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*Brno studies in English*. 1985, vol. 16, iss. 1, pp. 63-71

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/104475>

Access Date: 01. 12. 2024

Version: 20220831

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## ON ENGLISH ADVERBIALS OF AGENCY IN THE PENULTIMATE SENTENCE POSITION

*Eva Golková*

The present paper results from research into adverbials of agency in English and Czech, continuing the inquiries started in Golková 1983, but paying attention to only one kind of adverbial of agency (=A<sub>ag</sub>), namely the A<sub>ag</sub> situated in the penultimate sentence position, and its role in functional sentence perspective (=FSP).<sup>1</sup>

The formal limitations used before have been kept in regard to the investigated category of penultimate A<sub>ag</sub>, i.e. only such adverbials have been taken into consideration as are (a) dependent on the finite verbal passive (not on the past participle only) and (b) formally expressed by a substantive (or a substantivized adjective or numeral) with the preposition *by* or *with* in English, e.g.:

1. Sir Wilfred Lucas-Dockery had not been intended *by nature or education* for the Governor of a prison; ... WD 166,19<sup>2</sup>  
Sir Wilfred Lucas-Dockery nebyl *ani povahou, ani vzděláním předurčen* k tomu, aby zastával místo ředitele věznice; ... 123,20

The A<sub>ag</sub> is most frequently situated at the very end of the sentence; the penultimate position of the A<sub>ag</sub> before another sentence element is less frequent: in the corpus examined in Golková 1983 only 15 per cent of the A<sub>ag</sub> occupied the penultimate position.

Both the final and the penultimate A<sub>ag</sub>, however, proved to be essentially of the same character as far as their position in FSP was concerned: if context-dependent, they were thematic (the number of context-dependent A<sub>ag</sub> being comparatively very small); if context-independent, they were all rhematic.

Only by applying a subtler gamut of communicative dynamism (=CD), in this case by distinguishing between rheme proper and other rhematic elements, could we see a difference between A<sub>ag</sub> situated in the final sentence position and those situated in the penultimate position: the final A<sub>ag</sub> was interpreted as rheme proper, the penultimate A<sub>ag</sub> as belonging to the rhematic section of the sentence

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'FSP' and other related terms follow the usage established by Jan Firbas (cf., e. g., Firbas 1981. 53, or Svoboda 1983. 49–52).

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Waugh, *Decline and Fall*, page 166, line 19, in the Czech translation page 123, line 20. For a list of abbreviations, see note<sup>4</sup>.

but mostly not operating as rheme proper (this function being assumed by the sentence element following the  $A_{ag}$ ).

The question we shall attempt to answer in this paper can be formulated as follows: does the syntactic and semantic character of the (context-independent) sentence element following the penultimate  $A_{ag}$  affect the relative amount of CD conveyed by the  $A_{ag}$ ? Or, in other words, do sentences with a penultimate  $A_{ag}$  show a different interplay of means of FSP because of different final sentence elements?

The previous research yielded only 45 cases of the penultimate  $A_{ag}$  of the investigated type (final  $As_{ag}$  were nearly 6 times more frequent). They were excerpted from three functional styles: 16 from scholarly writing, 17 from narrative prose and 12 from dialogues (Gol. 1983.43). To have a more representative corpus, we resolved to increase the number of penultimate (=pnlt)  $As_{ag}$  investigated to a minimum of 100. The previous research came to the conclusion that 'there are no conspicuous differences in different functional styles as far as the amount of CD of the English  $A_{ag}$  is concerned' (Gol. 1983.46) and also that 'the sentence position of the  $A_{ag}$  does not differ with different functional styles' (Gol. 1983.43). What does differ in the three functional styles is the frequency of the  $A_{ag}$ : in the examined narrative prose the frequency was 4.8 times lower than that in scholarly writing, and in dialogues 6.9 times lower (Gol. 1983. 41 and TABLE 1). The most convenient functional style to excerpt from in search of more pnlt $As_{ag}$  was, therefore, that of scholarly writing. Bearing in mind Uhlřířová's observation that  $As_{ag}$  are frequent in historical writing, we finished excerpting examples from E. H. Carr's book *What is History?* and chose A. L. Morton's *A People's History of England*.<sup>3</sup> Having augmented the original number of 45 cases from the previous research by additional 67 cases taken from the books mentioned above, we reached a total of 112 cases of the pnlt $A_{ag}$  for the purpose of our research.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> In fact, we also examined Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* and Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* without finding a single case of the pnlt $A_{ag}$ ; one of the two cases in Priestley's *Bright Day* has been included in our material (the other one has been excluded because of the absence of a counterpart in the Czech translation).

<sup>4</sup> A complete list of the 24 titles used in the previous research can be found in Gol. 1983. 38–39. The following list of abbreviations refers only to the publications drawn on for the 15 examples in the present paper:

BO – Manfred Bierwisch, On classifying semantic features, *Semantics*, ed. by Danny D. Steinberg and Leon A. Jakobovits, 410–35 (Cambridge 1971); Manfred Bierwisch, Třídění sémantických rysů, *Studie z transformační gramatiky I*, ed. by Eva Hajiřová, 105–33 (Prague 1975);

CW – E. H. Carr, *What is History?* (Harmondsworth, England, n. d.); E. H. Carr, *Co je historie?*, transl. by Jaroslav Strnad (Prague 1967);

LH – Peter Luke, *Hadrian VII* (London 1968); Peter Luke, *Hadrián sedmý*, transl. by Ivo T. Havlíř (Prague 1971);

MC – Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*, *Collected Plays*, 223–330 (London 1961); Arthur Miller, *Zkouška ohněm*, 5 her, 215–328, transl. by Aloys Skoumal (Prague 1962);

MP – A. L. Morton, *A People's History of England* (Seven Seas Publishers, Berlin 1967, i.e. 2nd paperback impression of the new edition 1948); A. L. Morton, *Dějiny Anglie*, transl. by Šárka Nováková and Radovan Tešář (Prague 1950);

PB – J. B. Priestley, *Bright Day* (London 1946); J. B. Priestley, *Jasný den*, transl. by L. Kaufmannová-Fastrová (Prague 1947);

SQ – *A Corpus of English Conversation*, ed. by Jan Svartvik and Randolph Quirk (Lund 1980);

WD – Evelyn Waugh, *Decline and Fall* (Harmondsworth, England 1976); Evelyn Waugh, *Sestup a pád*, transl. by Josef Schwarz (Prague 1971).

The syntactic function performed by the sentence element following the  $\text{pnltA}_{\text{ag}}$  can be any except that of the predicate. The syntactic functions associated with the final element in our material and their frequencies are given in TABLE 1:

TABLE 1

| Function               | Frequency | Per cent |
|------------------------|-----------|----------|
| subject                | 7         | 6.2      |
| object                 | 16        | 14.3     |
| complement             | 15        | 13.4     |
| attribute <sup>5</sup> | 3         | 2.7      |
| adverbial of place     | 10        | 8.9      |
| time                   | 28        | 25.0     |
| manner                 | 20        | 17.9     |
| cause                  | 12        | 10.7     |
| result                 | 1         | 0.9      |
| Total                  | 112       | 100.0    |

The final sentence element is implemented by a noun or noun phrase, *as* + adjective, preposition + numeral, adverb, non-finite verbal form (infinitive, gerund or past participle) or even subordinate clause, the structures being simple or expanded.

Let us adduce one example of each of the syntactic functions performed by the final sentence element:

### SUBJECT

2. ... because it is not permitted *by human nature* to attain perfection even in evil ...  
 CW 77,03  
 ..., že není *v lidské přirozenosti*<sup>6</sup> dosáhnout dokonalosti ani ve zlu... 78, 19

### OBJECT

3. ... but /I/ was told *by Bridget* — on our side too — not to be 'so jolly cocky about it'  
 /and was.../ PB 121, 20  
 ... ale *Bridget* mi řekla, že na to „nemusím být tak nafoukaný“, ... 88, 09

<sup>5</sup> not related to the  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  itself.

<sup>6</sup> The Czech word(s) conveying the notion corresponding to that of the English  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  will be (for the reader's convenience) *italicized* even if their syntactic function in the Czech sentence is different from that of the  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$ .

## COMPLEMENT

see example 1, p. 63

## ATTRIBUTE

4. ...now a new king was appointed by *Parliament* who was not by hereditary right the next in succession... MP 141, 04  
...nyní si *parlament* dosadil nového krále, který nebyl na řadě podle nástupnického práva... 109, 08

## ADVERBIAL OF PLACE

5. The relevant passages are quoted by *W. Stark* in his introduction to F. Meinecke, *Machiavellism*, pp. XXXV–XXXVI. CW 101, 30  
Dotyčné pasáže cituje *W. Stark* v úvodu ke knize F. Meinecke, *Machiavellism*, str. XXXV–XXXVI. 102, 43

## ADVERBIAL OF TIME

6. This rebellion was put down by *German mercenaries* after hard fighting outside Exeter. MP 172, 18  
Toto povstání potlačili *němečtí žoldněři* po tuhém boji před Exeterem. 132, 16

## ADVERBIAL OF MANNER<sup>7</sup>

7. And, second, the central period of the Industrial Revolution — 1793 to 1815 — was occupied by *European wars* on a scale never before known. MP 344, 21  
A za druhé, ústřední období průmyslové revoluce — léta 1793–1815 — bylo vyplněno *evropskými válkami* v dosud nevidaném měřítku. 257, 19

## ADVERBIAL OF CAUSE

8. ...how this cavalry was adapted by *Cromwell and the English bourgeoisie* to suit the needs of their struggle. MP 114, 10  
...jak si *Cromwell* a *anglická buržoazie* přizpůsobili tuto jízdu svému boji o moc. 90, 26

## ADVERBIAL OF RESULT

9. The set of basic elements has been divided by *Katz and Fodor* (1963) into two types of elements, called semantic markers and distinguishers. BO 410, 25  
Soubor základních sémantických prvků byl rozdělen *Katzem a Fodorem* (1963) na dva typy prvků, a to na tak zvané sémantické indexy (semantic markers) a na rozlišovatele (distinguishers). 105, 24

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<sup>7</sup> According to the classification of Šmilauer 1966, our category of the adverbial of manner includes manner proper, quantity, instrument, and viewpoint; that of the adverbial of cause includes cause proper and consequence, purpose, condition, and concession.

In attempting to establish the functional perspectives of the sentences with a  $\text{pnltA}_{\text{ag}}$ , or at least the amounts of CD conveyed by the  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  and the final sentence element, we take into consideration the three factors that are relevant here: context (context dependence and context independence), linear modification and semantic structure.<sup>8</sup> Linear modification (which is, strictly speaking, the influence of the sentence position on the degree of CD carried by an element) is a more important factor in Czech than it is in English, because Czech uses word order as the main means of FSP. In Hajičová and Sgall's words:<sup>9</sup> 'In most Slavonic languages, the „free“ word order of which reflects the hierarchy of communicative dynamism rather faithfully, the identification of the boundary between topic and focus can be carried out in a more effective way.'<sup>10</sup> Firbas sums up the relevant conclusions of the extensive inquiries into Czech and Slovak word order as follows: 'In Standard Czech and Standard Slovak the unmarked arrangement of sentence elements puts the element expressing the most important piece of information in end position.'<sup>11</sup>

The final sentence elements of the Czech examples 1 to 9 can, accordingly, be interpreted as expressing the most important piece of information, i.e. as rhemes proper. Supposing the Czech translators did not ascribe the function of rheme proper in Czech to an element whose English counterpart they did not interpret as rheme proper either, we may conclude that in the English examples 1 to 9 the final sentence element is also rheme proper, the  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  conveying a lower amount of CD.

Not all of the 112  $\text{pnltA}_{\text{ag}}$  we have investigated have been translated into Czech as  $\text{As}_{\text{ag}}$  (cf. the examples 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8). Very often the whole structure of the Czech sentence is different, the passive verbal form with an  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  being translated by means of an active verb with the agent of the action expressed by the subject (cf. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8).<sup>12</sup> This Czech structure sometimes puts the element corresponding to the English  $\text{A}_{\text{ag}}$  closer to the beginning of the sentence, rendering it less communicatively dynamic, but, of course, maintaining the relation showing a less dynamic agent and a more dynamic final sentence element. (In our material, the Czech active voice corresponds to the English passive voice in 70 cases.)

Intonation is a very important means of FSP in the spoken language, the intonation centre of the sentence signalling rheme proper. In establishing the distribution of CD, we were able to make use of intonation as a means of FSP in five sentences with a  $\text{pnltA}_{\text{ag}}$ . They have been excerpted from Svartvik and Quirk's *Corpus of English Conversation*, which gives prosodic transcriptions of all its sentences.

With the assistance of the Czech translations or prosodic transcriptions, we have interpreted the distribution of CD in the English sentences with a  $\text{pnltA}_{\text{ag}}$  as follows:

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Firbas 1983.27.

<sup>9</sup> Hajičová and Sgall 1982.25.

<sup>10</sup> Meaning more effective than in English.

<sup>11</sup> Firbas 1979.39.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Table 2 in Golková 1983.

TABLE 2

| The syntactic function of the final sentence element | (i)Penultimate A <sub>ag</sub> as rheme proper |                     |            | (ii)Final sentence element as rheme proper |             | (iii)Other sentence element as rheme proper |            |
|--|--|---------------------|------------|--|-------------|---|------------|
|  | Total number                                   | Number of instances | Per cent   | Number of instances                        | Per cent    | Number of instances                         | Per cent   |
| subject  | 7  | —                   | —          | 7  | 100         | —   | —          |
| object   | 16   | 1                   | 6.2        | 15   | 93.8        | —   | —          |
| complement   | 15   | —                   | —          | 15   | 100         | —   | —          |
| attribute  | 3  | —                   | —          | 3  | 100         | —   | —          |
| adverbial of place                                   | 10   | 2                   | 20         | 8  | 80          | —   | —          |
| time   | 28   | 7                   | 25         | 18   | 64.3        | 3   | 10.7       |
| manner   | 20   | —                   | —          | 20   | 100         | —   | —          |
| cause  | 12   | —                   | —          | 10   | 83.3        | 2   | 16.7       |
| result   | 1  | —                   | —          | 1  | 100         | —   | —          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>112</b>                                     | <b>10</b>           | <b>8.9</b> | <b>97</b>                                  | <b>86.6</b> | <b>5</b>                                    | <b>4.5</b> |

All of our examples 1 to 9 are recorded in column (ii). This column shows the highest numbers (the first expressing the absolute frequencies of cases, the second their percentages). It not only tells us that in 97 out of the 112 examined sentences the final sentence element operates as rheme proper, the *pnltA<sub>ag</sub>* conveying a smaller amount of CD, but also gives us the frequencies and percentages of the syntactic functions performed by the final sentence element: the lowest percentage (64.3) goes with the adverbial of time.

Before drawing any more conclusions, let us examine the final sentence elements in our material from the point of view of their context dependence. (Bearing in mind the possible additional influence of the following context on the functional perspective of a sentence, we understand by context-dependent elements only such elements as are, in all their aspects, known or derivable from the immediately relevant situational context or from the immediately relevant preceding verbal context; cf. Firbas 1981.39—40.)

Only four final sentence elements have been interpreted as context-dependent in our material: 1 object, 1 adverbial of time (= *A<sub>t</sub>*) and 2 adverbials of cause. They are the expressions *to do* (object), *any more* (*A<sub>t</sub>*), *for an attack on Russia* and *to secure land* (*As* of cause) in examples 10 to 13:

10. /Now draw yourselves up like men and help me/ as you are bound by *Heaven* to do.  
MC 318, 11  
... jak jste k tomu *od Boha* povolán. 315, 15
11. I'm not fooled by *your high-falutin* talk any more. LH 6, 32  
Já už vám na *ty vaše řečičky* neskočím. 11, 26

12. /In 1811, when Napoleon had to draw away part of his forces for his Russian venture, Wellington was able to take the offensive and step by step the French were driven out of the peninsula./ An army of nearly half a million — Poles, Italians and Germans as well as Frenchmen — was massed by *Napoleon* in 1811 for an attack on Russia. MP 360, 16  
K útoku na Rusko v r. 1811 shromáždil *Napoleon* armádu o síle asi pět miliónu Poláků, Italů, Němců a Francouzů.
13. /Bookland was land granted to a lord by book or charter.  
... The first charters were made out in favour of Church bodies, but once their advantages were realised they were increasingly sought after and obtained by the magnates./ All kinds of devices, from the invocation of the terrors of Hell to plain forgery were adopted by *the Church* to secure land. MP 43, 32  
Aby si zajistila pozemky, použila *církve* všech možných úskoků od vzývání pekelných hrůz až k zjevným podvodům. 34, 41

In 10 the semantic content of *to do* is derivable from the notion expressed by *help*.<sup>13</sup> *Any more* in 11 can be taken as derivable from the preceding verbal context and the negative *not*. 12 and 13 have been provided with rather extensive preceding contexts so that the reader can see the context dependence of the final sentence elements for *an attack on Russia* and *to secure land*. In fact, the  $A_{ag}$  by *Napoleon* and *by the Church* and the  $A_t$  in 1811 are also context-dependent, so that the rhemes proper of both the sentences are the subjects, the word order of each of the sentences being a mirror-image of the basic distribution of CD.<sup>14</sup>

Examples 11, 12 and 13 are recorded in column (iii) of TABLE 2, example 10 in column (i). If context-dependent, the final sentence element cannot operate as rheme proper; this is the reason why none of the four sentences with a context-dependent final sentence element is recorded in column (ii).

If the  $A_{ag}$  is context-dependent, the final sentence element is either context-dependent as well (the highest amount of CD being conveyed by another sentence element /as in 11, 12 and 13/) or — and this is more frequently the case — the final sentence element is not context-dependent and conveys the highest amount of CD.

TABLE 3 is similar to TABLE 2, but records only sentences with *context-independent* final sentence elements.

Leaving aside the two cases in column (iii) as rather peripheral, we should like to draw the reader's attention to columns (i) and (ii). Column (ii) shows that out of 108 sentences with a  $pnltA_{ag}$  and a context-independent final sentence element, 97 (i.e. 89.8 per cent) have a rising distribution of CD, the highest amount of CD being conveyed by the very last sentence element. Column (i), on the other hand, records cases where the highest amount of CD is conveyed by the last but one sentence element ( $A_{ag}$ ), the final sentence element being less dynamic, even if context-independent. The only sentences with such a fall in CD on the last sentence element are sentences with a final adverbial of place or final adverbial of time.

Examples 14 and 15 will illustrate.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Gol. 1983.46. The agent of the action will keep its function of rheme proper in Czech only if the expression *od Boha* bears the intonation centre. Intonation can be used as a means of FSP here, the sentence being a part of a drama, which is supposed to be heard rather than read.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Firbas 1979.54.



TABLE 3

| The syntactic function of the<br>CONTEXT-INDEPENDENT<br>final sentence element | (i)Penultimate A <sub>ag</sub><br>as rheme proper |                        |             | (ii)Final sentence<br>element as rheme<br>proper |             | (iii)Other sentence<br>element as rheme<br>proper |             |
|--|---|------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|---|-------------|
|  | Total<br>number                                   | Number of<br>instances | Per<br>cent | Number of<br>instances                           | Per<br>cent | Number of<br>instances                            | Per<br>cent |
| subject  | 7   | —                      | —           | 7  | 100         | —   | —           |
| object   | 15  | —                      | —           | 15   | 100         | —   | —           |
| complement   | 15  | —                      | —           | 15   | 100         | —   | —           |
| attribute  | 3   | —                      | —           | 3  | 100         | —   | —           |
| adverbial of<br>place  | 10  | 2                      | 20          | 8  | 80          | —   | —           |
| time   | 27  | 7                      | 25.9        | 18   | 66.7        | 2   | 7.4         |
| manner   | 20  | —                      | —           | 20   | 100         | —   | —           |
| cause  | 10  | —                      | —           | 10   | 100         | —   | —           |
| result   | 1   | —                      | —           | 1  | 100         | —   | —           |
| Total  | 108   | 9                      | 8.3         | 97   | 89.8        | 2   | 1.9         |

14. The Bill passed the Commons but was rejected *by the Lords* in October. MP 391, 19  
Zákon o reformě byl schválen v dolní sněmovně, ale neprošel v říjnu *ve sněmovně lordů*. 291, 12
15. Germany will be eclipsed *by FRANCE* in the not very distant **FUTURE**.<sup>15</sup> SQ 457, 953

The *pnltA<sub>ag</sub> by the Lords* also conveys the highest amount of CD because of its standing in contrast with *the Commons*; the context-independent *A<sub>t</sub> in October* is less dynamic even though it occupies the final sentence position. In 15 the *pnltA<sub>ag</sub> by France* bears the intonation centre and can, accordingly, be interpreted as rheme proper, the context-independent *A<sub>t</sub> in the not very distant future* conveying a smaller amount of CD. (Needless to say, in both the examples the *A<sub>ag</sub>* is also context-independent.)

The factor acting counter to the basic distribution of CD in the given examples is the semantic content of the *A<sub>t</sub>*, a mere temporal setting.<sup>16</sup> If the semantic content

<sup>15</sup> The bold type indicates the peak of greatest prominence in a tone unit, the 'nucleus'; the syllable **FRANCE** bears a fall, the syllable **FU** a rise. Since in the case of a fall occurring before a rise within one sentence, the former is to be regarded as the intonation centre (= IC) of the sentence (cf. Firbas 1980.126), we can interpret the *A<sub>t</sub> in the not very distant future* as occurring in a post-intonation-centre prosodic shade, the IC being borne by the *A<sub>ag</sub> by France*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dvořáková (= Golková) 1964.

of the  $A_t$  is 'richer' (as, e.g., with the  $A_t$  after hard fighting outside Exeter in 6), the  $A_t$  may become rheme proper, surpassing the  $pnltA_{ag}$  in its amount of CD. In our material such cases are approximately 2.6 times more numerous.

The question raised at the beginning of this paper can now be answered.

The syntactic and semantic character of the context-independent sentence element following the penultimate  $A_{ag}$  affects the relative amount of CD conveyed by the  $A_{ag}$  in the following way: in the vast majority of cases the penultimate context-dependent or context-independent adverbial of agency becomes less dynamic than the context-independent final sentence element, which operates as rheme proper. Only final adverbials of place and final adverbials of time that express mere local or temporal settings are surpassed in the amount of CD by the penultimate  $A_{ag}$ , in spite of their contextual independence and final sentence position. But even adverbials of place and time can occur in final sentence positions as rhemes proper (in our limited corpus, they actually do so in a majority of cases).

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## O ANGLICKÝCH PŘÍSLOVEČNÝCH URČENÍCH PŮVODCE DĚJE V PŘEDPOSLEDNÍ VĚTNÉ POZICI

Autorka navazuje na svůj dřívější výzkum, jehož výsledky uveřejnila v minulém čísle tohoto sborníku, a prohlubuje jej z tohoto hlediska: všimá si příslovečných určení původce děje (PUPD), která stojí ve světě na předposledním místě, a jejich interpretace ve funkční perspektivě větné. Klade si otázku, zda je výpovědní dynamičnost nekoncového PUPD ovlivněna syntaktickým a sémantickým charakterem větného členu, který po PUPD následuje.

Na základě excerpcovaného materiálu dochází k závěru, že v převážném počtu případů je anglické PUPD v předposlední větné pozici výpovědně méně dynamické než kontextově nezapojený větný člen, který za ním ve větě následuje (viz tabulku 3 na str. 70). Jen u dvou kategorií koncového větného členu, a to u příslovečného určení místa a příslovečného určení času, se vyskytly případy, v nichž kontextově nezapojený koncový větný člen se nestal vlastním rematem. Bylo tomu tak díky sémantické náplni příslovečného určení místa nebo času, pouhé situacnosti. Funkci vlastního rematu v takových případech převzalo kontextově nezapojené PUPD v předposlední větné pozici.

