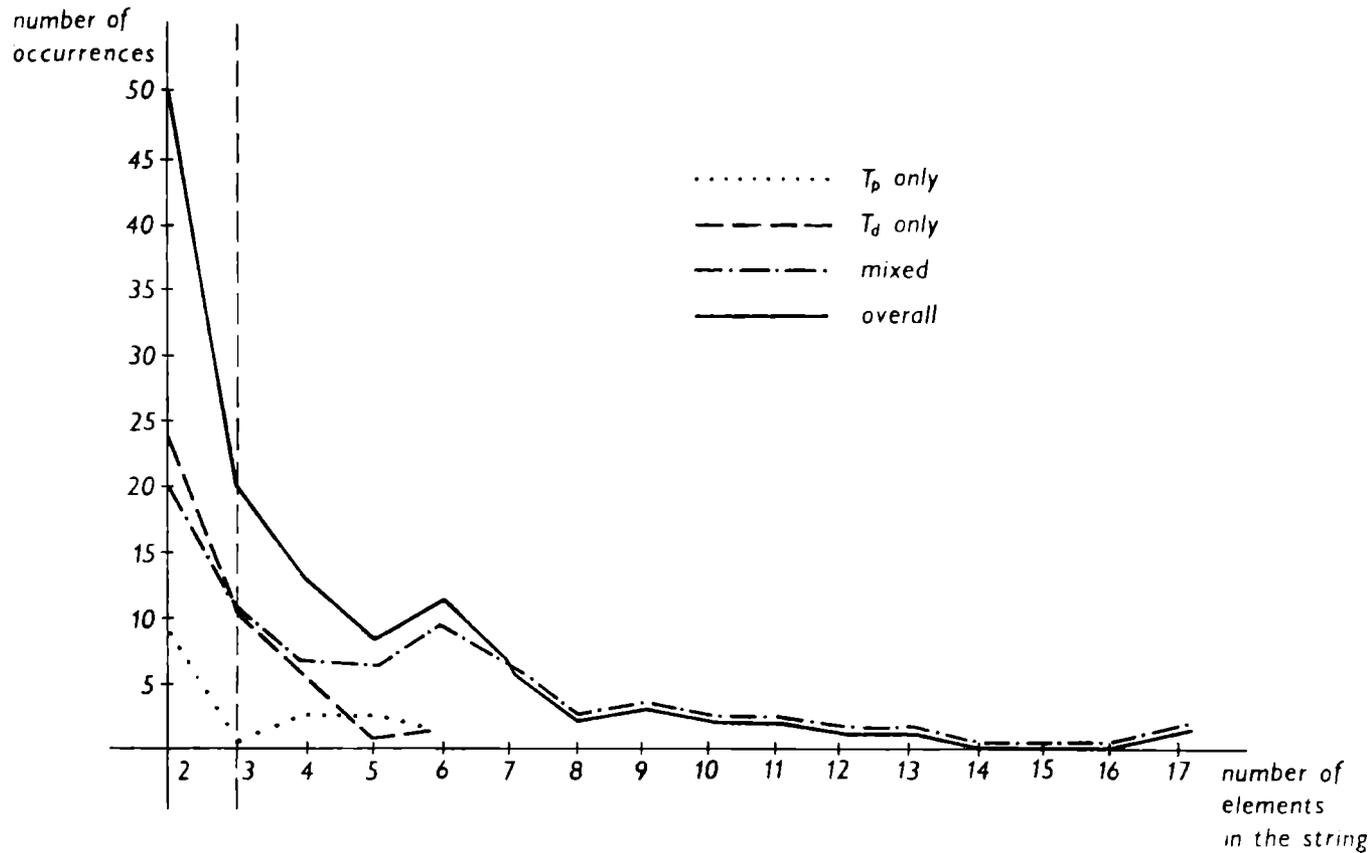


Fig. 116

As to the function of diatheme compared with that of theme proper, still more important is the proportion of different hyperthematic strings, their average length, the number of elements they contain, and the proportion of diathemes and themes proper that participate in these strings.

Fig. 117a clearly shows that the mixed strings are the most frequent and also have the highest average length (5.25 elements per string). Second come the diathematic strings, with an average length of only 2.62, and the least frequent are strings constituted purely by themes proper. This is the evidence that themes proper are reluctant to constitute hyperthematic strings all by themselves but mostly do so in collaboration with diathemes. The occurrence rate of elements in strings of different kinds only confirms the fact that the mixed strings are by far the most important in constituting hyperthemes (see Fig. 117b).

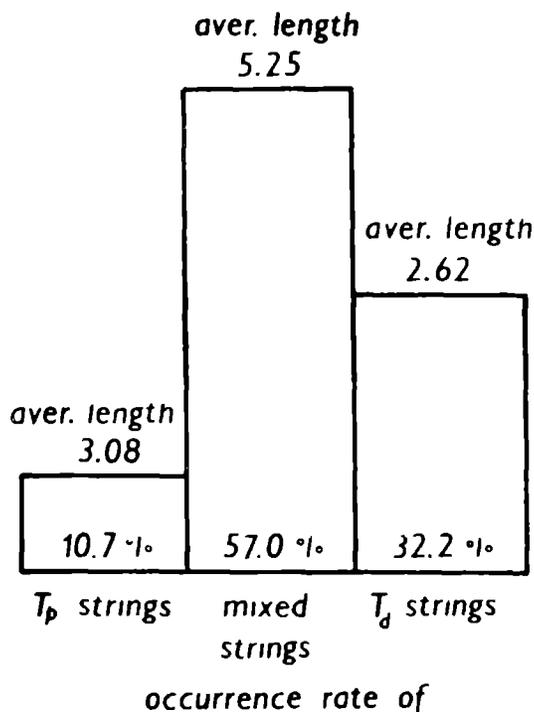


Fig. 117a

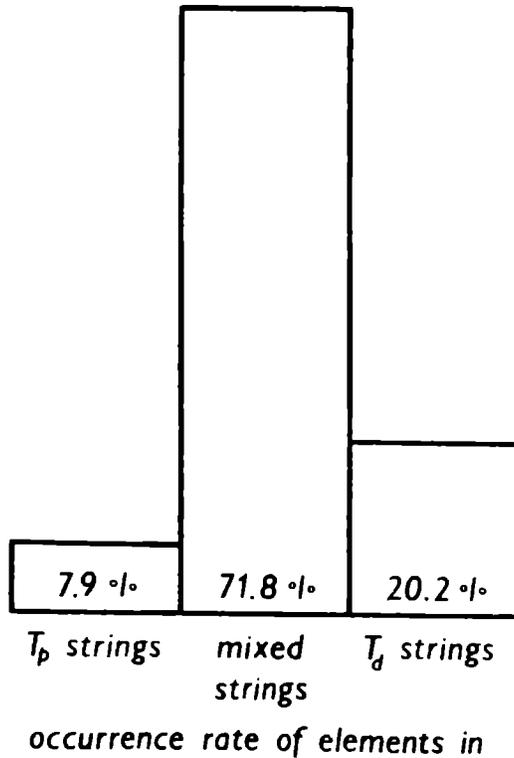


Fig. 117b

As for the internal composition of these mixed strings, themes proper have a clear majority over diathemes (see Fig. 118). The difference in the occurrence rate of themes proper and diathemes, however, is not so clear if all the elements in all the three kinds of strings are taken into account (53.8 %, and 46.2 %, respectively). This is due to the fact that diathemes very frequently form two-element strings of their own. In fact, nearly 50 % of the two-element strings are constituted purely by diathemes. We have already mentioned the tendency of diathemes (see 2.4.4.3) to represent short-lived themes, i.e., to appear just once, without a successor and without a thematic predecessor. The same tendency may be traced with regard to hyperthemes. The string of two diathematic elements is in fact a short-lived hypertheme, a hypertheme that, without the contribution of themes proper, is nothing but a potential hypertheme if stricter criteria for hyperthemes are applied (see below).

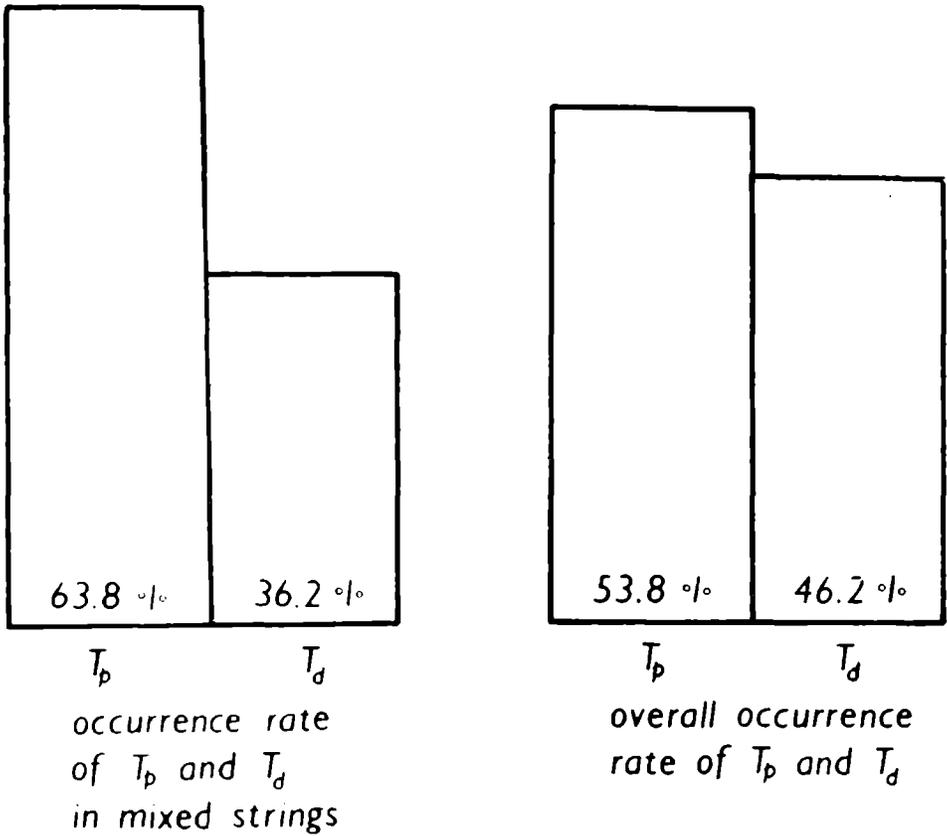


Fig. 118

This phenomenon only confirms what has been said about two of the principal functions of diathemes. They appear in the centre of the scene for just a short time either to mediate the transfer of a non-thematic element to the narrow scene or to introduce a new aspect of the narrow scene. Seen in this light, it is no wonder they substantially contribute to the proportion of short-lived hyperthemes.

If we are stricter about hyperthemes or — more precisely — if we consider the hyperthemes to be constituted by strings of three and more elements, the high proportion of mixed strings as well as the higher proportion of themes proper in the hyperthematic strings will be still more pronounced, as shown in Figures 119a,b and 120 (cf. the diagram in Fig. 116 showing the number of occurrences of strings according to the number of their elements, starting this time at the broken line by 3).

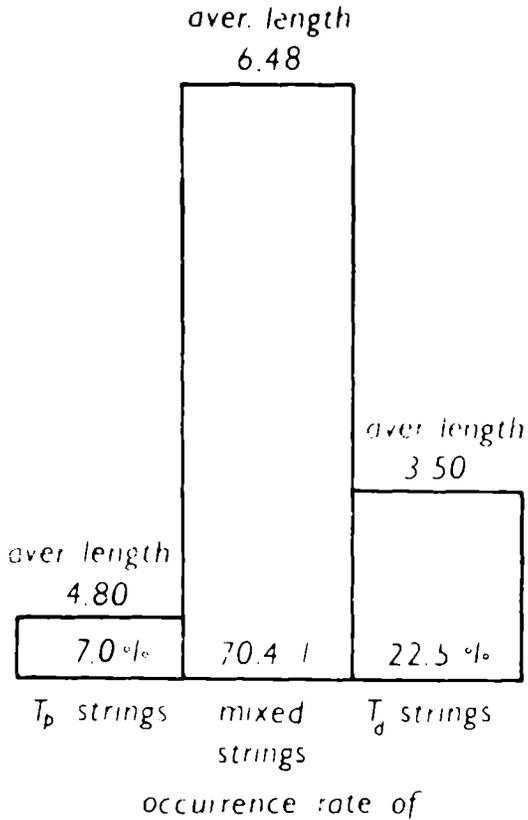


Fig. 119a

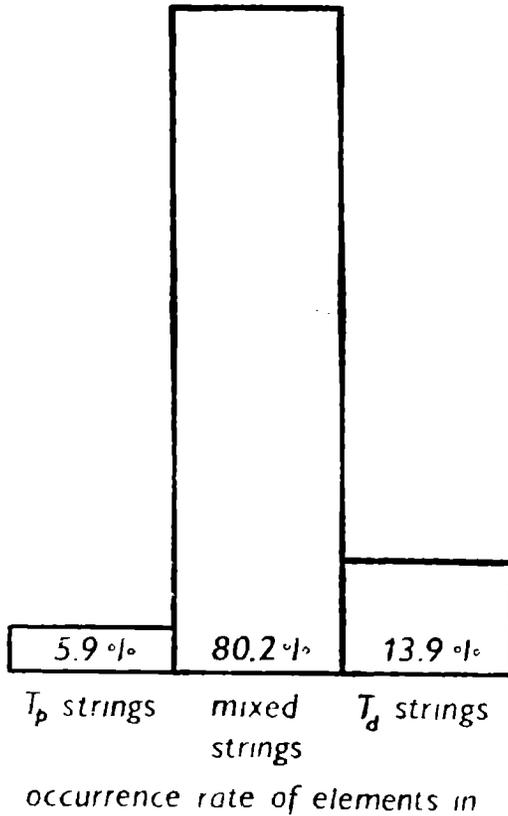


Fig. 119b

The mixed strings with their average length of 6.48 elements per string clearly dominate. They also contain a vast majority of thematic elements engaged in constituting the hyperthematic strings. It is worth mentioning that if the “two element” hyperthemes are reckoned in, the overall average length of a string is just over four (4.17), while in the case of “three plus” hyperthemes alone, it is close to six (5.69).

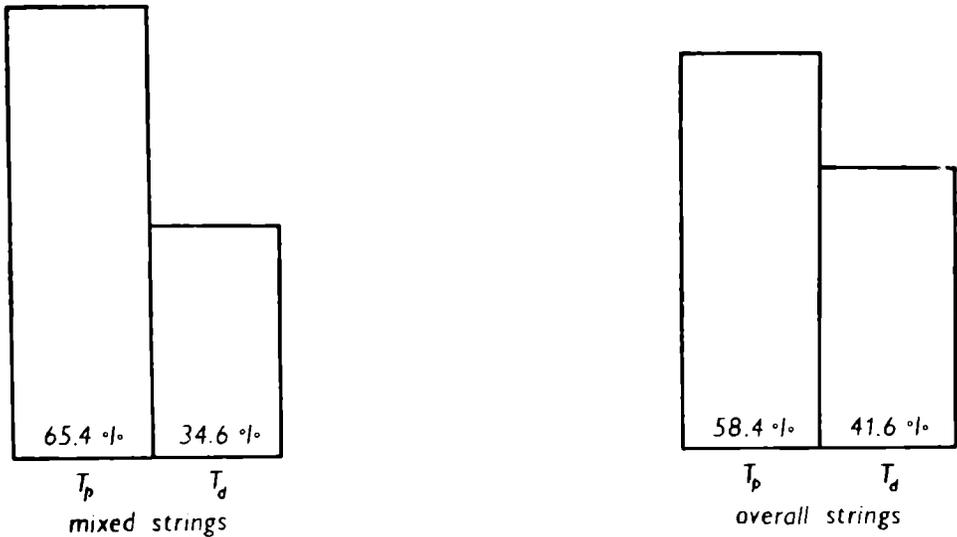
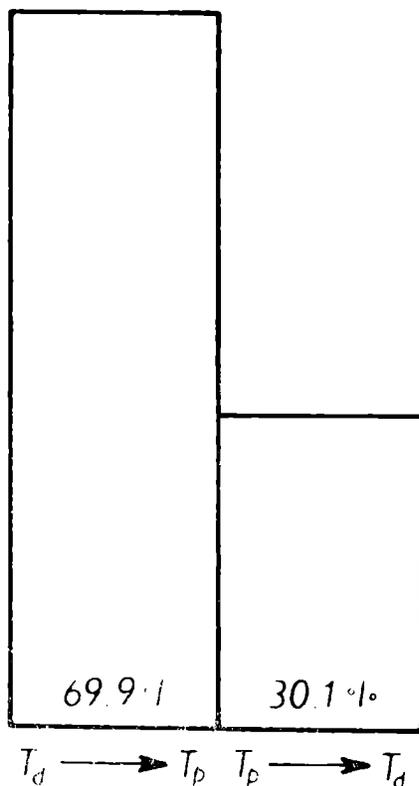


Fig. 120

However clear the majority of themes proper may be, the proportion of diathemes in both mixed strings (34.6 %) and the overall count (41.6 %) cannot be neglected. This is where diathemes manifest themselves in one of their principal functions: to a great extent, they contribute to the internal oscillation of the narrow scene. The internal oscillation is closely related to the phenomenon of intensification, which is to be dealt with in the following subsection.

2.4.4.6 Intensifications

By thematic intensification (foregrounding) we mean the succession of an element of a theme-proper nature by a diathematic element. Semantically it means that a well-established element (or one presented as such) is brought from the background to the centre of the narrow scene. The number of occurrences of theme proper – diatheme progressions is 37 and the number of occurrences of diatheme – theme proper progressions is 86. We get a total of 123 ties between themes proper and diathemes (regardless of the order of elements) and can calculate the proportion of thematic intensifications ($T_p - T_d$) in relation to thematic dedynamizations ($T_d - T_p$).

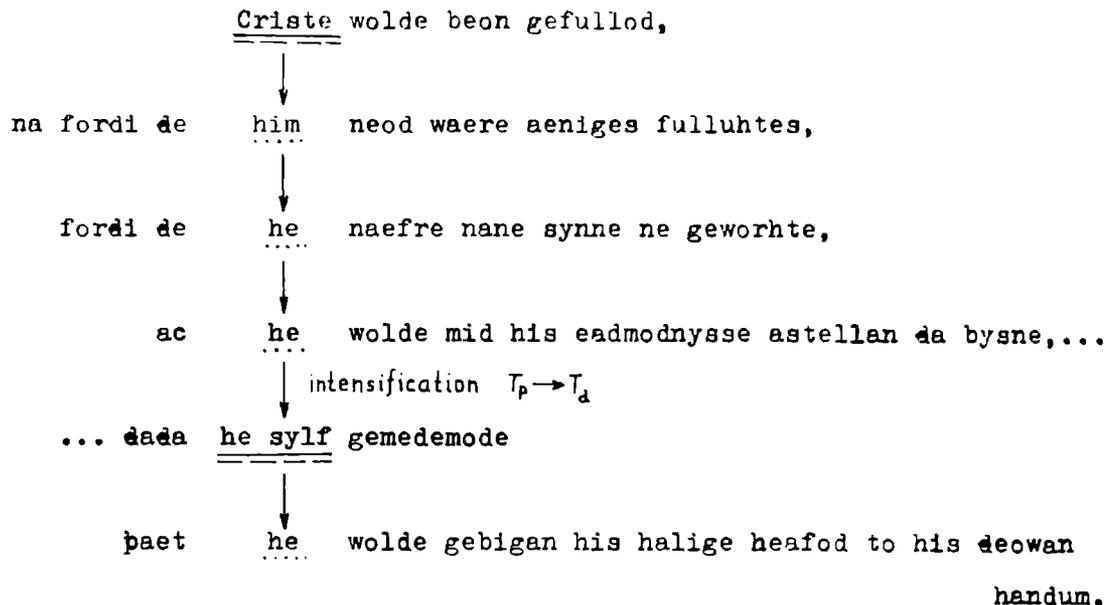


(dedynamization) (intensification)

Fig. 121

Fig. 121 also shows the extent to which diathemes participate in the oscillation of elements within the narrow scene: about two-thirds of the diathemes contribute to the movement from the centre to the background, while one-third is engaged in bringing the elements from the background to the centre of the scene.

The intensification of an element may be signalled grammatically, semantically and contextually. Usually, the signalling runs along all three lines, but the different kinds of signals need not be equally apparent. In the examined text the most clear grammatico-semantic indications seem to be “self”, “the same”, and the use of an explicit subject with the imperatives, as shown by the examples in Figures 122, 123, and 124.



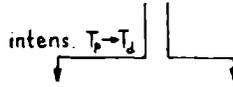
(A.40.21)

((Christ would be baptized, not because he needed any baptism, for he had never wrought any sin, but he would by his humility set the example, ... when he himself vouchsafed to bow his holy head to the hands of his servant.))

Fig. 122

...Fordi þæt we ne sceoldon wenan þæt his fulluht waere swa god,

þæt nan man ne moste beon on ðam gefullod buton Crist ana.



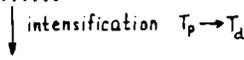
Hwanon com Iohanne þæt fulluht? (A.46.31)

((... Because we might not imagine that his baptism was so good, that no man might be baptized by it save Christ only. Whence came baptism to John?))

Fig. 126

The sequence of a pronoun functioning as theme proper and the corresponding noun need not by itself signal intensification (as shown above). But in the presence of other grammatico-semantic signals it does so, and more often than not the resulting diatheme also conveys an additional piece of information (as shown below in Fig. 127).

... swa swa be him awriten is,



"Godes Gast gefylð ealre eorðan ymbhwyrf." (A.44.1)

((... as it is written of him, "The Spirit of God filleth the circumference of all the earth."))

... ne deð seo culfre na swa,
 ↓
 ne leofað heo be nanum deade.
 ↓ intensif $T_p \rightarrow T_d$

Mare we mihton sprecan be ðære culfran gecynde,... (A.46.18)

((... the dove does not so, it lives by no death. More could we say of the dove's nature,...))

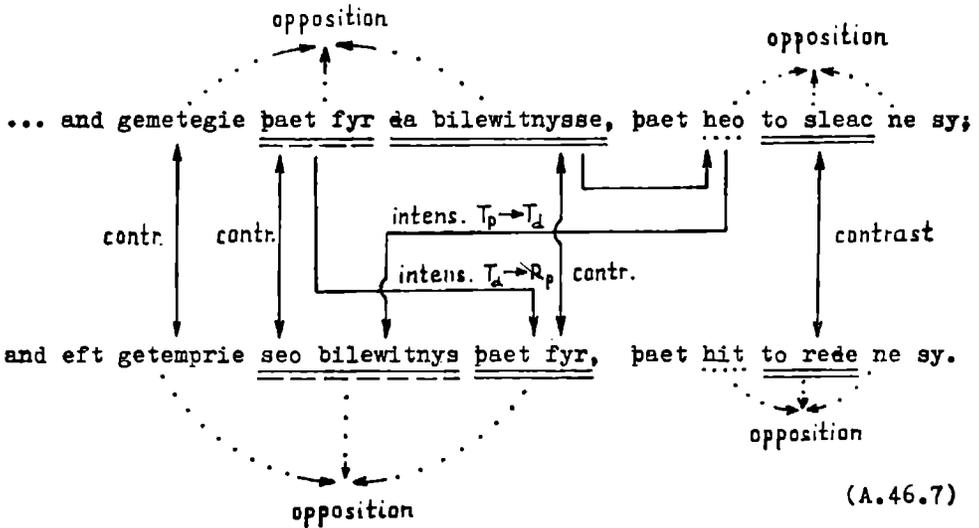
... ða sende he his bydel toforan him, Iohannem þone Fulluhtere,
 R ↓ Rp
 paet he sceolde Cristes to-cyme mannum cyðan,
 ↓ intensification $T_p \rightarrow T_{(d)}$
 paet hi, ðurh ðone bydel, gelyfdon on ðone godcundan Cyning.
 $T_{(d)}$

(A.36.24)

((...(The Almighty Son of God,...) sent his proclaimer before him, John the Baptist, to announce the advent of Christ to men, that they, through that proclaimer, might believe in the divine King.))

Fig. 127

The overt signalling seems to be less apparent if the intensification rests in the semantics of the particular element and its relation to the semantic environment rather than in the grammatical signals. Such cases are always connected with the phenomena of mild contrast and standing opposition, which will be discussed in subsection 2.4.4.9. The examples in Figures 128 and 129 are only meant to illustrate what has been said above (for the sake of clarity only the most relevant connections are marked).



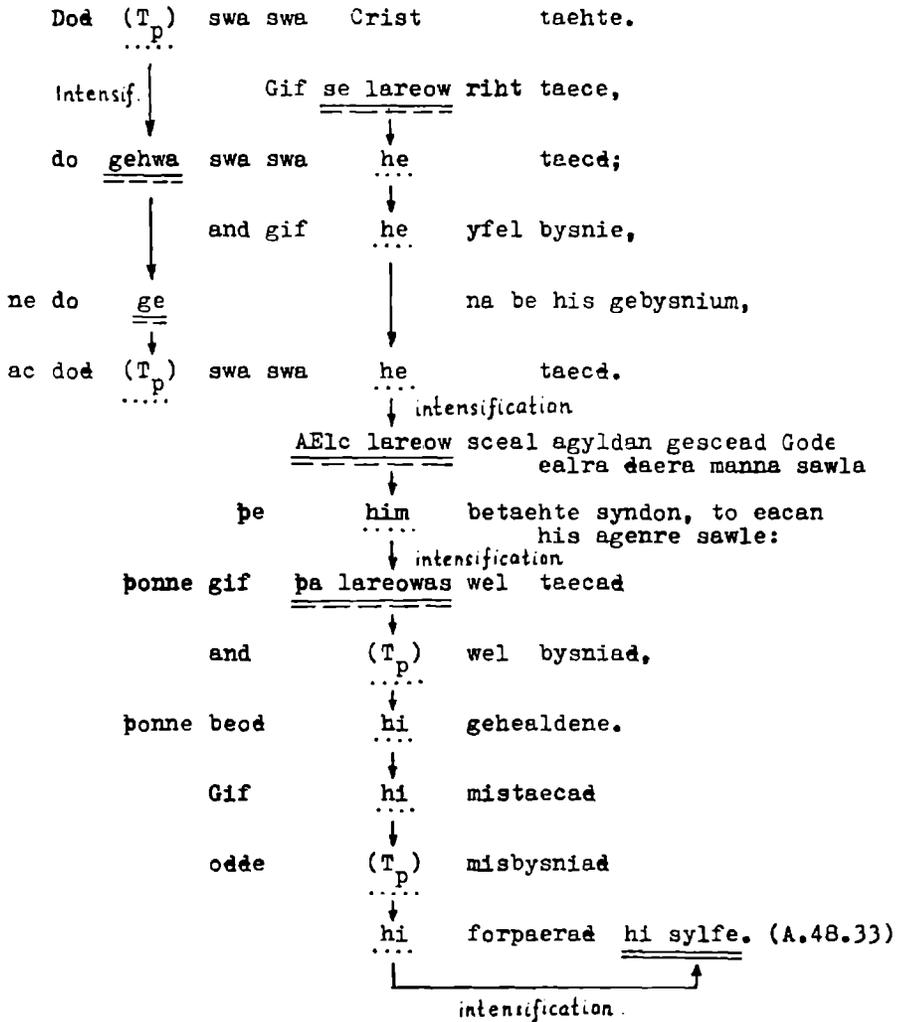
((... and let the fire regulate the meekness, that it be not too slack; and again let the meekness temper the fire, that it be not too fierce.))

Fig. 129

Thematic intensifications are not the only ones that occur in the text. Fig. 129 includes a diatheme — rheme proper intensification (rhematization). Before discussing the rhematic intensification, let us look at another instance of it in Fig. 130 (the passage also contains three thematic intensifications).

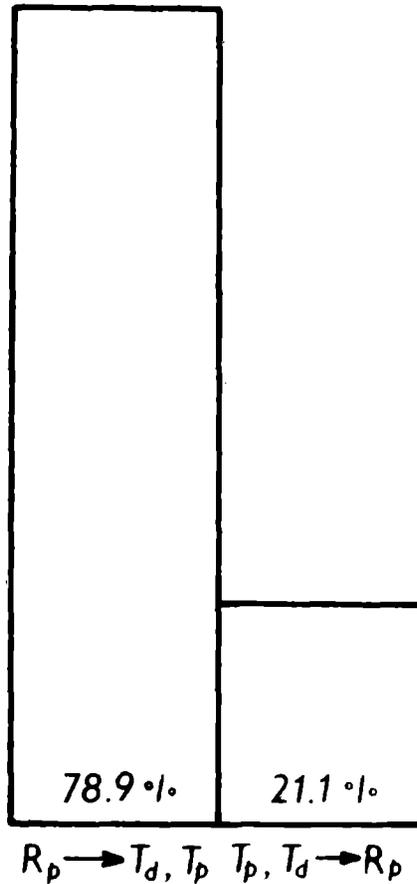
In Fig. 130, only the two thematic progressions containing intensification are marked with connection lines, but the other elements are arranged in such a way as to show the progressions of *swa swa's*, *ponne's*, *gif*-clauses, as well as the progressions of the verbs with the meaning “to do”, “to teach” and “to give example”. (For the latter progressions, see 2.4.5.)

The intensifications of themes proper or diathemes into rhemes proper (rhematic intensifications or rhematizations) occur in the analyzed text slightly less often (30) than the thematic intensifications (37). The overall number of ties between rhemes proper on the one hand and diathemes and themes proper on the other is 142. The proportion of progressions from rhemes proper to the above two thematic elements (dedynamizations) and the opposite progressions (intensifications) is shown in Fig. 131.



((Do as Christ taught. If the teacher teach right, let every one do as he teaches; and if he give evil example, do ye not by his examples, but do as he teaches. Every teacher shall render an account to God of the souls of all those men which are committed to him, in addition to his own soul: then, if the teachers teach well and give good example, they shall be saved. If they misteach, or give evil example, they destroy themselves.))

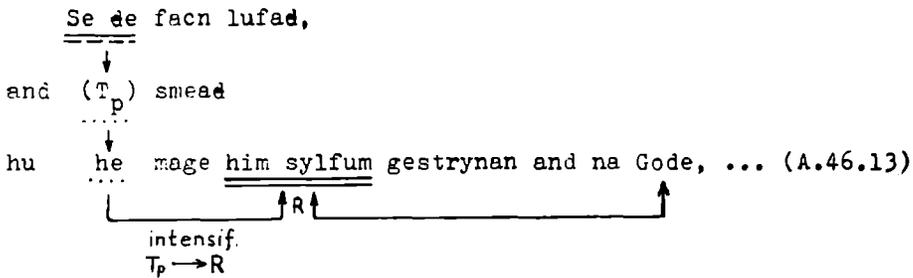
Fig. 130



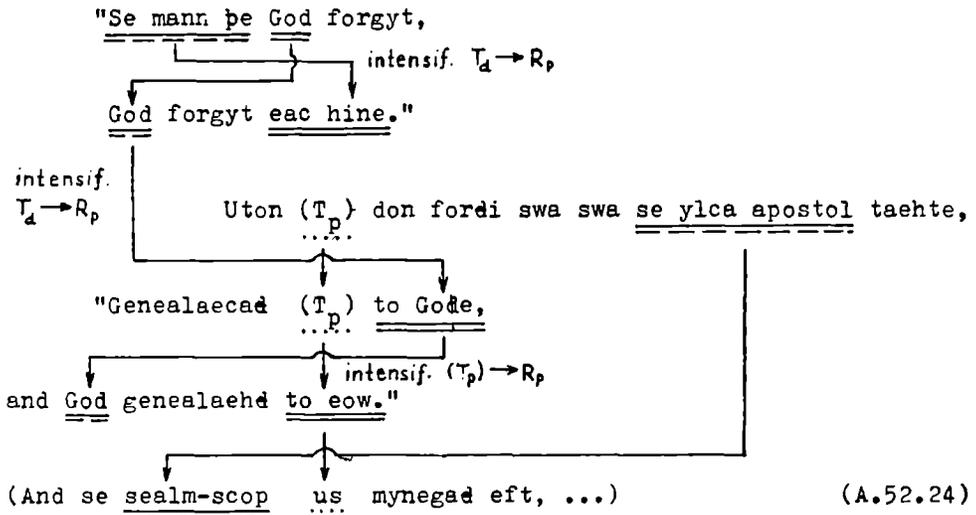
(dedynamization) (intensification)

Fig. 131

As far as the proportions of diathemes and themes proper which participate in these rhematic intensifications are concerned, 70 % are diathemes and 30 % themes proper. The relation between rheme proper and the thematic elements as well as the role of rhematic intensifications in the narrow scene oscillation will be dealt with in 2.4.4.7 and 2.4.6. Here we adduce some examples in order to show that the grammatico-semantic and contextual means of signalling rhematic intensifications are the same as in the case of the thematic intensifications; they are only more straightforward and more “explicit”. (The role of negation as the extreme case of particularization seems to be more pronounced.) Cf. Fig. 132.



((He who loves guile, and devises how he may gain for himself and not for God, ...))



(A.52.24)

((("The man who forgets God, God will also forget him." Let us do, therefore, as the same apostle taught, "Draw near unto God, and God will draw near unto you." (And again, the psalmist reminds us, ...)))

Fig. 132

The following example is a comparatively long passage. For technical reasons, the wording is given without the usual markings, and the relevant hyperthematic string (with intensifications) is adduced in a sketchy way in Fig. 133.

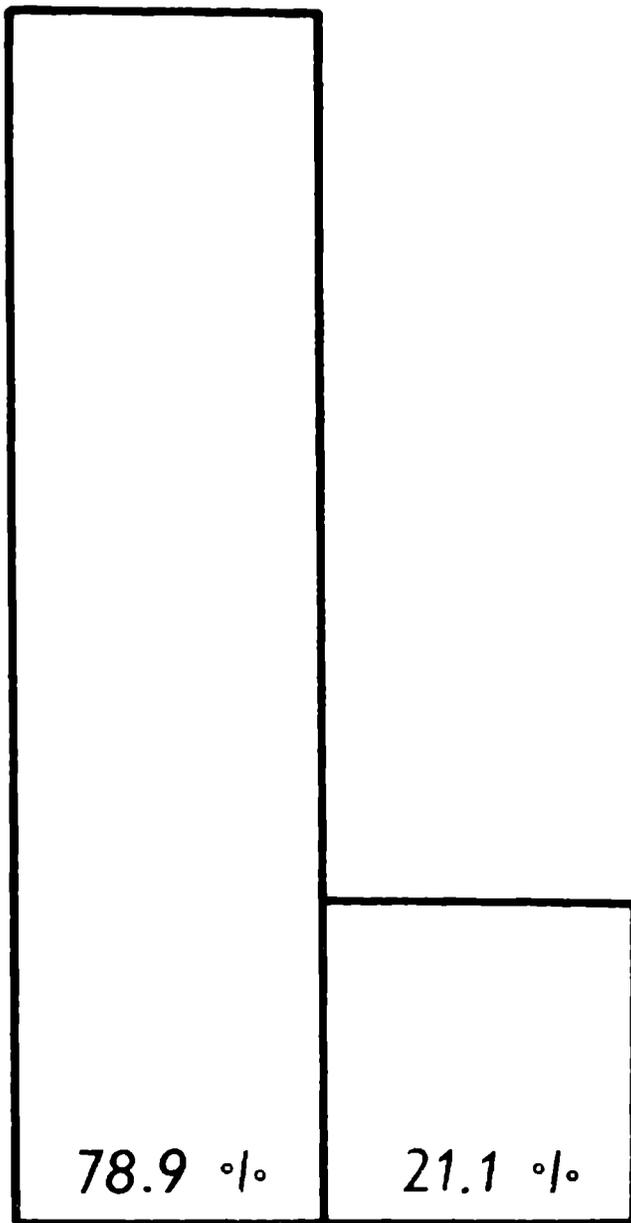
„ þær stôð se Sunu on ðære menniscnysse, and se Fæder clypode of heofonum, and se Halga Gast niðer astah to Criste. þær wæs ða eal seo Halige ðrynnys, seoðe is ân God untodæledlic. Se Fæder nis of nânum oðrum gecumen, ac hê wæs æfre God. Se Sunu is of ðam Fæder eall þæt hê is, na geworht ne gesceapen, ac acenned æfre of ðam Fæder, forþan ðe hê is ðæs Fæder Wisdom, þurh ðone he geworhte ealle gesceafta. Se Halga Gast is Lufu and Willa þæs Fæder and þæs Suna; and hi sindon ealle gelice mihtige, and æfre hî ðry ân God untodæledlic: þry on hâdum, and ân on Godcundnysse, and on gecynde, and on eallum weorcum. Ne trucað heora nân âna ðurh ûnmihte, ac ðurh gecynde ânre Godcundnysse hî wyrcað ealle æfre ân weorc. Nis na se Fæder mid þære menniscnysse befangen, ne se Halga Gast, ac se Sunu âna; ðeah-hwæðere hî ealle ðry þæt geræddon and gefremodon, þæt se Sunu âna þa menniscnysse underfeng.” (A.42.16)

(“There stood the Son in human nature, and the Father cried from heaven, and the Holy Ghost descended to Christ. There was then all the Holy Trinity, which is one God indivisible. The Father is not come of any other, for he was ever God. The Son is of the Father all that he is, neither made nor created, but ever born of the Father; for he is the Wisdom of the Father, through whom he made all creatures. The Holy Ghost is the Love and Will of the Father and of the Son; and they are all alike mighty, and those three ever one God indivisible: three in persons, and one in Godhead, and in nature and in all works. Not one of them fails alone through weakness, but through the nature of one Godhead they all work ever one work. The Father is not invested with humanity, nor the Holy Ghost, but the Son only; nevertheless they all counselled and effected, that the Son alone should assume humanity.” (A. 43.15))

The thematic progression in Fig. 133 clearly shows that the functions of diathemes and themes proper can hardly be shown in their full light if they are not related to those of rhemes proper. It is for this reason that rhemes proper have been included as a subsection of thematic progression.

2.4.4.7 Rhemes proper

As has been shown above (cf. also 2.4.4.1, 2.4.4.2, 2.4.4.4), rhemes proper are related to thematic progression by the fact that they tie with thematic elements in two directions; they either precede them or follow them. The proportion of rhemes proper followed by diathemes or themes proper and those preceded by them can be seen from Fig. 134.



R_p

R_p

succeeded
by T_d, T_p

preceded
by T_d, T_p

Fig. 134

It is clear that the rhemes proper that are somehow connected with thematic progression most often precede the thematic elements and constitute what might be called potential predecessors of hyperthematic strings. The proportion of diathemes and themes proper as successors to rhemes proper speaks quite decisively in favour of diathemes. The same can be said about the thematic predecessors of rheme proper, which also shows the relative extent to which diathemes and themes proper participate in rhematic intensifications. Cf. Fig. 135.

The diagrams in Fig. 135 corroborate from another angle what has been said before: the principal link between the rhematic spheres and the following thematic spheres (narrow scenes) is the diatheme.

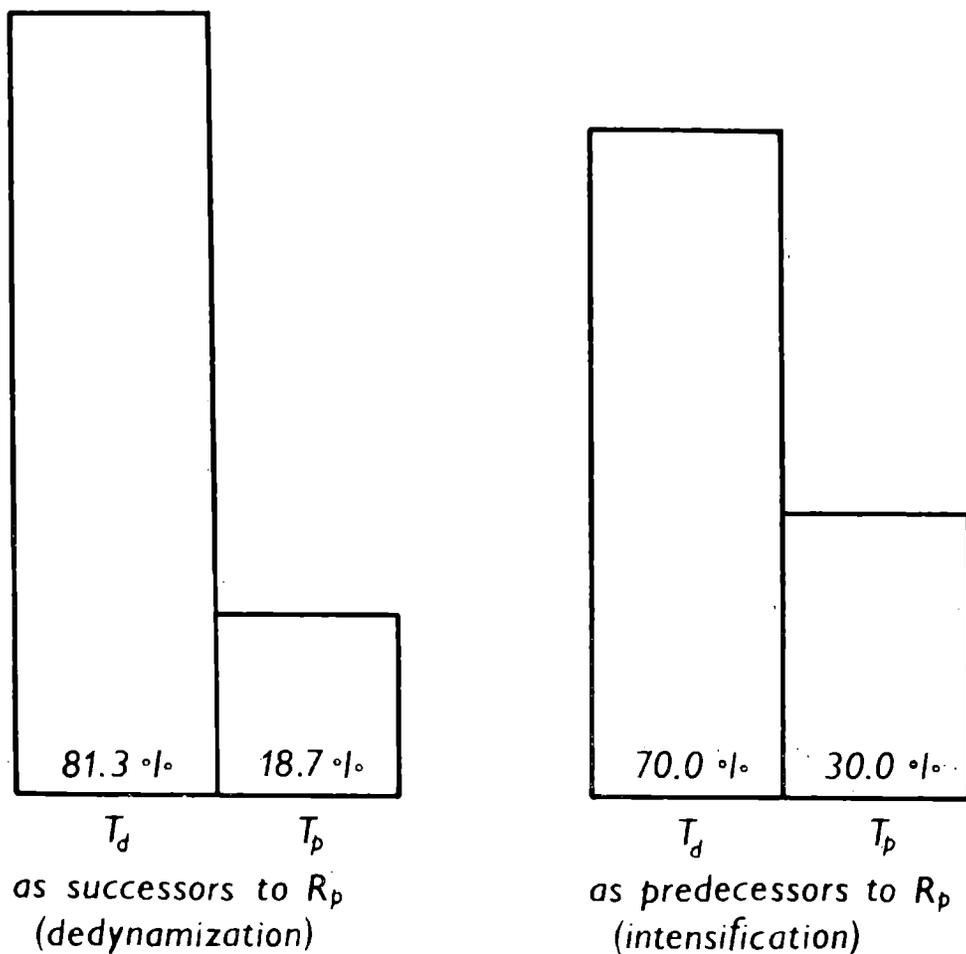


Fig. 135

From the viewpoint of prospective hyperthematic strings, rhemes proper may occur in three contextual positions:

- (i) at the beginning of the prospective string (having a zero predecessor and a thematic successor)
- (ii) in the "middle" of the string (having both a thematic predecessor and a thematic successor – the hyperthematic string is in fact broken)
- (iii) at the end of the (possibly) preceding string (having a thematic predecessor and a zero successor).

The relative occurrence of rhemes proper in these three positions (and functions) is shown in Fig. 136.

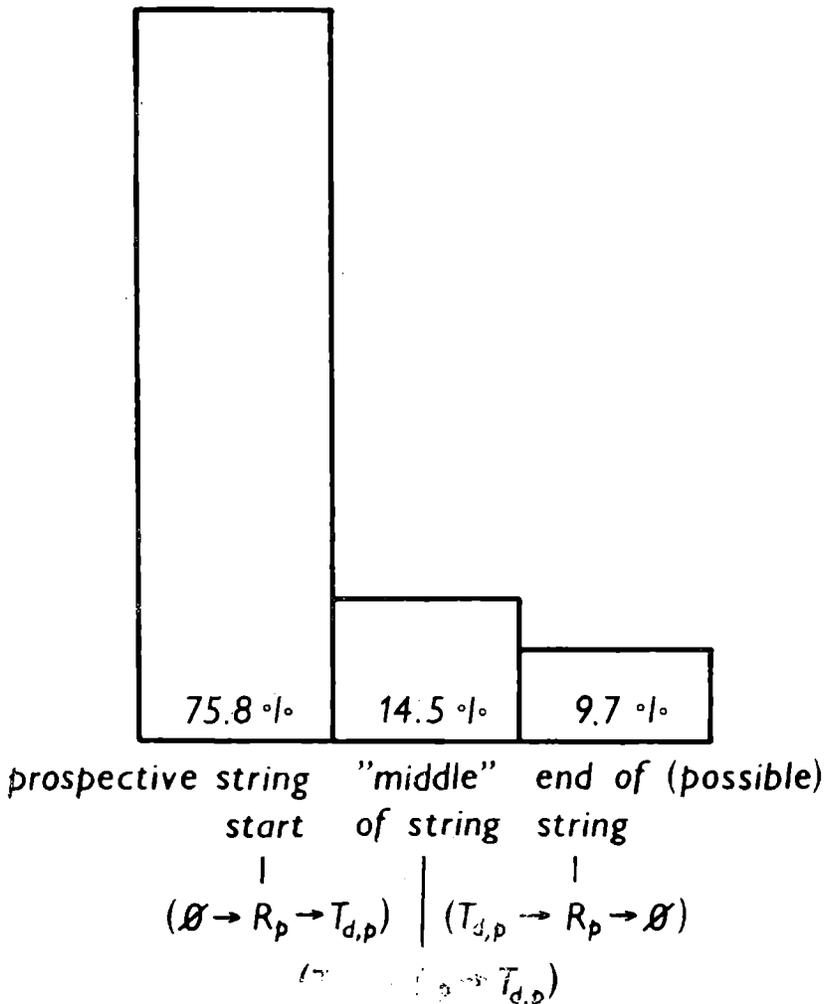


Fig. 136

Up to now we have only been speaking about rhemes proper that display some direct relation to thematic elements (124 in all). Since there are also rhemes proper that display relations to non-thematic elements (for more discussion on this point see 2.4.5) as well as ones that do not seem to display contextual relations of the kind examined here at all, it will be interesting to see what proportion of the total each of these three groups of rhemes proper represents (cf. Fig. 137).

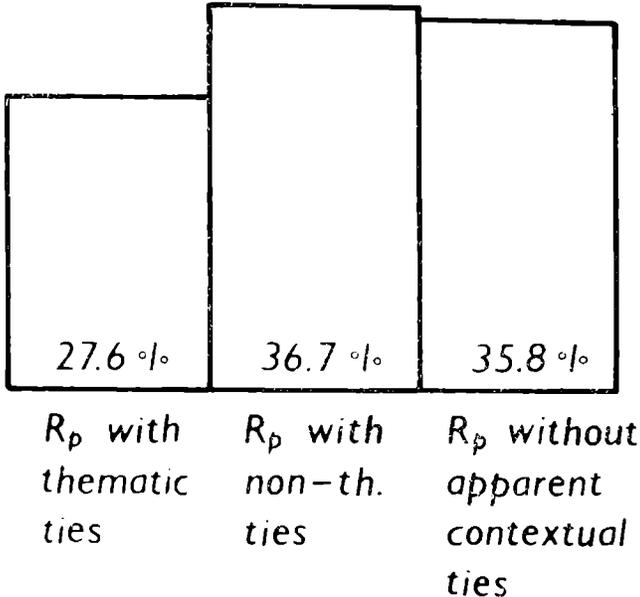


Fig. 137

The total number of rhemes proper (450) is equal to the total number of examined clauses (more precisely communicative fields), because rheme proper is (under normal circumstances in written language) the only element that must be (explicitly) present if the clause (semi-clause) is to function as an unimpaired communicative field. Fig. 137 shows that only less than one-third of all the rhemes proper directly participate in the formation of the following narrow scene(s), while the remaining two-thirds either participate in non-thematic contextual relations or do not display such relations at all. (A word of warning is to be inserted here:

The whole analysis has been made from the viewpoint of diatheme and other thematic elements and for this reason the concept of the (structural) contextual relations is only based on characteristic features of thematic progression. There are definitely other relations among the non-thematic elements that have not been mentioned here because they have not been examined. If we speak of no apparent contextual ties of a rheme proper, we mean that there are no ties of a nature similar to thematic progression. (Cf. 2.4.5.))

Semantically, rhemes proper are new (non-thematic) elements (or presented as such) that are introduced onto the broad scene as "appearing phenomena" (prospective quality bearers) or "appearing qualities or their specifications" (cf. 2.3.7). The above 27.6 % (Fig. 137) is the proportion in which they also enter the (following) narrow scene(s). Though all of them are potential predecessors of hyperthematic strings, only those which enter one of the following narrow scenes can actually perform this function.

The introduction of a rheme proper (as a non-thematic element) onto the broad scene does not entail its being established in the broad scene. After its appearance as rheme proper, it can only be regarded as a latent thematic element. Only if it appears as diatheme or theme proper in the narrow scene of one of the (nearest) successive clauses, it is established as part of the narrow scene; if it does not appear as a thematic element rather soon, it disappears from the broad scene, and from the viewpoint of contextual analysis such an introduced rheme proper (as a latent thematic element) can be said to have never entered the narrow scene at all. In addition to what has been said about the scene-establishing function of the diatheme, the analyzed text displays another phenomenon that may substantiate the thesis above: Rhemes proper without thematic successors in one of the (nearest) successive clauses make their next appearance as rhemes proper again. This means that they are not considered to be part of the broad scene any more (otherwise they would be used as more or less established thematic elements) and there is a need to introduce them as new elements onto the broad scene again. If they are then succeeded by thematic elements, they become part of the broad scene; if they are not, they will have to be introduced next time as rhemes proper again. It remains to be said what is meant by the nearest successive clauses. As to the analyzed text, if their number exceeds six without the particular element (a rheme-proper successor) occurring within the narrow scene (as a thematic element), there seems to be a need for it to be introduced anew in the seventh clause. Similarly, rhemes proper succeeded by diathemes without further continuation (i.e., without being well-established within the narrow scene) seem to follow the same pattern as the solitary rhemes proper, the only difference being that the distance between the "diathematic" and the next "rhematic" occurrence becomes longer. Further discussion of this problem would require a detailed contextual analysis of the non-the-

matic elements, which has not been made since our focal point is the diatheme.

As to their predecessors and successors, it is possible to say that rhemes proper and diathemes reveal some similar features. Both of them bring “new” elements (in their own way) onto the scenes; rhemes proper introduce them onto the broad scene, diathemes make them appear in the centre of the narrow scene. Both of them contribute to the movement of elements from the broad scene to the centre of the narrow scene and hence to the background or out of the narrow scene. Both of them participate in the preservation and the internal oscillation of the respective thematic or non-thematic spheres (for the latter, see 2.4.5).

2.4.4.8 “New” diathemes

The contextual examinations of themes proper and of rhemes proper have shown that diathemes share common features with both typically thematic and typically non-thematic elements. From the viewpoint of themes proper, we can speak of a scene-forming aspect with the emphasis on the narrow-scene preservation; from the viewpoint of rhemes proper, we can speak of the tendency to bring something new, to introduce “new” elements onto the broad scene (rhemes proper) or to introduce a “new” aspect of the narrow scene (diathemes).

The new aspect of the narrow scene as presented by adverbial diathemes has already been discussed in 2.4.4.3. In this respect, adverbial diathemes behave in exactly the same way as rhemes proper, the only difference being that they do so within the narrow scene. The present subsection, however, will be devoted to subject-object diathemes without predecessors or “new” subject-object diathemes, because from the viewpoint of contextual analysis it is interesting to see what elements appear in the centre of the scene without their “full” introduction. (For themes proper without predecessors see 2.4.4.4.)

The number of occurrences of subject-object diathemes without predecessors is 67, but the actual number of different elements is much smaller, because the “semantic range” of such elements is rather limited.

Of 18 opening clauses, 14 contain subject-object diathemes, which are considered to be without predecessors, because the paragraphs have been analyzed as separate contextual units. These diathemes will not be dealt with separately, since they display exactly the same characteristics as the other “new” diathemes found in the middle of the text. This can be easily seen if the diathemes in the opening clauses (adduced in 2.4.3.2) are compared with those given below.

According to their notional content, the subject-object diathemes without predecessors may be divided into seven groups with a more or

less proportional occurrence of their members (five of the groups can be exemplified by the opening clauses adduced in 2.4.3.1 and 2.4.3.2, the remaining two — as will become clear — have been abundantly illustrated before):

1. elements denoting God, Christ and the Holy Ghost (*God, Crist, se Ælmihtiga Godes Sunu, se Halga Gast, etc.*)
2. elements related to John the Baptist and to baptism (*Iohannes, Iohannes fulluht, þæt fulluht, ðe we nu fulliað, etc.*)
3. elements denoting people connected with baptism and the teaching of Christ (*Godes þeowas, sume lâreowas, se mæsse-preost, se apostle Paulus, se sealm-wyrhta, etc.*)
4. elements denoting the speaker, the listener, people or things in general, their particularizations or negations (*Ic, we, menn, sum ðing, ælc cristen man, sume men, nānum men, etc.*)
5. elements represented by a relative clause with “the one” or “he who” as the antecedent (*se man ðe nefð Godes Gast on him, se ðe reaflac lufað, þa men þe Iohannes fullode, etc.*)
6. elements expressed by a nominal phrase but semantically having the nature of the adverbial diatheme (*þurh oðra manna synna, on life, to ðam ecan life, be ðæs folces gehyrsumnysse, etc.*)
7. elements closely related to the general topic of the paragraph (*deofle, ælc yfel, his synna, ðin geleafa, his willan, ða ungewittigan cild, etc.*)

At first glance it is apparent, that although these diathemes appear without predecessors, it is not typical of them to occur exclusively in this way. Just the opposite is true. These elements most frequently constitute the hyperthematic strings, which also means that they most frequently enter the narrow scene and remain there for some time. From this viewpoint, all of them are well-established within the narrow scenes and such elements soon become members of the kernel sphere of the broad scene. That is why they need not — under the circumstances — be repeatedly introduced (as rhemes proper) onto the broad scene; through functioning as diathemes and themes proper in hyperthematic strings, they have established themselves well enough to be easily manoeuvred to the foreground or the background of the narrow scene, to be withdrawn from it or to be directly employed in it as the case may be.

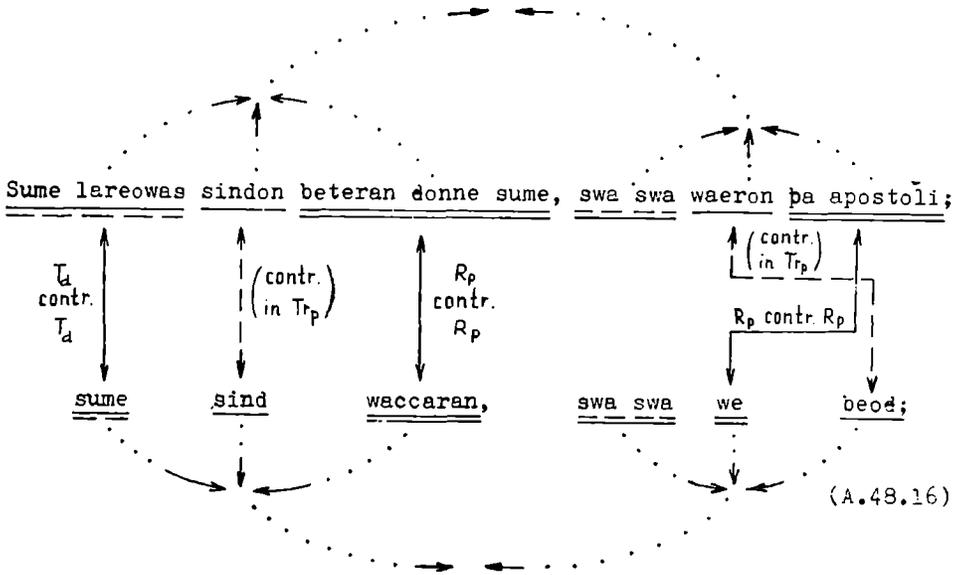
All this clearly shows that “new” diathemes, or diathemes without predecessors, are really of the vast majority old diathemes — so old, in fact, that, together with predecessorless themes proper, they constitute latent hyperthemes, which may become actual hyperthemes without having to be reintroduced onto the broad scene. This is not to say that they do not occur as rhemes proper. They do, but such an occurrence is always connected with an apparent mild contrast, often accompanied by standing

opposition. These two phenomena, closely related to both the “internal” and the “external” oscillations of the narrow scene, will be briefly touched upon in the following subsection.

2.4.4.9 Mild contrast and standing opposition

By mild contrast we understand the relation between two elements that differ in one or a small number of semantically distinctive features and share the rest. It is a kind of opposition but we shall not employ this term because we want to make a distinction between this phenomenon and a slightly different kind of opposition discussed later on. The adjective “mild” is used to distinguish this contrast from the heavy (ad hoc) contrast employed in clauses at the second instance level (cf. 2.4.2.3). The elements standing in mild contrast to one another most frequently occur in two different clauses. Quite often the contrasted pairs are two diathemes, two rhemes proper or any other two elements with the same function, but they may also be pairs containing diatheme and rheme proper or other elements with different function. Strictly speaking, nearly any two non-identical elements with the same function in two successive clauses can be found in some sort of mild contrast, but here we are only interested in such cases of contrast as influence the interplay of factors determining the function of the particular element.

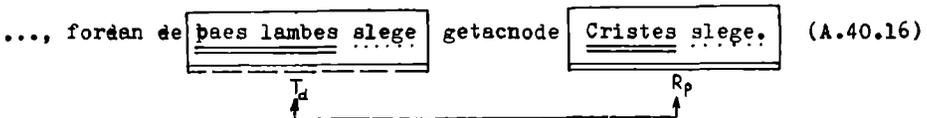
By opposition we understand the relation between two or more elements that differ in a majority of semantically distinctive features. Contrary to mild contrast, which usually relates the elements performing the same function in two different clauses, opposition — as used here — is confined to the communicative field of one single clause. It often relates the thematic and the non-thematic elements, but can also relate the elements within one of these two spheres. We speak of the opposition of theme proper and rheme proper or the opposition of diatheme and rheme proper or even diatheme, transition and rheme proper, etc. In fact, all the functionally different elements of one clause stand in a kind of multi-lateral opposition. What we are interested in here from the viewpoint of contextual analysis is the standing opposition, i.e. the opposition that remains relatively constant in two or more clauses. If the standing opposition is accompanied by the above mild contrast, then it is all the more pronounced and both the diathematic and the rhematic elements are easy to detect. The example in Fig. 138 will illustrate this.



((Some teachers are better than others, as were the apostles; some are weaker, as we are;))

Fig. 138

If mild contrast occurs between the (functionally different) elements of one clause, it is usually the contrast of two communicative subfields of a lower order (not subject to the present analysis) or, more precisely, the contrast of two elements performing the same function in the two subfields (cf. Fig. 139).



((..., because the slaying of the lamb betokened the slaying of Christ.))

Fig. 139

The figures concerning the occurrence of mild contrast between two elements (the total of contrastive pairs 95, the total of clauses involved in standing opposition 88) tell us little about contrast and opposition in general, because the whole text has not been analyzed exclusively from the viewpoint of these two relations. They have been marked and listed only if they took part in the interplay of means determining the communicative functions of elements within the clause. Seen from this angle, the number of occurrences suggests rather the relative extent to which separate elements are involved in such mild contrast as has made itself perceptible as a semantico-contextual factor of the functional analysis (see Fig. 140).

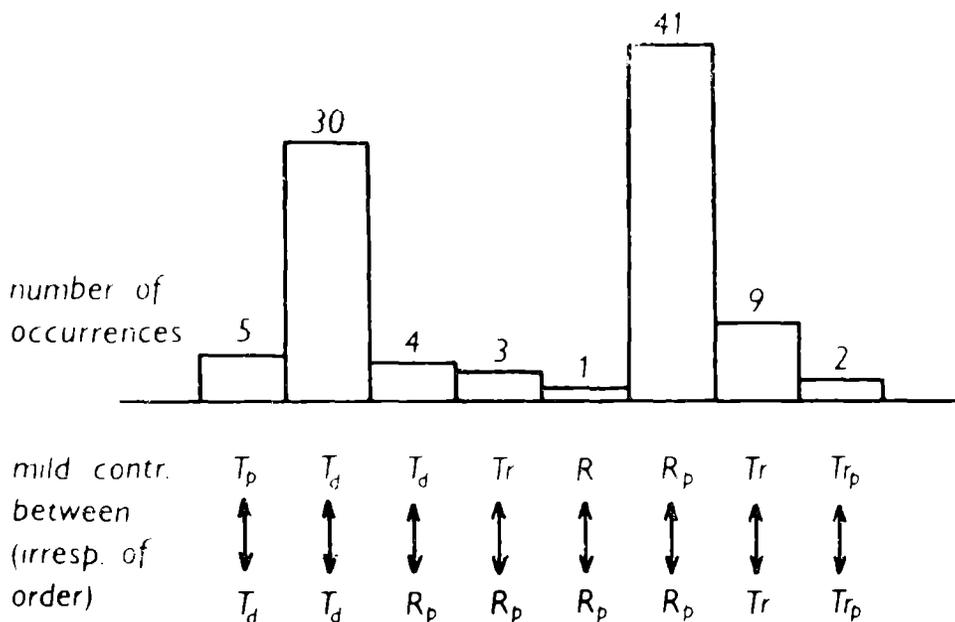


Fig. 140

The same can be said about clauses which participate in constituting the "sequences" of standing opposition. Their occurrence rate with regard to the total of clauses can be seen in the diagram in Fig. 141.

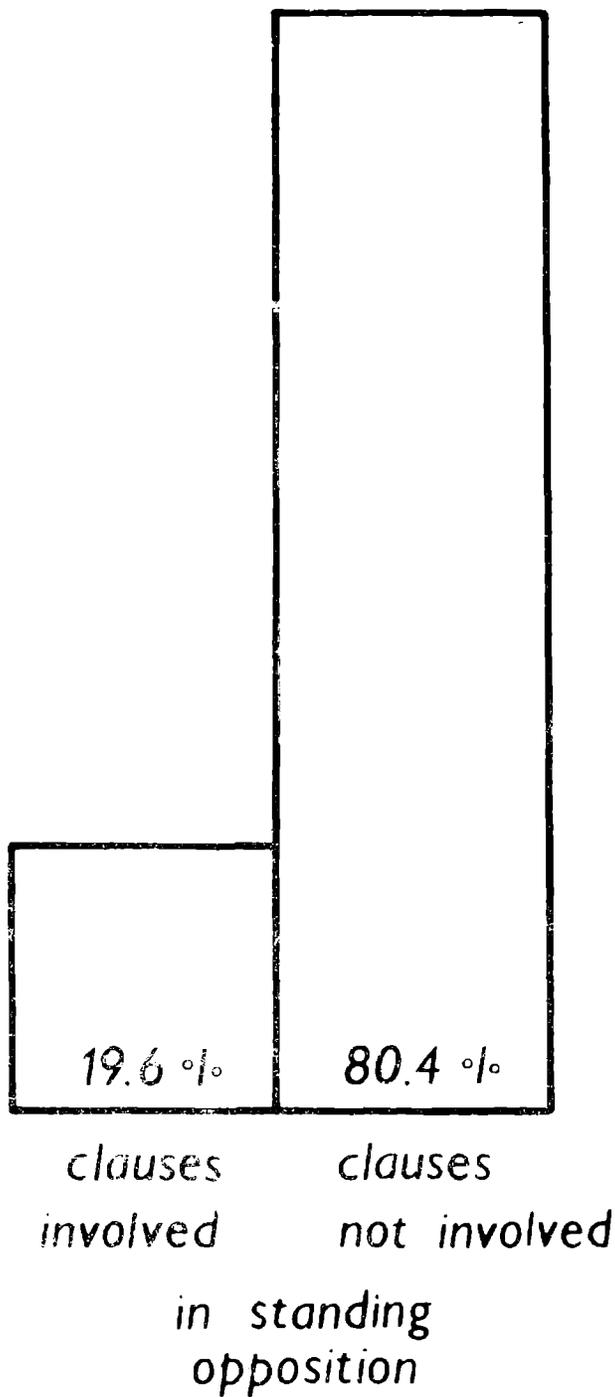


Fig. 141

As for the means of signalling mild contrast, they are practically the same as those used in cases of intensification. As has been shown before (2.4.4.6), mild contrast usually accompanies intensifications, but it may also be employed if the elements in question are without predecessors or stand all by themselves.

Both mild contrast and standing opposition are nothing but a natural consequence of the interplay of semantics and context. If either is seen by itself, it is a phenomenon frequently occurring in the text, and to recognize it as such (or not) is often a matter of degree. If, however, these two phenomena are seen, not only in the light of the thematic progression, but also in the light of their roles in what is to be called rhematic progression, the matter assumes another aspect. Although the progression of non-thematic or rhematic elements is not the main concern of this study, we shall touch upon this issue in the following subsection (2.4.5), because the specific features of thematic progression can be better seen and better understood if they appear against the background of their non-thematic counterpart.

2.4.5 RHEMATIC PROGRESSION

Generally, the sequence of non-thematic elements can be regarded as rhematic progression. The rhematic progression within the examined text has not been subjected to consistent analysis, and the following remarks only aim at a basic confrontation of the rhematic and the thematic progressions.

While the thematic elements are prevalingly engaged in assorting and storing the information supplied from outside, it is the non-thematic elements that provide for the influx of new information; they do not store it, but introduce the new information onto the broad scene for the thematic elements to make their choice as to which items will become part of the narrow scene. Since the non-thematic elements basically differ from the thematic elements in their function with regard to the flow of new information, it seems quite reasonable to expect that the criteria employed in rhematic progression will have to be different from those applied to thematic progression.

In thematic progression the leading criteria were those of semantic identity and similarity. In rhematic progression the leading criterion of progression seems to be that of semantic difference. What we have in mind here is the difference between non-thematic elements performing (mostly) the same communicative function in successive clauses. As opposed to tendencies towards the preservation of elements within the narrow scene, there should be tendencies towards successive differences between elements outside the narrow scene, towards a rhematic change. As has been indi-

cated above, the progression of non-thematic elements has not been examined to such an extent as to reveal the characteristic features of the rhematic change. For the present purpose, however, it is sufficient to realize that rhematic progression is a succession of semantic differences between or among non-thematic elements.

2.4.5.1 Marked and unmarked progressions

We have already mentioned the theme-transition-rheme opposition (cf. 2.4.4.9). If examined from the viewpoint of rhematic progression, it will prove to be changing from clause to clause in its semantics, with themes proper and transitions proper keeping their semantic differences at the lowest, and diathemes, transitions, rhemes and rhemes proper contributing more and more substantially to the extent of differences and thus to the extent of opposition changes. A specific case in the progression of these opposition changes is a kind of rhematic stalemate which occurs if the changes stop or are kept at a minimum. Instead of being semantically different, the non-thematic elements in successive clauses are identical or similar, which brings about the phenomenon of standing opposition. As the clauses involved in such cases only constitute about 20 % of the total, we may regard the standing opposition as a marked case of rhematic progression. And it is precisely in this case that we can employ the criteria used in thematic progression. In the analysis, the "thematic" criteria were indeed applied to the non-thematic elements as well, but seen in the light of the above discussion, such cases have to be regarded — from the viewpoint of rhematic progression — as marked. Contrary to this, the thematic progression keeping the identical or similar elements within the scope of the narrow scene is to be regarded as unmarked, while the cases of successive changes (also intensifications) either within the narrow scene or without are to be considered marked.

The marked rhematic progression need not always be represented by only one standing opposition. There are also cases of two standing oppositions alternating at more or less regular intervals, with the non-thematic elements in immediately successive clauses being different, but repeatedly appearing (and in this sense, being kept) within the non-thematic sphere of clauses (for more detail and examples, see 2.4.5.2).

2.4.5.2 The interplay of progressions

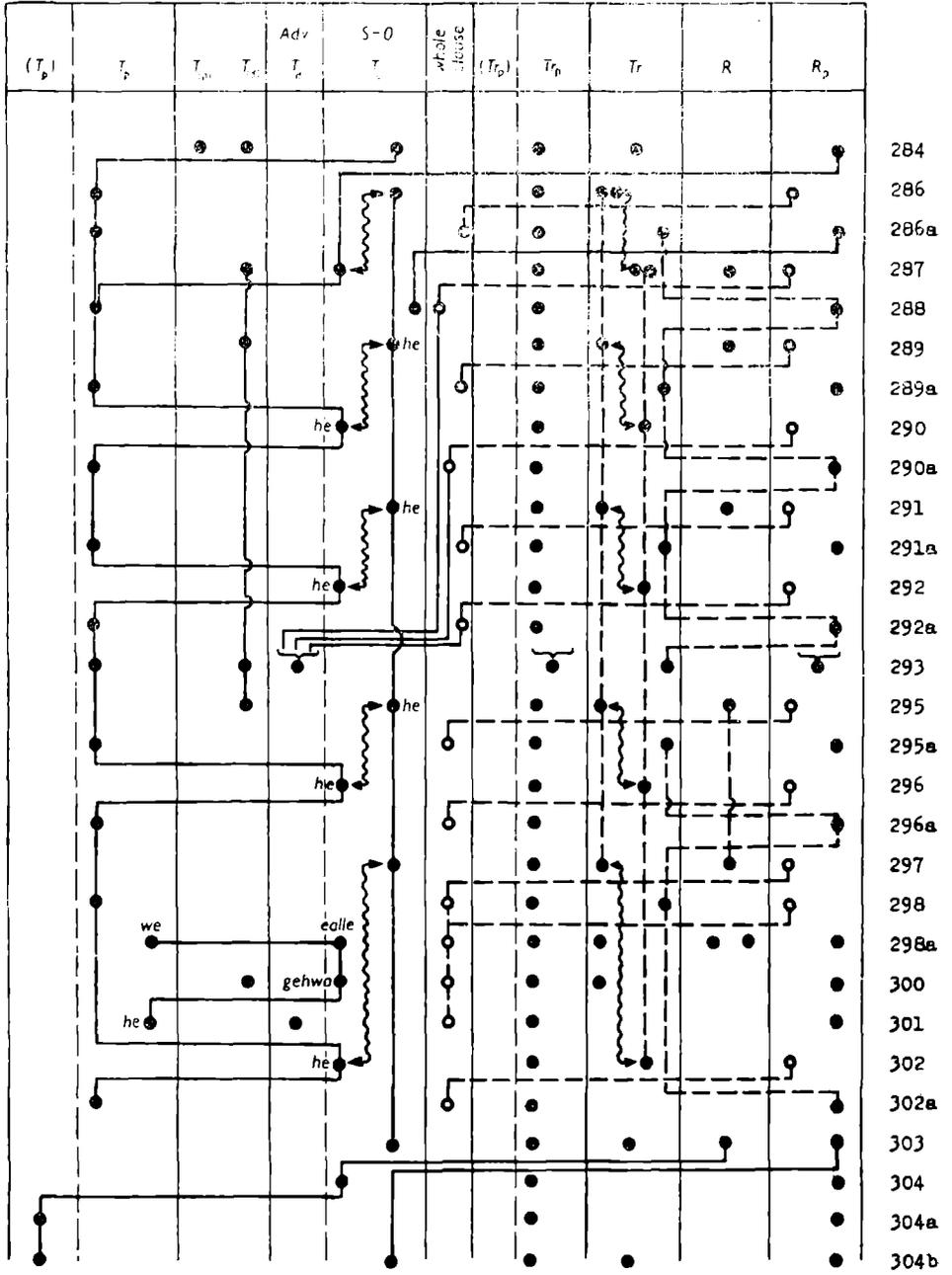
Even a cursory glance at the contextual flow-diagram reveals that thematic progression and rhematic progression are complementary in contributing to the "structural cohesion" of the text. If the cohesion rests in the

identity and similarity of the thematic elements, the non-thematic elements are free to play their “unmarked” role within the rhematic progression, based on the relation of difference. If, however, the thematic elements become more lively in their changes, similarity playing a less important part than difference (intensifications, rapid successive changes of the narrow scene), the rhematic progression takes over in carrying on the “structural cohesion” by substituting the relations based on identity or similarity for those based on difference. In the case of relatively stabilized non-thematic spheres of successive clauses (the marked part of rhematic progression), any difference and any kind of change among the thematic elements is more likely to be seen. This may explain why mild contrast, which can be found between the scenic elements at any time, becomes — under these circumstances — more perceptible, and may even play the decisive role in distinguishing diathemes from themes proper.

Fig. 142a is a condensed version of the part of the contextual flow-diagram exemplifying the marked case of rhematic progression. Fig. 142b on the opposite page contains the corresponding text arranged in accordance with the succession of clauses in the flow-diagram. (The running text renders the full wording of the passage, the “missing” clause numbers in the succession as well as the numbers additionally specified as a, b, are a purely technical matter, without any linguistic significance.)

Fig. 142a also illustrates one phenomenon which becomes more apparent if the contextual flow-diagram of the whole text is examined. While the thematic and the rhematic progression often prove to be complementary in performing their cohesive functions, they do not seem to be complementary as to their marked or unmarked appearance. In fact, they tend to be either both marked or both unmarked, thus rendering whole passages of text contextually marked or unmarked. The example in Figures 142a and 142b is an illustration of a contextually marked passage.

Under contextually marked conditions, we can find phenomena that would otherwise be regarded either as impossible or as defects in the contextually unmarked text. If it were not for this interplay of thematic and rhematic progression, the narrow scenes of the example below could never have afforded the successive occurrence of two and later even three (referentially) different “he”-elements functioning as diathemes and themes proper, without bringing confusion among them. The flow-diagram clearly shows that it is not only the semantic relation between “he asks” and “he (other he) says” or “he answers” (cf. also “he (third he) has merited in life” in 301), but the whole contextual conditioning provided by the interplay of the thematic and the rhematic progression that prevents the listener/reader from confusing formally identical, but semantically different elements.



Legend: — ties concerning thematic elements
 - - - ties concerning non-thematic elements
 ~ mild contrast

Fig. 142a

284 (...)

286 Se maesse-preost axað þæt cild, and cwed,

286a "Widsaecst du deofle?"

287 Þonne andwyr̃t se godfaeder þæs cildes wordum, and cwed,

288 "Ic widsace deofle."

289 þonne axað he eft,

289a "Widsaecst du eallum his weorcum?"

290 He cwed,

290a "Ic widsace."

291 He axað þridan side,

291a "Widsaecst du eallum his getotum?"

292 He cwyð,

292a "Ic widsace."

293 þonne hæfd he widsacen, on disum drem wordum, deofle and
 eallum leahtrum.

295 Þonne axað he gyt,

295a "Gelyfst du on ðære Hælgan Bryhtnysse and soðre Annysse?"

296 He andwyr̃t,

296a "Ic gelyfe."

297 Se Godes ðen befrind þonne gyt,

298 "Gelyfst du

298a þæt we sceolon ealle arisan min urum lichaman on domes daege,
 togeanes Criste,

300 and þæt ðær gehwa onfo edlean ealra his weorca,

301 swa swa he aer on life gearnode?"

302 He andwyr̃t,

302a "Ic gelyfe."

303 And se preost gefullað þæt cild mid þisum geleafan.

304 Hit wexð,

304a and gaed forð,

304b and ne cann þyses geleafan nan ðing. (A.52.2)

Fig. 142b

2.4.6 SCENIC PROGRESSION

It is true that thematic elements reveal a strong tendency to display the characteristic features of thematic progression (identity and similarity), and non-thematic elements rather tend to display the features of rhematic progression (characterized by the relation of conceptual difference). But this does not hold for the separate kinds of elements to the same degree, nor does it hold for the single occurrences of elements. We have already mentioned the tendency of rhemes proper to prepare thematic progression by functioning as predecessors to diathemes (and also themes proper) and in this way constituting predecessors to prospective hyperthematic strings. Another non-thematic element displaying certain features of thematic progression is transition proper, which is not to be dealt with here. (In the flow-diagram, the progression of transitions proper has not been marked except for connections among ellipted and non-ellipted cases. The modal aspect was utterly ignored, while the tense was mostly respected by placing the Present Tense transitions proper to the left and the Past Tense ones to the right of the relevant field (column).) On the other hand, there are some thematic elements displaying features typical of rhematic progression, e.g. diathemes without predecessors or successors, expressing the new aspect of the narrow scene.

Seen from this angle, the progression of all the thematic elements — or, we can even say, the flow of information within successive thematic spheres — cannot be identified with thematic progression, and neither can the flow of information within non-thematic spheres be identified with rhematic progression. In order to examine the progressions of all the separate thematic or non-thematic elements, we should have to know not only the “thematic” but also the “rhematic” criteria and apply them both. Since the “rhematic” criteria are not known to us, we cannot follow the progression of all the separate elements and so we cannot characterize the general flow of information in the analyzed text.

What we can do on the grounds of the present contextual flow-diagram, however, is to examine the progression of all the thematic spheres and the progression of all the non-thematic spheres irrespective of the similarities or differences between the elements in particular, but with regard to these relations between the successive spheres in general. As the thematic spheres (of successive clauses) represent their narrow scenes

and the non-thematic spheres represent the new arrivals of the broad scenes, we shall speak of the narrow scene progression and the broad scene progression, respectively. By means of these scenic progressions, we shall be able to characterize the progression of thematic elements in a most general way, taking into account both the aspect of perpetual change as well as that of self-preservation.

2.4.6.1 The narrow scene

The thematic sphere of the clause represents a scene in the narrowest possible sense. Such a narrow scene of a clause can be quantitatively characterized by the number of thematic elements occurring in the clause. To take into account that the narrow scene of one clause ties — in one way or another — with the preceding text, we can make the quantitative characteristics more precise by considering also the number of the preceding contextual ties concerning the thematic section of this clause. For the purposes of statistical inquiry, let us introduce the following definition:

The narrow scene of a clause is given by the (explicitly) expressed thematic elements of the clause and by the preceding contextual ties concerning both the expressed and the ellipited thematic elements (the ellipited theme proper also representing a contextual tie) of the clause. The total number of expressed thematic elements is 630 and the total number of clauses is 450, which gives an average of 1.40 elements per clause. The number of ties in a hyperthematic string is equal to the number of participating elements minus one. Hence the number of all the ties in the strings is equal to the total number of participating elements minus the number of strings. If we add to this the total of non-thematic predecessors (the total of ties with non-thematic elements), we get 542 ties, which gives an average of 1.16 ties per clause.

The progression of particular narrow scenes can be illustrated by an oscillogram in which the trough of the wave is the number of realized (preceding) contextual ties and the crest is the number of expressed thematic elements (both tied and “new”), one cycle representing the narrow scene of one clause. Fig. 143 shows the narrow scene progression in paragraph 4 (31 clauses) of the analyzed text.

If we connect the crests and troughs of the waves, the upper curve will show the changing breadth of the narrow scenes in progression, while the lower curve will indicate the “strength” of contextual ties between successive clauses. Seen against the background of the average of expressed thematic elements and realized ties per clause, these two curves taken together can be regarded as the main characteristics of the narrow scene progression (cf. Fig. 144).



Fig. 143

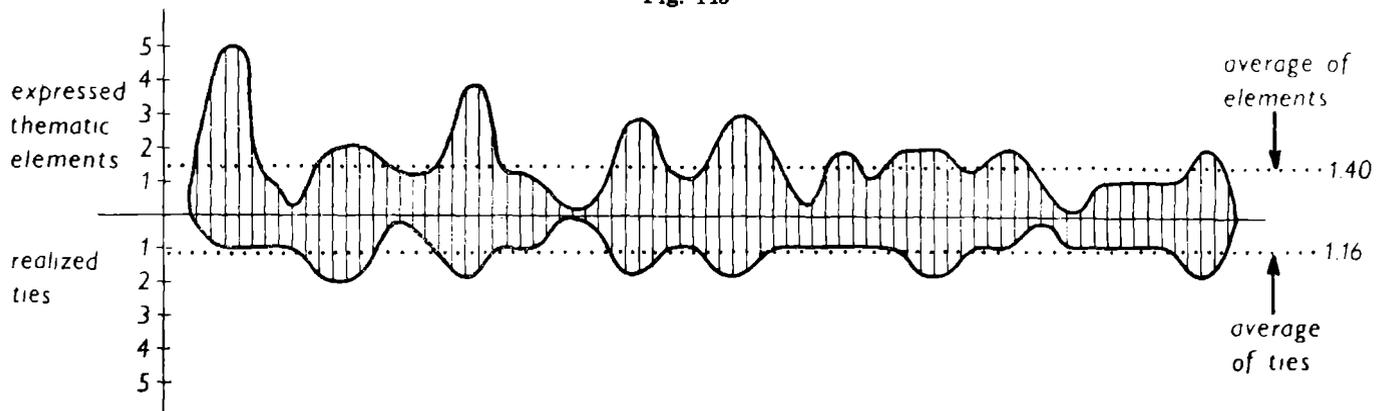
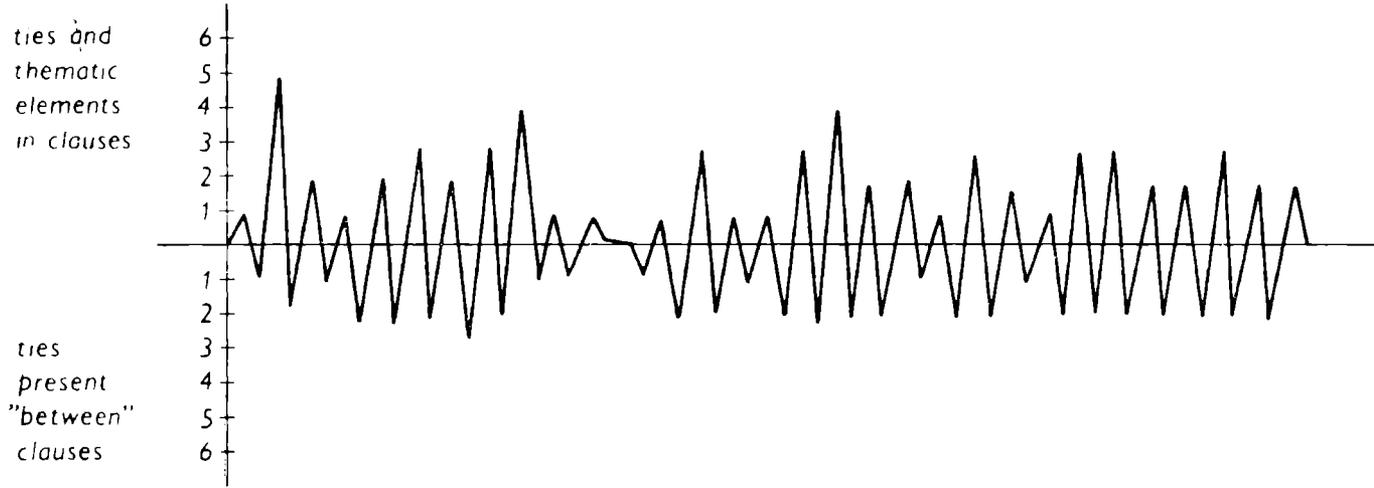


Fig. 144

As the above diagrams are based on data available to the listener at the moment of hearing the clause (expressed thematic elements, ties realized at that very moment), we shall speak of the listener's narrow scene. (The term listener is to be understood here as listener/reader.) Now it is imperative to remember that what has been said so far holds good only for the listener's narrow scene.

There is, however, an alternative approach to the narrow scene. The narrow scene of a clause may be characterized by the expressed and ellipted thematic elements as well as by both the ties realized at the given moment and the ties with some preceding elements that will be realized later on, i.e. the ties that as it were run through the given clause without being realized in it, but are realized in one of the subsequent clauses. The latter are the ties between elements that have been introduced onto the broad scene (non-thematic elements) or have already become part of the narrow scene before and those which occur, not in the examined clause, but in one of the subsequent clauses. This is, in fact, the speaker's point of view. In the narrow scene progression, the speaker keeps "in mind" not only the elements and ties he employs at the given moment, but also the preceding elements that he intends to tie with the thematic elements in the subsequent clauses. The evidence of this is that the speaker does use these elements later on. Our contextual flow-diagram enables us to trace the latent presence of such elements, because their contextual ties (connecting lines) can be clearly seen to run through the thematic sphere of a given clause.

Hence the speaker's narrow scene is represented by all the thematic elements and ties present at a certain point of the flow diagram. The speaker's narrow scene need not be the same if "measured" within a given clause or between two successive clauses, because some elements may leave the narrow scene (no further ties) and some may enter it (appearing in the subsequent clause(s) as thematic elements without predecessors or thematic elements with non-thematic predecessors). The general extent of the speaker's narrow scene in its progression can be given by the total of thematic elements and ties within the clause (crest of the wave) and the total of ties present at the point between successive clauses (trough). The oscillogram in Fig. 145 illustrates the speaker's narrow scene progression for the same paragraph (4, 31 clauses) as in the case of the listener's scene above.



Within the analysis, the whole contextual flow-diagram was provided with the speaker's narrow scene track. The total number of elements and ties within clauses and the total number of ties "between" clauses are substantially higher than in the case of the listener's scene, 2.57 in clauses, 2.19 "between" clauses. From the present point of view, the speaker's narrow scene is broader than the listener's. But the average of the elements and ties is not the only difference between these two aspects of the narrow scene. The comparison of the listener's track and the speaker's track will reveal the tendency of the latter to be more stable and to display fewer differences in breadth. Very often it keeps the same level of oscillation (the same total of elements and running ties) even when the listener's scene displays differences. (This may be a reflection of the fact that the speaker must know beforehand what narrow scene in general he is going to follow, or — more precisely — which elements of the broad scene (see 2.4.6.2) he intends to include in the (following) narrow scene, while the listener can only go by the explicit thematic elements and ties after their realizations in separate successive clauses.)

The higher stability of the speaker's narrow scene progression can be seen from Figures 146–149, illustrating successively the listener's narrow scene oscillogram of paragraph 6, the speaker's oscillogram of the same paragraph, the comparison of the two, and another instance of comparison based on the oscillograms of paragraph 10.

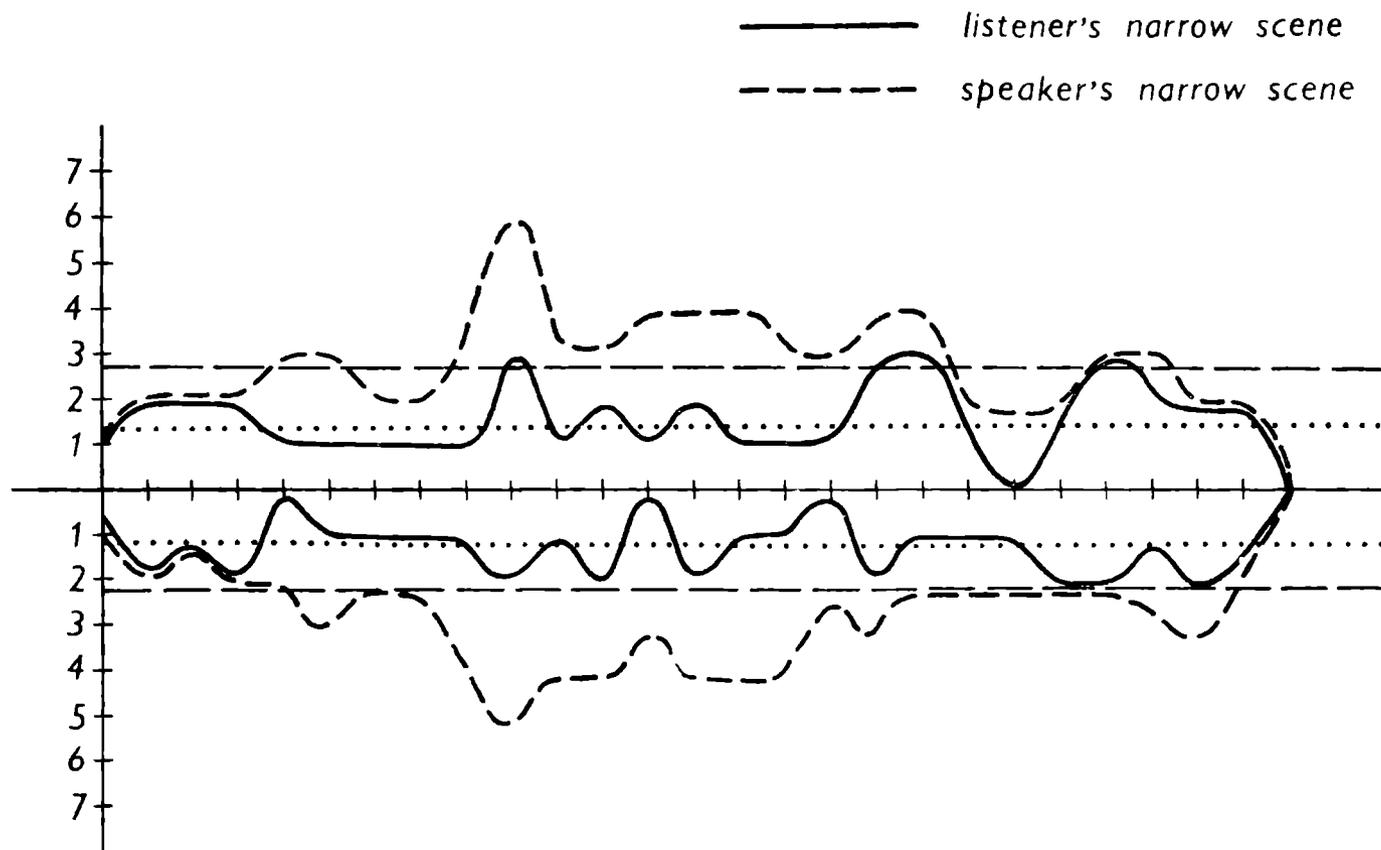


Fig. 148 Narrow scenes (§ 6, 26 clauses)

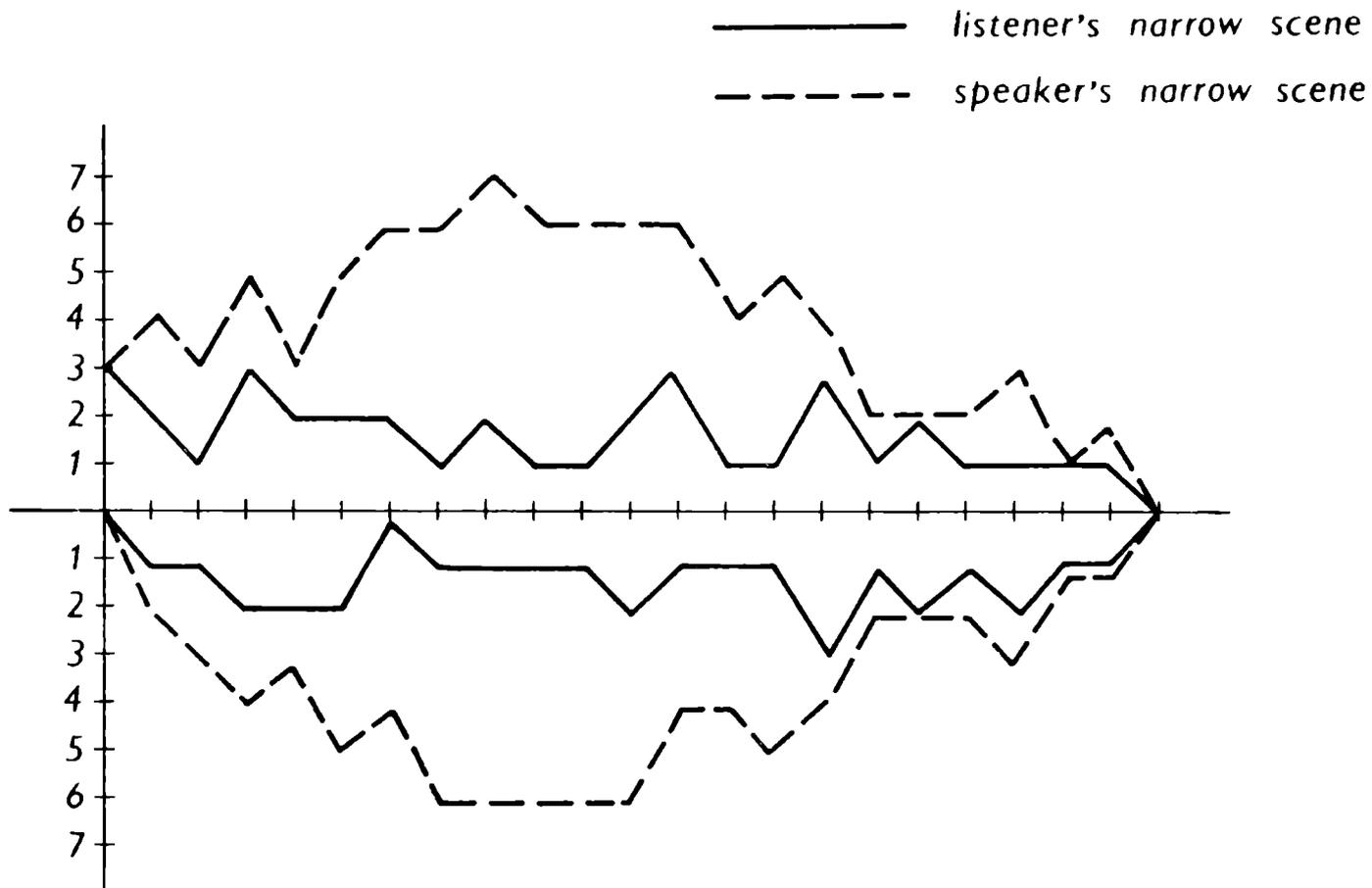


Fig. 149 Narrow scenes (§ 10, 22 clauses)

It is to be borne in mind that the narrow scene progressions as presented above reflect the quantitative aspect of the narrow scene rather than the qualitative one. For instance, the mutual exchange of thematic and rhematic elements in successive clauses, which represents one of the most striking qualitative changes of the narrow scene, need not show up in the oscillogram at all, because the number of thematic elements and the number of ties may remain the same. (One of the thematic ties is “abolished” by intensification, but another tie is created by the non-thematic element that becomes thematic.) Despite this defect the clear-cut extent of the narrow scene offers a reliable basis for dealing with the more delicate question of the broad scene.

2.4.6.2 The broad scene

So far we have spoken about the broad scene of a clause, which is given by both the thematic and the non-thematic elements of the clause. If we examined the succession of these particular broad scenes in the way we examined the narrow scenes, we would arrive at an oscillogram showing the number of elements and contextual ties (partly irrelevant from the viewpoint of rhematic progression), but failing to show the general intake and drop-out of elements introduced onto the broad scenes within a certain space of time or the whole text. For this reason we shall deal with the succession of separate broad scenes from the viewpoint of the whole text. By the broad scene progression we shall understand the process of creating the broad scene of the whole text by means of the successive contributions of the broad scenes of the separate clauses. To be able to “measure” these contributions, we have to look for a property which both the thematic and the non-thematic elements appearing on the separate broad scenes have in common. The common denomination of all these elements is that they are prospective members of one of the following narrow scenes.

Hence the broad scene (relative to the given text) is a collection of elements that are prospective members of the listener’s narrow scene, i.e. they may or they may not enter the narrow scene within a certain — at present unspecified — part of the narrow scene progression. They are latently present in the broad scene of the whole text for either an unlimited or a limited space of time. According to how well these elements are established in the broad scene, we can distinguish the following three kinds:

- (i) eternal themes (potential hyperthemes related to any kind of text)
- (ii) long-lived themes (potential hyperthemes related to the given text)
- (iii) short-lived themes (non-thematic elements as prospective themes)

Ad (i). Some elements display a very strong tendency to appear as themes proper without predecessors (cf. 2.4.4.4). Four of them are probably present in the broad scene of any kind of text: the speaker (I, we), the listener (you), "man" in general (cf. general subjects), and "nature" in general (cf. impersonal subjects). These elements are so well established in the broad scene of the text (the speaker and the listener are so well aware of their presence) that they need not be introduced into the discourse as rhematic elements first (which is usual with elements of other kinds), but can function directly as themes proper at any point in the text. They — as it were — constitute an imaginary hyperthematic string running through the whole text, and for this reason they are called eternal themes. This is not to say that they (especially the first two) cannot play the role of diathemes or even rhemes proper. Such functions, however, have to be always clearly signalled by word order, semantics and the immediate verbal context of the clause in question. Without special signals (i.e. in their unmarked use), these elements remain thematic.

Ad (ii). With the development of the discourse some elements develop a tendency to become exclusively thematic. They are often introduced as rhematic elements first, and then — after creating one or more hyperthematic strings — they start appearing as thematic elements without (rhematic) predecessors, which may testify to the fact that they have acquired permanent membership in the broad scene (cf. diathemes without predecessors in 2.4.4.8). These elements become part of the broad scene gradually. In the examined text, the amount grows from one element at the beginning to 19 towards the end. Especially at the beginning of the text, elements of this kind need not always be introduced as rhematic, but they may immediately play the role of themes, most often diathemes. They are presented as quasi context dependent, i.e. they appear in a way showing that they are regarded as matter-of-course items relating to the given text. (E.g., the element "Christ" in the second clause of Ælfric's homily.) The total number of 19 elements at the end of the text, which consists of 450 clauses, may seem rather low, but it is due to the fact that different words and phrases rendering the same conceptual contents (synonyms, e.g., Christ, Jesus, God's Son) are regarded as one element of the broad scene. No matter which of them is established in the broad scene first, the other (synonymic) elements automatically acquire the same status and appear as themes without (rhematic) predecessors. (The clues to recognizing certain items as synonyms are often given not by the verbal and the situational context but by the most general context of all — the context of experience.) In contradistinction to eternal themes, these elements are closely related to a particular text; different texts will develop different collections of these elements. As they are in fact the elements that are most often spoken about, they tend to form hyperthematic strings again and again, and that is why they are called potential hyperthemes.

From the point at which they appear as well-established elements of the broad scene (which is signalled by their direct thematic occurrence at the beginning of a hyperthematic string), they accompany the text as latent themes till the end and may, therefore, be regarded as long-lived themes (relative to the given text).

Ad (iii). The transitional and rhematic elements of a given clause are also introduced onto the broad scene and in fact become its members, because they may play the role of thematic elements in the subsequent clauses and are therefore prospective members of the narrow scene. Some of them are made part of the narrow scene of the very next clause, some of them remain latent in the broad scene and join the narrow scene of the next but one clause or one of the clauses coming afterwards, and some do not join any of the following narrow scenes at all. However, the length of time these non-thematic elements remain within the broad scene is not unlimited. It happens quite often that the non-thematic elements which have not entered the narrow scene of (at least) one of the following six or seven clauses appear later on, not as thematic but as transitional or (more often) rhematic elements, which means that they have to be introduced onto the broad scene again. This may be taken as (indirect) evidence of the (possible) fact that they are latently present in the broad scene for the span of six or seven clauses and then — if not used — leave the broad scene. With the exception of the non-thematic elements that become potential hyperthemes (long-lived themes), the other non-thematic elements are the least established in the broad scene: they hold the status of prospective members of the narrow scene for a comparatively short time (six or seven clauses) and that is why they are called short-lived prospective themes. As the total occurrence of non-thematic elements without transitions proper is 795, the average is 1.77 non-thematic elements per clause. Generally, this means that, in terms of the elements introduced onto the broad scene as non-thematic, the broad scene grows from 1.77 at the outset of the text to 12.39 in the seventh clause, and then remains at this level, because the average intake equals the average drop-out. Hence the part of the broad scene constituted by short-lived prospective themes may be possibly said to contain about 12 elements (except at the beginning). In contradistinction to the part of the broad scene constituted by the long-lived themes (sub(ii)), the part constituted by the short-lived themes is numerically constant, but is in fact subject to the perpetual change of the concrete elements (with their semantic contents) present at a given moment. For this reason we shall call the part constituted by the short-lived themes the ever-changing periphery of the broad scene, as opposed to its kernel part, represented by the eternal and the long-lived themes.

Special mention should be made of elements represented by adverbial diathemes appearing without predecessors and without successors. They display some features of all the above three groups of elements constituting

the broad scene in its progress. What they share with eternal themes is their presupposed presence in any kind of text. (Any appearance of a new quality takes place under some circumstances.) In contradistinction to eternal themes, they are presupposed in their general circumstantial meaning, but the concrete instances of temporal, spatial and other indications bring a new aspect of the narrow scene, and that is why they appear not as themes proper but as diathemes. The common feature shared with long-lived themes is that these adverbial diathemes appear as diathemes without predecessors and may be potentially present within the broad scene for a comparatively long time (usually till the validity of the particular circumstance is abolished by the introduction of a new circumstance of the same kind). What they have in common with short-lived themes is that they appear only once, have no successors, and are present in the broad scene not as concrete temporal, spatial and other circumstantial items but as a kind. The concrete instances of these indications may change infinitely, which reminds us of the ever-changing periphery constituted by the short-lived themes. In our analysis, the adverbial diathemes of the above kind are included in the broad scene progression within the average number (1.4) of expressed thematic elements per clause.

After having made a rough estimate of the number of elements representing the broad scene of the whole text and having divided the broad scene according to the kinds of elements it contains, we can make an estimate of the broad scene progression within the whole body of Ælfric's text. This time, the progression will be based not on the data concerning the separate clauses in succession but on the average rate of occurrence of the elements dealt with above. Fig. 150 will illustrate this, and the explanation will follow afterwards.

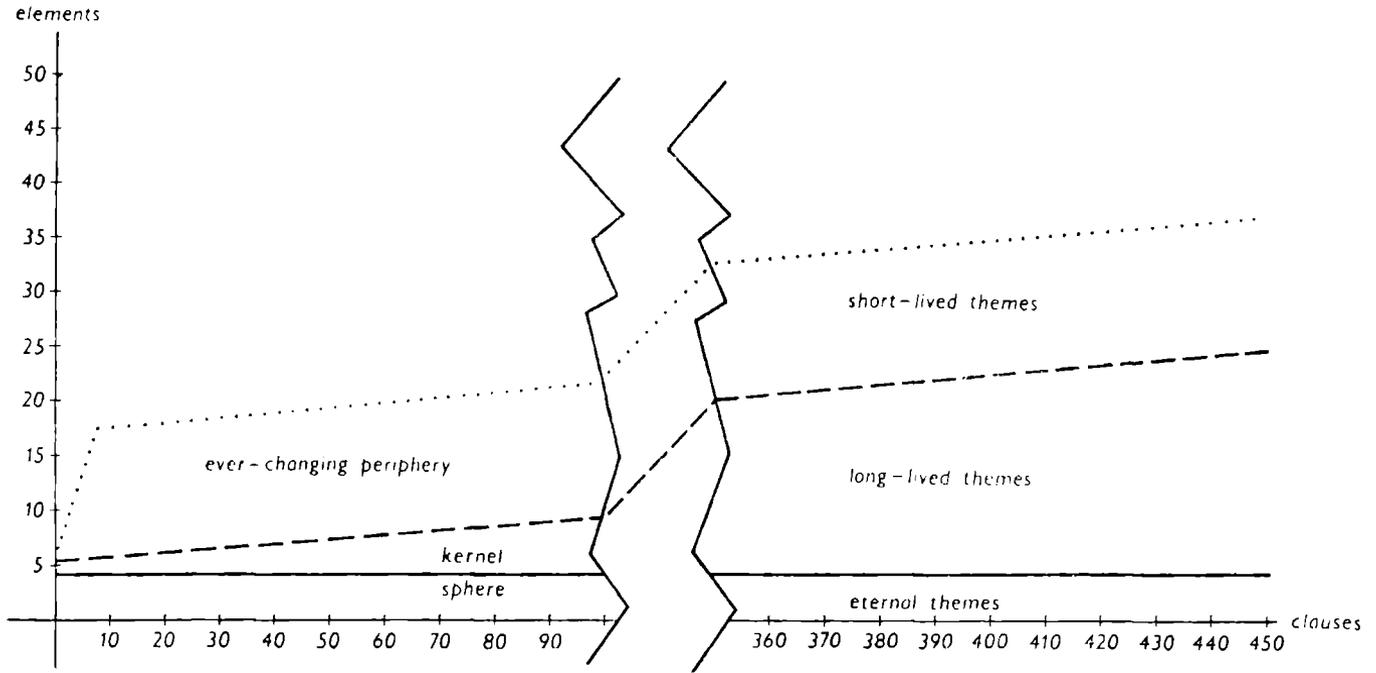


Fig. 150

On the average the broad scene at the beginning of the text consists of four eternal themes, 1.40 thematic elements (the average of thematic elements per clause), and 1.77 non-thematic elements (the average of non-thematic elements per clause without transitions proper), which makes a total of about seven elements at the very beginning of the broad scene progression. Owing to the non-thematic elements introduced onto the broad scene in the following clauses, the broad scene extends at the rate of 1.77 elements per clause till the seventh clause, where the number of these short-lived themes amounts to 12.4. Hence the average breadth of the broad scene at the seventh clause is about 18 elements. If the intake and the drop-out of the non-thematic elements (short-lived prospective themes) were the same, the broad scene would remain at this level. In the course of progression, however, some of the short-lived prospective themes become more established in the broad scene and begin to play the role of long-lived themes. They leave the sphere of ever-changing periphery (constituted by non-thematic elements introduced onto the scene) and enter the kernel part of the broad scene. Since the number of these new arrivals ranges from one at the beginning to 19 at the end, the average increase is one element per 25 clauses (0.04 elements per clause). As the number of elements in the ever-changing periphery remains constant, the broad scene gradually grows, owing to the fact that some peripheral elements are not dropped out but remain within the broad scene and enter its kernel sphere at the rate of 0.04 per clause. Based on the above data the extent of the broad scene towards the end of our text is 37 elements.

The narrow scene progression is — of course — part of the broad scene progression. The source of elements of the narrow scenes are the narrow scenes themselves (one of the preceding narrow scenes) and the non-narrow scene part of the broad scene. The ties between the narrow scenes were dealt with in 2.4.6.1. It might be interesting to know what the ties with the non-narrow scene part of the broad scene are. The ties with the kernel sphere (eternal themes, long-lived themes and occasional themes) are represented by the total number of expressed thematic elements without predecessors. The total number is 208, which makes an average of 0.46 ties per clause. The ties with the peripheral sphere of the broad scene (short-lived prospective themes) are in turn given by the total of expressed thematic elements with non-thematic predecessors: the total 142, average per clause 0.32. The overall average of the ties between the (listener's) narrow scene and the rest of the broad scene is 0.78 ties per clause, with about 60 % being supplied by the kernel sphere and 40 % by the periphery (see Fig. 151).

On the grounds of the acquired statistical data, it is possible to give the proportion of ties realized purely within the narrow scene progression to those between the narrow scenes and the rest of the broad scene progres-

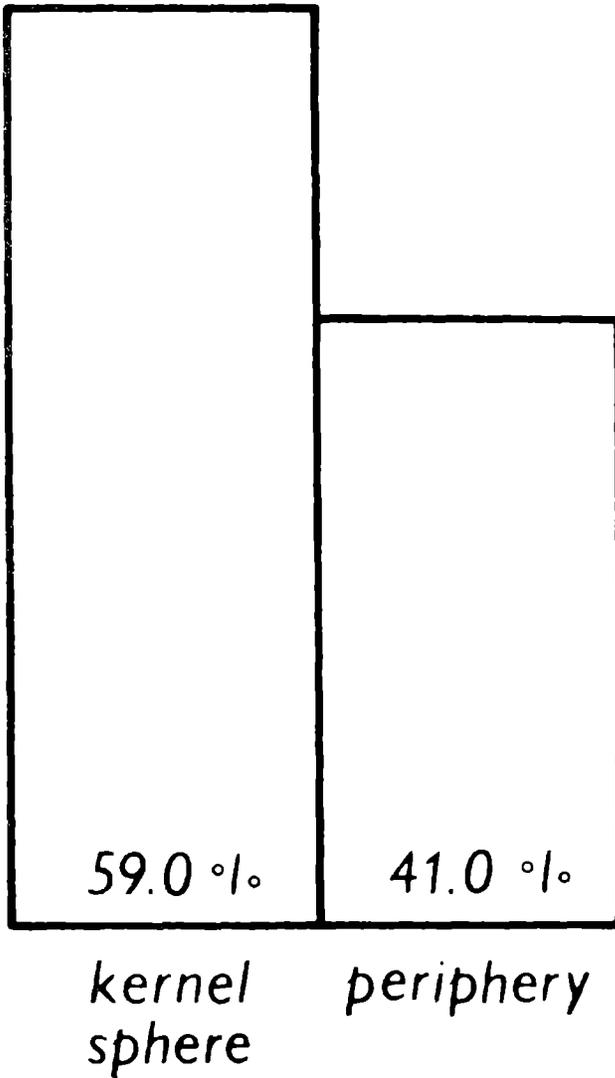


Fig. 151

sion. As is shown in Fig. 152, the contribution of “narrow scene” elements (0.85 per clause) and “broad scene” elements (0.78) to the narrow scene progression is approximately the same.

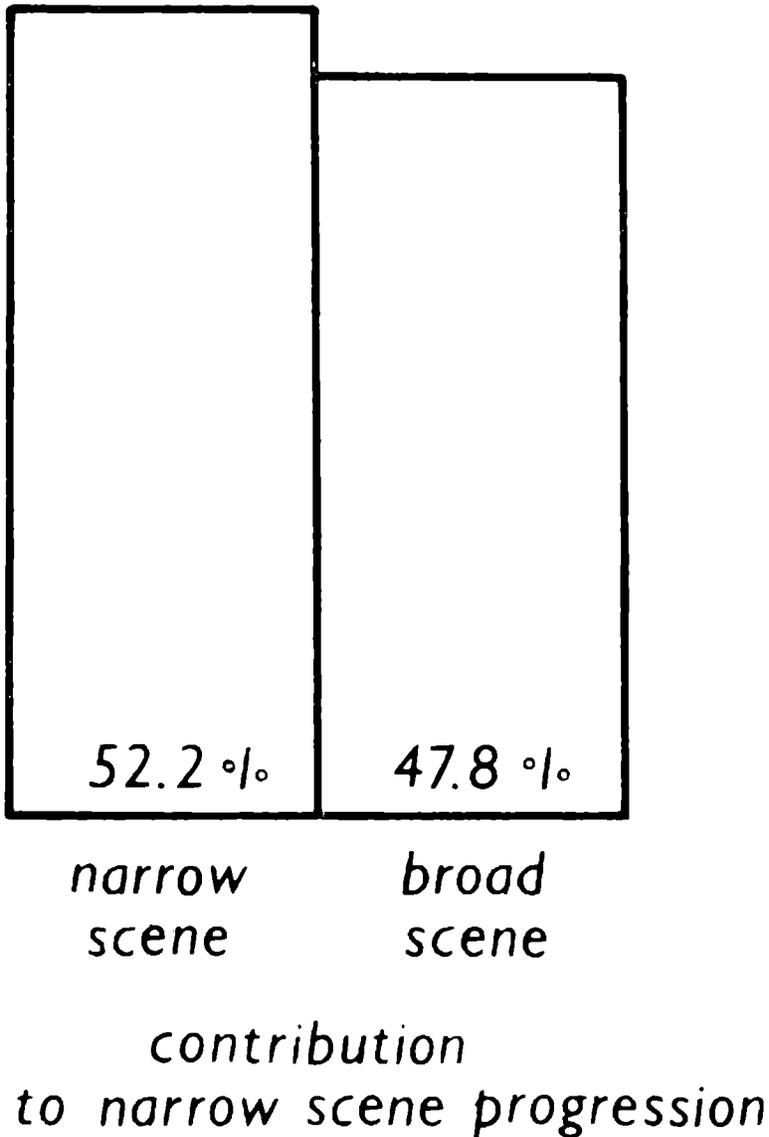


Fig. 152

To come back to the broad scene progression, we calculated its extent and shape on the grounds of average numbers of elements and thus presented it as more stable than the narrow scene. It proves to be stable (in terms of the tendencies of growth discussed above) even when it is examined clause by clause. If we realize that not only the thematic but also all the non-thematic elements of a clause (because introduced onto the broad scene) constitute the broad scene at any given moment, it will become clear that any changes within and of the narrow scene (which is part of the broad scene) are — from the viewpoint of the broad scene — only internal changes and hence do not affect its shape. There are only two differences that can be traced between the “average” and the “clause to clause” progression: the irregular increase of non-thematic elements introduced onto the scene.

Instead of the regular intake and drop-out (1.77 elements per clause), there are deviations in both the intake (one to five elements) and the drop-out, but the general balance is kept the same. In addition to that, the usual difference of plus/minus two elements within the total of 20—40 is nothing compared with the differences in the narrow scene progression.

The other difference is caused by the (possibly) irregular growth of the extent of the kernel sphere. First the elements cannot enter it in fractions (0.04 elements per clause); second, they need not enter it at quite regular intervals (as supposed in the graph). But again, the differences are too small to influence the broad scene progression based on average terms.

Comparing the broad scene and the narrow scene, we have had in mind the listener's narrow scene (cf. 2.4.6.1), which is based on explicitly expressed elements and ties. At any given time, the listener's narrow scene does not contain any potential elements: it contains only those which have already entered the narrow scene. Beside these elements, the speaker's narrow scene may also contain potential elements and their ties that (after having been introduced onto the broad scene) will enter the narrow scene in the “near” future. In this sense, the speaker's narrow scene may contain the “peripheral” elements of the broad scene, but — contrary to the broad scene — it never contains all of them, but only the ones that will actually be employed. Whatever the differences between the listener's and the speaker's narrow scenes may be, it can be clearly seen that, if compared with the broad scene, the former is of one kind while the latter displays characteristics that set it distinctly apart. For this reason, the speaker's narrow scene progression, though broader and more stable than the listener's, cannot be identified with the broad scene progression as presented above.

2.4.7 FIRBASIAN SCALES PROGRESSION

On the one hand the progression of Firbasian scales in successive clauses exceeds the scope of the present study, because the main division of the scales themselves is based on the semantic properties of non-thematic elements in relation to their thematic "counterparts". (Cf. 2.3.7.) On the other hand, the concepts of pure and augmented scales according to the type of scene they contain lead us touch upon the scales progression, because it may throw further light on the junction of subject-object and adverbial diathemes with regard to other thematic and non-thematic elements.

All the clauses of the analyzed text (not only those containing diathemes) have been examined from the viewpoint of the Firbasian scales they represent. The subdivision of scales is the following (for the terms see 2.3.7):

- (i) pure scales
 - (a) pure Q-scales (denoted by 1 in Figures 153 and 154)
 - (b) pure A-scales (denoted by 3)
 - (c) Q/A-scales (pure Q-scales which might be also seen as pure A-scales; denoted by 6)
 - (d) A/Q-scales (pure A-scales which display some features of pure Q-scales; denoted by 5)

- (ii) augmented Q-scales with
 - (a) subject-object diathemes and themes proper (2B)
 - (b) subject-object diathemes and "oriented" elements (2A)
 - (c) adverbial diathemes and themes proper (4B)

- (iii) augmented A-scales with
 - (a) adverbial diathemes and themes proper (4A)
 - (b) adverbial diathemes and "oriented" elements (4C)

Before discussing the tendencies displayed by the scales progression, let us briefly mention the types of scale occurring at the beginning and the end of such progressions in separate paragraphs. At the beginning there

are both Q-scales and A-scales, either pure or augmented. The beginning of the progression does not seem to be confined to one or a small number of types of scale, but with regard to a lower rate of occurrence of A-scales in general, we can say that A-scales display a slight tendency to be more frequent at the beginning of the progression than anywhere else. This is also corroborated by figures concerning the types of scale at the end of the progressions. Neither augmented nor pure A-scales can be found in this place, with the exception of two occurrences of A/Q-scales, whose presence here might be ascribed to their Q-scale feature. In contradistinction to this, all the Q-scale types have their representatives at the end of the progressions, which testifies to the tendency of progressions to be closed by one of the Q-scales.

2.4.7.1 The axial tendency

The high proportion of pure Q-scales has already been mentioned in 2.3.7.3. The proportion is still higher if not only clauses containing diathemes but also the other clauses are taken into account. This means that pure Q-scales will most probably play an important part in scales progression. We examined each type of scale from the viewpoint of its immediate successor and the statistics clearly show that the pure Q-scale is the most frequent successor to any type of scale, itself included. This also explains its well-pronounced tendency to form groups of its own type (as mentioned in 2.3.7.3). The tendency to appear after any kind of scale together with the tendency to form groups is what we shall call the axial tendency of the pure Q-scale. It is an imaginary axis running through the whole of the Firbasian scales progression; it – as it were – represents the point of rest to which the language user returns again and again after having “deviated” from it by using other types of scales.

The Firbasian scales progression and its tendencies can be shown in the form of a graph, where the upper part of the vertical axis represents various types of Q-scales, the lower part represents A-scales, and the horizontal axis the sequence of clauses. The graph in Fig. 153 illustrates paragraph 4 of the examined text.

It is quite apparent from the graph that the pure Q-scale constitutes an imaginary axis of the progression. It is not only its high occurrence rate in general but also its tendency to follow any other scale that makes it hold the key position in the progression. The axial tendency of the pure Q-scale can be seen even when a comparatively small number of clauses is examined. It becomes most evident, however, if all the clauses are subjected to examination.

2.4.7.2 Other tendencies

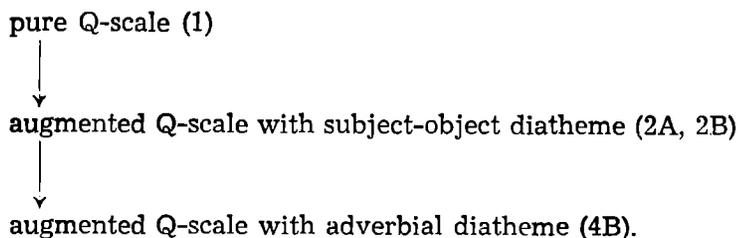
Apart from the axial tendency (2.4.7.1), the Firbasian scales progression in the analyzed text displays some other tendencies which are less pronounced than the one above and, therefore, more difficult to trace within one paragraph. The longer the examined text, the more apparent they become.

One of them may be called the self-preservation tendency. Scales of the same or closely related types tend to form groups. In the scales progression graph, they form horizontal parts of the curve (which might be called secondary axes) or they keep the curve within the limits of augmented Q-scales with subject-object diathemes and augmented Q-scales with adverbial diathemes or within the region of A-scales. As has been shown above, the pure Q-scale is the most frequent successor to any type of scale. The second most frequent successor is usually the scale of the same type. Some deviations can be seen only with types of low occurrence in general.

Both the axial and the self-preservation tendency can be illustrated by the graph representing the scales progression of paragraph 6 (see Fig. 154).

The primary (pure Q-scale) axis is represented by clauses 1, 5–9, 11, 13, 15–17, 20–21, 26. The secondary axes are represented by clauses 3–4; 10, 12, 14; 18–19; 22–23; 24–25.

The Firbasian scales progression in the whole of the analyzed text displays one more tendency which can also be clearly seen from the above graph; this is the tendency of the Q-scales gradation. If we disregard the frequent come-back of the pure Q-scale, we can trace the successions



In paragraph 6 (see Fig. 154), there are three successions of clauses displaying this tendency:

- (i) 1 → 2 → 3
- (ii) 5–9 → 10, 12, 14 → 18–19
- (iii) 20–21 → 22–23 → 24–25

If we realize that adverbial diathemes appear as “new” diathemes (bringing a new aspect of the scene) more often than subject-object diathemes, we can speak of a kind of gradation of Q-scales in terms of the

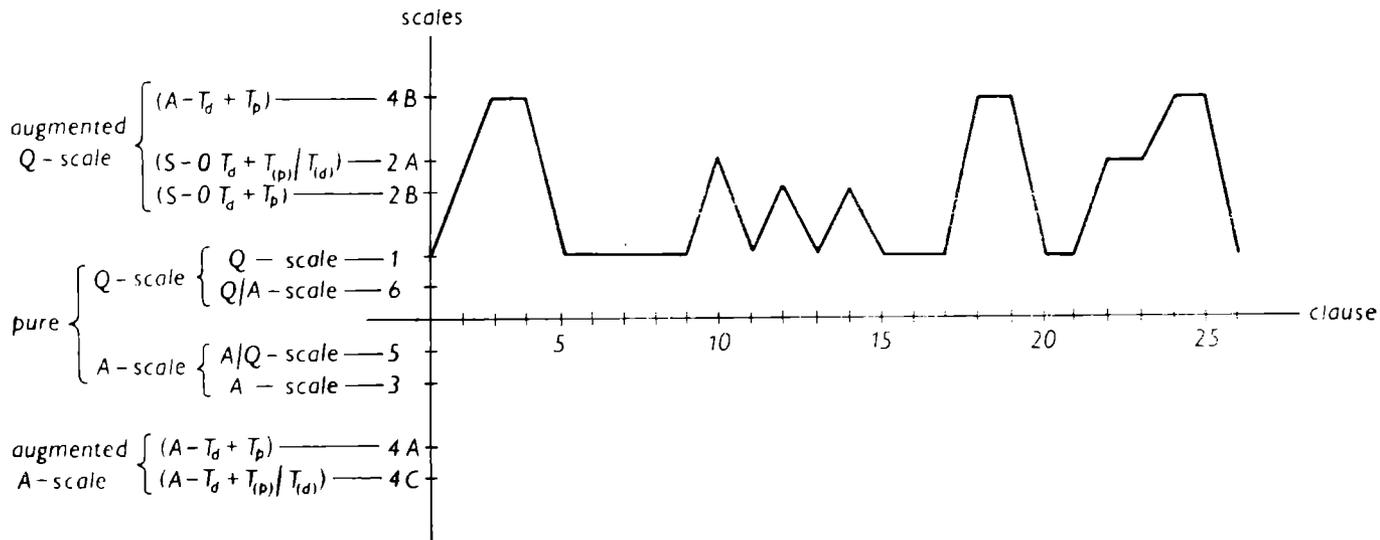


Fig. 154

contents of their narrow scenes. The pure Q-scale with only one thematic element comes first. It is followed by an augmented Q-scale containing the subject-object diatheme and some other thematic element. Both the subject-object diatheme and the other thematic element very often tie with the thematic or non-thematic sphere of the preceding clause, and in this sense, they are less "new" (more established) than the adverbial diatheme accompanied by the theme proper, which constitute the narrow scene of the third member of the succession in question. More often than not, it is only the theme proper which ties with one of the elements in the preceding clause(s), while the adverbial diatheme represents a "new" element of the narrow scene. For this reason we should like to speak here of the tendency of Q-scales gradation. In different paragraphs this tendency is present to varying degrees, and the results of our analysis do not single it out as clearly as the above axial and self-preservation tendencies.

The Firbasian scales progression as presented here takes into account only the thematic differences among the Firbasian scales. A more profound and more detailed analysis would require the inclusion of the non-thematic differences as well, and the examination of a more extensive part of text. In the case of the Firbasian scales, we ought to be aware of the fact that they represent a very high level of abstraction, and their "contextual" analysis has to be based not on one but on a large number of texts if it is to yield comparatively reliable results. The reason why we have mentioned our partial and tentative results is that the phenomena of scales progression are in a certain way connected with thematic elements in general and diathemes in particular. This has been meant as an attempt to show the kind of "contextual" connection that links them and — at the same time — to provide material for comparison with the results of further research.