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EXTENDED THEMATIC PROGRESSION

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1. Thematic progression

A now traditional analysis of sentence, if understood as message, is that it carries out the basic task of conveying information, and for that reason it is said to be made up of a segment with known or old information and another one with new information. In English, and to a certain extent also in Spanish, there is a strong tendency for the old information to be located in the initial constituent of the sentence (which receives the name of "theme"), whereas the new information usually comes in the final segment (which receives the name of "rheme"). Therefore, if messages are the sum of a theme and a rheme, and texts are the sum and concatenation of several messages, it follows that the sequence of thematic and thematic segments constitutes one of the pillars of textual organization. This statement is, in fact, an imprecise paraphrase of thematic progression, a concept employed to designate (Daneš 1974:115):

The choice and ordering of utterance themes, their mutual concatenation and hierarchy, as well as their relationship to the hyperthemes of the superior text units (such as the paragraph, chapter, etc) to the whole text, and to the situation. Thematic progression might be viewed as the skeleton of the plot.

Other definitions of thematic progression insist on the same elements (Enkvist 1974: 116; Fries 1983: 121;¹ Glat 1982: 88;² Petöfi 1988: 87; Scinto 1986: 111

and 1983: 82).³ Halliday subscribes to that opinion too (1985: 227), stating that the success of a text does not lie in the grammatical correctness of its individual sentences, but in the multiple relations established among them.

The authors just quoted seem to agree that thematic progression reveals the connections among the different themes and rhemes in a passage. Traditionally, those connections are indicated with an arrow tying the related segments; however, the arrow is an empty symbol because it neither identifies that relation nor specifies its nature. As a consequence, the textual map we obtain through the use of arrows tends to be ineffect.

To overcome this disadvantage, in the present article I am proposing the concept of "extended thematic progression", which enriches Daneš's original idea through the identification and notation of the relations connecting different textual segments. To that end, I will make use of a notation system similar to the one proposed by Scinto (1983, 1986), whose main purpose is the graphic representation of the passage analysed through a limited number of abbreviations and symbols.

It is also important to point out that the latest textual models have tried to build an explanation of the dynamic nature of texts starting from the lexicogrammatical opposition between theme and rheme, and finding their correspondence at the discourse level (Downing 1996, Hasan and Fries 1995). These models are based on the cumulative effect of thematic and rhematic selection throughout a given fragment, and as Matthiessen says (1992: 39) are "often articulated in terms of an ideational metaphor involving (motion through) abstract space". For instance, starting from Fries' concepts (1983) of Method of Development and Point, Martin (1992: 443) has suggested that texts contain different layers of theme, each with its own discursive function, but all subject to a reciprocal solidarity.

2. Scinto's notation system

L. Scinto (1983) developed a notation system to explain the different patterns of thematic progression, which are: theme repetition (where several consecutive sentences share the same or similar theme), thematization of theme (where the theme of one sentence is the theme of the following), theme-to-theme transition (where several consecutive sentences share the same or a similar theme), and other complex patterns. The outstanding contribution of Scinto lies in his effort to provide thematic progression with some more depth, by means of a classification which distinguishes the following cases, all of them followed by their symbolic representation:

- a) The themes of two sentences are lexically identical: $T_2 (-T_1)$.
- b) The second theme is a pronominal substitution of the first: T_2 (pro. T_1).

- c) There is a partial identity between the two themes: T_2 (dom. T_1).
- d) One theme is a superordinate of the other: T_2 ($\in T_1$).
- e) The first theme has a general or indefinite reference whereas the second is a particular instantiation: $T_2 (+T_1)$.
- f) The second theme is the contrary or the opposite of the first: $T_2 (-T_1)$.
- g) The second theme is omitted: $T_2 (\emptyset T_1)$.
- h) The second theme partially reproduces the first, adding or suppressing some informative feature: $T_2 (=T_1)$.

Apart from the previous relations, which work between consecutive themes, Scinto also mentions (1983: 88) others "that may obtain in rheme to theme transitions", the most important of which are the following: one theme is derived from a previous rheme by implication, represented as T_2 (impl T_1). And one theme illustrates the previous segment, represented as T_2 (eg T_1).

As I said before, Scinto's system can be considered an advance with respect to traditional thematic progression in that it gives the original concept a depth which it lacked. My impression is, however, that his system could be extended in two ways. On the one hand, I consider that any textual segment can be related simultaneously to several others, independently of its being a theme or a rheme, so that what Scinto said before about consecutive themes also holds for rhemes and even for non-consecutive segments. Our personal experience as readers tells us that, in any text, relations are multifarious, spreading through it like a metaphorical cobweb linking one textual point to many others in more than one way.

On the other hand, I believe that his system should attach more importance to certain relations of indubitable value in discourse analysis. As an illustration of my point of view, I would cite, among others, ellipsis (because in Scinto's system there is no indication of where the omitted participant can be retrieved) or conjunctive adjuncts (simply not included).

3. Extended Thematic Progression

The symbols that make up the notation system show an arbitrary correspondence with a set of relations which I call extended thematic progression and which is the result of several additions to Daneš' concept. First, the four cohesive resources (Halliday and Hasan 1976) are brought in to explain the achievement of textual cohesion; these non-structural resources working above sentence level are reference, ellipsis and substitution, conjunction (or logic-semantic relation established between a sentence and that preceding or following it) and lexical cohesion (or link that two or more words establish with each other through a number of semantic relations). Secondly, semantic relations (Alcaraz 1982) are also

imported to refine and give better expression to lexical cohesion. The semantic relations included are identity, synonymy, antonymy, hyperonymy and implication. As these two sets of variables are already well known, the following points simply explain how they are formally represented.

4. Reference

Reference is the resource we use to keep track of a participant throughout a text. Generally, participants are explicitly mentioned at the beginning of a fragment so that they can be taken for granted later on, substituting the explicit mention by pronominal reference or demonstratives. The different mentions of a given participant construct a sequence that is usually called a reference chain; an attentive consideration of all or most of the reference chains in a randomly chosen fragment will soon show that those chains play a major role in providing it with a sense of wholeness or unity. It can therefore be said that reference is a semantic relationship. This will be illustrated with examples taken from the passage analysed at the end of the present article (Chatwin 1990: 170). Both the explicit and the dependent mention of the participant are underlined, the latter leaning anaphorically on the former. The two examples are followed by their corresponding notation, following these conventions: the abbreviation *pro* stands for pronoun, and *D* stands for demonstrative. The exact place where the explicit mention of the participant occurs will also be indicated. Finally a short explanation is provided to justify and explain the symbols used.

Example 1:

Also on board was the Prussian Junker, Von F. [...] He had fought for the Fascists in Spain.

$$\begin{array}{l} T_1 \quad \rightarrow \quad R_1 \\ T_2 \text{ (pro: attrib } R_1) \rightarrow \quad R_2 \end{array}$$

The first theme (T_1 : *also on board*) takes us (\rightarrow) to the first rheme (R_1 : *was the Prussian Junker*), whose attribute reappears in the second theme (T_2) through a pronominal substitution (*He*), which is formalised thus (pro: attrib R_1), where *pro* stands for pronoun, *attrib* stands for attribute, and R_1 indicates the textual segment which contains the explicit mention of the substituted participant.

Example 2:

A percipitatory voice would [...] announce the events of the day. These began with a programme of gymnastics on the sun-deck.

$$\begin{array}{l} T_1 \quad \rightarrow \quad R_1 \\ T_2 \text{ (D:obj } R_1) \rightarrow \quad R_2 \end{array}$$

The second theme (T_2 : *These*) is a demonstrative pronoun that substitutes for the object of the first rheme (R_1 : *the events of the day*), formalised as follows (D: obj R_1).

5. Ellipsis

The importance of reference as a sort of textual history has just been noted, and there is no need to insist on it. It may be worth paying particular attention, however, to the way it proceeds. It takes no great effort to discover that reference offers not only a tracking of participants but also considerable discursive economy since once a new participant has been introduced, it may later on be substituted or elided. The saving of communicative energy is a major objective of the informative structure of texts, an important feature of which is the "swing of the pendulum" that transforms new into old, and is in part managed through two resources: ellipsis and substitution. While substitution replaces the explicit mention of a participant with a pronoun or a demonstrative, ellipsis is the omission of such a participant thanks to the proximity of an explicit mention. If we want to achieve accuracy for our extended notation system, then it is essential to point out which part of the sentence has been omitted or substituted.

To that end, we'll make use of the symbol \emptyset followed by the omitted part. Sometimes, we find longer themes that, according to Halliday (1985), contain elements that mimic the three Metafunctions of language. The only indispensable element is the one for the ideational Metafunction (the one that describes and constitutes reality), but we can also find an element for the textual Metafunction (usually a conjunctive adjunct or a conjunction) or another for the interpersonal Metafunction (maybe a Comment adjunct or a Vocative adjunct, as in these examples taken from Eggins (1994: 280): *Fortunately, the bomb didn't explode or Stephen, do you want more soup?*). In example three, the ideational element of the theme is omitted and only the textual element of the theme remains. Such a case would be shown thus: text, \emptyset id. It is also important to indicate, as in reference, where the omitted element can be retrieved from. After this short explanation, we can now proceed to formally express the following examples:

Example 3:

Then there might be a lecture on the turbulent and revolutionary history of the Volga region. Or a visit to a riverside town. Or to one of the hydroelectric schemes that [...].

$$\begin{array}{l} T_1 \quad \rightarrow \quad R_1 \\ T_2 \text{ (text, } \emptyset \text{ id: } T_1) \rightarrow \quad R_2 \text{ (}\emptyset \text{ verb: } R_1) \\ T_3 \text{ (text, } \emptyset \text{ id: } T_1) \rightarrow \quad R_3 \text{ (}\emptyset \text{ verb: } R_1 - \emptyset \text{ obj: } R_2) \end{array}$$

The bracket following the second and third theme (text, Ø;id: T₁) shows that both themes only contain a textual element (*or*) because their ideational element (empty theme *there*) has been omitted. The abbreviation T₁ explains that the obligatory ideational element can be retrieved from the first theme. The second theme (R₂) contains another omission, this time of the verb (*might be*) which can be retrieved from the first theme (R₁). Finally, the third theme (R₃) shows not only the verbal omission just mentioned (*might be*), but also the ellipsis of the object (*a visit*), which can be retrieved from the second theme (R₂).

Example 4:
Our task was to research, record, film, and photograph the lions. But how to do it at night?

T₁ → R₁ [(T₁ A R₁) (T₁ → R₁) (T₁ → R₁)]
T₂ → R₂ [(sust R₂) (sust R₂) (sust R₂)]

The very long formulation for the two rhemes in example four can be explained thus. The first rheme includes a series of final sentences linked together by the conjunction *and*, all of them sharing the same object (*the lions*). The above analysis has understood that each of the infinitives is a subordinate clause whose subject is always *our task*. To distinguish between main themes or rhemes, and secondary themes or rhemes (those of messages of a lower rank), we employ letters instead of numbers with the latter. Therefore, The abbreviations R_s stands for *to research*, R_r for *to record*, R_f for *to film*; and R_p for *to photograph*. In the second sentence, we find that the sequence of final clauses has been substituted by the pronoun *it* following the verb *do*, which is represented by using the abbreviation *sust* before each of the secondary rhemes.

Example 5:
A new wave of conservation must be let loose. One that recognizes we cannot protect lands merely by setting them aside.

T₁ → R₁
T₂ (sust id: T₁) A R₂

The only remarkable aspect in example five is the second theme where the ideational element of the first theme (*a new wave of conservation*) is substituted by *one*.

6. Conjunction

In well planned texts it is not only easy to understand and retrieve all the omitted or substituted participants, but it is also simple to follow the advance of the logical propositions contained in their sentences. To better appreciate this idea, we will

now try to imagine a tailor making a suit: first he takes some measurements, then he cuts the fabric in pieces according to the measurements, and finally he sews the different pieces together following a pattern; in this way, the individual pieces become an orderly set thanks to the seams and the pattern. Likewise, a text contains a given number of logical propositions, or content, which, in terms of the previous metaphor, are sewn into the whole according to a previous plan or pattern. The seams linking the different logical propositions receive the name of "conjunction". They may connect several sentences or paragraphs through a relationship of meaning. The connection can be carried out explicitly, making use of conjunctive adjuncts (that is, words such as *then*, *for this reason*, *on the other hand*, etc.), or implicitly, in which case the addressee must guess what sort of relation is linking the two textual segments.

Arguing along the same lines, Elisabeth Rudolph (Petöfi 1988: 97) attaches great importance to explicit connection, claiming that conjunctions (or conjunctive adjuncts) enormously simplify the decoding task of the addressee because they reveal the sentence relationship that the addresser had in mind. Equally, Jones (1977: 215) underlines the discursive value of conjunctions, comparing them to road signs which help us to anticipate where the relevant information is.

In order to clarify the way this cohesive resource works, Halliday (1985: 306-307) gives a long list of conjunctions and conjunctive adjuncts. Sometimes, they overtly express the relationship between two consecutive sentences, and then we say that they are explicitly connected. However, it is not unusual to find two consecutive textual units without any formal connection; this, as just been said poses an additional difficulty for the addressee.

By way of summary, then, conjunctions or conjunctive adjuncts usually express one of the following discursive meanings: co-ordination (copulative, adversative or distributive) or adverbial subordination (condition, finality, concession, etc.); categories which find expression in our notation system through the following labels, loosely based on the classification proposed by Halliday (1985: 309).

ad: addition	caus: finality	cond: condition	dist: distribution
conc: concession	temp: time	op: opposition	

Given that, in thematic analysis, the conjunction or the conjunctive adjunct usually carry out the textual Metafunction, then the relation between two sentences can be formalised thus:

Example 6:
Others had been pilots whose planes had failed to crash. Then there were the war widows [...].

T₁ → R₁ [(T₁ (obj: R₁) A R₁)]
T₂ (text: temp) → R₂

The first theme in example six (R_1 : *had been pilots whose planes had failed to crash*) includes a subordinate clause (*whose planes [...]*) whose theme (T_1) is a relative pronoun (*whose*) that finds its antecedent in the object of the first theme (*pilots*), information which is represented thus: [T_1 (obj): R_1] $\bar{A} R_1$]. The second theme includes a textual element (*then*) and an ideational one (empty theme *there*). The textual element is a discursive adjunct which shows a temporal relation, represented as T_2 (text: temp).

7. Lexical cohesion

In the preceding points, we have mentioned several cohesive resources: reference, ellipsis, substitution and conjunction. The last resource, lexical cohesion, has a semantic nature and comes into being cumulatively in virtue of the predominant words in a given text. If you read a fragment about nuclear energy, it is highly probable that it will be organised around a limited set of words whose mission is to establish the referential domain: maybe *power station*, *uranium*, *pollution*, *safety*, *civil opposition*, etc. These words can be grouped, according to the similarity of their meaning, into one or several chains sometimes called isotopical networks. A given word belongs to this chain if it shares with the rest of the words within the chain one or several aspects of its meaning (*senses*).

Any native speaker of a language has a perception of the similarity linking the words of a chain, for instance, that there is some sort of connection between *flower* and *rose*; or, going back to the previous example, between *power station* and *uranium*. But it is not enough to perceive the relation, it is also essential to identify it.

In this respect, Halliday (1985: 310) suggests the following repertory: repetition, synonymy, and collocation. In his classification, synonymy includes hyponymy, or the relationship between a specific concept and the general class which contains it. It also includes meronymy, or relationship between a part and the whole. Finally, collocation is a sort of implication.

The lexical backbone that structures the semantics of a given text can be explained in many other ways, as in Hasan (1984), for example. There she claims that any text contains a number of cohesive ties among its lexical units, ties which organise themselves in two different kinds of cohesive chains: identity chains (based on co-reference) and similarity chains (based on co-classification and co-extension). The lexical units that fit in those chains are called relevant, and those that do not fit are called peripheral. In these terms, it follows, then, that the fewer peripheral lexical units there are, the more coherent a text is, which is the same as saying that the semantic chains within any text must tend to establish unequivocally a specific referential domain. In the same line, Hazadiah (1993: 65) maintains "that groups

of words with shared environments can be built up, and the most pervasive groups can be selected as those most likely to express the aboutness of a text".

Both approaches are useful and can successfully clarify the semantics of any text. However, I would like to offer a classification which is based on that of Alcaraz (1982: 103-124), for whom there are five types of semantic relations: identity, synonymy, antonymy, hyperonymy and implication. A short description of each of them is given in the following paragraphs.

Identity, the complete or partial repetition of a lexical unit, is represented by the symbol (=). Synonymy, or relationship of partial identity, is represented by the abbreviation *sin* followed by the abbreviation for the segment where the other term of the relation can be found. Antonymy occurs when two lexical items are related in such a way that the negation of the first is the affirmation of the second, although in fact such clear cut oppositions are rarely found. It will be represented with the abbreviation *ant* followed by the abbreviation for the segment where the other term of the relation can be found. Hyperonymy is the relation holding between, for example, *flower* and *rose*, where the first lexical unit designates a general class and the second is a specific example of that class. Obviously, the relation works both ways: as above, from the word with the extensive meaning to the one with the intensive meaning; or the other way round, from the one with the intensive meaning to the one with the extensive meaning. In this second case, it receives the name of hyponymy. These relations will be noted down in our system as *hyper* (hyperonymy) and *hypo* (hyponymy).

Implication is, according to Alcaraz (1982: 121), the relation established when a lexical unit shares part of its meaning with another. Coherent texts contain many examples of implication because their lexical units do not always enter into such clear cut relations as synonymy, antonymy or hyperonymy. It will be represented with the abbreviation *impl*.

But the abundance of implication in discourse deserves, in my opinion, better consideration. After paying detailed attention to several examples of implication, I became convinced that some of them had a metaphorical or metonymic character. I decided to take advantage of these and other figures of speech, and in the following section I defend a subclassification of implication, where metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and simile are recognised as independent relations.

8. Concerning implication

When it came to testing the expanded notation system that I am here proposing, I realised that in many of the formalised examples implication was the most frequent relation. Sometimes, it had a vague nature, very difficult to pinpoint, but there were also many cases where it had an evidently metaphorical character. Therefore, I thought that the figures of speech might help to subdivide the

enormous semantic area given to implication, as it was clear to me that many lexical units entered into relation through metaphor, metonymy or synecdoche. I am perfectly conscious that, in doing so, I am not breaking new ground because the figures of speech have already been used to explain, among many other things, semantic change or the acquisition of language by children. However, I believe that we can still derive many useful insights from their study. In the following paragraphs, I follow the classification and definitions proposed by Le Guern (1980), who understands metonymy as: 1) cause substituting for effect; 2) effect substituting for cause; 3) content substituting for agent; 4) sign substituting for referent; 5) instrument substituting for agent; 6) abstract noun substituting for concrete noun; and finally, 7) some parts of the human body considered as the recipient of passions and feelings substituting for those passions or feelings. Example seven (*National Geographic*, October 1994) contains a metonymy where the effect (*a booming fanfare*) precedes the cause (*a giant music speaker*).

Example 7:
Suddenly a booming fanfare vibrated the clear blue sky. It seemed to come from the wooded shore. I squinted through binoculars at a black structure in the trees. It was a giant music speaker!

Within synecdoche, Le Guern recognises (1980: 34-40) the following substitutions: 1) a part for the whole; 2) the whole for a part; 3) the species for the genus; 4) the abstract for the concrete; and finally, 5) antonomasia, which is understood as a kind of synecdoche. Example eight (*National Geographic*, October 1994) contains a synecdoche where the part (*its graying planks*) stands for the whole (*the Wilcox*):

Example 8:
Below the lighthouse Luc showed me through one of the half dozen wrecks that curse Anticosti's shores, the Wilcox [...]. Pitched onto the white stone beach by a sudden storm in 1954, its graying planks still defy the elements.

Lodge (1977: 75) suggests, following Jakobson, that although metaphor is based on a certain similarity, to achieve its intended effect it depends on the perception of difference. Some examples follow (*National Geographic*, 1994):

Example 9:
Turnpike for freighters [...] the river continues to flow through calm and storm.

Example 10:
Sanctuaries of calm. Monuments to beauty. Touchstones of a once wild continent. America's parklands remain one of the nation's most farsighted ideas, but they are ailing.

Smilie is another figure that frequently appears in texts, as can be inferred from the following examples taken from *National Geographic*:

Example 11:
The snow-covered mountains of three nations surrounded us like backpacks for a good-size opera set.

Example 12:
When, like a merchant taking a list of his goods, we take stock of our wildness, we are glad to see how much of even the most destructible kind is still unspoiled.

Summarising the previous explanations, it can be said that Scinto's classification, initially taken as a starting point, was modified to make room for the four cohesive resources (Halliday and Hasan 1976) and the semantic relationships (Alcaraz 1982). Following Enkvist's advice (1974: 131),⁴ there is a conscious effort to simplify and reduce the symbols of the expanded system, avoiding some unnecessarily opaque symbols, such as the following: *dom* for partial identity, here replaced either by synonymy (syn) or identity (=); ϵ for superordinate, here replaced by hyperonymy (hyper); \equiv for partial reproduction, here replaced by identity (=); or, finally, \sim for antonymy, which is replaced by the abbreviation ant. But the tendency to simplify must be balanced by the obligation to be exhaustive. In the end, the abbreviations and symbols that will be used in the extended notation system are as follows:

Catalogue of symbols and abbreviations

ad : additive	adv: adverbative	ant: antonymy	atrb: attribute
D: demonstrative	dist: distributive	eg: illustration	emb: embedded
hyper: hyperonymy	hypo: hyponymy	id: ideational	impl: implication
inter: interpersonal	metny: metonymy	metph: metaphor	obj: object
pro: pronoun	sin: synonymy	sin: synecdoche	temp: temporal
text: textual	verb: verb	= : identity	\emptyset : ellipsis
$T_x(+T_y)$: where T_x has a general meaning and T_y is an example from that class.			

9. Application of the extended notation system

For the application of the system, I have chosen the initial paragraph of *The Volgas*, a story by Bruce Chatwin (1990: 170) included in his book *What am I doing here?* The paragraph has been divided into units or messages according to the

specifications given above. Each of these units is accompanied by its corresponding notation and a short explanation of it.

On the MV Maxim Gorky, a cruise boat belonging to Intourist, I spent ten September days sailing smoothly down the Volga; through the Volga-Don Canal, and on down the Don to Rostov.

$T_1 [T_a(+T_1) \mathcal{E} R_1] \rightarrow R_1 [(T_b \rightarrow R_b) (\text{Oid}:T_b - \text{Overb}:R_b - \text{Obj}:R_b - \text{Oem}:R_b \rightarrow R_b)]$ (text: ad, Oid: T_b , O verb: R_b - Obj: R_b - Oem: R_b $\mathcal{E} R_b$..)]

The theme of this first unit (T_1), which includes an apposition (T_a), extends as far as the comma preceding the pronoun *I*. The abbreviation T_1 designates the whole thematic segment (*On the MV [...] to Intourist*) and the abbreviation T_a designates the apposition (*a cruise boat [...] to Intourist*), an absolute sentence whose analysis appears between square brackets: $[T_a(+T_1) \rightarrow R_a]$. In this apposition, as in the rest of secondary themes or rhemes, the subindexes are not cardinal numbers but small letters. Its theme is a common noun with a generic character (*a cruise boat*), while a few words before, the first theme, (T_1) contains a proper name (*Maxim Gorky*) belonging to the class designated by T_a . This is a relation which Scinto notes down as $T_a(+T_1)$. The non finite verbal form in the apposition and its object constitute what has been referred as R_a .

We can observe from the notation that the first theme (R_1) is very complex, extending from *I spent* until *down the Don to Rostov*. Because of its length, I have understood that it consists of three sentences. The first (*I spent ten September days [...] the Volga*) is expressed thus ($T_b \rightarrow R_b$). The second (*through the Volga-Don Canal*) shows, in my opinion, several ellipses: one for the ideational element T_b (I , transcribed as Oid: T_b), another for the verb (*spent*, represented as Overb: R_b), another for the object (ten September days, represented as Obj: R_b) and a final one for the embedded sentence (*sailing smoothly*, represented as Oem: R_b). Consequently, the sequence *I spent ten September days sailing smoothly* has been omitted, and only a part of the rheme remains (*through the Volga-Don Canal*), here designated as R_b .

And, finally, the third segment of the first theme contains the same ellipses as the second and, in consequence, there only remains the final segment of its rheme (R_b): *on down the Don to Rostov*. It must also be added that, although the ideational part of its theme was omitted (Oid: T_b), we can still find its textual part (*and*), which shows a structural element of additive character represented as (text: ad).

The days were clear

T_2 (=obj R_b) $\rightarrow R_2$

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The second sentence has a simple structure whose theme (T_2) is a repetition of the object in R_b (*ten September days*), formalised as (=obj R_b). Halliday claims (1994: 331) that "for a lexical item to be recognised as repeated it need not be in the same morphological shape", and in the present case it is evident that the *clear days* are the same as the *September days*. On the other hand, I consider that this unit and the following one are linked by a paratactic relation and therefore enjoy the same rank. That is why they are given separate explanations.

and the nights were cold.

T_3 (text: ad, id: ant T_2) $\rightarrow R_3$

The third theme (T_3) consists of an additive textual element (*and*) and of an ideational element which is the antonym of the second theme (*the nights*), represented thus: T_3 (ant: T_2).

All the other passengers were German.

T_4 (impl: $T_1 - T_2$) $\rightarrow R_4$

The theme of the fourth unit (*all the other passengers*) clearly holds a relationship of implication with T_1 (*Maxim Gorky*) and T_2 (*cruise boat*), as the *passengers* travel in a *cruise boat* named *Maxim Gorky*.

Some had been Panzer officers who had wasted their youth in Siberian labour camps.

T_5 (pro: T_4) $\rightarrow R_5$ (impl: R_4) [T_c (pro: obj R_5) $\rightarrow R_c$ (since: R_b ..)]

The fifth unit (*some*) is a partial pronominal substitution of the previous theme (T_4 : *all the other passengers*). Concerning the rheme, there is implication between its object (*Panzer officers*) and the object in the fourth rheme (obj R_4 : *German*). Moreover, there is also a relative sentence (*who had wasted [...] labour camps*) whose notation appears between square brackets. Its theme (T_c) is a relative pronoun (*who*) that finds its antecedent in the object of the fifth rheme (obj R_5 : *Panzer officers*), formalised as T_c (pro: obj R_5). On the other hand, its rheme contains a place adjunct (*in Siberian labour camps*) that, in my opinion, is a synecdoche of R_b (*the Second World War*). I understand that here the part stands for the whole as, in fact, the youth of those soldiers was wasted by the whole Second World War, and not only by one of its unfortunate consequences (the Siberian labour camps).

and were revisiting the scene of last battles.

T_6 (text: ad, Oid: T_5) $\rightarrow R_6$ (impl: R_c - since: R_b ..)

The theme in the sixth unit is reduced to the additive textual element (*and*) because the ideational element has been omitted and can be retrieved in the

previous theme (Øid: T₃). In the rheme there is an object (*the scenes of last battles*) which is related through implication to R₆ (*had wasted their youth in Siberian labour camps*); but it is also a synecdoche of R₇ (*the Second World War*), because the lost battles are only a part of the whole war.

Others had been pilots whose planes had failed to crash.

T₇ (pro: T₄) → R₇ (impl: R₅) [T₄ (pro: obj) R₇] → R₄]

Here the theme is a pronoun (*others*) which partially substitutes for T₄ (*all the other passengers*). Part of the rheme is related through implication with R₅ ([...] *Panzer officers* [...]) *Siberian labour camps*). It also includes a relative sentence (*whose planes* [...]) *to crash*), analysed between square brackets [T₄ (pro: obj) R₇] → R₄], where its theme (T₄: *whose*) is a relative pronoun which finds its antecedent in the object of the seventh rheme (obj) R₇: *pilots*)

Then there were the war widows — moist-eyed women clinging to the remains of prettiness who forty-one years earlier had waved and waved as the trains drew out for the Russian front—

T₈ (text: temp) → R₈ (impl: R₆) [T₆ (eg: arth) R₈] → R₆]

[T₁ (pro: arth) R₈] → R₁ (T₁ → R₁, impl: R₅-R₆ - since: R₇,)]]

In my opinion, the textual element in T₈ (*them*) expresses a temporal sequence in the logical order of the narrated events; that is why it is represented as (text: temp). The rheme of the eighth unit (R₈) is very complex: on the one hand, there is an implication between part of it (*war widows*) and part of R₆ (*last battles*); on the other, after what might be considered to be the rheme proper (*were the war widows*), following Firbas' terminology (1992: 71), there comes a long apposition with units of a lower rank. The first of them (*moist-eyed women clinging to the remains of prettiness*) is a sort of explanation or illustration of the attribute in R₈ (*war widows*). This relation has been expressed, as in Scintor's system, T₆ (eg: arth) R₈). Immediately after comes a relative sentence (*who forty one years* [...]) *for the Russian front*) whose theme (T₆) is a relative pronoun substituting for *war widows*. That relative clause contains, in turn, an adverbial clause (*as the trains drew out for the Russian front*) included in R₆ and represented between brackets as (T₁: AE R₆, (impl: R₅-R₆ - since: R₇,). Its rheme (R₁: [...]) *for the Russian front*) is related through implication to R₆ ([...] *Panzer officers* [...]) *Siberian labour camps*) and part of R₆ (*last battles*). Moreover, I believe that *Russian front* is a synecdoche of R₇ (*the Second World War*).

and who now, when you asked why they had come to the Volga, would bow their heads and say, "Mein Mann ist tot in Stalingrad?"

T₉ (text: ad, id: pro) R₈] → R₉ [T₈ → R₈ (T₈ (pro: R₈) → R₈ (=R₆))]]

[T₁ (text: ad, Øid: R₈) → R₁ (impl: R₆)]]

The last sentence in the first paragraph shows a theme with an additive textual element (*and*) followed by an ideational element (relative pronoun *who*) whose antecedent can be retrieved in the attribute of R₈ (*war widows*). Its rheme begins with an adverb (*now*) which is followed by an apposition containing two subordinate clauses, respectively expressing time and cause. The time clause (*when you asked*) is superior in rank to the cause clause (*why they had come to the Volga*), and that is the reason why the latter is shown, in smaller type, as part of the former's rheme. Moreover, the cause clause contains a pronoun (*they*) that substitutes for the attribute in R₈ (*war widows*), whereas its rheme (R₉) repeats a lexical unit of R₆ (*the Volga*), and the identity of the two is expressed as R₉ (= R₆). After the apposition is what can be called the rheme proper (R₉: *would bow their heads*), which is in turn followed by a co-ordinate sentence (*and say "Mein Mann ist tot in Stalingrad?"*) with a sentence in German related through implication to R₆ (*last battles*).

10. Conclusion

Following Halliday's advice (1985: xvii),⁵ the approach defended here has an undoubtedly semantic character because its final purpose does not lie in presenting a beautiful formal system, but in adequately expressing the resources that construe and guarantee the global meaning of a text. To that end, I designed and applied a notation system that reveals some of the links working in coherent texts and whose main advantage is to provide us with a general vision of a text's inner structure. In consequence, it allows us to make generalisations and risk hypotheses, some of which are advanced in the following paragraphs.

The symbols and abbreviations of the extended notation system mentioned above were used to formalise and explain, by way of example, the initial paragraph of a story by Bruce Chatwin (1990: 170). I felt I had to check my first impressions, so I continued the analysis throughout the first five paragraphs of this story, because precisely at that point there begins a long digression where the isotopical networks are temporarily substituted by others. The first outstanding fact I noticed is that almost a third of the main themes (twelve out of thirty nine) are pronouns (eight) or ellipses (four), a proportion that is multiplied in minor themes, seventy per cent of which (twenty four out of thirty four) are pronouns (ten) or ellipses (fourteen). These figures prove that on most occasions the theme carries given information and the rheme new information. That may be the explanation for such a strong anaphoric tendency in themes, because all the pronouns and ellipses functioning as theme or point of departure depend necessarily on a previous explicit mention of the participant.

In addition to carrying the new information, the theme is usually the longest segment of the sentence. Consequently, it is natural that some part of it may point ahead in discourse, anticipating what is to come. Likewise, because of its length, the isotopical networks go down mostly through the rhemes of the sentences composing a given text.

On the other hand, there is a substantial coincidence between what has just been said about the abundance of pronouns in thematic position and the research of Gernsbacher and Hargreaves (1992)⁶ on what they call "first mention advantage". They established through some experiments that the initial element in a sequence usually enjoys a great informative relevance because the rest of the communication is most commonly dependent on it. The addressee tends to understand this first element as the message's cognitive foundation, and that's why the comprehension of the first element in a sentence or the first sentence in a text demands longer processing time than any other. Therefore, if the first constituent requires a greater effort of comprehension, then it can be understood why speakers tend to take the greatest possible advantage of the participants first mentioned, which are structurally revealed through pronominal substitution and ellipsis.

Concerning iconicity (that is, the tendency to present events as they happened in reality), there is a marked psychological need to establish the time when and/or place where the narrated events happened. Such a segment of the sentence is usually referred to as setting, and according to Giora (1983: 160),⁷ its importance can be explained through the proposals made by *Gestalt* psychology on the perception process; that is, that the figure (or what we have in the foreground) cannot be perceived without the base (or background). Giora's experiments have proved that setting is a necessary condition for textual processing and is one of the better remembered categories among addressees. In this respect, Fries (1983: 125) remarks that in the description of complex objects or of scenes, the sentences usually begin with place adjuncts, and Hetzron (1975: 358) adds that this presentational construction is used to introduce the addressee to the scene that is going to be described.

Paragraphs opening with setting are very frequent in descriptive texts, as any reader of *National Geographic* can attest: articles in that magazine tend to begin with a marked theme realized by a place or time adjunct. A glance at the main themes in the fragment analysed will show that only seven of its thirty-nine themes are settings, which at first sight may seem of little importance. This first impression will soon be corrected when it is realized that four of the five paragraphs analysed begin with a setting, a fact that clearly establishes its enormous cognitive importance.

Finally, I want to evaluate the subclassification of implication defended here and described in a customary way, the object, it is hoped, of more extensive study in the future. The figures of speech seem to be a good starting point for the

proposed subclassification, but they occur very rarely in the chosen fragment (a couple of synecdoches and metaphors). Curiously enough, I have discovered a great abundance of them in journalistic texts, both written or spoken, a fact that I attribute to several factors: the urgency to get the reader's or listener's attention, the taste for novelty so widespread among journalists, and —when a given novelty appeals— its tendency to become fossilised into a commonplace.

I have just said that the figures of speech were rarely used by Chatwin, but I found some other relations that were frequent, such as that between a participant (for instance *the Prussian Junker Von F.*) and what is predicated about him (*His fate, his views, etc.*) This relation (also linking in later paragraphs *The Maxim Gorky, a cruise boat* and its parts) is here understood as an implication, but perhaps it should be classified differently in order to reserve the term implication for examples of a less neat nature.

Notes

1. "Thematic progression correlates with the structure of a text".
2. "Thematic progression is the principle that old information ought to precede new information in sentences".
3. "A measure of the degree of complexity as given by the thematic progression of a text as it unfolds in the very act of communication in order to accomplish a particular communicative goal, and is realised by the simultaneous instantiation of appropriate syntactic, semantic and pragmatic linguistic means of the discourse system through their integration at the highest level of discourse organization in the thematic progression of text".
4. "Clauses and sentences may be interwoven with most intricate patterns of warp and woof. Tracing different types of topical links through a text by joining them with lines, coloured differently for different types of linkage, will result in pretty but confusing pictures. Numerical coding for computerized treatment may be an avenue
5. "In order to provide insights into the meaning and effectiveness of a text, discourse grammar needs to be functional and semantic in its orientation, with the grammatical categories explained as the realization of semantic patterns. Otherwise, it will face inwards rather than outwards, characterizing the text in explicit formal terms but providing no basis on which to relate it to the non-linguistic universe of its situational and cultural environment".
6. Both authors have empirically proved the existence of two advantages related to precedence. On the one hand, the first mention advantage claims that in sentences with two participants, the one mentioned first is more easily remembered because it is the cognitive foundation of the structure that is going to be developed. On the other, the immediacy advantage states that in sentences made up of several clauses, the addressee constructs a substructure for

each of them. Thus, the information represented in the substructure that is being developed is more accessible than the rest because of its immediacy. However, at a given moment, the first clause recovers its relevance and becomes more accessible than the rest thanks to its condition of cognitive foundation for the whole sentence structure. There is a distinction, in consequence, between an imminent memory and a long term memory, responsible for the retrieving of the discursive topic.

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RESOURCE MATERIALS

- Examples 1, 2, 3, 6 taken from Chatwin (1990: 170-171)
- Example 4 taken from "Lions of Darkness", *National Geographic* (August 1994): 35-53.
- Examples 5, 10, 11 and 12 taken from "Our National Parks", *National Geographic* (October 1994): 2-55.
- Examples 7, 8 and 9 taken from "St. Lawrence River", *National Geographic* (October 1994): 104-125.