



DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS OF WORD ORDER CHANGES IN ENGLISH DECLARATIVE SENTENCES

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Biljana Mišić Ilić

English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, Niš, Yugoslavia

Abstract. *Following the theoretical assumption that similarities in syntactic form may correspond to discourse-functional similarities in the use of those forms, English declarative sentences with non-subject initial elements were examined in their syntactic, textual, and pragmatic aspects. Parameters influencing discourse functions of such word order changes include syntactic ones, semantic and pragmatic ones, and semantic and textual ones. Taking discourse functions to be additional elements of meaning introduced in the propositional content of sentences with canonical word order and the contribution of such word order changes to the context in which the sentence is used, we identified two basic types: 1) pragmatic functions of achieving prominence and emphasis (creating two especially prominent positions in a sentence, initial and final, evoking a salient set the member of which is the entity denoted by the initial element, setting the theme or the "scene" of the sentence), and 2) textual ones, which chiefly deal with linking with the preceding and the following text and rearranging of elements within a sentence.*

1. INTRODUCTION

"The purpose of language is communication in much the same sense that the purpose of the heart is to pump blood. In both cases it is possible to study the structure independently of function but pointless and perverse to do so, since structure and function so obviously interact."

*John Searle*¹

The above quotation expresses, no doubt, one of the very radical and controversial

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¹ Quoted from Chomsky (1975:55), who, needless to say, opposes this view.

stands in linguistics. Without entering the debate between the so called 'formal' (e.g. generative) paradigm and 'functional paradigm' (Dik 1979, Levinson 1983, Halliday 1985, Kuno 1987, *inter alia*), it should, nevertheless, be recognized that the study of various syntactic constructions has been given a new impetus when pragmatists and discourse analysts joined forces with the syntacticians.

In this study, we started from the theoretical assumption that similarities in syntactic form may correspond to discourse-functional similarities in the use of those forms, and examined certain word order changes² in English declarative sentences and compared them with respect to their discourse functions. 'Word order changes' in English declarative sentences, most generally, include variations from the canonical SVOMPT order with initial sentence constituents other than subjects, which in the canonical order would be usually placed postverbally. The frontings may be accompanied by the subject-verb inversion. By discourse functions of word order changes we mean the additional elements of meaning that are introduced in the propositional content of the sentences with canonical word order, as well as the contribution of such changes to the context in which a particular sentence was used.

The analysis of some 1500 naturally-occurring tokens from the corpus of some 1000 pages of English prose included the study of syntactic, semantic, textual, and pragmatic aspects of the defined constructions, in the attempt to see how these aspects interrelate with the identified discourse functions of such word order changes.

The starting point in the analysis was the syntactic one. It included the identification of the initial constituent in terms of its form and grammatical function, the determination of the sentence pattern and syntactic properties of major sentence elements, as well as the presence, type and the position of other sentence elements, such as complements, adjuncts and modifiers.

The semantic analysis at the sentence level included the analysis of the relevant semantic characteristics of basic sentence elements, primarily the initial, as well as the determination of the semantic role of the initial adverbial.

Following the relatively recent recognition that an analysis of word order should go beyond the sentence and examine an extended domain, the examined language segments included not only the 'word order change' construction but also the surrounding context. Thus, textual and pragmatic aspects of word order change constructions were examined by observing the sentences in context, which primarily meant detecting the relations between the entity (property, state, etc.) denoted by the sentence-initial element and other discourse entities, as well as the grammatical and lexical cohesive devices.

Regarding the discourse functions of word order changes, two major types were identified. The first type can be broadly described as 'prominence-giving' pragmatic functions, while the second type of discourse functions can be described as textual-pragmatic functions, which chiefly deal with text development and text cohesion. They will be examined in detail by looking at the results of the analysis of syntactic, semantic, textual and pragmatic aspects, here viewed as the parameters influencing the identified discourse functions.

² The term 'word order' has been used in the sense of 'arrangement of sentence constituents'.

SYNTACTIC PARAMETERS INFLUENCING DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

The first group of parameters, the syntactic ones, deals with the functional category of the initial element, including the semantic-functional role of the initial adverbials, the form of the initial element, its structure in terms of definiteness, with the sentence structure, which primarily refers to the order of the subject and the predicate, and the presence of other sentence elements, chiefly complements, adjuncts and verbal complements within the sentence predicate.

The primary classification of word order changes has been made according to the functional category of the initial constituents and three major types were identified: (non-subject) initial nominals (1), initial adverbials (2), and initial verbals (3).³

- (1) A **gardener** would be dismissed for being seen to come into the house with earth on his hands; a **butler** for having a spot of wine in his stock; a **maid** for having slut's wool under her bed. ... : for the gardens were a positive forest of **humane man traps** - "humane" in this context referring to the fact that the great waiting jaws were untoothed, though quite powerful enough to break a man's leg. **These iron servants** were the most cherished by Mrs Poulteney. **THEM**, **she** had never dismissed. (Fowles:23)
- (2) *My first impression*, that the birds were all canaries, was quite wrong; ... (five lines of text about the birds he saw) ... and a **host of other birds**. IN ONE CORNER OF THE ROOM **I** found small french windows that led me out on **to a balcony**. AT EACH END **a large aviary** had been built, and IN ONE lived **a cock blackbird, black and velvety with a flaunting, banana-yellow beak**; while IN THE OTHER AVIARY opposite was **a thrush-like bird which was clad in the most gorgeous blue feathering**... (Durrell:217)
- (3) I should like to pay a special tribute to my mother, ... Like a gentle enthusiastic, and understanding Noah, she has steered here vessel full of strange progeny through the stormy seas of life with great skill, ... never being sure that her navigation would be approved by the crew ... That **she survived the voyage** is a miracle, but SURVIVE IT **she** did, and moreover, with her reason more or less intact. As my brother Larry rightly points out, we can be proud of the way we have brought her up. (Durrell:10)

As shown in Table 1, initial adverbials, with 90,62%, are by far the largest category, whereas initial verbals, with only 0,74% of the corpus, are a very rare language phenomenon in English.

Table 1. The frequency of the identified functional categories in the corpus

Type of initial constituent	Number of tokens	Percentage
initial adverbials	1363	90,62%
initial nominals	130	8,64%
initial verbals	11	0,74%
Total	1504	100,00%

According to the grammatical function (shown in Table 2), the following functional elements, exemplified in (1)-(14) were identified:

³ Typographical conventions used in the examples:

CAPITALS - initial non-subject element

italics - subject

bold underlined italics - the subject of the sentence with the word order change

bold - discourse references to the non-subject initial element

- direct objects (1),
 - indirect objects (4),
- (4) Considered as a group **my family** was not a very prepossessing sight that afternoon, for *the weather* had brought with it the usual selection of ills to which we were prone. FOR ME, lying on the floor, labelling my collection of shells, **it** had brought catarrh, pouring it into my skull like cement, so that I was forced to breath stertorously through open mouth. FOR MY BROTHER LESLIE, hunched dark and glowering by the fire, **it** had inflamed the convulsions of his ears so that they bled delicately but persistently. TO MY SISTER MARGO **it** had delivered a fresh dappling of acne spots to a face that was already blotched like a red veil. **For my mother** *there* was a rich bubbling cold, and a twinge of rheumatism to season it. Only **my eldest brother, Larry**, was untouched, but it was sufficient that he was irritated by our failings. (Durrell:15)
- prepositional objects (5),
- (5) We who live afterwards think of great reformers as triumphing over **great opposition of great apathy**. OPPOSITION AND APATHY **the real Lady of the Lamp** had certainly had to contend with, but there is **an element in sympathy**, as I have pointed out elsewhere, that can be almost as harmful... (Fowles:101)
- subject complements (6),
- (6) He himself proposed the name. He is her Godfather' She murmured,"i know it is **strange**.' STRANGE CERTAINLY were **Charles's feelings**; and **the ultimate strangeness** was only increased by this curious soliciting of his opinion on such, in such circumstances, trivial matter... (Fowles:392)
- adverbials, which, according to the semantic role, were further classified as adverbials of space (2),
 - time (7),
- (7) "I am afraid his conduct shows *he* was without any Christian faith. But no doubt he had told her *he* was one of our unfortunate co-religionists in that misguided country. **AFTER SOME DAYS** **he** returned to France, promising Miss Woodruff that ... he would come back here, to Lyme, marry her, and take her away with him. **SINCE THEN** **she** has waited. It is quite clear that the man was a heartless deceiver. (Fowles:34)
- process (subtypes manner (8), means (9), instrument, and accompaniment (10)),
- (8) ...**No one could say** that *the sea-slugs* **led interesting lives**. DULLY **they** rolled on the sand, sucking in the sea with monotonous regularity. *It* was hard to believe that *these obese creatures* could defend themselves in one way,... (Durrell:63)
- (9) ... means must be found for remedying this state of affairs, and if no such means are found our civilization is in danger of going down to destruction in an orgy of hatred. In old days *people* only envied their neighbours, because **they knew little about anyone else**. Now THROUGH EDUCATION AND THE PRESS **they** know much in an abstract way about large classes of mankind of whom no single individual is among their acquaintance. THROUGH THE MOVIES **they** know much of the wickedness of foreign nations, THROUGH PROPAGANDA **they** know of the nefarious practices of all whose skin has a pigmentation different from their own. Yellows hate whites ... (Russell:72)
- (10)What little God *he* managed to derive from existence, he found in Nature, not the Bible, a hundred years earlier *he* would have been a deist, perhaps even a pantheist. IN COMPANY **he** would go to morning service on a Sunday; but ON HIS OWN, **he** rarely did. (Fowles:18)

- respect (11),
(11)FOR LESLIE *the coming of spring* meant the soft pipe of wings as the turtle - doves and wood pigeons arrived, and the sudden flash and scuttle of a hare among the myrtles. So, after visiting numerous gunshops ... (Durrell:90)
- degree (12),
(12)*This* is PARTLY due to having discovered what were the things that I most desired and having gradually acquired many of these things. PARTLY *it* is due to having successfully dismissed certain objects of desire - such as the ... - as essentially unattainable. But VERY LARGELY *it* is due to a diminishing preoccupation with myself. (Russell:14)
- reason (13),
(13)But *she* suffers from grave attacks of melancholia. They are attributable to her remorse. But also, I fear, to her fixed delusion that the lieutenant is an honourable man and will one day return to her. FOR THAT REASON *she* may be frequently seen haunting the sea approaches to our town, Mr. Fursey-Harris himself has earnestly endeavoured to show to the woman the hopelessness ... (Fowles:35)
- predicates (3) and
- participle predications (14).
(14)*Charles* looked through the leaves and down the slope of the ash-grove - and his blood froze. COMING UP TOWARDS THEM, as if seeking their same cover, were *Sam and Mary*. Sam had his arm around the girl's shoulder. *He* carried his hat... (Fowles:161)

Regarding the form of the initial elements, it was noticed that they are mostly word groups. As shown in Table 2, in our basic corpus, the most frequent form of initial nominals was the noun phrase (82 tokens out of 130), realized sometimes as a pronoun, but much more often as a modified NP, and there were also prepositional phrases, nominal clauses and adjective phrases. The most frequent form of initial adverbials was the prepositional phrase (1113 tokens out of 1363), but there were also noun phrases, adverbs and adverbial phrases and coordination constructions. Initial participle predications were all participial phrases, whereas VP Preposing construction involved only single verbs.

Table 2. Fronted constituents in terms of their form and sentence function

FUNCTION		FORM						
		NP	PP	Nom. Cl.	Adj(P)	Adv(P)	VP	Particip. P.
N O M	DO	67		23				
	IO		13					
	OP	9						
	SC	6		4	8			
A	Place	12	568			43		
D	Time	55	254			50		
V	Manner		120			80		
E	Means		40					
R	Instrument		4					
B	Accomp.		8			2		
I	Respect		99					
A	Degree		4			8		
L	Reason		16					
VERBAL	Predicate						3	
	Predication							8

As for the subjects in the examined constructions, it has been observed that they are mostly short, frequently pronouns, except in constructions which include S-V inversion, where more complex subject forms are dominant, such as in (2), last two tokens.

Syntactically, placing a non-subject constituent into the initial position can be accompanied by the subject-verb inversion if the initial constituent is the subject complement (6) or a place adverbial (2) whereas the inversion is obligatory in case of initially placed participle predications (14).⁴

This characteristic, whether the initial placement of a non-subject sentence constituent is accompanied by the S-V inversion or not, is very significant and it is also related to the form of the initial and other sentence constituents, with their information status, and, ultimately, with discourse functions.

As for the description of the syntactic and semantic characteristic of sentence initial elements, it was noted that they are mostly subcategorized by the verb in the sentence, i.e. they are obligatory. Initial adverbials, however, are more often optional. It should be noted, though, that here we did not much insist on the difference between 'sentence adverbials', more precisely, 'sentence adjuncts', and predication adjuncts.⁵ Sentence adjuncts, especially locative and temporal, are considered 'scene-setting', almost 'natural' in the initial position. Unlike them, predication adjuncts, especially obligatory ones, are perceived as more prominent in the initial position and the whole construction is felt as more marked (Quirk *et al.*, 1985:491, 510-511).

SEMANTIC, PRAGMATIC AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The following two groups of parameters deal with a larger language segment, i.e. take into account the context. We will first examine the parameters of a semantic and pragmatic nature that deal with the information status of the initial constituent in the first place, but also of the subject and the predicate.

The information status was determined basically according to E. Prince's taxonomy. Information can be new (with subtypes brand-new anchored, brand-new unanchored, and unused), inferrable (containing or non-containing), or evoked (textually or situationally) (Prince 1981a)⁶. In Prince 1992 this familiarity scale was transformed into a matrix of crosscutting dichotomies, classifying information in terms of its status as either

⁴ In case of the initial placement of a VP (VP preposing in 3), the main verb is placed in front of the subject, but its canonical position is occupied by the corresponding finite pro-verb, so this construction could not be considered inversion.

⁵ Our analysis of adverbials included what in Quirk *et al.* (1985) is classified as both adjuncts and subjuncts, which are relatively integrated in the sentence structure, whereas other two adverbial categories, disjuncts and conjuncts, being rather peripheral, were not analyzed.

⁶ Evoked information is represented by an entity that has been explicitly evoked, mentioned in the prior discourse. ("A guy I work with says **he** knows your sister.") Brand-new anchored information is represented by the entity that has not been evoked in the discourse but is 'anchored' to some other entity known to the hearer (e.g. "**A guy I work with**"), whereas brand-new unanchored is neither anchored to nor inferrable from the prior discourse. Unused information is represented by the entity presumed to be known to the hearer, though not evoked in the current discourse. (e.g. "**Noam Chomsky** went to Penn."). The third category, inferrable information, is the most complex. It is represented by an entity which the speaker believes the hearer can infer by logical or plausible reasoning from information that has been either discourse evoked or other inferrables (e.g. "I got on a bus and **the driver** was drunk."). Containing inferrable is a special case wherein the phrase licensing the inference is properly contained within the inferrable phrase itself (e.g. "One of these eggs is broken") (Prince 1981a:233-237)

discourse-old or discourse-new, and either hearer-old or hearer-new.

Although Prince herself applied these taxonomies only to nominals, they can be applied to other functional and formal categories as well, representing not only entities but also states, locations, properties, etc. (cf. Virtanen's (1992) analysis of sentence initial time and space adverbials and Birner's (1994) of inversion in English).

When determining the degree of discourse familiarity of a particular initial element, it was its form that was primarily taken into account, and then the prior discourse. Thus, for instance, the presence of pro-forms that express coreferentiality, especially personal and demonstrative pronouns and possessive and demonstrative determiners in initial nominals or adverbials in the form of an NP or containing an NP, as well as the presence of definite adverbs of time and place, indicated a relatively rather well-known, given information.

Comparing the basic syntactic functional categories with respect to the information status of the initial elements, it can be noted that for initial nominals it is characteristic that they denote information that is relatively high on the familiarity scale. Initial nominals, therefore, often carry information directly evoked from the prior discourse, with a coreferential antecedent (example 1), or inferrable information (inferrable from some semantic, logical, or more rarely, morphological relationship) (examples 4, 5, 6). There are comparatively few tokens of initial nominals that can be considered as relatively new information, or, more precisely, unused information.

Initial adverbials, on the other hand, can be said to be lower on the familiarity scale. Information carried by an initial adverbial is least frequently directly evoked from the prior discourse, with a coreferential antecedent (7,13). Most often it is inferrable information (2, 8, 9, 12), although there are quite a few tokens with unused or brand-new information (2, first token, 7, first token, 10, 11).

This finding is partly confirmed by the study of T. Virtanen (1992), who, after examining a relatively small corpus, concluded that "the category of inferrables has by far the largest group of exponents among the text-strategically important adverbials of time and space. ... The data contain relatively few ... adverbials ... that could be included in the other two main categories: evoked and new." (Virtanen 1992:104-105).

Initial verbals carry information directly evoked from the prior discourse in the case of VP Preposing⁷ (3), or inferrable or new information anchored to some evoked information, in case of initial participle predications (14).

The third type of parameters influencing the discourse functions of the examined word order changes are of a semantic and textual nature. They take into account formal, functional and semantic similarities between the initial constituent and the whole examined sentence, and some other elements in the language segment. The most characteristic cases are those of parallelism or partial parallelism of syntactic structure in two or more sentences or clauses (example 2, last two tokens, 4, 9, 12), as well as the presence of other adverbials in the relevant context, which are of the same or similar semantic role as the initial adverbial (10, 12).

⁷ There are actually very strict discourse requirements for felicitous VPP, cf. Ward 1990

DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

The study of syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and textual aspects of the examined word order changes could be summed up as the answer to the question **what**.

However, the central question we would like to provide the answer to is **why**. Why do such word order changes occur? To put it differently, what are the discourse functions of such word order changes, i.e. the additional elements of meaning introduced into the propositional content of the corresponding canonical word order sentences, as well as the contribution of such changes to the context in which the sentence has been used?

As mentioned earlier, the identified discourse functions can be classified into two groups - 'prominence-giving' pragmatic functions and textual functions. However, it should be stressed that they are by no means unrelated and very distinct from each other. On the contrary, they can be considered interrelated in the sense that they often influence each other and cannot be viewed separately. In other words, it is very seldom that we can speak of just one clearly manifested function but rather of the 'mixture' of functions.

'PROMINENCE-GIVING' DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

The most significant among the 'prominence-giving' pragmatic functions is the creation of two particularly prominent positions in the sentence. It has been widely and generally recognized that the most prominent positions in a sentence are the initial, as the starting point of the message, and the final, which usually contains the nucleus. However, since we are dealing with constructions with non-canonical word order, the initial position is occupied by a constituent that is, more or less, unusual in that position, i.e. it is more conspicuous, which makes it more prominent, and makes the whole construction marked. In the majority of the analyzed tokens, together with the emphasized initial constituent, in the examined sentence there is also the focal constituent, the one that carries new or contrastive information, and which, in speech, would carry the nucleus. As it was noted by N. Enkvist (1980:149), in a topicalized structure "marked focus goes on the topicalized or commentized elements or on both".

Another pragmatic function is that the entity denoted by the prominent initial element can evoke some salient set, whose part or member it is. In some instances, such a set or/and some of its other members can even be explicitly mentioned, as in (4), where the set is 'my family'.

This function has been mentioned in literature, and is said to be related to another pragmatic function, namely, marking an open proposition as salient in the discourse. Prince (1981b, 1985, 1986), Ward (1988, 1990), Ward & Birner (1994) in their extensive study of topicalization/preposing constructions, which, however, they defined as fronting of lexically-governed constituents only, identified two discourse functions that are performed simultaneously:

- marking the referent of the preposed constituent as a member of a salient partially ordered set⁸
- marking an open proposition as salient in the discourse.⁹

Since the entity denoted by the (final) element, which carries the focus, can also evoke a set, in such cases, (example 1), and especially in case of parallelism, there are two salient sets, whose members are entities denoted by initial and some other, often final elements (2, last two tokens, 4, 9, 10, 12). Thus, for instance, in (1) the salient sets could be described as 'servants, human and mechanical' and 'Mrs. Poultney's attitude towards her servants', and in (9), they could be 'various means of spreading information' and 'information about other nations'.

It was interesting to examine whether these two discourse functions could be said to be performed also by initial adverbials. As noted earlier, they differ syntactically from the fronted nominals because they are usually not subcategorized. Prince (1986) explained the difference between sentence and predication adverbials by claiming that there was a connection between the pragmatic function of marking the presupposed open proposition as shared knowledge and syntactic constructions that involve a 'trace' (such as topicalization and fronting of a predication adverbial).

The results of our analysis lead to the assumption that in cases where there is the parallelism of syntactic structure, accompanied by the contrast between the sentences with initial adverbials, they are actually similar to the sentences with topicalized subcategorized nominals (direct, indirect, and prepositional objects). In both cases it is possible to note an open proposition, i.e. the presupposition of the sentence is felt as salient both by the speaker and the hearer, such as in (2, 9, 10, 12). On the other hand, when in the relevant language segment there is only one sentence with the initial adverbial, its presupposition is not felt as salient (7, 8, 11, 13). Also, neither is the referent or the denotation of the initial adverbial felt as an element of some evoked set, which is the case with fronted nominals. (Cf. Mišić Ilić 1997).

In the case of initial participle predications, it is the predicative and the sentence subject that are made especially prominent (14). VP Preposing (3) stresses the fronted verb and the pro-verb and at the same time affirms the evoked proposition of the sentence (examined in great detail in Ward 1990).

The next noted pragmatic-textual function is that the initial element, depending on its functional category can be considered as setting the 'theme' or the 'scene' of the sentence.

The notion of 'theme' was adopted from Halliday's (1970, 1985:32-37) distinction of three functions, Subject, Actor and Theme. It should be noted that some authors defined the function of certain frontings, topicalization, according to its name, as "marking the

⁸ A partially ordered set (=poset) relation of two elements exists if either one of them is of a lower value than the other in the set, or is of a higher value, or they are alternates. Examples of such relations are 'type-subtype', 'a-part-of', 'a-member-of', 'an-attribute-of'. (Ward 1988, Ward & Prince 1991). It should be noted that, whereas most of the previous studies of Topicalization insisted on definiteness, generality, etc., (cf. Davison 1984, Gundel 1985, Hietaranta 1986, *inter al.*) of the topicalized constituent (usually an NP), Ward & Prince (1991:173,177) claim that "the entity represented by the preposed constituent must be related, via a salient partially set relation, to one or more entities already evoked in the discourse model." ... "What is relevant for the Topicalization of an NP is not its intrinsic morphological /lexical /semantic properties but rather the relation of the entity it represents to other entities in the discourse structure."

⁹ An open proposition (OP), as defined by Prince 1981a, Ward 1988, and Ward & Birner 1994, *inter alia*, is a proposition which contains one or more variables; the variable is instantiated with the focus of the utterance.⁹

topic" (Reinhart 1981, Gundel 1985), or as "the rule which creates topic out of otherwise non-sentence-initial elements" (Hietaranta 1986:42). In Halliday (1985:35), however, Theme is not to be confused with 'topic', which is generally taken to be 'what the sentence is about'. According to Halliday (1970:161), "The theme is another component in the complex notion of subject, namely the 'psychological subject'; it is as it were the peg on which the message is hung, the theme being the body of the message. The theme of a clause is the element which, in English, is put in first position."

It is possible for these three functional elements to be collated in a single sentence element, but it need not always be so, which is exactly what happens in the constructions that we are dealing with here. Fronting, therefore, enables the dissociation of the functions of Subject, Theme and Actor and the arranging of sentence elements, which carry particular semantic roles, not according to their syntactic functions, bound to certain sentence positions, but as the writer finds most appropriate. The writer, to use Chafe's (1976) term, 'packages information', selects the starting point of his message in such a way as he considers the most adequate for conveying across his message, depending on the effect he wants to achieve.

As we talk about 'setting the theme' when discussing fronted nominals, we will, likewise, talk about 'setting the scene', when we talk about initial adverbials and participle predications. The main function of the initial placing of an adverbial of time and space is considered to be scene setting. (Quirk *et al.*, 1985:491) In a similar way, adverbials of other, various semantic roles can be considered as setting the framework for the proposition of the sentence (cf. Chafe 1976:50-51). Depending on the semantic role of the initial adverbial, we defined this framework setting as setting the spatial or temporal framework, or the framework specifying the manner, means, instrument, company, reference point, subject-matter, part, degree or reason. In that way, the initial adverbial refers to the sentence as a whole, rather than to the verb only. Initial participle predications can also be considered scene-setting in the sense of setting the circumstances.

TEXT-DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

In the second group of functions, the text-building ones, the most significant function is that of making the link of the examined sentence with the preceding text.

Sentence topic in general have been claimed to be linguistic constituents with particular syntactic and semantic characteristics so they can perform a cohesive function in the process of linking the sentence to its context (Davison 1984:797). Alternative ways of expressing the same grammatical relations, which also includes word order changes as defined here, can serve the function of "defining the topic, increasing efficiency when a sentence is processed in a context, ... i.e. the message is encoded into a more compact form that it might have been otherwise." (Davison 1984:843).

The function of linking with the preceding text is usually related to the function of creating two prominent positions. The first prominent position, where the fronted element is, which is considered a 'marked theme' is a "'thematic echo' of what has been contextually given, and serves, mostly, the function of providing direct linkage with what has preceded" (Quirk *et al.* 1985:1377). Such linkage can be realized in various ways and in various degrees. It was noted that it primarily depends on the relationship of the entity

denoted by the topicalized element to some antecedent discourse entity, on its information status, and, less directly, on its form and function. This textual function is more frequent in fronted nominals than in adverbials, but it does not have so much to do with the functional category in itself, as it has to do with the information status of the denotations of those functional elements.

The linking is most prominent if the referent of the initial element has a coreferential antecedent in the preceding sentence. The strongest formal indicators of this relationship are topicalized nominals in the form of a personal (example 1) or demonstrative pronoun, and for adverbials, deictic adverbs of time (7, second token) and space. Other formal indicators of such a coreferential relationship are the presence of definite determiners and repeated or synonymic or hyperonymic head words in nominals and definite determiners or demonstrative pronouns or adverbs within the initial adverbial (2, 13), as well as certain headwords that can be considered as hyperonyms to something already mentioned. According to their information status, initial adverbials with linking function are quite high on the familiarity scale, because they carry wither textually evoked or inferrable information, inferrable from the part/whole relationship from the membership in some implicitly (2 - 'parts of the room', 12 - 'degree').

The very strong connective function of initial adverbials, however, is not very common, and was identified only in initial adverbials denoting space, time, reason and, even less often, respect.

In cases when the entity (or attribute) denoted by the initial element does not have a (coreferential) antecedent, it is possible to note some other relevant relations, logical, semantic or morphological, with the elements from the prior discourse (examples 3, 4, 5). It could, be, therefore, concluded that the prominent fronted element there too has a cohesive function, although to a somewhat lesser degree than when there is a coreferential antecedent.

Birner's (1997) recent findings concerning inferrable information confirm this. She explicitly states that "inferential links can serve the same connective function in a marked syntactic construction as do links of identity (such as between the referent of a pronoun and its antecedent) ... inferrable information may appear in the same range of positions as does explicitly evoked information." The only difference may be that with explicitly evoked information the inference is described as "rather trivial", whereas in other cases it is "less straightforward". (Birner 1997:144-145).

Initial verbals, both predicates and participle predications cannot be said to have a prominent linking function with the preceding text. Though fronted predicates are directly evoked from the prior discourse they primarily have the pragmatic function of proposition affirmation, not the textual linking function.

The cohesive function can be viewed not only with respect to the preceding but also the following text. By fronting a certain element, in the final position there may appear an element which, otherwise, would not be final. The following sentence may directly, by rhematic linking, take over as its theme something that was expressed by the final element of the examined sentence. This is quite frequent when the final position is occupied by the sentence subject, which got there after the S-V inversion that sometimes accompanies the fronting (such as in 14). The link with the following text can also be less direct, when the following sentence can be considered the illustration, elaboration of, or contrast to what was expressed by the final element of the sentence with the changed word order. This function is usually connected with the syntactic-textual function of

better arranging the elements within a sentence, especially when there are several complements, adverbials, verbal complements or structures of coordination within the sentence predicate. The fronting of one of the elements from the predicate, together with the above mentioned most significant functions of making it more prominent and achieving better cohesion with the preceding text, also has the function of preventing the 'accumulation' of elements in the predicate, in the rhematic part of the sentence, whereby some of them could be rather inconspicuous and felt as a bit 'lost in the crowd'. Moreover, especially with initial adverbials, in this way a possible structural ambiguity is avoided, when it could not be possible to determine for sure what the adverbial really refers to.

As we can see, the most significant parameter influencing the linking functions is the pragmatic one, especially the information status of the initial constituent.

CONCLUSION

This brief review of discourse functions of certain word order changes in English declarative sentences and syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and textual parameters that influence these functions is necessarily quite a tentative outline of this language phenomenon, and its aim was to reveal some regularities, preferences and tendencies rather than provide hard-and-fast rules. We also wanted to point to the complexity of the factors the speaker/writer manipulates with when he speaks/writes. In order to convey his message in the most adequate way, he does not only package information, taking into account the current state of consciousness of his listener/reader in order to facilitate him sentence processing (Chafe 1976:55). Making an entity denoted by a particular sentence element more prominent at the expense of some other, the speaker/writer also tries to 'enforce' a particular way of the hearer/reader's perception and interpretation of the message, which is not always the easiest way of processing it. This, in a way, suggests that the speaker/writer actually tries to induce a particular state in his listener's/reader's consciousness.

The exploiting of word order change options is certainly a powerful device that can serve this purpose. No doubt, writers also have recognized it. The poet T. S. Colerige expressed it in unmistakable and much more concise terms than the linguistic science. As his 'homely definition of prose', he stated: "prose = words in their best order."

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DISKURSNE FUNKCIJE PROMENA REDA REČI U ISKAZNIM REČENICAMA U ENGLESKOM JEZIKU

Biljana Mišić Ilić

Polazeći od teorijske pretpostavke da sličnosti u sintaksičkoj strukturi mogu odgovarati diskursno-funkcionalnim sličnostima u upotrebi tih struktura, ispitivali smo iskazne rečenice u engleskom jeziku u kojima se u inicijalnom položaju ne nalazi subjekat sa ciljem da se ta pojava sagleda u sintaksičkim, semantičkim i pragmatiskim aspektima. Parametri koji utiču na diskursne funkcije takvih promena reda reči su trojaki: sintaksički, semantičko-pragmatiski i semantičko-tekstualni. Podrazumevajući pod diskursnim funkcijama dodatne elemente značenja koji se unose u propozicioni sadržaj rečenica sa neutralnim redom reči, kao i doprinos takvih izmena u odnosu na kontekst u kome je konkretna rečenica upotrebljena, identifikovali smo dva osnovna tipa: 1) pragmatске funkcije isticanja i naglašavanja (stvaranje dva posebno istaknuta položaja u rečenici, inicijalnog i finalnog, evociranje nekog skupa čiji je član entitet označen inicijalnim elementom, postavljanje tematskog ili 'scenskog' okvira rečenice), i 2) tekstualne funkcije, koje se prvenstveno tiču povezivanja posmatrane rečenice sa prethodnim i narednim tekstom, kao i adekvatnijeg raspoređivanja elementa unutar rečenice.