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Rheme in English and Czech

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RHEME IN ENGLISH AND CZECH

The theory of functional sentence perspective conceives a sentence as a communicative field and sentence constituents as communicative units, i.e. units carrying different degrees of communicative dynamism (CD) (Svoboda 1968). Rheme is the communicative unit with the highest degree of CD, and „within the rheme, the highest degree of CD is carried by rheme proper, the element conveying the piece of information towards which the communication is per-spectived". (Firbas 1992.73)

The present paper really investigates rheme proper, but for brevity and in particular because rheme proper is generally identical with the whole of rheme, the term used here is just rheme.

The questions to be answered in the paper are the following:

1) What are the **PARTS OF SPEECH** that implement rheme most often?

2) What are the most frequent **SENTENCE CONSTITUENTS** that serve as the communicative unit of rheme?

3) What is the most frequent **SENTENCE POSITION** of rheme?

In trying to answer these three questions for English and Czech, I have ana-lysed 1,200 English communicative fields or subfields and 1,200 Czech ones (the subfields being subordinate clauses and semi-clauses, such as modified in-finitives or participles). They have been excerpted from 6 English and 6 Czech original texts and from their respective translations.

Two English and two Czech originals (and their translations) are NON-FICTION, the same numbers represent FICTION and the same numbers DRAMA. Thus we can also compare the characteristics of rheme in three dif-ferent genres.[1]

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[1]   The books excerpted are:
        NON-FICTION
        CW — Campbell, J.A., *Why do chemical reactions occur?* (Englewood Cliffs, N.Y. 1965),
        Proč probíhají chemické reakce?, (Prague 1972), transl. by František Zemánek;
        RA — Rice, T.T., *Ancient arts of Central Asia* (London 1965), *Umění Střední Asie* (Prague 1973), transl. by Miloslav Žilina;

EVA GOLKOVÁ

Let us turn our attention to the first question, i. e., to the **PARTS OF SPEECH** that realize rheme. **TABLE 1** is relevant here, providing a survey of different parts of speech used as rhemes in the three genres examined.

NUMERALS, INTERJECTIONS and PARTICLES each make up less than 1.5 per cent of all rhemes, both in English and Czech, but there are differences between genres: all the particles found in my material are in drama, as in example 1 with the emphatic agreement particles *Of course* and *No ovšemže*:

> 1 AR /Surely you knew that?/ <u>Of course</u> I knew. (F-2)=I[2]
> /To jste jistě věděla, že?/ <u>No ovšemže</u> jsem to věděla. (F-2)=I
> [/That you certainly knew, (quest.tag)?/ But of-course I that knew.][3]

There are some interjections as rhemes in fiction and drama, but no particles and no interjections in non-fiction.

PRONOUNS split into two main groups: personal, demonstrative or indefinite pronouns without any postmodification (as in ex. 2), and pronouns with postmodification, which is sometimes very extensive (as in the English version of ex. 3, where the rheme, for lack of space, is not even given in full; in the text itself, it contains another 44 words).

> 2 HA /<u>Miluje</u> vás./ <u>Mě</u>? F=I
> [/She-loves you./ Me?]
> /She is <u>in love</u> with you./ <u>With me</u>? F=I

HP — Havel, V., Politika a svědomí. *Do různých stran* (Prague 1989), Politics and conscience, *Living in truth* (London 1990), transl. by E. Kohák and R. Scruton;

TD — Tichý, A., Pantůčková, L. and Sparling, T.D., *Dějiny anglické literatury od počátku do poloviny sedmnáctého století.Část první. Středověk* (Prague 1982), *A history of English literature from its beginnings to the middle of the 17th century. Part one. The Middle Ages* (in one volume with the Czech original), transl. by T.D. Sparling;

FICTION

JT — James, P.D., *A taste for death* (London 1987), *Pachuť smrti* (Prague 1991), transl. by Jiří Lexa;

LC — Lee, L., *Cider with Rosie* (Harmondsworth 1964), *Jablečné víno s Rozárkou* (Prague 1983), transl. by B. Hodek;

KS — Kundera, M., *Směšné lásky* (Prague 1970, Brno 1991), *Laughable loves* (London 1987), transl. by Suzanne Rappaport;

ŠP — Škvorecký, J., *Prima sezóna* (Toronto 1975, Prague 1990), *The swell season* (London 1983), transl. by Paul Wilson;

DRAMA

AR — Ayckbourn, A., *Relatively speaking* (London 1968), *Aby bylo jasno* (Prague 1968). transl. by J.Z. Novák;

MA — Miller, A., *All my sons* (Harmondsworth 1961), *Všichni moji synové* (Prague 1971), transl. by O.Ornest;

ČR — Čapek, K., R.U.R., *R.U.R., Bílá nemoc, Matka* (Prague 1958), R.U.R., *R.U.R. and The insect play* (London 1961), transl. by P. Selver;

HA — Havel, V., Asanace, *Largo desolato, Pokoušení, Asanace* (Prague 1990), *Redevelopment* (London 1990), transl. by James Saunders.

[2] Symbols like F, (F-2)=I etc. show the positions of rhemes and will be explained later.

[3] For the benefit of the reader who may not have a ready command of Czech, each Czech example is followed by a literal English translation.

3 HP Vnitřní koherenci mu dává přitom <u>jakýsi před-spekulativně daný předpoklad, že</u>
<u>funguje a je možný jen proto, že existuje cosi za jeho horizontem, že je něco za</u>
<u>ním či ...F</u>
[Internal coherence to-it gives then some pre-speculatively given assumption that
it-functions and is possible only for-the-fact that there-exists something beyond
its horizon, that there-is something beyond it or ...]
It owes its internal coherence <u>to something like a 'pre-speculative' assumption</u>
<u>that the world functions and is generally possible at all only because there is</u>
<u>something beyond or ...</u>F

TABLE 1
PARTS OF SPEECH AS RHEMES

English / Czech	NON-FICTION					FICTION					DRAMA					TOTAL	
	CW	RA	HP	TD	TOTAL	JT	LC	KS	ŠP	TOTAL	AR	MA	ČR	HA	TOTAL		%
NOUN unmodified (Eng)	6	10	13	11	40	9	21	16	19	65	15	18	16	7	56	161	13.42
unmodified (Cz)	*8*	*14*	*13*	*8*	*43*	*11*	*18*	*16*	*27*	*72*	*15*	*21*	*20*	*3*	*59*	*174*	*14.50*
pre- or post-modified (Eng)	52	62	49	57	220	43	41	17	28	129	6	18	19	26	69	418	34.84
modified (Cz)	*50*	*65*	*51*	*65*	*231*	*47*	*53*	*19*	*20*	*139*	*5*	*16*	*12*	*20*	*53*	*423*	*35.25*
SUBORDINATE CLAUSE (Eng)	14	6	9	4	33	14	3	32	17	66	18	7	4	14	43	142	11.83
(Cz)	*19*	*7*	*9*	*8*	*43*	*21*	*6*	*31*	*17*	*75*	*14*	*10*	*3*	*14*	*41*	*159*	*13.25*
ADJECTIVE (Eng)	6	3	4	7	20	9	6	6	3	24	13	9	10	12	44	88	7.33
(Cz)	*3*	*2*	*4*	*8*	*17*	*3*	*3*	*4*	*2*	*12*	*6*	*1*	*7*	*8*	*22*	*51*	*4.25*
PRONOUN unmodified (Eng)	–	–	1	–	1	–	2	3	3	8	5	5	6	9	25	34	2.83
unmodified (Cz)	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*1*	*5*	*2*	*8*	*6*	*8*	*5*	*8*	*27*	*36*	*3.00*
postmodified (Eng)	–	–	7	1	8	–	2	2	–	4	1	1	1	1	4	16	1.33
postmodified (Cz)	*1*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*3*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*1*	*2*	*2*	*1*	*–*	*5*	*9*	*0.75*
VERB finite auxiliary alone (Eng)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	3	2	–	12	12	1.00
finite auxiliary alone (Cz)	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*2*	*1*	*3*	*3*	*0.25*
finite notional (Eng)	2	1	11	8	22	8	10	13	11	42	19	17	23	15	74	138	11.50
finite notional (Cz)	*7*	*2*	*14*	*6*	*29*	*12*	*15*	*13*	*19*	*59*	*30*	*28*	*24*	*28*	*110*	*198*	*16.50*
non-finite (Eng)	5	16	3	9	33	13	11	3	7	34	2	7	4	11	24	91	7.58
non-finite (Cz)	*1*	*7*	*5*	*4*	*17*	*–*	*–*	*6*	*4*	*10*	*1*	*5*	*4*	*9*	*19*	*46*	*3.83*
NUMERAL (Eng)	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	1	–	3	–	1	4	–	5	10	0.83
(Cz)	*1*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*3*	*–*	*4*	*5*	*0.42*
INTERJECTION (Eng)	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1	1	–	1	–	2	3	0.25
(Cz)	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*3*	*4*	*1*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*3*	*7*	*0.58*
ADVERB (Eng)	13	2	3	3	21	4	1	7	12	24	5	13	8	4	30	75	6.25
(Cz)	*10*	*3*	*1*	*1*	*15*	*6*	*3*	*5*	*6*	*20*	*11*	*7*	*12*	*7*	*37*	*72*	*6.00*
PARTICLE (Eng)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8	1	2	1	12	12	1.00
(Cz)	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*9*	*1*	*5*	*2*	*17*	*17*	*1.42*
TOTAL (Eng)	100 each				400	100 each				400	100 each				400	1200	100.0
TOTAL (Cz)	*100 each*				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*1200*	*100.0*

These two examples are excerpts from texts written by the same author, but
the short one is taken from a drama, and the long one from one of his philo-
sophical essays. Differences in genres are quite obvious here.

All stylistic registers show ADJECTIVAL RHEMES as more numerous in
English than in Czech, but the predominance is less evident in non-fiction, while

in fiction and drama the ratio is exactly 2:1. Example 4 is illustrative of this fact: the English adjectival rheme *inconvenient* corresponds to the Czech verbal rheme *nevyhovovalo.*

> 4 JT /Dalgliesh liked Berowne./ but the summons was inconvenient. F
> /Dalgliesh choval k Berownovi sympatie,/ ale náhlé pozvání mu vůbec nevyho-
> vovalo. F
> [/Dalgliesh maintained to Berowne affections,/ but sudden invitation to-him at-all
> not-suited.]

The percentage of rhemes expressed by ADVERBS is about the same in English and Czech: 6.25 per cent in English, 6 per cent in Czech.

VERBS as rhemes[4] are not a homogeneous category: the frequency of finite verbal forms differs from that of non-finite forms. There are 150 English finite forms operating as rhemes in my material, but 201 Czech ones. The notional verb *nevyhovovalo* in ex. 4 is one of them. So is *se nevrátil* in ex. 5; its English counterpart *wouldn't* is representative of rhematic auxiliaries, all of which occur in drama in my material. They too are part of the category 'finite verbal forms'.

> 5 MA /I wish/ he wouldn't, Kate. F
> /Přál bych mu,/ aby se nevrátil, Kate. F
> [/I-wish would to-him/ that-he-would (refl.pron.)
> not-return, Kate.]

Non-finite forms are more frequent in English than in Czech, the ratio being approximately 2:1. This bears out the nominal tendencies in English.

The part of speech that implements rheme most often in both English and Czech, comprising nearly 50 per cent of all rhemes, is the NOUN (or the noun phrase); the real numbers are 579 in English and 597 in Czech (out of 1,200 each). More striking differences than between English and Czech can be seen between genres here: the highest percentage of noun rhemes is in non-fiction, lower in fiction and the lowest in drama. Only nouns without any modification are more frequent in fiction and drama as compared to non-fiction, while nouns with premodification or/and postmodification have the highest numbers in non-fiction, lower in fiction and the lowest in drama. (Ex. 2 from drama uses the unmodified noun *in love*, while the Czech version of ex. 3, taken from non-fiction, is perspectived towards the rheme expressed by a noun that is both pre-modified and postmodified.)

Nearly 12 per cent of the English rhemes and more than 13 per cent of the Czech ones in my material are not expressed by any part of speech but by a SUBORDINATE (non-attributive)[5] CLAUSE (as *he wouldn't* and *aby se*

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4   Even in cases where the notional part of a verb operates as rheme, the temporal and mod
exponents (TME's) of the verb operate as transition proper (Firbas 1968.12, 25). The present study leaves aside the transitional function and concentrates on the communicative function of rheme only.

5   A noun + an attributive clause is classified as a noun with postmodification, since this type of subordinate clause is not an immediate constituent of a sentence or clause (cf. Svoboda

nevrátil, taken as communicative units, in ex. 5). Direct speech preceding the reporting clause makes this category the most numerous in fiction (as compared to non-fiction and drama). Ex. 6 is also from fiction.

> 6 KS „To si počkáme." řekl mladík dívce /a .../ (F-3)=1
> [„(particle) (refl.pron.) we'll-wait," said young-man to-girl /and .../]
> „We'll have to wait," said the young man to the girl. (F-3)=1

Now let us examine the second question of the present paper, i.e., the occurrence of individual **SENTENCE CONSTITUENTS** in the communicative function of rheme.

The results of my investigation into English and Czech sentence constituents occurring as rhemes in non-fiction, fiction and drama are shown in **TABLE 2**.

The least frequent (but still occurring) rhemes are expressions that are not really sentence constituents: they are PARTICLES in two-member sentences, DISJUNCTS, CONJUNCTS and ONE-MEMBER SENTENCES. Ex. 7 provides us with two one-member sentences taken from fiction:

> 7 ŠP Ale houby. F=1
> [But nonsense.]
> Success my eye; F=1

and ex. 8 with three one-member sentences from drama (only the last sentence is a two-member one, having both a subject and predicate):

> 8 ČR Ano. Neodvolatelně. F=1, F=1
> [Yes. Inevitably.]
> Yes. It's inevitable. F=1. F

In all the three genres there are more one-member sentences in Czech than in English, and their highest frequency is in drama,lower in fiction and the lowest in non-fiction.

ADVERBIALS OF CIRCUMSTANCE, RESULT and AGENCY are more frequent rhemes in non-fiction than in the other two genres. Ex. 9 is excerpted from non-fiction and shows an adverbial of agency as rheme in its English version and the subject as rheme in its Czech one (which is quite a common situation — cf. Golková 1983 and TABLE 2 of the present paper, showing that English adverbials of agency occur three times more often in my material than Czech ones).

> 9 RA   when annexed by the Achaemenids. F
> kdy se ho zmocnili Achajmenovci. F
> [when (refl.pron.) it they-seized Achaemenids.]

EVA GOLKOVÁ

TABLE 2
SENTENCE CONSTITUENTS AS RHEMES

English / Czech	NON-FICTION				TOTAL	FICTION				TOTAL	DRAMA				TOTAL	TOTAL	%
	CW	RA	HP	TD		JT	LC	KS	ŠP		AR	MA	ČR	HA			
SUBJECT	12	6	7	5	30	4	9	4	5	22	4	6	8	1	19	71	5.9
(Czech)	*8*	*23*	*8*	*14*	*53*	*13*	*17*	*5*	*10*	*45*	*8*	*6*	*11*	*5*	*30*	*128*	*10.7*
OBJECT	35	42	35	26	138	36	21	39	30	126	18	23	21	30	92	356	29.7
	38	*46*	*36*	*31*	*151*	*35*	*18*	*37*	*22*	*112*	*19*	*26*	*22*	*25*	*92*	*355*	*29.6*
SUBJECT COMPLEMENT	12	13	18	18	61	13	23	12	12	60	27	14	22	24	87	208	17.3
	10	*8*	*15*	*12*	*45*	*3*	*14*	*7*	*10*	*34*	*10*	*8*	*12*	*14*	*44*	*123*	*10.2*
OBJECT COMPLEMENT	–	2	1	4	7	–	1	–	–	1	1	–	1	2	4	12	1.0
	–	*1*	*1*	*2*	*5*	–	–	–	–	–	*1*	–	–	–	*1*	*6*	*0.5*
ADVERBIAL OF PLACE	7	13	14	11	45	7	9	13	18	47	3	17	7	10	37	129	10.7
	7	*9*	*12*	*12*	*40*	*12*	*11*	*9*	*14*	*46*	*3*	*12*	*6*	*7*	*28*	*114*	*9.5*
OF TIME	6	3	2	9	20	8	3	7	3	21	1	7	3	2	13	54	4.5
	1	*3*	*1*	*5*	*10*	*6*	*4*	*8*	*2*	*20*	*4*	*5*	*5*	*2*	*16*	*46*	*3.8*
OF MANNER	22	1	4	9	36	10	15	6	9	40	2	3	2	2	9	85	7.1
	19	*4*	*4*	*9*	*36*	*11*	*16*	*8*	*7*	*42*	*2*	*3*	*3*	*5*	*13*	*91*	*7.6*
OF CAUSE	3	7	4	3	17	11	3	5	5	24	1	3	–	1	5	46	3.8
	6	*1*	*5*	*1*	*13*	*7*	*1*	*6*	*6*	*20*	*2*	*2*	–	*2*	*6*	*39*	*3.3*
OF AGENCY	1	3	–	3	7	1	2	–	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	11	0.9
	1	*1*	–	–	*2*	–	*2*	–	–	*2*	–	–	–	–	–	*4*	*0.3*
OF RESULT	–	3	1	2	6	1	1	–	1	3	–	–	–	–	–	9	0.8
	1	*2*	–	*3*	*6*	*1*	–	–	–	*1*	–	–	–	–	–	*7*	*0.6*
OF ACCOMPANYING CIRCUMSTANCE	–	4	–	–	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0.3
	–	–	–	*1*	*1*	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*1*	*0.1*
PREDICATIVE VERB	2	3	14	10	29	9	12	13	12	46	28	22	26	17	93	168	14.0
	8	*2*	*18*	*7*	*35*	*12*	*14*	*17*	*21*	*64*	*30*	*30*	*27*	*30*	*117*	*216*	*18.0*
ONE-MEMBER SENTENCE	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	3	5	14	5	9	11	39	44	3.7
	–	–	–	*2*	*2*	–	*3*	*2*	*7*	*12*	*18*	*6*	*14*	*9*	*47*	*61*	*5.0*
PARTICLE	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	0.1
	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*1*	*1*	–	–	*2*	*2*	*0.2*
DISJUNCT	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.1
	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*1*	*1*	*1*	–	–	–	*1*	*2*	*0.2*
CONJUNCT	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	0.1
	1	–	–	–	*1*	–	–	*1*	–	*1*	*1*	*1*	–	*1*	*3*	*5*	*0.4*
TOTAL	100 each				400	100 each				400	100 each				400	1200	100.0
	100 each				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*1200*	*100.0*

Adverbials of CAUSE are the least frequent in drama and the most frequent in fiction, where they make 6 per cent of all English rhemes and 5 per cent of all Czech ones. Also adverbials of MANNER, TIME and PLACE as rhemes occur most often in fiction and the least often in drama. In comparing the frequencies of the three types of adverbials irrespective of genres, we find that in my corpus there are fewer rhematic adverbials of time than those of manner and especially those of place, the last ones reaching 10.7 per cent in English and 9.5 per cent in Czech. (These results of comparison correspond to those obtained by Uhlířová

1985.120, who examines the frequency of Czech sentence constituents as themes, transitions or rhemes in simple sentences.)

SUBJECT serves as rheme in about 6 per cent of cases in English but almost 11 per cent of all cases in Czech.

Rhematic subjects can be found in the Czech version of examples 9 (see the commentary above) and 3 (where the carrier of the highest degree of CD in the English version is the object — quite a common correspondence, too).

OBJECT COMPLEMENTS as rhemes are very rare (*předmětem svého tázání* in ex. 12 is one of them), but SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS make 17.3 per cent of rhemes in my English corpus and 10.2 per cent of rhemes in my Czech material. Ex. 10 shows a subject complement as rheme in English, but an object in Czech;

> 10 TD Nečekané znovuobjevení tohoto verzifikačního systému svědčí o kulturní roz-
> tříštěnosti země. F
> [Unexpected re-discovery of-this versifying system witnesses to cultural hetero-
> geneity of-country.]
> The unexpected revival of this type of verse was an indication of the heterogen-
> eous state of culture in the country. F

PREDICATIVE VERB is the second most frequent sentence constituent operating as rheme, reaching 14 per cent of all rhemes in English and 18 per cent in Czech. In both the English and the Czech version of ex. 11, the verb has no „successful competitor in the sentence in regard to the dynamics of the communication" (Firbas 1992.41), and that is because the subjects are only "quality bearers" and not "phenomena appearing on the scene" (Firbas 1979.50) and the objects are context-dependent.

> 11 LC when my sisters surrounded me, F-1
> Sestry mě obklopily, F
> [Sisters me surrounded,]

Also ex. 12 brings us predicative verbs that have become rhemes because there are no successful competitors which could surpass them in the degree of CD (two verbs in the Czech version and three verbs in the English one):

> 12 HP /hodnoty, které tu jsou jakoby odvždycky a pořád,/ dřív, než o nich mluvíme, než
> je zkoumáme, a činíme předmětem svého tázání. F, F, F
> [/values which here are as-if from-ever and always,/ earlier than about them we-
> speak. before them we-examine and make (them) subject of-our inquiry.]
> /values which are simply there perennially,/ before we ever speak of them, before
> we reflect upon them and inquiry about them. F-1, F-1, F-1

Rhematic predicative verbs occur most frequently in drama: their frequency there is three times as high as their frequency in non-fiction, and about twice as high as in fiction. That may be due to the fact that drama is full of 'action' (expressed by verbs) and that the comparatively strong situational context in drama renders a number of communicative units context-dependent, depriving them of the possibility of competing, in regard to their dynamism, with the verb.

The comparatively high frequency of the rhematic verb in drama is closely connected with a relatively low frequency of rhematic OBJECT there: fiction and especially non-fiction orientate their sentences towards the object more often. Ex. 13 is taken from non-fiction:

    13 CW giving equal concentrations of ammonia and hydrogen chloride gas F
          jež poskytují stejné koncentrace plynného amoniaku a plynného chlorovodíku F
          [which give the-same concentrations of-gas (=adj.) ammonia and of-gas (=adj.)
          hydrogen-chloride]

The total numbers of rhematic objects (356 in English and 355 in Czech) mean that the object is the most frequent sentence constituent operating as rheme in both English and Czech.

The third question to be answered in the present paper concerns the **SENTENCE POSITION** of rheme.

Dušková 1985 examines the position of English and Czech rheme in non-fiction and comes to the conclusion that while the Czech rheme, taken as a whole, only occurs in final position, the English rheme can be found in four sentence positions: 1) preverbal, 2) postverbal, but not final, 3) final, 4) represented by the verb itself or its modifier/intensifier; even in an English (scientific) text, though, the rheme prevalently occurs in final position.

The results of my investigation into the sentence position of rheme in three different genres are shown in **TABLE 3**.

The positions identified are the following: final (F), penultimate or first to the left of the final position (F-1), second to the left (F-2) and third to the left of the final position (F-3). Each of these positions can be initial at the same time, and then the symbol =I is used (see ex. 1 and others); #I means non-initial.

Keeping to the procedure used up to now, I will discuss the least frequent phenomena first and the most frequent ones last.

The F-3 POSITION does not reach 1 per cent of all the rhemes in the material examined, and this applies to both English and Czech. Ex. 6 is illustrative of this position, which is simultaneously the initial one.

The F-2 POSITION can again be either initial, as in examples 1 and 14,

    14 MA /these private little revolutions always die./ The
        compromise is always made. (F-2)=I
        /Tyhle malý revoluce vždycky zkrachnou./ Nakonec se vždycky najde ten kom-
        promis. F
        [/These litle private revolutions always fail./
        In-the-end (pass.refl.pron.) always it-is-found that compromise.]

or non-initial, as in ex. 4 (i.e. in the Czech sentence *Dalgliesh choval k Berownovi sympatie*). There are more cases of the initial F-2 position than those of the non-initial one, but the total percentage of the F-2 position is only 3.7 per cent in English and 2.1 per cent in Czech.

TABLE 3
SENTENCE POSITIONS OF RHEMES

English / *Czech*		NON-FICTION				TOTAL	FICTION				TOTAL	DRAMA				TOTAL	TOTAL	%
		CW	RA	HP	TD		JT	LC	KS	ŠP		AR	MA	ČR	HA			
FI-NAL (F) TOTAL	F#I	82	91	83	88	344	88	75	77	70	310	50	74	48	61	233	887	73.9
	F#I	*97*	*100*	*97*	*99*	*393*	*95*	*97*	*90*	*77*	*359*	*57*	*78*	*58*	*81*	*274*	*1026*	*85.5*
	F=I	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	7	9	23	11	18	12	64	73	6.1
	F=I	*–*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*14*	*15*	*29*	*12*	*28*	*12*	*81*	*98*	*8.2*
	NUMBER	82	91	83	88	344	88	76	78	77	319	73	85	66	73	297	960	
	NUMBER	*97*	*100*	*99*	*99*	*395*	*95*	*97*	*91*	*91*	*374*	*86*	*90*	*86*	*93*	*355*	*1124*	
	%					86.0					79.8					74.2		80.0
	%					*98.8*					*93.5*					*88.8*		*93.7*
F-1 TOTAL	(F-1)#I	11	4	11	7	33	8	16	13	13	50	20	12	22	23	77	160	13.3
	(F-1)#I	*2*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*3*	*3*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*4*	*3*	*1*	*8*	*1*	*13*	*20*	*1.6*
	(F-1)=I	1	4	5	2	12	1	4	–	–	5	2	–	8	–	10	27	2.2
	(F-1)=I	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*8*	*7*	*4*	*5*	*4*	*20*	*29*	*2.4*
	NUMBER	12	8	16	9	45	9	20	13	13	55	22	12	30	23	87	187	
	NUMBER	*2*	*–*	*1*	*1*	*4*	*5*	*3*	*2*	*2*	*12*	*10*	*5*	*13*	*5*	*33*	*49*	
	%					11.2					13.8					21.8		15.5
	%					*1.0*					*3.0*					*8.2*		*4.0*
F-2 TOTAL	(F-2)#I	–	–	–	2	2	1	–	–	–	1	2	–	1	1	4	7	0.6
	(F-2)#I	*1*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*0.1*
	(F-2)=I	4	1	–	–	5	2	4	6	10	22	1	3	3	3	10	37	3.1
	(F-2)=I	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*5*	*7*	*12*	*4*	*5*	*1*	*2*	*12*	*24*	*2.0*
	NUMBER	4	1	–	–	5	2	4	6	10	23	3	3	4	4	14	44	
	NUMBER	*1*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*1*	*–*	*–*	*5*	*7*	*12*	*4*	*5*	*1*	*2*	*12*	*25*	
	%					1.8					5.7					3.5		3.7
	%					*0.2*					*3.0*					*3.0*		*2.1*
F-3 TOTAL	(F-3)#I	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.1
	(F-3)#I	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*0.0*
	(F-3)=I	1	–	1	1	3	–	–	3	–	3	2	–	–	–	2	8	0.7
	(F-3)=I	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*v*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*2*	*0.2*
	NUMBER	2	–	1	1	4	–	–	3	–	3	2	–	–	–	2	9	
	NUMBER	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*2*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*–*	*2*	
	%					1.0					0.7					0.5		0.8
	%					*0.0*					*0.5*					*0.0*		*0.2*
TOTAL		100 each				400	100 each				400	100 each				400	1200	100.0
		100 each				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*100 each*				*400*	*1200*	*100.0*

Sentence positions of sentence constituents definitely play an important role in FSP, in other words, linear modification is one of the main FSP factors. Bolinger (1952.1125) says: "Gradation of position creates gradation of meaning where there are no interfering factors." Firbas speaks about "two factors capable of operating counter to linear modification. One is semantic, the other contextual." (Firbas 1992.10) The actual functional perspective of a written sentence depends on the interplay of all the three factors (and there is an additional factor of intonation in spoken language).

Continuing the analysis of the examples adduced in the present paper, let us try to explain why some rhemes occupy a sentence position which is 'unusual' from the point of view of linear arrangement, i.e., why they occupy a non-final position, and to point out the factors that interfere with linear modification.

In ex. 6 (with the F-3 position of the rheme) it is the semantic factor: the direct speech completes the action (of saying). In the Quality Scale (Firbas 1992.66-67), the direct speech of ex. 6 is a Further Specification, which conveys a higher degree of CD than Quality Bearer (*the young man — mladík*), Quality (*said — řekl*) and Specification (*to the girl — dívce*).

In ex. 1, with the F-2 position of the rheme, the factor interfering with that of linear modification is the contextual factor: both *I* and *knew*, in Czech *to* and *jsem věděla* are context-dependent, that is retrievable from the immediately relevant context, in this case from the preceding sentence.

The other F-2 example, ex. 14, *The compromise is always made*, shows the decisive operation of the semantic factor: the Phenomenon presented (in the Presentation Scale, Firbas 1992.66-67) gets the highest degree of CD irrespective of its sentence position.

The F-1 position is more frequent than the two previous ones: it covers 15.5 per cent of the English rhemes in the corpus examined and 4 per cent of the Czech rhemes, with a predominance of non-initial positions in both English and Czech.

In ex. 11 (*when my sisters surrounded me*) the object *me* is context-dependent and thus, in spite of occupying the final position, it cannot surpass the verb in the degree of CD (and the subject is not a successful competitor of the verb either). A similar situation can be found in ex. 12, where the verbs *speak, reflect* and *inquire* are all in the F-1 position as well.

In ex. 15, which follows, the adverbial of time *a moment* is context-independent, but recedes into the background because of its semantic character — the mere temporal setting of the action.

> 15 ČR Počkejte. F=1
> [You(pl.)-wait.]
> Wait a moment. (F-1)=1

All the remaining examples in the present paper represent the most frequent category, i.e. rheme in the FINAL sentence position.

Even the final position can be initial at the same time, as can be seen in examples 2, 7, 8 and 15, but such final-initial rhemes make only 6.1 per cent of all English rhemes and 8.2 per cent of all Czech rhemes in the corpus examined (see TABLE 3).

Final rhemes taken as a whole account for 80 per cent of all rhemes in English and 93.7 per cent in Czech, bearing out the important difference between the function of word order in English and Czech: as shown by Mathesius 1941 and 1942, the leading factor in English word order is the grammatical principle,

while the leading Czech word order principle is that of FSP (Firbas 1992.120 prefers to use the designation 'FSP linearity principle').

TABLE 3 of the present paper also shows conspicuous differences in the frequency of final rheme in different genres: the highest percentage of final rheme is in non-fiction (86 per cent in English and 98.8 per cent in Czech), lower in fiction (79.8 per cent in English and 93.5 per cent in Czech) and the lowest in drama (74.2 per cent in English and 88.8 per cent in Czech). The lowest frequency of final rheme in drama may be connected with the comparatively strong situational context there and, consequently, with the FSP contextual factor effectively operating counter to linear modification.

Summing up the answers to the three questions raised at the beginning of the present paper, the following statement can be made: the most frequent rheme in both English and Czech is an object in the final sentence position implemented by a modified noun.

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