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SCENE AND PERSPECTIVE

Jan Firbas

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY

Charles T. Fillmore's study 'The Case for Case' (Fillmore 1968) created quite a stir among linguists when it appeared in 1968. Ever since it has remained one of the most quoted and discussed studies in the linguistic literature.¹ Recently Fillmore has returned to the problems he took up in his study of 1968 and published a paper entitled 'The Case for Case Reopened' (Fillmore 1977). In this paper he proposes 'a new interpretation of the role of cases in a theory of grammar and a new method of investigating the question of their number and identity' (Fillmore 1977:59). He characterized his new approach as relativizing meanings to scenes (ib.). He distinguishes the role analysis of the participants in a situation and the conditions under which a speaker can choose to draw certain situation participants into perspective (1977:79).

The two new concepts, 'scene' and 'perspective', introduced by Fillmore in his paper have especially roused our interest,² for 'scene' and 'perspec-

¹ For Czechoslovak discussions of Fillmore's approach, see, for instance, Daneš et al. 1973, Hajičová 1975, Sgall 1975, Poldauf 1970, Uhlířová 1972.

² Partly because of lack of space, but mainly because of the necessity to observe the deadline set for the completion of the present paper, our attention will be devoted almost exclusively to Fillmore's approach to the problems chosen for discussion. It is hoped that on some other occasion it will be possible to offer at least brief appreciations of the approaches of other scholars (e.g., Chafe 1974, Dahl 1978, Haftka 1977). For some notes on the approach of Sgall, Hajičová and Benešová (1973), see Firbas 1978.

tive' are also concepts that have played important roles in the theory of functional sentence perspective (= FSP).³ This raises the question whether the same terms refer to identical concepts.

To answer this question is the main purpose of the present paper, which will not claim to have offered an exhaustive analysis of Fillmore's new approach. As for our creed, it subscribes to the three-level approach to syntax, distinguishing between the semantic level, the grammatical level and the level of functional sentence perspective (i.e. the level of contextual organization). This distinction can be traced back to František Daneš's and Miloš Dokulil's ideas (Dokulil & Daneš 1958, Daneš 1964). It also involves a distinction between semantic structure viewed statically (i.e. as not functioning within context) and semantic structure viewed dynamically (i.e. as functioning within context) (cf. Daneš & Dokulil 1958.238, Firbas 1975b.56). It should be added that we do not regard grammatical structure as severed from lexical and ultimately from cognitive meaning. As Anton Reichling (1961.11) has pointed out and František Daneš (1968.55) emphasized, grammatical structure does not merely combine forms as such, but with the aid of formal relations effects a semantic connexion, i.e. a connexion of meanings.

Fillmore's choice of 'scene' and 'perspective' as designations of two fundamental concepts in his new approach has created a welcome opportunity to offer a detailed discussion of an equally important concept of our approach — that of 'the narrow scene'. This discussion will be presented in Chapter Two. Chapter Three will analyze a piece of English narrative prose, demonstrating the operation of the narrow scene in the development of the discourse and examining its relation to the functional perspective of the sentence. Chapter Four will take up Fillmore's concepts of 'scene' and 'perspective' and compare them with our concepts bearing the same names, but modified by 'narrow' and 'functional', respectively.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NARROW SCENE — A COMPLEX PHENOMENON

1. The Constituents of the Narrow Scene

The narrow scene is a complex of linguistic, and to a certain extent even of non-linguistic, phenomena operating in the foundation-laying process. This process selects the elements upon which within a sentence (clause)⁴ the core of the information is to be built up. The elements so selected constitute the foundation. In the course of the following discussion they

³ The term 'narrow scene' has been used by us since 1957 (cf. Firbas 1957a.36—7, and also, e.g., 1966.246, 1975a.333 note⁵, 1975b.68, 1979a.32).

⁴ Unless stated otherwise, what will be said about the sentence regarded as an independent grammatical structure in the following discussion is, with due alterations, applicable also to the clause regarded as a dependent grammatical structure. It should be added that in the present paper 'sentence' and 'clause' are applied to grammatical structures containing a finite verb or ellipting it. Infinitival, gerundial and participial structures are regarded as semi-clauses.

will be specified and delimited from the elements that do not constitute the foundation.

From the speaker/writer's point of view, the foundation-laying process operates at the moment a sentence has been produced and a new one is to be implemented. From the listener/reader's point of view, it operates at the moment a sentence has just been mentally digested and a new one is to be taken in. Naturally, no preceding sentence exists at the beginning of a monologic or dialogic (or plurilogic, for that matter) discourse.

What are the constituents that make up the complex phenomenon of the narrow scene? Discussions with Aleš Svoboda (in the summer of 1979) have induced us to draw up the following list: elements⁵ derivable from the immediately relevant situational context, elements⁵ derivable from the immediately relevant preceding verbal context (the immediately relevant preceding flow of verbal communication), underivable foundation-laying elements,⁵ and the immediately relevant orientation of the discourse (communication).

2. Derivable Foundation-Laying Elements

Derivability of a semantic content or feature presupposes its presence in the immediately relevant preceding verbal context (cf. Firbas 1975a.318; 1979.31–2) or the presence of its referent in the immediately relevant situational context (cf. Firbas *ib.*).

The qualification 'immediately relevant' (or 'of immediate relevance') used with 'preceding verbal context' (or 'preceding flow of verbal communication') and 'situational context' is of utmost importance. It serves to emphasize that derivability applies neither to the entire preceding verbal context (flow of communication) nor to the entire situational context. Let us first turn our attention to the immediately relevant preceding verbal context (preceding flow of verbal communication).

The qualification is necessary, because a semantic content or feature cannot be regarded as derivable if it appears in the flow of the preceding verbal communication, stays in it for a shorter or longer span of its development, leaves it, remains absent from it for a time, and reenters it (is reintroduced into it) only under contextual circumstances that have con-

⁵ Speaking about linguistic elements in this particular context, we are ultimately concerned with their semantic contents or semantic features. The contents or features meant have already occurred in the immediately relevant preceding verbal context or are introduced into the discourse at the moment the sentence is produced or taken in and/or have their referents in the immediately relevant situational context. Not all three types of element are necessarily always present. At the beginning of the discourse, there are no elements derivable from the preceding verbal context. Nor need the situational context of immediate relevance constantly manifest itself. Moreover, the situational context does not affect spoken and written language to the same extent. It is especially in the case of the latter that its operation may become practically non-existent and therefore remain ineffective. On the other hand, it may become very powerful at the very beginning of a conversation. — The notions of the immediately relevant situational context and of the immediately relevant preceding verbal context as well as the circumstances under which elements become derivable from these kinds of context will be explained in the following sections of the present chapter.

siderably developed and changed in the meantime. Such a re-entry perceptibly contributes towards the further development of the communication, carries a new aspect and the semantic content concerned cannot be but considered underivable from the immediately preceding verbal flow. The condition of derivability remains equally unfulfilled if though present in the immediately preceding verbal flow a semantic content or a semantic feature comes to express some evidently new aspect, such as contrast, not mentioned before.

The extent of the span of communication during which a particular semantic content or semantic feature remains overtly or latently present in the verbal flow may vary. But examining one of Aelfric's homilies, Svoboda (1981 and in print) found that in this text the maximum length of communication during which a semantic content or a semantic feature remains unmentioned, but derivable (and therefore latently present) did not normally exceed seven sentences (see Svoboda 1981.88–9). (It follows that 'remaining in the flow' does not necessarily involve continuous presence throughout the span, i.e. a regular recurrence in each sentence constituting the immediately relevant preceding verbal flow.) 'Normally' is an important limitation here, for a unique position — as Svoboda has established — may be held by an exceedingly small number of semantic contents that practically never or for a considerably long span do not leave the flow of communication. The longer a semantic content or a semantic feature remains in the verbal flow, the more firmly it gets established in it, the stronger its ties to what precedes appear, and the higher the degree of its derivability becomes.

Like the preceding verbal context, the situational context cannot be regarded as immediately relevant in its entirety either (cf. Firbas 1975a.318; 1979a.31–2). Only those phenomena existing in the situation can be considered relevant that present themselves as strikingly obvious at the moment of communication, simultaneously attracting the speaker's and the listener's attention and becoming objects of their immediate common concern. Only such situational phenomena are regarded as derivable. Situational phenomena that fail to become so strikingly obvious are introduced into the flow of communication as underivable.

Not perhaps 'strikingly' obvious, but nevertheless obvious to a very high degree is the existence of the speaker/writer and the listener/reader. They are to be normally regarded as part of the immediately relevant situational context and interpreted as derivable. 'Normally' is once again an important limitation. The notion of the speaker/writer or the listener/reader can become underivable on account of contrast or for some other special reason.

By way of concluding the section dealing with derivable elements let us point out that any element that becomes derivable in the sense explained above assumes a foundation-laying role. A derivable element can only serve as a basis upon which the core of the information is built up. A derivable element assumes the foundation-laying function irrespective of the character of the semantic content it conveys and irrespective of the position it occupies within the sentence. An analysis of a short text to be carried out in Chapter Three will offer examples and illustrate the foregoing exposition of the derivable elements.

3. Underivable Foundation-Laying Elements

Apart from derivable elements, even underivable elements can participate in the foundation-laying process. This, however, can happen only if they are permitted to do so by their semantic contents and the semantic relations into which they enter.

For the purposes of the present paper, only a rough outline of the causes inducing underivable elements to become foundation-laying will have to suffice. The adduced examples will remain quite simple. The observations offered by the outline will, however, be amply illustrated by an analysis of a text to be carried out in Chapter Three.

A case in point are non-derivable adverbial elements. In accordance with their semantic character and the semantic relations entered into they can function in two ways in the development of the communication: they either express mere background information and function as settings, or belong to the core of the information to be conveyed and function as specifications. Not every point has been cleared yet, but the observation that in the act of communication an underivable adverbial element will in principle perform one of the two mentioned functions can be regarded as fairly established. As to derivable adverbial elements, it can be regarded as established that they can serve only as settings. (In *Two days ago I met a friend* used in reply to *What can you tell me about yourself?*, the underivable adverbial *Two days ago* functions as a setting. In *I met him two days ago* used in reply to *When did you meet him?*, the underivable adverbial *two days ago* serves as a specification. In *At that moment I just did not notice anything* used in reply to *What did you see then?*, the derivable adverbial *At that moment* functions as a setting.) As a setting, an adverbial element will participate in the foundation-laying process; as a specification it will participate in what may be termed the core-constituting process, a process consisting in building up on the foundation the essential part of the information to be conveyed.

It has been also shown that in regard to the further development of the communication an underivable quality — understood in the widest sense of the word and expressed either by a verbal or a non-verbal, i.e. adjectival or substantival, element (cf. Mathesius 1975.58, Firbas 1975a.41) — will exceed in communicative importance a subject expressing the person, thing, or abstract notion or another phenomenon that the quality is ascribed to. Such a subject, functioning as a quality bearer, becomes backgrounded and hence foundation-laying. (In *His father was a musician, His mother played the piano extremely well, A king waged dangerous wars*, the underivable elements *musician, played* and *waged* are regarded as expressing qualities and exceed in communicative importance the subjects, expressing quality bearers.) Three notes should be inserted at this point.

First, it is to be repeated that quality is understood here in a wide sense. At the chosen level of abstraction, no distinction is made between a permanent quality, usually, but not exclusively, conveyed by non-verbal elements (e.g., *musician*), and a transitory quality, usually, but not exclusively, conveyed by the verb (e.g., *played*).

Second, the mentioned conditions otherwise remaining the same, the subject may naturally be interpreted as a quality bearer even if it conveys

derivable information (cf. *He waged dangerous wars*). In such a case the functions of the non-derivable elements are sufficiently distinct to impose on the derivable subject the function of quality bearer. (It must be borne in mind that but for this distinctness, the derivable subject could not by itself perform the function of quality bearer, for in principle derivability neutralizes the functions performed within the non-derivability sphere. Irrespective of position or semantic character, derivable elements become foundation-laying, in fact performing a function that in regard to the development of the communication comes near to that of a setting: they become merely scenic.)

Third, the subject will not participate in the foundation-laying process if underivable, introduced into the discourse by a verb performing the function of expressing existence/appearance on the scene (the narrow scene of discourse, that is) and possibly accompanied by an adverbial element or adverbial elements functioning as settings (expressing the scene); underivable elements functioning as qualities and specifications are absent (cf. *A strange figure appeared on the doorstep, A question hovered on his lips*). Under such conditions the underivable subject does not perform the function of a quality bearer, but that of a phenomenon existing/appearing on the scene (cf. Firbas 1966, 1975b). In the absence of elements functioning as qualities and/or elements functioning as specifications, it constitutes the core of the information. It is not a foundation-laying, but a core-constituting element.

Under special circumstances even the verb is induced to participate in the foundation-laying process. This happens when in the absence of a setting an intransitive verb is linked with an underivable subject expressing a phenomenon existing/appearing on the scene (cf. *Rain was falling*). No matter whether interpretable as derivable or underivable, the verb is exceeded in communicative importance by the underivable subject and in the absence of a setting takes over its foundation-laying function.

The preceding paragraphs have shown that underivable semantic contents do not contribute to the development of the communication to the same extent. Some of them become backgrounded and by themselves or together with derivable semantic contents (irrespective of their semantic character) participate in the foundation-laying process. If backgrounded and participating in this process, they perform the following communicative functions: that of expressing a setting, that of expressing a quality bearer and under special conditions that of expressing existence/appearance on the scene.

So far the foundation-laying function of the underivable element has been accounted for on purely semantic grounds. Semantics, however, is not the only factor that is in play. We have to remind the reader of another important factor, that of linear modification (or for short 'linearity') (cf. Bolinger 1952, Firbas 1979a.30).

The operation of linear modification consists in rendering an underivable element communicatively the more important, the closer it comes to be placed to the end of the sentence. There are types of element that on account of the character of their semantic content are subject to the operation of linear modification, not being capable of working counter to it, and have

their degree of communicative importance determined by their position in the sentence. Roughly speaking, front-position would render them foundation-laying, end-position core-constituting. This can be regarded as fairly established, although a detailed list of types affected by linear modification has not yet been offered. Two pairs of examples will have to suffice. Provided the infinitive of purpose *in order to meet a friend* is underivable, it will be foundation-laying in *In order to meet a friend, I went to Brno*, but core-constituting in *I went to Brno in order to meet a friend*. The communicative purpose fulfilled by the first sentence is to state the place of the visit, whereas the communicative purpose of second is to give the reason for it. Similarly, in *As I was ill I stayed at home, I stayed at home because I was ill*, the underivable adverbial clause of reason will be foundation-laying if placed in front-position, but core-constituting if placed in end-position. Further examples of the operation of linear modification will be found in our previous writings (see, e.g., Firbas 1964, 1972, 1975a; Firbas and Golková 1975).

Linear modification plays an important role in determining the degree of communicative importance of an element. It is one of the three factors determining it in written language. The degree is determined by an interplay of the immediately relevant context, semantics and linear modification.

We can now return to the functions of the underivable verb performed in the development of the discourse. Together with the functions of the other underivable sentence elements, it deserves some more attention. It is worth noticing that even if not participating in the foundation-laying process (such participation occurring comparatively very rarely), the verb will merely perform an introductory function in an overwhelming majority of cases.

In order to enable a better understanding of the communicative functions participating in the foundation-laying process, we shall briefly recapitulate the hierarchical organization of the communicative functions that operate in the development of the discourse. The starting point of the recapitulation will be an observation concerning the role of the verb.

It is worth noticing that the verb is a rare participant in the foundation-laying process. In the core-constituting process it does not very often serve to express the very core of the information. In an overwhelming majority of cases, it will merely perform an introductory function. As has been shown in greater detail elsewhere, it can function in two ways in this respect. It either introduces into the discourse a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene (*A strange figure* [phenomenon appearing on the scene] *emerged* [appearance] *on the doorstep* [scene]), or functioning as an expresser of quality, it introduces into the discourse a specification of this quality, which in its turn may be further specified (*A king* [quality bearer] *waged* [quality] *dangerous wars* [specification] *in a most ruthless way* [further specification]). In this way, the verb participates in the implementation of either of the two following scales: SCENE (settings) — APPEARANCE/EXISTENCE on the scene — PHENOMENON appearing/existing on the scene; SCENE (settings) — BEARER of quality — QUALITY — SPECIFICATION of quality — FURTHER specification(s). It

should be borne in mind that the scales are not essentially word-order concepts. Ultimately, they reflect the rise of communicative importance imposed on underivable sentence elements by their functions in the act of communication (cf. Firbas 1975a, 1975b).

Owing to the fact that both scales open with the scenic function and that the function expressing a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene cannot be implemented after the function of expressing a quality bearer,⁶ the two scales can be merged into one: SCENE (settings) – APPEARANCE/EXISTENCE on the scene – PHENOMENON appearing/existing on the scene – BEARER of quality – QUALITY – SPECIFICATION of quality – FURTHER specification(s).

The scale is not as a rule implemented in its entirety by a sentence. (But cf.: *Once upon a time* [setting] *there* [setting] *was* [existence] *a king* [phenomenon existing on the scene] *who* [quality bearer] *treated* [quality] *his courtiers* [specification] *with little consideration* [further specification]. Moreover, irrespective of the character of its semantic content and of its communicative function performed in the immediately preceding flow of communication, a derivable element virtually assumes the scenic function. This leads to a neutralization of functions which especially in the absence of clear indications of the functions implemented point to a scale conceived of at a still higher level of abstraction – to a scale that might be regarded as an archiscale and presented as follows: SCENE – INTRODUCTION onto the scene – SPECIFICATION. 'Scene – specification' is a shorthand mode of characterizing the movement of the discourse within a sentence. The usefulness of the scale is believed to have already been shown elsewhere (Firbas 1975a; Svoboda in print, sect. 2.3.7); another demonstration of its usefulness will be attempted in Chapter Three of the present paper.

By way of closing the section on underivable elements participating in the foundation-laying process, the following notes on the relationship between derivability and underivability will not be out of place.

There are semantic contents that in accordance with the rigidly narrow criteria adopted must be regarded as underivable, and yet almost qualify for the status of derivability. This accounts for their receding into the background and consequently for their participation in the foundation-laying process.

One type is particularly striking and can be illustrated by the following sentences:⁷ *The 'tide was in* (MacCarthy 1956.60), *The 'teams are coming out* (Arnold and Tooley 1971.8), *The in' evitable thing happened* (Lewis 1977.54). Their structure is composed of a subject and a finite verb and – according to the rigidly narrow criteria adopted – conveys un-

⁶ This wording is not at variance with the conclusion that the scales cannot ultimately be regarded as word-order concepts. It is to be remembered that they are to be understood in terms of the interplay of the immediately relevant context, linearity and semantics. This does not exclude the possibility of linearity actually manifesting itself. The fact that, in terms of linearity, the function of expressing the quality bearer is not implemented before the function of expressing a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene (cf. Firbas 1975b.67) is to be regarded as such a manifestation.

⁷ The examples have been borrowed from excerpts collected under our direction by Dr Ivana Fialová.

derivable information. It is worth noticing that the intonation centre (the most conspicuous prosodic feature) occurs on the finite verb and thus prevents it from merely performing the introductory function and from receding into the background as a foundation-laying element. It is in fact the subject that performs the foundation-laying function; it expresses a quality bearer, the verb stating the quality. Under the circumstances, the subject certainly expresses a phenomenon that has not been mentioned in the immediately relevant preceding verbal flow nor is conspicuously present in the immediately relevant situational context. When mentioned, however, the appearance of the phenomenon is understood as having been the only possible and/or inevitably imminent one; it cannot therefore be regarded as a case of genuine new appearance on the scene.

A similar effect is produced by a subject-verb sentence structure expressing a proverb (e.g., *In every country, dogs bite; When the cow flies, her tail follows; Extremes meet; Good wits jump; Old vessels must leak*). A situation can be easily imagined in which – according to the rigidly narrow criteria – the semantic contents of the subject and the verb are not derivable either from the preceding verbal flow or the immediately relevant situational context. Yet the verb will not function as an introducer of a phenomenon appearing on the scene, but as an expresser of quality. In consequence, the subject is backgrounded and becomes a foundation-laying element. This is due to the proverbial character of the sentence, understood as recapitulating an experience well-known and generally valid, the recapitulatory effect assigning the subject the role of quality bearer and turning it into a foundation-laying element.

The above notes have indicated that within the underderivability sphere there are areas that border closely on the sphere of derivability and manifest themselves accordingly. The notes also bear out the conception of context as a graded phenomenon (cf. Daneš 1974b.109, Sgall 1975). All this raises the question whether gradedness does not entail borderline cases. This question must be answered in the positive. A consequence of this – the phenomenon of multifunctionality – will be touched upon later.

4. The Immediate Orientation of the Discourse

By the immediate orientation of the discourse (or the immediate communicative orientation) we mean the immediate communicative purpose imposed upon the semantic and grammatical sentence structure and ultimately determining – with due regard to the operation of the immediately relevant context, linear modification and semantics – which of the elements of the structure are to lay the foundation and which are to build up upon it the core of the information.

It may be argued that the immediate communicative orientation is an unexplorable phenomenon, for it is subject to the speaker's discretion on the one hand, and to the listener/reader's arbitrary modification or interpretation on the other. Yet, it must be borne in mind that in his choice of the foundation-laying elements the speaker/writer is limited by the objectively existing derivable phenomena, the semantic character of

the eligible underivable elements as well as their position in the linear arrangement. He is equally limited in his choice of the core-constituting elements. In choosing them, he has to respect the interplay of the immediately relevant context, linear modification and semantics.

As for the listener/reader, the objectivity of the phenomena occurring in the immediately relevant context and the laws of the interplay are binding on him, too. But for this, no efficient communication could take place between the speaker/writer and the listener/reader: the two would not even be able to exchange their roles, speaker/writer becoming listener/reader and vice versa.

The speaker/writer and the listener/reader's shared knowledge of the immediately relevant context forms part of their shared knowledge of the entire preceding verbal context and the entire relevant situation, all this knowledge in its turn forming part of their shared general knowledge and experience (cf. Firbas 1975a.318; 1979a.31-2). Needless to say, in range and intensity of individual knowledge and experience the interlocutors never fully coincide, but the higher the degree of coincidence, the more efficient and adequate the communication becomes. Bound by the objectively existing context and the laws of interplay, the speaker/writer and the listener/reader can exchange, and in fact keep on exchanging their roles.

At this point an important circumstance must be taken into consideration. Though restricted by the immediately relevant context, the speaker/writer can subjectively manipulate it: within limits he can present non-derivable information as derivable and derivable information as non-derivable (cf. Firbas 1980.131). These subjective manipulations become apparent against the background of the immediately relevant context, only bearing out its objective existence. True enough, they create discrepancies between the objective context and the subjective presentation. Yet these discrepancies may be functional, for they can serve special communicative functions (cf. Firbas, *ib.*). As indicated above, they must be kept within reasonable limits, set by the immediately relevant context. Disregard of these limits, i.e. in fact of the objective existence of the immediately relevant context, may seriously impair the communication, possibly even rendering it pathological.⁸

What has been said so far speaks against the view that the immediate communicative orientation is an unexplorable phenomenon. This view, however, seems to receive support from the existence of multifunctionality. A semantic and grammatical sentence structure is multifunctional if at the moment of communication it permits of more than one interpretation as to the distribution of its foundation-laying and its core-constituting elements. Multifunctionality is due to the absence of an unequivocal manifestation of the interplay of the immediately relevant verbal and situational context, linear modification and semantics. To be more specific, it may be caused by the uncertainty as to the dividing line

⁸ The designation 'pathological' has been suggested to us by Gunter's analysis of a pathological dialogue rendered unintelligible by a misplacement of prosodic features (cf. Gunter 1966).

between the context of immediate relevance and the wider verbal and situational context. It may also be caused by an equivocal relationship between linear modification and semantics.

Yet multifunctionality may be reduced or even removed altogether. Spoken language and written language offer different possibilities. In contrast with written language, spoken language employs intonation as a powerful device, co-signalling the foundation-laying and the core-constituting elements, and furnishing the listener with a valuable additional clue. Written language cannot avail itself of this device. But the reader of a written (or printed, for that matter) text can decide about the tempo at which he will take in and interpret the offered information. Moreover, he is not forced to move forwards all the time; he may go backwards and reread what he has already taken in. All this enables him to get better acquainted with the strings (layers) formed within the paragraph and the discourse in general by the foundation-laying elements on the one hand, and the core-constituting elements on the other (cf. Firbas 1961.93-5). These strings (layers) and the progressions within them (cf. Daneš 1974b.114) may prove to be a valuable clue to the immediate communicative purpose (orientation) imposed upon a semantic and grammatical sentence structure. It follows that determining the distribution of foundation-laying and core-constituting elements within a sentence, the reader can have recourse not only to the preceding, but also to the following context.⁹ It becomes evident that the careful reader will be able to appreciate the communicative purposes imposed upon the sentence structures far better than a casual or inexperienced one. (A careful reader uttering a sentence aloud would not succumb to the temptation to adopt a mechanical intonation. Czech children, for instance, would often indiscriminately place the intonation centre on the last word of the sentence.)

Although further research may show that some types thought to be multifunctional are not to be regarded as such at all, the phenomenon undoubtedly exists. This is quite compatible with the character of language not to be viewed as a closed and well-balanced system. Multifunctionality is a phenomenon pertaining to the periphery of the system.¹⁰

But even cases in which multifunctionality cannot be eliminated do not invalidate the findings concerning the interplay of the immediately relevant context, linear modification and semantics, i.e. the interplay conditioning the distribution of the foundation-laying and core-constituting elements within the sentence structure. Different interpretations are due to different conditionings, for one type of interpretation cannot be linked with more than one type of conditioning, and vice versa.¹¹ This interdependence cannot but corroborate the interplay.

Multifunctionality entails the absence of unequivocal signalling of the

⁹ The importance of the following context for the study of FSP has been emphasized by Beneš (1968, 1970).

¹⁰ On problems of the relationship of centre and periphery in language, see Daneš 1966, Vachek 1966.

¹¹ This relationship was pointed out by Daneš in a discussion at the conference on FSP organized by the University of Sofia in November 1977.

immediate orientation of the discourse. But in some cases, in poetry, for instance, this may not necessarily prove to be a defective feature. It gives especially the reader the opportunity of creative co-operation in the completion of the actual meaning and the communicative orientation of a sentence and a text in general.

The existence of multifunctionality¹² disproves neither the existence of the immediate orientation of the discourse nor its explorability. The immediate orientation of the discourse (the immediate communicative purpose of a sentence structure) can hardly be overlooked by a functional approach to language. Strictly speaking, however, it appears that it cannot be fully identified with the speaker's immediate communicative purpose. The former more or less adequately reflects the latter. But the speaker/writer's occasional failure to unequivocally signal the foundation-laying and core-constituting elements or his abstention from doing so entails multifunctionality and opens the door to the listener/reader's co-operation in ultimately determining the immediate communicative orientation of the sentence structure.

5. The Narrow Scene and FSP-Terminology

The preceding sections of Chapter Two attempted to account for the concept of the narrow scene. In doing so, they employed a number of other concepts known from our previous writings¹³ (such as 'setting', 'appearance/existence on the scene', 'phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene', 'quality bearer', 'quality', 'specification', 'further specification', and the 'interplay of linear modification, semantics and context'), but at the same time they avoided the use of others equally known from these writings (such as 'context-dependence', 'context-independence', 'communicative dynamism', 'distributional field', 'theme', 'transition', 'rheme' and last but not least 'functional sentence perspective'). The very avoidance of the concepts of the latter group was intentional. As will be shown presently, it was in fact instrumental in re-establishing the phenomena covered by these concepts as well as the concepts themselves.

Let us first re-establish the concepts of context-dependence, context-independence and communicative dynamism (= CD).

It is derivability and underderivability that respectively constitute what has been termed context-dependence and context-independence. An element is context-dependent or context-independent if in accordance with the immediate orientation of the communication it is derivable or non-derivable from the immediately relevant context. It is in this sense, i.e. in regard to the narrow scene, that a context-dependent element is said to convey known, old information, and a context-independent element unknown, new information.

¹² For a more detailed discussion of multifunctionality, with examples, see Firbas 1966.249-53; 1975b.54-6; 1980.130. For further examples, see the comments on the analyzed text here on pp. 62-6.

¹³ Those published before 1973 are listed and briefly annotated in Firbas and Golková 1975.

Derivable, i.e. context-dependent, elements undoubtedly contribute less to the further development of the communication than the underivable, i.e. context-independent, elements. The difference between the two types of element is one of the causes of the dynamics of the discourse.

The dynamics of the discourse is also reflected by the difference between the foundation-laying and the core-constituting process. Elements participating in the former contribute less to the development of the communication than the latter. The former are communicatively less important than the latter.

As to the relationship between the foundation-laying and the core-constituting elements on the one hand and the derivable and the underivable elements on the other, it must be remembered that core-constituting elements are always underivable, whereas foundation-laying elements are either derivable or underivable.

The dynamics of the discourse is, of course, reflected also by each of the two processes, foundation-laying and core-constituting, viewed by itself. In each case the participating elements are of unequal communicative weight, differing in the importance of their contributions to the development of the communication. In other words, they differ in the relative extent to which they contribute to this development; they carry different degrees of communicative dynamism (CD) (cf. Firbas 1971).

Having re-established the concepts of context-dependence, context-independence and communicative dynamism, we can now undertake the re-establishment of the concept of 'the distributional field'.

In accordance with Trost (1962:267), the sentence is regarded as a field of syntactic relations, the centre of these relations being the finite verb. As has been shown elsewhere and will be recapitulated here presently, the finite verb, especially through its temporal and modal exponents (= TMEs), acts as a centre of relations even in regard to the distribution of the degrees of CD (cf., e.g., Firbas 1965, 1975a, in print₁). The sentence (clause)¹⁴ has therefore come to be regarded also as a distributional field of CD (Firbas 1967:142).

The concept of the distributional field has been elaborated by Svoboda (1968). He regards the sentence constituents — S, V, O, C_s, C_o, A¹⁵ — as communicative units, i.e. as carriers of CD, within the distributional field. As for the relationship between a superordinate and a subordinate clause, the latter functions as a communicative unit within the distributional field provided by the former. On the other hand, the subordinate clause provides a distributional field of its own and in its turn serves as a distributional subfield. As has been shown by Svoboda (1968), a distributional subfield is also provided by an attributive construction (headword and attribute functioning as communicative units). According to him, an attributive construction conveys a hidden (implicit) predication (Svoboda 1968).

¹⁴ May we remind the reader of note⁴, in which the way these terms are employed in the present paper is commented upon?

¹⁵ S = subject, V = verb, O = object, C_s = subject complement, C_o = object complement, A = adverbial element (cf. Quirk et al. 1972:34 ff).

The following question should be answered now. What accords the finite verb, or rather its TMEs, the status of a relational centre within a distributional field of CD? An answer to this question will prepare the way for a re-establishment of the concepts of 'theme', 'transition' and 'rheme' as well as for a re-establishment of the concept of a boundary between the thematic and the non-thematic section within a distributional field.

Inquiries into the distribution of degrees of CD have established that the finite verb tends to carry a degree that ranks between the lowest and the highest within the sentence (cf. Firbas 1968). In an overwhelming majority of cases, the verb is neither a foundation-laying element nor the element conveying the very core of the message (cf., *He [f-l] has [TME] giv [c-c]¹⁶ -en [TME] us [f-l] a lot of trouble [c-c]*). This characteristic invariably holds good for the TMEs of the finite verb, provided the finite verb occurs in a sentence operating within first instance.¹⁷ In other words, in regard to first instance the following observation can be made: although the notional component of the finite verb may occasionally participate in the foundation-laying process (cf., *Snow [c-c] was [TME] fall [f-l] -ing [TME]*) or convey the very core of the message (cf., *He [f-l] smil [c-c] -ed [TME]*), the TMEs will invariably serve as the link between the foundation-laying elements and the elements building up upon them the core of the message. The invariableness with which within first instance the TMEs perform this linking function testifies to a high degree of congruence between the linking function and the predicative function of the TMEs. This is in harmony with the observation that predication is to be regarded as the creator of the distributional field. This necessarily entails some further remarks.

The congruence of the central function of the TMEs within the grammatical sentence structure and their linking function within a first instance distributional field justifies us in interpreting the finite verb form as two communicative units, one being constituted by the notional component of the finite verb, the other by its TMEs.

At this point, a note concerning the use of the designation 'element' can be inserted. It can be conveniently applied to any linguistic element, irrespective of its place in the hierarchy of clausal structure and the

¹⁶ The abbreviations 'f-l' and 'c-c' stand for 'foundation-laying' and 'core-constituting', respectively.

¹⁷ The concept of 'first instance' will become clear if put in contrast with that of 'second instance'. By a second instance use of a semantic and grammatical sentence structure we mean its appearance in sharp, heavy contrast on account of the semantic content of one of its elements or one semantic feature of such a content. It is only the heavily contrasted semantic content or semantic feature that is regarded as undervivable, the rest of the semantic contents and features conveyed by the sentence being considered derivable (cf., e.g., *He paid HARRY five dollars, HE paid Harry five dollars, He paid Harry FIVE dollars, He DID pay Harry five dollars*). It is important to note that second instance use involves either an actual repetition of the sentence structure or the impression of such a repetition, the structure being actually perceived or at least imagined as a copy of a structure already used. For a more detailed discussion of the concept of 'second instance', see Firbas 1968.15-8. Sentence structures not appearing in the described sharp, heavy contrast function within first instance. Borderline cases naturally exist.

corresponding hierarchy of distributional fields. If necessary, its function within the hierarchy of clausal structures, as well as within that of the distributional fields provided by these structures, will be duly specified.

Coming back to the central status of the TMEs, we find that in terms of linear arrangement they frequently occur between the foundation and the rest of the sentence. Although this often happens, the central status of the TMEs cannot be ultimately accounted for in terms of linear arrangement. It has to be accounted for in relational terms, the relative communicative importance in regard to the development of the communication being the ultimate criterion. This involves another important aspect of the linking function of the TMEs.

Providing a link, the TMEs start building up the core of the message upon the foundation and simultaneously act as a boundary between the foundation and the rest of the sentence. Like 'link', 'boundary' is not a word-order concept. It must equally be accounted for in relational terms, i.e. in regard to the communicative importance accorded to the sentence elements by their functions in the development of the communication. On account of their linking and simultaneously delimiting function, they rank between the elements constituting the foundation and the rest of the sentence. As they start building up the core of the message, the TMEs primarily belong to the core-constituting elements. But serving as a link, they cannot really be totally severed from the foundation. As has been shown elsewhere (e.g., Firbas 1976.50-1), features can be established that bear out this observation.

Like the link, implemented by the TMEs, the foundation-laying and the core-constituting elements cannot ultimately be accounted for in positional terms.

The non-position-boundness of the foundation-laying elements manifests itself in the following way: they are not confined to a certain position within the sentence, for instance, to its beginning; nor do they necessarily form one uninterrupted, continuous section within the sentence. As has been shown in the preceding sections of the present chapter and in greater detail elsewhere (e.g., Firbas 1975a) and as will be illustrated in Chapter Three, the following types of element can perform the foundation-laying function: any element that is context-dependent, i.e. derivable from the immediately preceding relevant context (i.e. any context-dependent element irrespective of the character of its semantic content); any adverbial element, context-dependent or context-independent, serving as a setting (i.e. expressing temporal, local or any other concomitant information); a notional verbal component that in the absence of a setting introduces a context-independent phenomenon into the discourse; a noun expressing a quality-bearer in the presence of context-independent elements expressing qualities and/or specifications.

Now what has been treated here under the heading of 'foundation' has – in all the other English writings of mine on FSP (cf. here note 13) – been termed 'theme'. Endeavouring to re-establish the most characteristic features of the theme, I thought it desirable for the end proposed to avoid the term and to reintroduce it into the discussion only after the features sought for had been re-established. Trusting to have now reached this

point in the discussion, I am recapitulating the principal features of the theme as follows: the theme expresses semantic contents of any type or character derivable from the immediately relevant preceding context and/or settings (temporal, local and other concomitant circumstances) and/or a quality bearer, or – in the absence of the just enumerated items and if implemented as the notional component of a verb – serves as an introductory element; in conveying the described kind of information, it performs the foundation-laying function and carries the lowest degree(s) of CD within the sentence; it is not position-bound nor does it necessarily form a continuous section of the sentence; in relational terms, it is delimited from the non-thematic section of the sentence by the TMEs. The following observations should be added. The theme may be formed by one or more elements. If more than one element form the theme, the one carrying the lowest degree of CD has been called 'theme proper', the one carrying the highest degree of CD 'the diatheme' (a term and concept introduced by Svoboda [1981 and in print]). Should there be more than two elements constituting the theme, the remaining ones may just be referred to as the 'rest of the theme'.

Endeavouring to elaborate the concept of the narrow scene, we naturally concentrate on the foundation-laying process and its outcome, the thematic section of the sentence, and do not intend to give equal attention to the core-constituting process and its outcome, the non-thematic section of the sentence. But in order not to leave the picture too incomplete, we must give the non-thematic section at least a few notes.

Like the thematic section, the non-thematic section is not homogeneous in regard to degrees of CD. The lowest degree is carried by the TMEs. Starting to build up the core of the information within the non-thematic section, they perform the function that has come to be termed 'transition proper'. (On their possibly referring back to the theme, see, e.g., Firbas 1976.50–1 and here 51.)

In the presence of an element (elements) functioning as a specification (specifications), or in the presence of an element functioning as a phenomenon appearing/existing on the scene, and simultaneously in the presence of an element (elements) performing the thematic function, the notional component of the verb is transitional and belongs to the rest of the transition. It is evident that in the presence of context-independent elements performing the indicated functions the notional component of the verb is prevented from carrying the highest degree of CD and conveying the core of the message.

An element or elements carrying the highest degrees within the non-thematic section constitute the rheme. If the rheme is constituted by more than one element, the one carrying the highest degree of CD acts as rheme proper, the other (others) forms (form) the rest of the rheme.

Whereas the boundary between the theme and non-theme is as a rule clearly delimited by the TMEs, the sub-boundary within the non-thematic section between transition and rheme may occasionally be less clear. But does it not lie in the character of transition to pass from one status to another?

The heterogeneity in regard to degrees of CD displayed by the thematic

and non-thematic section is reflected by the following scale: theme proper – rest of the theme to the exclusion of the diatheme – diatheme – transition proper – rest of transition – rheme to the exclusion of rheme proper – rheme proper. (Theme proper shows the lowest, diatheme the highest degree of CD within the thematic section; transition proper shows the lowest, rheme proper the highest, degree of CD within the non-thematic section.)

The scale is not a position-bound concept, for linearity is not the only factor implementing it. The implementation of the scale is an outcome of an interplay of factors in which linearity co-operates with context and semantics (cf. here p. 43). The scale is not necessarily implemented in its entirety. This raises the question whether every sentence has a theme, transition and rheme. We have discussed this question in some detail in a separate paper (Firbas, in print₁), emphasizing the central status which – on account of the high degree of congruence between semantic structure, grammatical structure and the distribution of CD – the TMEs maintain in the system of an Indo-European language. We have come to the conclusion that the verbal sentence provides a central type of distributional field, against the background of which all other sentence types and the distributional fields provided by them must be evaluated. The evaluation reveals that there are themeless sentences, transitionless sentences and even sentences that are both themeless and transitionless. A structure without a rheme, however, would be regarded as an unfinished, truncated sentence.

We have now reached an important point in our discussion. We are now in a position to introduce the term 'perspective' as understood in our previous writings and to add an essential note on the concept of the narrow scene.

The preceding paragraphs and sections have shown how in the course of the development of discourse every sentence is imposed upon a communicative purpose. Implementing it, the foundation-laying and core-constituting processes make the sentence elements contribute to the further development of communication to varying extent. They make the sentence elements carry different degrees of CD. The degrees are distributed over the sentence elements, the sentence providing a distributional field of CD. The outcome of this distribution makes the semantic and grammatical sentence (clause) structure function in a definite kind of perspective. This accounts for the term 'functional sentence perspective' (= FSP).

It is important to bear in mind that the concept of FSP is linked up with the immediately relevant context, verbal and situational. As was explained earlier, context is conceived of here in the narrowest possible way. But the conception of the immediately relevant, narrow context in no way denies its forming part of a wider verbal and situational context and of a general context of experience shared by the sender and the receiver of the message.

It has been explained that by the narrow scene we mean all the linguistic phenomena that directly participate in the foundation-laying process, i.e. in constituting the theme. It was in accordance with this con-

ception that we used the adjective 'scenic' when making it refer to an element performing the function of a setting or to one that has become thematic simply on account of its derivability, i.e. context-dependence.

It is essential to realize in which senses the word 'scene' is used in the language of everyday life. At least two of these senses are relevant here. 'Scene' can refer either to the place and all the other concomitants of an actual or imagined event excluding the event itself, or to the occurrence in its entirety including both the concomitants and the event itself. The former sense is certainly more adjustable to the concept of the narrow scene than the latter. The latter sense, however, can be associated with other two notions, those of 'the distributional scene' and 'the communicated scene', which also have their places in our approach.

The distributional scene is in fact one aspect of the distributional field. It is constituted by its total semantic content functioning in the development of the discourse and involving the communicative functions (i.e. the functions performed by the communicative units within the distributional field: the functions of expressing the settings, . . ., the quality bearer, . . ., further specifications). The distributional scene involves not only the foundation-laying (thematic) elements, but also the core-constituting (non-thematic) elements.

It could be argued, and rightly so, that the designation 'communicated scene' might be considered synonymous with the designation 'distributional scene'. We should, however, like to apply it exclusively to the total of the extra-lingual referents of the communicative units. The communicated scene is the section of the extra-lingual reality reflected and communicated by the distributional field.

The term 'narrow scene' has been used by us since 1957 (cf. note 3). The term 'functional sentence perspective' has been modelled on Mathesius' German term 'Satzperspektive' (cf. Mathesius 1929). In his Czech publications (cf., e.g., 1947), however, Mathesius used the term 'aktuální členění větné', and felicitously used the adjective 'aktuální' in reference to the organization of sentence as implemented at the moment of utterance and serving the immediate communicative needs of the speaker/writer. Like French 'actuel', German 'aktuell', also Czech 'aktuální' conveys the meaning 'being of immediate interest and concern'. This meaning does not, however, associate so readily with English 'actual', which primarily suggests the meaning 'existing in fact', 'real'. These circumstances were decisive for the introduction of the term 'functional sentence perspective' into our English papers and studies.

Felicitous were also Mathesius' terms 'základ' (foundation, basis) and 'jádro' (core, nucleus), employed by us in explaining the concepts of 'theme' and 'rheme'. In Mathesius' later publications, 'základ' was used interchangeably with 'téma' (cf. Daneš 1964a, Firbas 1978.30). 'Rheme' (Cz 'réma') was not employed by Mathesius, it was suggested to us by the monograph of Boost (1955, cf. Firbas 1957b.94). 'Theme' and 'rheme' have been introduced into our writings because of their international character and their easily yielding both adjectival and verbal derivatives: 'thematic', 'rhematic', 'thematize', 'rhematize'.

AN ANALYSIS OF A PIECE OF NARRATIVE PROSE

1. The Analysis Proper

The present chapter presents an analysis of a piece of English narrative prose with a view to illustrating the observations offered in Chapter Two. The subject of the analysis are the first three paragraphs of an English fairy tale, *Dick Whittington and His Cat*, published in Joseph Jacob's *English Fairy Tales* (Frederick Muller, London, 1942, pp. 128–39). The extract to be analyzed comprises 15 basic distributional fields. (They are introduced by Arabic numerals.)

The analysis will be presented in two versions, to which a list of all the thematic units established in the extract will be added. The second section of the present chapter will then add some further comment on the analyzed piece of narrative. The text to be analyzed runs as follows.

¹In the reign of the famous king Edward III, there was a little boy called Dick Whittington, whose father and mother died when he was very young. ²As poor Dick was not old enough to work, he was very badly off; ³he got but little for his dinner, ⁴and sometimes nothing for his breakfast; ⁵for the people who lived in the village were very poor indeed, ⁶and could not spare him much more than the parings of potatoes, ⁷and now and then a hard crust of bread.

⁸Now Dick heard many, many very strange things about the great city called London; ⁹for the country people at that time thought that folks in London were all fine gentlemen and ladies; and that there was singing and music there all day long; and that the streets were all paved with gold.

¹⁰One day a large waggon and eight horses, all with bells at their heads, drove through the village while Dick was standing by the sign-post. ¹¹He thought that this waggon must be going to the fine town of London; ¹²so he took courage, ¹³and asked the waggoner to let him walk with him by the side of the waggon. ¹⁴As soon as the waggoner heard that poor Dick had no father or mother, and saw by his ragged clothes that he could not be worse off than he was, he told him he might go if he would, ¹⁵so off they set together.

The first version of the analysis, presented below, only marks the communicative units of the basic distributional fields (cf. here pp. 49, 51). The last word of a unit bears a superscripted numeral (¹⁰, ²⁰, ³⁰ or ¹¹, ¹², ... ²¹, ²², ..., ³¹, ³², ...), denoting the status of the unit within the theme-proper — rheme-proper scale (cf. here pp. 52–3). The superscripts ¹⁰, ²⁰, ³⁰ respectively stand for theme, transition and rheme. They are respectively replaced by ¹¹, ¹², ..., ²¹, ²², ..., ³¹, ³², ... if theme, transition or rheme is to be subdivided (cf. here pp. 52–3). Let us recall that the finite verb is interpreted as two communicative units (cf. here p. 51). As for the functions of the communicative units, i.e. their status within the semantic communicative scale (cf. here pp. 43–4), they are indicated interlinearly by the following: abbreviations:

Set(ting)

Sc(enic) (cf. here pp. 43–4)

Ex(istence/appearance on the scene)
 Ph(enomenon existing/appearing on the scene)
 B(earer of quality)
 A(scription) of Q(uality)
 Q(uality)
 Sp(ecification)
 F(urther) Sp(ecification)

The abbreviation 'neg. focus ant.' stands for 'negation focus anticipator'. By negation focus we understand the element that within the non-thematic section of a negative sentence carries the highest degree of CD. The negating element is then regarded as the negation focus anticipator. Anticipator is to be understood in terms of the gamut of CD, not in terms of linear arrangement. Instead of the abbreviation 'TMEs' (which would take up too much space) the sign 'X' has been used. It conveniently suggests the borderline function of the TMEs (cf. here p. 51). As has been emphasized, however, this borderline function is not ultimately to be understood as a word-order phenomenon (cf. here p. 51).

(1) *In the reign of the famous King Edward III¹², there¹¹*
Set¹² Set¹¹

was²¹⁻²² a little boy called Dick Whittington, whose father and
 X²¹ Ex²²

mother died when he was young³⁰. (2) As poor Dick was not old
 Ph³⁰

enough to work¹², he¹¹ was²¹⁻²² very badly off³⁰; (3) he¹¹
 Set¹² B¹¹ X²¹ A of Q²² Q³⁰; B¹¹

got²¹⁻²² but little³⁰ for his dinner¹²; (4) and sometimes¹¹
 X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰ Set¹²; Set¹¹

nothing³⁰ for his breakfast¹²; (5) for the people who lived in
 Sp³⁰ Set¹²;

the village¹⁰ were²¹⁻²² very poor indeed³⁰, (6) and could²¹
 B¹⁰ X²¹ A of Q²² Q³⁰; X²¹

not³¹ spare²¹⁻²² him¹⁰ much more than the parings of
 neg. focus ant³¹ X²¹ Q²² Sc¹⁰

potatoes³⁰, (7) and now and then¹⁰ a hard crust of bread³⁰.
Sp³⁰, Set¹⁰ Sp³⁰.

(8) Now¹² Dick¹¹ heard²¹⁻²² many, many very strange things³⁰
Set¹² B¹¹ X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰

about the great city called London¹³; (9) for the country people¹¹
Set¹³; B¹¹

at that time¹² thought²¹⁻²² that folks in London were all fine
Set¹² X²¹ Q²²

gentlemen and ladies³¹; and that there was singing and music
Q³¹

there all day long³²; and that the streets were all paved with
Q³²

gold³³.
Q³³.

(10) One day¹¹ a large waggon and eight horses, all with
Set¹¹

bells at their heads³⁰, drove²¹⁻²² through the village¹³ while Dick
Ph³⁰ X²¹ Ap²² Set¹³

was standing by the sing-post¹². (11) He¹⁰ thought²¹⁻²² that
Set¹². B¹⁰ X²¹ Q²²

this waggon must be going to the fine town of London³⁰; (12) so he¹⁰
Sp³⁰; B¹⁰

took²¹⁻²² courage³⁰, (13) and asked²¹⁻²² the waggoner³¹ to let
X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰, X²¹ Q²² Sp³¹

him walk with him by the side of the waggon³². (14) As soon as
F Sp³²

*the waggoner heard that poor Dick had no father or mother*¹², and
Set¹²

saw by his ragged clothes that he could not be worse off than he

*was*¹³, *he*¹¹ *told*²¹⁻²² *him*¹² *he might go if he would*³⁰, (15)
Set¹³ B¹¹ X²¹ Q²² Sc¹² Sp³⁰,

*off*³¹ *they*¹⁰ *set*²¹⁻²² *together*³².
Sp³¹ B¹⁰ X²¹ Q²² Sp³².

The second version of the analysis, now to be adduced, is more detailed in character, for it also indicates the communicative units of the sub-fields and semi-fields (cf. here p. 49). It stops, however, at the communicative units of sub-fields provided by the attributive construction of the headword + non-clausal attribute type. Such units are left unmarked. The last word of a communicative unit bears a compound superscripted numeral indicating the place of the unit in regard to the hierarchy of the distributional fields as well as the status of the unit within the theme-proper — rheme-proper scale.

The compound superscripted numeral consists of more than one two-digit numbers. The last of them indicates the communicative status the unit has within the subfield of which it forms a component. The next two-digit number placed to the left indicates the communicative status this subfield has as a communicative unit within a field of higher rank. If necessary, further two-digit numbers are added to the left of the numbers so far stated.

The functions of the communicative units, i.e. their status within the semantic communicative scale, is again indicated interlinearly by abbreviations that have been explained above. The hierarchical relationship between distributional fields is interlinearly indicated by various brackets. Only the basic distributional field remains unbracketed. Distributional fields of lower rank are — in descending hierarchical order — enclosed within round brackets, (), square brackets, [], and braces, { }.

(1) *In the reign of the famous King Edward III*¹², *there*¹¹
Set¹² Set¹¹

*was*²¹⁻²² *a little boy called Dick Whittington*^{30.10}, *whose father*
X²¹ Ex²² (B^{30.10} {

and mother^{30.30.10} *died*^{30.30.21-22} *when he*^{30.30.30.10}
B^{30.30.10} X^{30.30.21} Q^{30.30.22} { B^{30.30.30.10}

X^{30.30.30.21} was^{30.30.30.21-22} very young^{30.30.30.30} .
A of Q^{30.30.30.22} Q^{30.30.30.30} } Sp^{30.30.30} }

Q^{31.30}) Ph³⁰. (2) *As poor Dick*^{12.10} was^{12.21-22}
(B^{12.10} X^{12.21} A of Q^{12.22}

not^{12.31} old enough to work^{12.32} , he¹⁰
neg. focus ant.^{12.31} Q^{12.32}) Set¹² B¹⁰

was²¹⁻²² very badly off³⁰ ; (3) he¹¹ got²¹⁻²² but little³⁰
X²¹ A of Q²² Q³⁰ ; B¹¹ X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰

for his dinner¹² ; (4) and sometimes¹¹ nothing³⁰ for his
Set¹² ; Set¹¹ Sp³⁰

breakfast¹² ; (5) for the people^{10.10} who^{10.30.11} lived^{10.30.20-30}
Set¹² ; (B^{10.10} [B^{10.30.11} X^{10.30.20} Q^{10.20.30}

in the village^{10.30.12} were²¹⁻²² very poor
Set^{10.30.12}] Q^{10.30}) B¹⁰ X²¹ A of Q²²

indeed³⁰ , (6) and could²¹ not³¹ spare²¹⁻²² him¹⁰ much
Q³⁰ , X²¹ neg. focus ant.³¹ X²¹ Q²² Sc¹⁰

more than the parings of potatoes³² , (7) and now and then¹⁰ a
Sp³² , Set¹⁰

hard crust of bread³⁰ .
Sp³⁰ .

(8) Now¹² Dick¹¹ heard²¹⁻²² many, many very strange things³⁰
Set¹² B¹¹ X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰

about the great city called London¹³ ; (9) for the country
Set¹³ ;

people¹¹ at that time¹² thought²¹⁻²² that folks in London^{31.10}
B¹¹ Set¹² X²¹ Q²² (B^{31.10}

were²¹⁻²² all fine gentlemen and ladies^{31.30} ; and that
X²¹ A of Q²² Q^{31.30} Sp³¹ (

there^{32.11} was²¹⁻²² singing and music^{32.30} there^{32.12} all day
Set^{32.11} X²¹ Ex²² Ph^{32.30} Set^{32.12}

long^{32.13} ; and that the streets^{33.10} were^{33.21-22} all
Set^{32.13} Sp³² (B^{33.10} X^{33.21} A of Q^{33.22}

paved^{33.23} with gold^{33.30} .
Q^{33.23} Sp^{33.30} Sp³³ .

(10) One day¹¹ a large waggon and eight horses, all
Set¹¹

with bells at their heads³⁰ , drove²¹⁻²² through the
Ph³⁰ X²¹ Ap²²

village¹³ while Dick^{12.10} was^{12.21} standing^{12.21-22} by the
Set¹³ (B^{12.10} X^{12.21} X^{12.21} Q^{12.22}

sign-post^{12.30} . (11) He¹⁰ thought²¹⁻²² that this waggon^{30.10}
Sp^{12.30}) Set¹² . B¹⁰ X²¹ Q²² (B^{30.10}

must be^{30.21} going^{30.21-22} to the fine town of London^{30.30} ;
X^{30.21} X^{30.21} Q^{30.22} Sp^{30.30}) Sp³⁰ ;

(12) so he¹⁰ took²¹⁻²² courage³⁰ , (13) and asked²¹⁻²² the
B¹⁰ X²¹ Q²² Sp³⁰ , X²¹ Q²²

waggoner³¹ to let^{32.20} him^{32.11} walk^{32.31} with him^{32.32} by the
Sp³¹ (Q^{32.20} Sc^{32.11} Sp^{32.31} FSp^{32.32}

side of the waggon^{32.33} . (14) As soon as the waggoner^{12.10}
FSp^{32.33}) FSp³² . (B^{12.10}

heard^{12.21-22} that poor Dick^{12.30.10} had^{12.30.21-22} no
X^{12.21} Q^{12.22} [B^{12.30.10} X^{12.30.21} Q^{12.30.22}

father or mother^{12.30.30} , *and* *saw*^{13.21-22} *by*
 Sp^{12.30.30}] Sp^{12.30}) Set¹² (X^{13.21} Q^{13.22}
his ragged clothes^{13.12} *that he*^{13.30.10} *could*^{13.30.21}
 Set^{13.12} [B^{13.30.10} X^{13.30.21}
not^{13.30.31} *be*^{13.30.21-22} *worse off*^{13.30.32} *than*
 neg. focus ant.^{13.30.31} X^{13.30.21} A of Q^{13.30.22} Q^{13.30.32} {
he^{13.30.33.10} *was*^{13.30.33.20-30} ,
 B^{13.30.33.10} X^{13.30.33.20} Q^{13.30.33.30} } Q^{13.30.33}] Q^{13.30}) Set¹³
*he*¹¹ *told*²¹⁻²² *him*¹² *he*^{30.11} *might*^{30.21} *go*^{30.21-30} *if*
 B¹¹ X²¹ Q²² Sc¹² (B^{30.11} X^{30.21} Q^{30.30} [
he^{30.12.10} *would*^{30.12.20-30} , (15) *so off*³¹
 B^{30.12.10} X^{30.12.20} Q^{30.12.30}] Set^{30.12}) Sp³⁰ , Sp³¹
*they*¹⁰ *set*²¹⁻²² *together*³² .
 B¹⁰ X²¹ Q²² Sp³² .

As we are particularly interested in the foundation-laying, i.e. thematic, elements, we have compiled a list of all the communicative units that have been interpreted as thematic within the analyzed extract. The abbreviations, superscripted numerals and brackets have been applied in the same way as above. Additionally, oblong brackets, ⟨ ⟩, have been introduced. In the first column of the list, they adduce the referents of the pronominal elements in the listed themes; in the third column, they enclose particularizations of the functions performed by the settings.

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| there ¹¹ | 1 | Set ¹¹ ⟨place⟩ |
| In the reign of the famous King Edward III ¹² | 1 | Set ¹² ⟨time⟩ |
| [whose father and mother ^{30.30.10} ⟨Dick's⟩ | [1] | [B ^{30.30.10}] |
| [he ^{30.30.30.10} ⟨Dick⟩ | {1} | {B ^{30.30.30.10} } |
| As poor Dick was not old enough to work ¹² | 2 | Set ¹² ⟨circumstance (cause)⟩ |
| (poor Dick ^{12.10}) | (2) | (B ^{12.10}) |
| he ¹⁰ ⟨Dick⟩ | 2 | B ¹⁰ |
| he ¹¹ ⟨Dick⟩ | 3 | B ¹¹ |
| for his dinner ¹² ⟨Dick's⟩ | 3 | Set ¹² ⟨time⟩ |
| sometimes ¹¹ | 4 | Set ¹¹ ⟨time⟩ |
| for his breakfast ¹² ⟨Dick's⟩ | 4 | Set ¹² ⟨time⟩ |
| the people who lived in the village ¹⁰ | 5 | B ¹⁰ |
| (the people ^{10.10}) | (5) | (B ^{10.10}) |
| [who ^{10.30.11} ⟨the people⟩ | [5] | [B ^{10.30.11}] |
| [in the village ^{10.30.12}] | [5] | [Set ^{10.30.12} ⟨place⟩] |
| him ¹⁰ ⟨Dick⟩ | 6 | Sc ¹⁰ |

| | | |
|--|------|--|
| now and then ¹¹ | 7 | Set ¹⁰ (time) |
| Now ¹² | 8 | Set ¹² (time) |
| Dick ¹¹ | 8 | B ¹¹ |
| about the great city called London ¹³ | 8 | Set ¹³ ('as to/as for' mention) |
| the country people ¹¹ | 9 | B ¹¹ |
| at that time ¹² | 9 | Set ¹² (time) |
| (folks in London ^{31.10}) | (9) | (B ^{31.10}) |
| (there ^{32.10}) (existential 'there') | (9) | (Set ^{32.10}) (place) |
| (there ^{32.12}) (London) | (9) | (Set ^{32.12}) (place) |
| (all day long ^{32.13}) | (9) | (Set ^{32.13}) (time) |
| (the streets ^{33.10}) | (9) | (B ^{33.10}) |
| One day ¹¹ | 10 | Set ¹¹ (time) |
| through the village ¹³ | 10 | Set ¹³ (place) |
| while Dick was standing by the sign-post ¹² | 10 | Set ¹² (time) |
| (Dick ^{12.10}) | (10) | (B ^{12.10}) |
| He ¹⁰ (Dick) | 11 | B ¹⁰ |
| (this waggon ^{30.10}) | (11) | (B ^{30.10}) |
| he ¹⁰ (Dick) | 12 | B ¹⁰ |
| (him ^{30.11}) (Dick) | (13) | (Sc ^{30.11}) |
| As soon as the waggoner heard that poor Dick | 14 | Set ¹² (time) |
| had no father or mother ¹² | | |
| (the waggoner ^{12.10}) | (14) | (B ^{12.10}) |
| and saw by his ragged clothes that he could | (14) | Set ¹³ (time) |
| not be worse off than we was ¹³ | | |
| he ¹¹ (the waggoner) | 14 | B ¹¹ |
| [poor Dick ^{12.30.10}] | [14] | [B ^{12.30.10}] |
| (by his ragged clothes ^{13.12}) (Dick's) | (14) | (Set ^{13.12}) (attendant circumstances) |
| [he ^{13.30.10}] (Dick) | [14] | [B ^{13.30.10}] |
| [he ^{13.30.33.10}] (Dick) | [14] | [B ^{13.30.33.10}] |
| him ¹² (Dick) | 14 | Sc ¹² |
| (he ^{30.11}) (Dick) | (14) | (B ^{30.11}) |
| [he ^{30.12.10}] (Dick) | [14] | [B ^{30.12.10}] |
| they ¹⁰ (the waggoner and Dick) | 15 | B ¹⁰ |

2. Commentary

Let us now add some comment on the offered analyses. As we are interested in the foundation-laying proces, we shall mainly concentrate our attention on its outcome, i.e. the thematic elements. Taken all together, they constitute the thematic layer of the examined piece of narrative (cf. Firbas 1961.93–5). The non-thematic elements, on the other hand, constitute its non-thematic layer, within which a rhematic and a transition (and a transition proper) layer could be established. Within these layers, the thematic (cf. Daneš 1974b), transitional and rhematic progressions could be examined.

None of the sentences of the examined extract functions within second instance. This means that in each distributional field of any rank the TMEs – if present – serve as a borderline between the thematic and the non-thematic section. In regard to the flow of the narrative, they constitute a dividing line between the thematic and the non-thematic layers. It should, of course, be recalled that 'borderline' is not a word-order concept. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that the undertaken analysis testifies to the TMEs tending to occur at a point within the linear arrangement where the thematic section ends and the non-thematic section begins. This bears

out the observation that English displays a tendency towards the basic distribution of CD (Firbas 1979a.55). This observation is further corroborated by the superscripted numbers. They reflect the English tendency towards the basic distribution of CD as well.

Turning our attention to the thematic elements we find that none of them contains a notional component of a finite verb. This corroborates the observation that the notional component of a finite verb appears in the theme only in the absence of other elements capable of performing the thematic function (cf. here p. 42). The listed thematic elements are implemented by adverbial elements, subjects and objects. The adverbials and subjects heavily outnumber the objects. (There are only three objects among the listed elements.) The adverbials invariably function as settings, the subjects as quality bearers; the objects are all derivable elements and have been interpreted as merely performing the scenic function (cf. here pp. 43–4).

Let us now add some comment on the thematic elements from the point of view of their derivability or underivability.

There is one item that permanently remains in the flow of the communication throughout the analyzed extract and can therefore be interpreted not merely as derivable from the immediately relevant preceding context, but as a permanent part of the narrow scene, and in consequence of the thematic layer of the story. In fact, it remains within the narrow scene throughout the entire fairy tale and consequently qualifies for the status of permanent theme (discussed by Svoboda 1981.87–8). Through various forms (*Dick Whittington*, *Dick*, *he*, *him*, etc.), it refers to the main character of the story; it occurs already in 1 and with the exception of 5, 9 recurs in each basic distributional field of the analyzed extract (the elliptical reference in 7 being interpreted as a case of recurrence). No special reason has been noted within the analyzed extract that would temporarily place a reference to Dick in the non-thematic layer of the story. As the discourse proceeds, the degree of derivability of a reference to Dick increases. Constant repetition renders the item more and more firmly established in the flow of communication.

There are not too many more items that are wholly derivable from the immediately preceding context. This, of course, effectively contributes to establishing Dick as a central figure of the narrative. Derivable information in the above sense is conveyed by *there*^{32.12} of 9, referring back to *London*^{31.10} of 9; *this waggon*^{30.10} of 11, referring back to a *large waggon*³⁰ of 10; *the waggoner*^{12.10} and *he*¹¹ of 14, referring back to *the waggoner*³¹ of 13; and *they*¹⁰ of 15, pointing back — through a chain of references — to *the waggoner*³¹ of 13 and to *a little boy called Dick Whittington*^{30.10} of 1. (The long chain of references in the latter case corroborates the observation about the well established position of *Dick* in the narrow scene). Strictly speaking, also *who*^{10.30.11} of 5 referring back to *the people*^{10.10} of 5 should be listed here as well. Let us add that *him* in *with him* of 13 also refers back to *the waggoner*³¹ of 13. Taken by itself, it certainly conveys derivable information. In terms of the present analysis, however, it does not constitute a separate unit.

Elements that are partly derivable and on account of this characteristic

appear in the theme are practically non-existent in the examined extract. But it may be argued that a trait of derivability is displayed by the thematic subject *streets* of 9, for it is undoubtedly linked with the notion of *London* of 8 and 9. The predominant reason for its appearance in the theme is, however, the immediate communicative orientation of the discourse. This consists in ascribing outstanding qualities to London, and consequently also in ascribing the extraordinary quality of being all paved with gold to the London streets. This makes the subject *streets* function as a quality bearer, the notion conveyed by it receding into the background.

As has been pointed out, the thematic elements of the analyzed piece of narrative are, in an overwhelming majority of cases, implemented by adverbials and subjects, the former serving as settings, the latter as quality bearers. It is also worth noticing that in an overwhelming majority of cases, the subjects are derivable, whereas the adverbials are underivable. In spite of their derivability, the subjects distinctly perform the function of quality bearers. This function is not neutralized, and therefore does not change into a merely scenic one (cf. here p. 42), owing to the presence of elements unequivocally performing the functions of expressing quality and specification.

The settings provide a point at which we can turn our attention to underivable thematic elements. A glance at the list of the thematic elements (which covers the entire thematic layer of the examined piece of narrative) reveals that the underivable adverbials serving as settings are implemented by single adverbs, adverbial phrases or adverbial clauses. Most of them express a concomitant indication of time. Second come settings expressing a concomitant indication of place. The third group, smallest in number, contains settings expressing cause or attendant circumstance or introducing an 'as far as somebody/something is concerned' (for short, 'as for/as to') mention. Longer texts would certainly contain a wider variety of non-temporal and non-local settings. The common denominator of all the types of settings is the conveyance of merely background information, i.e. *not* the kind of information constituting the core of the message.

Apart from underivable elements that unmistakably serve as settings, few may not appear so unequivocal to the interpreter. Cases of this type are also to be found in the analyzed extract. They deserve more detailed attention, for they involve the problem of multifunctionality touched upon here earlier (see pp. 46-7). The following question can be raised regarding the analyzed extract.

Are we to interpret *for his dinner* of 4 and *for his breakfast* of 5 as settings or specifications? Both adverbials may be regarded as conveying merely concomitant information, meaning 'on the occasion of a certain meal time' (cf. Wood 1967:36) and therefore receding into the background and throwing into relief *little* and *nothing*. This is in fact the interpretation we have adopted. It is not an arbitrary decision. By throwing *little* and *nothing* into relief, we bring out a semantically homogenous stretch of rhematic layer constituted by the notion of Dick's helplessness as a child (cf. *very young*^{30.30.30} of 1, *not old enough to work*^{12.32} of 2) and of all the

poverty surrounding him (cf. *very badly off*³⁰ of 2, but *little*³⁰ of 3, *nothing*³⁰ of 4, *very poor indeed*³⁰ of 5, *not*³¹... *much more than the parings of potatoes*³² of 6, and a *hard crust of bread*³⁰ of 7). This stretch of the rhematic layer should not escape the notice of the careful reader.

To interpret *for his dinner* and *for his breakfast* as specifications would certainly be possible. Such an interpretation, however, has its consequences: directing the reader/listener's attention to another aspect and weakening the semantic homogeneity of the rhematic layer. It involves a different immediate orientation of the discourse.

Another question can be raised. How are we to interpret the adverbial *in the village* of 6? It would certainly be possible to regard it as a specification. In terms of the narrow scene, it conveys underivable information; it co-occurs with a subject that functions as a quality bearer; it expresses a notion that could be regarded as specifying that of the verb: it localizes the domicile of the people concerned. This interpretation cannot be ruled out. And yet we vote for another interpretation.

We are inclined to consider *in the village* to be a setting. But in doing so, we put ourselves in a position in which an underivable piece of knowledge is presented to us as derivable. Though not having been told before where Dick lived, we accept it as known information. This appears to evoke a kind of 'to-be-in-the-know' feeling, establishing a closer link between the reader/listener and the narrator.

Interpreting *in the village* as a setting enlarges the number of items that in the thematic layer refer to the village (cf. *the country people*¹¹ of 9 and *through the village*¹³ of 10) and tend to create a semantically homogeneous stretch within it.

The two offered interpretations of the adverbial *in the village* do not contradict each other. They both ultimately use the same criterion of objective contextual conditioning. Subjective manipulation of the objective context, creating what has been tentatively termed the 'to-be-in-the-know' feeling, is to be accounted for as the cause of a functionally motivated deviation from the usual outcome of the interplay of FSP factors (according to which *in the village* would be a specification).

The element *about the great city called London* of 8 creates a similar problem. In terms of the narrow scene, it conveys underivable information. It could be treated as a specification. But the moment it is treated as a setting, it recedes into the background and throws the element *many, many very strange things* into relief, simultaneously bringing into full play the emphatic intensifying repetition of *many* as well as the intensifier *very*. The treatment of *about the great city called London* as a setting once again evokes in the reader/listener the feeling of 'being in the know'. In conformity with this observation, the following point can be made.

Like *people*^{10.10} *who*^{10.30.11}... *in the village*^{10.30.12} of 5, *the country people*¹¹ of 9 and *through the village*¹³ of 10, the elements *about the great city of London*¹³ of 8, *folks in London*^{31.10} of 9, *there*^{32.11} of 9 and *the streets*^{33.10} of 9 form part of the thematic layer (creating a mild contrast within it).

Making *about the great city of London* function as a setting heightens the semantic homogeneity both in the thematic and in the rhematic layer.

It enables the latter to present all the 'wonders' of London mentioned in the narrative: *many, many very strange things*³⁰ of 8, *all fine gentlemen and ladies*^{31 30} of 9, *singing and music*^{32 30} of 9, *all paved*^{33 23} *with gold*^{33 30} of 9.

The tendency towards the homogeneity of the layers is an important factor in determining whether an adverbial element is to function as a setting or a specification. It is implementable within limits set by the interplay of devices of FSP. Each in his own way, the speaker/writer and the listener/reader may, to a greater or smaller extent, pay heed to this tendency or disregard it, and accordingly increase or weaken the effectiveness of the communication.

Discussing derivability and underivability induces us to take up one more point presented by the analyzed extract.

It concerns the reintroduction into the flow of communication of items the semantic contents of which are wholly or partly derivable and yet come to serve as specifications.

A case in point is sentence 11. 'The fine town of London' is certainly fully derivable. But the immediately preceding relevant context by no means permits the conclusion that London will become the goal (place of destination) of the vehicle ('waggon') expressed by the theme. This very piece of information is underivable, and under the circumstances induces the adverbial expressing the goal to function as a specification.

Similarly, the immediately relevant preceding context does not tell the reader/listener where within the communicated scene Dick will want to place himself. It is therefore a new piece of information that it will be 'with the waggon' and 'by the side of the waggon' (see 3). Hence the two adverbials particularizing the places will function as specifications. Newly particularizing the place of destination (the goal of motion) or the place temporarily or permanently taken up by an animate or inanimate phenomenon is to be regarded as specifying, not as merely concomitant, information.

The above notes have brought us to the end of the analysis of the adduced extract. The analysis has illustrated the operation of the narrow scene, viewed as a dynamic foundation-laying process, the outcome of which is the thematic section of the sentence, or rather, of the distributional field of CD provided by the sentence. It has illustrated the causes rendering sentence elements thematic: their derivability from the immediately relevant preceding context; the interplay of devices making them recede into the background in the case of their underivability; the immediate communicative orientation of the discourse. Together with the core-constituting process, the foundation-laying process makes a sentence function in a certain perspective. We can now turn our attention to Fillmore's concepts of scene and perspective.

SCENE AND PERSPECTIVE IN FILLMORE'S APPROACH
AND IN FUNCTIONAL SENTENCE PERSPECTIVE

Let us now turn our attention to the concepts of scene and perspective as they have been developed by Fillmore. A note on what has been termed by him 'commercial event' may conveniently open the discussion.

The commercial event involves the buyer, who hands over some money and takes the goods, and the seller, who surrenders the goods and takes the money (Fillmore 1977:72). A sentence reporting such an event need not explicitly mention all the entities involved; it will, however, present the event from one particular aspect, which is indicated by the verb. Different verbs indicate different aspects. *Sell* approaches the event from the point of view of the seller and the goods, *spend* from that of the buyer and the money, *pay* either from that of the buyer and the money or from that of the buyer and the seller, *cost* from that of the goods and the money (72-3), *buy* from that of the seller and the goods.

The prototypic commercial event is regarded as a cognitive scene, which is activated by utterances. The verb efficiently co-operates in this process of activation (which does not necessarily entail explicit mention of all the entities involved). It identifies the particular aspect from which the scene is viewed: it co-operates in imposing on it a particular perspective; it constrains the language user to bring some entity or entities of the scene into perspective. The sentences adduced in 12 below will illustrate. (They open the set of Fillmore's examples given in Sections 5 and 6 of his paper. We are adducing the entire set, retaining the original numbering of the examples.)

12a. I bought a dozen roses. 12b. I paid Harry five dollars. 12c. I bought a dozen roses from Harry for five dollars. 12d. I paid Harry five dollars for a dozen roses.

13a. I hit the stick against the fence. 13b. I hit the fence with the stick. 13c. I hit the stick. 13d. I hit the fence.

14a. I hit Harry with the stick. 14b. I hit the stick against Harry.

15. The stick hit the fence.

16a. I beat the stick against the wall. 16b. I beat the wall with the stick.

16c. I beat the stick against Harry. 16d. I beat Harry with the stick. 16e. The stick beat Harry.

17. He knocked on the door with his fist.

18. He knocked the door down.

19a. I pushed against the table. 19b. I pushed the table.

20a. I broke the vase with the hammer. 20b. I broke the hammer on the vase.

21a. I cut my foot on a rock. 21b. I cut my foot with a rock.

22. I filled the glass with water.

23a. I loaded the truck with hay. 23b. I smeared the wall with mud. 23c. I loaded hay onto the truck. 23d. I smeared mud on the wall.

24a. I covered the table with a quilt. 24b. *I covered a quilt over the table.

24c. I put a quilt on the table. 24d. *I put the table with a quilt.

The examples adduced in 12 all evoke the entire scene of the commercial event. Not all of the entities involved are always explicitly mentioned, but in each case some of them are brought into perspective: the

buyer and the goods in 12a and 12c, the buyer and the seller in 12b and 12d.

Though playing an important role in determining the perspective, the action conveyed by the verb is evidently not included in it. This can be gathered from Fillmore's formulations concerning the roles played by the verbs *push* and *knock* in 19a and 17, respectively. Sentence 19a, containing the verb *push*, is interpreted as expressing "a two-participant scene with a one-place perspective" (77). The one place available is filled by the agent, implemented by the grammatical subject. Sentence 17, containing the verb *knock*, is accompanied with the comment that "conceptually an act of knocking requires more than one participant, but only the agent need be put into perspective". Once again, the agent is implemented by the grammatical subject. Neither of the two sentences includes in the perspective the action conveyed by the verb.

In order to illustrate the important role played by the verb in determining the perspective, let us add that some verbs allow a choice of perspective (79), while others, having fixed perspectives, do not (ib.). For instance, the verb *hit*, evoking 'a scene of a person taking something and causing that thing to come into abrupt contact with something else' (74), allows of two perspectives. One includes the actor and the manipulated object (cf. 13a), the other (cf. 13b) the actor and the affected object (ib.). On the other hand, *cover* and *put* allow of one perspective. *Cover* requires that the goal should be expressed by the direct object (cf. 24a); *put* (cf. 24c) requires that the patient should be expressed by the direct object (79). In each case, the grammatical subject and the grammatical direct object constitute the nuclear elements, which — to the exclusion of the verb — express the perspective.

One further point is of importance. Fillmore finds that it is more natural to include human beings within perspective than to leave them out in favour of inanimate objects (75). Change is another aspect that puts a phenomenon affected by it in perspective (77). Definiteness and totality can be added to the list of saliency criteria (78).

In terms of sentence constituents (conveying meaning which ultimately reflects extra-linguistic reality), Fillmore's approach does not put the entire sentence, but only a portion of it, into perspective. Let us recall that it is the nuclear elements — the grammatical subject and the grammatical direct object — that are included in the perspective; the rest of the sentence is excluded from it.

According to the FSP approach, the entire semantic and grammatical sentence structure appears (functions) in a certain type of perspective. The perspective in which the sentence appears (functions) is the outcome of the distribution of degrees of CD distributed over the sentence elements: it is the distribution of degrees of CD that imposes a certain type of perspective upon the sentence.

The question may be raised whether the nuclear elements constituting the perspective in Fillmore's approach cannot be equated with what has been described as 'foundation' and termed 'theme' by us. The answer must be in the negative, though under certain conditions (to be discussed later, see pp. 72–6) at least one of Fillmore's nuclear elements may become

thematic. The nuclear elements constituting the perspective in Fillmore's approach cannot be equated with the theme, because the former are invariably linked with the grammatical subject and the grammatical direct object irrespective of the roles of these constituents in the development of the communication, i.e. irrespective of their degrees of CD. In Fillmore's approach, the perspective ascribed to a sentence structure will not change under different contextual conditionings: in the FSP approach, it depends on these conditionings and changes accordingly.

The difference between the two approaches can be demonstrated by the following brief discussion of Fillmore's illustrative sentences.

Subject

Nearly all the examples adduced by Fillmore in Sections 5 and 6 of his paper happen to open with the pronominal subject *I*. Two examples (17, 18) open with the pronominal subject *he*, two with the nominal subject *the stick* (15, 16e). The most natural interpretation of *I* and *he* is to regard them as derivable¹⁸ and therefore as thematic. According to Fillmore, it is a nuclear element and consequently included in the perspective. An underivable *the stick* cannot be ruled out. But it remains thematic if the rest of the sentence conveys underivable information, too (see p. 42).

Object

With the exception of 17, all the examples adduced by Fillmore contain a direct object. Let us first give our interpretations.

If accompanied by a non-generic indefinite article (or its zero plural variant), the object is most naturally interpreted as underivable. It will then carry a higher degree of CD than the verb (cf. Firbas 1959, 1969, 1979a.37), not admit of pronominalization and belong to the non-thematic section of the sentence. (This applies to the direct objects of 12a, 12b, 12c, 12d.)

A direct object preceded by the definite article or the possessive adjective conveys either derivable or underivable information and belongs to the thematic or the non-thematic section, respectively. A proper name serving as a direct object behaves in the same way. And so does an articleless non-count common noun.

If underivable, the direct objects *the stick*, *Harry*, *my foot* and *hay* of Fillmore's illustrative sentences 13a, 14a, 21a, 23c, will not be replaceable by pronouns. (A direct object conveying underivable information cannot be pronominalized.) In such cases, it will then not be possible to say *I hit it against the fence*, *I hit him with the stick*, *I cut it on a rock*, *I loaded it onto the truck*.

If derivable, the direct objects of the cited illustrative examples will admit of pronominalization, provided ambiguity of reference is excluded.

¹⁸ Let us recall here that in the present paper 'derivable' and 'underivable' are used synonymously with 'context-dependent' and 'context-independent'.

Let us add that a pronominal direct object normally conveys derivable information and in consequence belongs to the theme. Under normal circumstances, pronominalization would give all the direct objects of Fillmore's examples the character of conveyers of derivable information.

In Fillmore's approach the object, like the subject, is a nuclear element, co-constituting the perspective and remaining so invariably; in FSP, on the other hand, it changes its functions, being either thematic or non-thematic. In the absence of elements exceeding it in CD (cf. the notes on the function of the adverbial in FSP), it will carry the highest degree of CD within the non-thematic section and serve as rheme proper.

Indirect Object

In addition to the direct object, two of Fillmore's examples (12b, 12d) contain an indirect object. In Fillmore's approach, the indirect object is excluded from the perspective and invariably remains so.

The FSP approach offers the following interpretation. As a rule the indirect object expresses a phenomenon (animate or inanimate) indirectly affected by the action expressed by the verb; the direct object, on the other hand, expresses a phenomenon directly affected or effected. At the present state of knowledge it appears that it is most natural to assume that the notion of the indirectly affected phenomenon contributes less to the further development of the communication than that of the directly affected phenomenon, provided the latter is context-independent. Both English and Czech unmarked sentences corroborate this view. It is also borne out by 12b and 12d. As long as the direct object *five dollars* is context-independent, it cannot be exceeded in CD by the indirect object *Harry*. A marked sentence pattern would be implemented by providing *Harry* with the preposition *to* and placing it after *five dollars*. Provided *Harry* is context-independent, it will exceed *five dollars* in CD. It follows that like the direct object, the indirect object is not invariably linked with one communicative function in the FSP approach.

Adverbials

One point should not pass unnoticed. The majority of Fillmore's illustrative sentence structures contain an adverbial element placed finally (see 12c, 12d, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d, 17, 19a, 20a, 20b, 21a, 21b, 22, 23a, 23b, 23c, 23d, 24a, 24c). These adverbials are all interpreted by Fillmore as occurring outside the perspective. This interpretation holds good invariably. From the point of view of FSP, the interpretation is the following.

If context-independent, the adverbials under discussion all evidently belong to the core of the message, supplying a specifying item of information. They do so by stating, for instance, the source, degree, goal, instrument or location. In the absence of any further specification, they will carry the highest degree of CD. It will be remembered that context-independence is not the only condition of the specifying function. The semantic character of the adverbial, as well as the semantic relations

into which it enters, is also in play. If context-dependent, however, the final adverbials under examination will not belong to the core of the message, but merely express concomitant circumstances and function as settings. To sum up, the adverbials call for different interpretations, depending on the development of the discourse.

Subject Again

The preceding comments have shown once more what an important role is played by contextual conditionings in FSP. Owing to the operation of context even the pronominal subject *I*, present in each of Fillmore's examples, could be made to stand out as the element carrying the highest degree of CD. This would happen if all the other elements — with the exception of the TMEs — became context-dependent: for instance, if Fillmore's sentence structures were used in reply to *wh*-questions asking for the subject. The subject of the reply would then necessarily become the carrier of the highest degree of CD; cf. *Who bought a dozen roses? — I bought a dozen roses.* True enough, the more common form of reply would be *I did*, but this does not affect the argument that even a pronominal subject may become rheme proper.

Verb

All the examples offered by Fillmore being verbal sentences, some comment must also be added on the function of the verb. In Fillmore's approach, the verb effectively co-operates in determining the perspective of the sentence, but is not included in it.

In our approach, the finite verb is split up into two communicative units (cf. pp. 50–51), represented by the notional component and the TMEs. The finite verb is not invariably linked with one function, though undoubtedly showing a marked tendency to be so. (Within first instance, the notional component tends to be transitional, the TMEs invariably performing the function of transition proper.)

The notional component of the finite verb could become rhematic if in addition to the subject even the object and the adverbial were context-dependent. In these cases, however, the object and the adverbial would usually be pronominalized (cf. *The stick hit it, It hit it, I broke it with it, I did it with it*).

The possibility of the notional component of the finite verb becoming thematic cannot be ruled out either. (Cf. the thematic function of the notional component of the second verb in *First I hit John and then I hit Harry*; the second subject and the second verb could of course be ellipted.) Fillmore's illustrative examples, however, certainly do not tend to occur in context that would thematize the notional components of their finite verbs.

The FSP approach emphasizes that a sentence structure is as a rule not restricted to one type of contextual use. In response to various contextual conditionings it functions in different perspectives. But the range of possible perspectives would become even wider if the second instance

uses were taken into account. All the comment on examined sentences that has been offered so far concerns only first instance uses. Each of the examined sentence, however, could function within the second instance sphere, in which one sentence element appears in heavy contrast — sometimes even on account of only one of its semantic traits (cf. Firbas 1968.15—18 and here note 17 on p. 50) — and becomes the carrier of the highest degree of CD, the rest of the sentence becoming thematic (cf. the various possible second instance uses of 15: *The STICK hit the fence*, *The stick HIT the fence*, *The stick DID hit the fence*, *The stick hit the FENCE*, or even *THE stick hit the fence*, *The stick hit THE fence*). All the possible perspectives in which a semantic and grammatical sentence structure can appear constitute the range of its contextual applicability.

* *
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The commentary has demonstrated that Fillmore's concept of perspective cannot be equated with the concept of perspective employed by the FSP approach. The latter relates the concept of perspective to the functioning of a sentence structure in the very act of communication, i.e. at the moment the sentence structure is called upon to fulfil an immediate communicative purpose set by the narrow scene. Fillmore's approach, on the other hand, relates the concept of perspective to the cognitive scene. It relates it, in fact, to a general scene created by the experience shared by the sender and the receiver of the message. Whereas the narrow scene changes with every act of communication, the general scene remains the same. This explains why according to the FSP approach the perspective changes in conformity with the contextual conditioning obtaining at the moment the sentence is produced and/or taken in. It equally explains why the perspective established by Fillmore remains unaffected by the contextual conditionings.

The preceding reflections have clearly indicated that Fillmore's concept of (cognitive) scene and our concept of (the narrow) scene cannot be equated either. Both Fillmore's approach and that of FSP relativize the meanings to scenes. Only the scenes, the points, in regard to which the relativization is effected occupy different positions in regard to the complex phenomenon of context. With due alterations what has been said about perspective can also be restated about scene.

The narrow scene and the related distributional and communicated scenes (see Chapter Two of the present paper) are linked with the immediately relevant situational and verbal context at the moment a sentence is produced or taken in. This represents perhaps the greatest possible narrowing down of the wide context of experience shared by the interlocutors of which the immediately relevant context necessarily forms a part. Fillmore in fact relates his scene to the context of experience as well, but does not narrow it down to the context of immediate relevance. In the FSP approach the narrowing serves to make the interpretation sensitive to the everchanging flow of communication: it enables to capture

the ever-changing dynamic aspect of the communication. The narrow scene relates to the dynamics of the discourse and in this respect is a dynamic concept. Remaining the same irrespective of different contextual conditionings, Fillmore's scene is a static concept. Needless to say, this observation is in no way intended to belittle one and to extol the other concept.

We have shown that Fillmore's perspective and scene cannot be equated with our perspective and scene. But non-identity does not preclude mutual relationship. We believe that under certain conditions it is possible to relate the unequatable concepts to each other. It is the complex phenomenon of context that provides the ground on which such relationship can be established. Let us only emphasize most emphatically that we are aware that further research will have to elaborate on the conditions presented in the final section of the present paper and aim at a more exact assessment of possible mutual relationship (cf. Firbas, in print₂).

As has been shown, the two types of perspective and the two types of scene are related to different types of context. The perspective and scene in our approach is related to the immediately relevant context, the perspective and scene of Fillmore's approach to the general context of experience. The fact of the immediately relevant context being embedded within the context of experience, virtually forming part of it, makes the mutual relationship between the two types of perspective and the two types of scene establishable.

Examining the contextual applicability of the sentence structures commented upon (pp. 69–72), we find that a high degree of correspondence between the narrow scene (and the related distributional scene and communicated scene) and the associated perspective on the one hand and the general scene of experience and the associated perspective on the other can be established at two levels within the first instance sphere: the basic instance level and one of the ordinary instance levels. Let us recall that at the basic instance level the entire semantic content of the sentence is to be regarded as underivable (see, e.g., Firbas 1979a.45–6). The ordinary instance level we are concerned with here answers to the following special description: it induces the sentence to have only one derivable element, this element being the one that most readily and most frequently acquires the status of derivability.

Applying the suggested criterion to the examples commented upon, i.e. regarding them as functioning at the two described instance levels, we come to the following conclusion. With two provisos, one to be stated straightway, the other further below, Fillmore's examples can indeed be interpreted as functioning at the two described instance levels.

The first proviso anticipates an objection. It might be argued that the pronominal subjects *I* and *he* of Fillmore's sentences are most naturally regarded as derivable and the sentences therefore unsuitable for employment at the basic instance level. This is certainly true. Although contexts might be imagined in which under certain conditions the entire sentence, including the pronominal subject, could be regarded as conveying underivable information, it must be admitted that the argument to be advanced

would be weightier if each pronominal subject were replaced, for instance, by the proper name *Peter*. This being so, might we ask the reader to carry out this substitution? It does not affect Fillmore's interpretation in any way, because like the pronominal subject, the nominal subject *Peter* is included in the perspective. As for our interpretation, like the pronominal subject, the nominal subject is the element that most readily acquires the status of derivability and can be taken for the only derivable element within the sentence. Bearing the above proviso in mind, let us reexamine Fillmore's examples. At the basic instance level, each of the subjects is induced to assume the communicative function of expressing the quality bearer; it is therefore backgrounded and assumes the foundation-laying function. At the ordinary instance level specified, it becomes thematic primarily on account of its derivability, but distinctly continues to express the quality bearer as well. Under the circumstances, each subject carries the lowest degree of CD at both levels.

At both instance levels concerned, the non-verbal elements placed by Fillmore in his examples out of the perspective will be underivable and function as specifications and/or further specifications. They will belong to the non-thematic section, functioning as rheme and/or rhemes proper. They will carry the highest degrees of CD.

The second element, the direct object, placed by Fillmore in the perspective will at the two levels concerned be underivable and non-thematic, functioning as a specification. In the presence of an element serving as a further specification it will be merely rhematic; in its absence it will serve as rheme proper and carry the highest degree of CD.

As for the finite verb, placed by Fillmore out of the perspective, it will function at both levels concerned as an underivable element, belong to the non-thematic section and occupy the transitional part of it, its TMEs functioning as transition proper. The finite verb, however, is the element in regard to which Fillmore's and our interpretation do not quite coincide. It would seem that in all the analyzed cases elements placed by Fillmore in perspective carry lower degrees of CD than those placed by Fillmore out of it. The verb constitutes an exception. Though placed out of the perspective, it is — according to our approach — exceeded in CD by an element functioning as a specification or further specification even if such an element is regarded by Fillmore as occurring in the perspective. But both approaches, each in its own way, accord the verb a central function.

Another fact is worth noticing. If functioning at the indicated levels, all the examples display a theme-transition-rheme sequence. If the TMEs preceded the notional component within the transition (which is not the case, as they are implemented by verbal endings), the examples would be perfect instances of the basic distribution of CD. Nevertheless, the tendency towards such distribution remains quite conspicuous.

We believe that the preceding paragraphs have established a relationship between the concepts of the narrow scene (and the related distributional scene and communicated scene) and the associated perspective on the one hand and the general scene of experience and the associated perspective on the other. The relationship between the narrow scene and

the wide scene of experience is of vital importance. Some degree of it should be maintained in the course of the development of the discourse. An obliteration of the relationship would remove the common ground of general experience shared by the sender and the receiver of the message and ruin the communication.

The correspondence between the narrow scene and the wide scene of experience (Fillmore's cognitive scene) is maintained primarily within the underivable section of the sentence. It is primarily within the sphere of underivability that the general experience shared by the receiver and the sender of the message is reflected and respected. Among other things, this relationship bears out the findings concerning the degrees of CD assigned to the sentence elements by the semantic communicative functions.

It has already been pointed out elsewhere (Firbas, e.g., 1979a.55) that it is in agreement with human experience to expect an agent (conceived of as an animate or inanimate source of action) to exist before the action and the latter to exist before the outcome of the action. Expressing it in more general terms, one can say that in ascribing a quality (conceived of in a wide sense as explained on p. 41) to a phenomenon, experience places the latter before the former. A specification of a quality is then placed by experience after the quality specified, not before it. It has also been pointed out that provided they convey underivable information, the semantic contents conveying these notions show a gradual rise in CD. In this way the rise in CD is corroborated by human experience. It is reflected by the scale of the communicative functions performed by underivable semantic contents in the act of communication. Borne out by human experience, the scale can be assumed to be inherent in the scene created by the wide context of experience. But language can — at least to a certain extent — free itself from this scale and in accordance with the immediate orientation of the discourse vary the degrees of CD carried by the semantic contents. In doing so, it has of course to observe the laws of the interplay of devices of FSP. Through this interplay, the meanings (semantic contents) become relativized to the narrow scene.

In this connection it is not without interest to note that the phenomena that according to Fillmore's saliency principle (cf. p. 68) qualify for inclusion in perspective would at the two described instance levels tend to be expressed by thematic elements. This is another proof that both semantics and the experience of the interlocutors (the former evidently reflecting the latter) participate in determining the perspective, no matter whether conceived of in Fillmore's terms or in those of FSP.

The preceding reflections permit of one further conclusion. Though not restricted to one type of contextual conditioning and showing a smaller or wider range of contextual applicability, a sentence structure will tend to function at one instance level or at a limited number of instance levels within the sphere of its own contextual applicability. This can be related to the basic character of language — to function as a tool of communication, fulfilling diversified communicative purposes. To serve these purposes, diversified devices are employed. No wonder if a sentence structure

appears to be predisposed to operate at a particular instance level, or even to function in a definite type of perspective at this level.

Thus the most frequent use of Fillmore's examples would undoubtedly be their employment at the specified ordinary instance level with one derivable element. Their variants with more than one pronominalized element would represent structures tending to operate at other ordinary instance levels. Structures 24a and 24c are predisposed respectively to present the adverbials *with a quilt* and *on the table* as specifications, 24b and 24c being ruled out as unsuitable substitutes.

Predisposition is not at variance with contextual applicability. Even this aspect testifies to the possibility of bringing the unequatable concepts under discussion into mutual relationship.

It is worth noticing that, strictly speaking, Mathesius' use of the term 'perspective' can be interpreted in two ways. He uses it when referring to the theme-transition-rheme distribution, making the designated phenomenon dependable on contextual conditioning, but also when referring to the aspect of meaning conveyed by the passive construction. The latter use prevents the term from being applied to more than one type of theme-transition-rheme distribution displayed by the passive sentence. Nevertheless, Mathesius' two uses of the term can be brought into mutual relation on the very basis that has been put forward in this paper. It is perhaps not inappropriate to close by saying that the conception presented is meant as a contribution to the development of Vilém Mathesius' ideas carried out by Czechoslovak scholars after World War Two.

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SCÉNA A PERSPEKTIVA

V stati „The case for case reopened“ (1977) promýšlí Charles T. Fillmore znovu svou známou koncepci, kterou podal v studii „The case for case“ (1968). Zavádí dva nové pojmy, a to pojem „scény“ a „perspektivy“. Těchto pojmů však také užívá teorie funkční perspektivy větné (aktuálního členění větného), proto si autor resumované práce klade za úkol zjistit, zdali jde o pojmy totožné, popř. zdali by bylo možné je při netotožnosti uvést do vzájemného vztahu.

V druhé kapitole osvětluje autor resumované práce pojem „úzké scény“, jak jej chápe při svém přístupu k funkční perspektivě větné. Úzkou scénou chápe jako komplexní jev, jež tvoří složky jazykové (převážně) i mimojazykové a jehož funkcí je především v toku sdělení vytyčovat základ (téma), na němž se buduje vlastní informace, totiž jádro (réma). Úzkou scénou tvoří a) složky vyvoditelné z bezprostředně předcházejícího relevantního kontextu slovního, b) složky vyvoditelné z bezprostředně relevantního kontextu situačního, c) složky sice nevyvoditelné z bezprostředně relevantního kontextu slovního a situačního, ale pro svou sémantickou náplň a pro sémantické vztahy, do nichž ve větě vstupují, spolufungující při kladení základu pro vlastní informaci, jakož i d) bezprostřední orientace (komunikativní záměr) sdělení. Vyvoditelnost z bezprostředně relevantního kontextu slovního a situačního vytváří kontextovou zapojenost. O vyvoditelnost, a tedy kontextovou zapojenost však nejde tam, kde složka známá z bezprostředně relevantního kontextu vzhledem k bezprostřední orientaci sdělení se stává nositelkou nějakého nového, nevyvoditelného aspektu.

Tím, že úzká scéna především vytyčuje základ, podílí se ovšem i na vytyčování části nezakladové, a významně se tak účastní na vytváření významové perspektivy, v níž věta funguje. Jednotlivé složky úzké scény probírá autor podrobně v čtyřech oddílech druhé kapitoly. V třetí kapitole demonstruje autor uplatnění jednotlivých složek úzké scény rozбором krátkého anglického prozaického textu.

V čtvrté kapitole se autor zabývá přístupem Fillmorovým. Podle Fillmora mluví (pisatel) větným obsahem vyjadřuje kognitivní scénou, k níž přistupuje ze zcela určitého aspektu, a tím ji dává do jisté perspektivy. Větný obsah je tím vzhledem ke kognitivní scéně relativizován. Pokud jde o gramatickou realizaci, dostávají se do perspektivy obsahy, které jsou ve větě vyjadřovány gramatickým subjektem a gramatickým předmětem. Zbytek věty stojí mimo perspektivu.

Ukazuje se, že Fillmorův přístup je v podstatě statický. Scéna a perspektiva, vyjadřovaná sémanticko-gramatickou větnou strukturou, zůstávají v jeho přístupu za různých kontextových podmínek nezměněny. Nejsou závislé na podmínkách vytvářených kontextem v toku sdělení. Přístup funkční perspektivy větné, která k těmto podmínkám přihlíží, je zato dynamický. Ukazuje se však dále, že oba přístupy lze do značné míry sladit v oblasti, kterou funkční perspektiva větná považuje za kontextově nezapojenou. Fillmorova scéna a perspektiva jsou v podstatě jevy širokého kontextu zkušenostního, úzká scéna a perspektiva jsou z hlediska funkční perspektivy větné jevy bezprostředně relevantního kontextu slovního a situačního. Vzhledem k okamžiku promluvy, popř. vzhledem k okamžiku, kdy je věta vnímána, jde tedy o scénou zúženou a o perspektivu chápanou skutečně funkčně.

