ON NARROW AND BROAD P-THEME PARAGRAPHS

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0. Introduction

The paragraph has been studied in diverse contexts. For example, it has been treated as a punctuation mark (e.g., King, 2000), as a significant content unit (e.g., Danes, 1995), as a style marker (e.g., Dubois, 1992), as a conspicuous unit of discourse (e.g., Brown and Yule, 1983), as a distinctive unit of translation (e.g., Le, 2004), etc. Various authors have scrutinized different aspects of paragraphing. In line with their linguistic tradition, many Czech authors have focussed on the thematic build-up of paragraphs.

1. Pioneering Studies on the Thematic Build-up of Paragraphs

In his pioneering study, Mathesius (1942/1982, 144) argues that the coherence of the paragraph follows from its basic Theme (Topic). Mathesius distinguishes between three types of paragraphs, viz. paragraphs where the Paragraph Theme is stable, where it unfolds, and where it develops.

Elaborating on Mathesius's original typology, Danes (1994/1995) employs his own concept of thematic progressions. Examining the various relationships between the Paragraph Theme (i.e., P-theme, Hypertheme) and the themes of individual utterances (U-themes) of which the paragraphs consist, Danes delimits four types of the thematic build-up of paragraphs. These include paragraphs with a stable P-theme, paragraphs the P-themes of which are unfolded by a number of particular U-themes, paragraphs with a content frame and paragraphs in which the P-theme develops. For a more detailed overview of Danes's framework, the reader may be cross-referred to Pipalova, 2005(a).

2. The Present Approach to Paragraphs

2.1. Introduction

Somewhat elaborating on Danes's original approach, in Pipalova (2005b) we seek to establish the above paragraph types on a wider range of tentative criteria. (Admittedly, some of the criteria may have been implied already in the original treatment.) Thus, the major paragraph types are conceived of as aggregates of the characteristics produced by the following tentative criteria.

If the cluster of the proposed criteria is comprehensive enough, it includes at least the relationship between the P-theme and the (U-/ FSP) themes[1], (i.e., the degree of in/stability of choices from the Thematic area[2], affecting the range of the thematic Discourse Subjects[3] and their variability across the paragraph); the types, arrangement and hierarchy of thematic progressions[4]; the type of thematic paradigm (the cohesive ties[5] and means involved in thematic units); the role assigned to thematic progressions and cohesive links (their incidence); and the placement and characteristics of the P-theme exponents. Naturally, additional criteria may be revealed once paragraphs of various build-up patterns are carefully scrutinized and contrasted with one another.

The above criteria are seen as working in concert in the apperception of paragraph typology. Some paragraphs may be delimited only on the basis of a single criterion; others, however, may be founded on much firmer grounds.

Furthermore, the original paragraph types may be arranged along a relatively continuous cline. The two opposite ends of this cline differ radically in their build-ups and epitomize two distinct configurations of features. Thus, in this paper we propose to distinguish between two crucial supratypes, viz. Narrow and Broad P-theme paragraphs.

2.2. Narrow P-theme Paragraphs

By definition, the narrow P-theme paragraphs are those embodying the top degrees of stability in their thematic build-up. This means that they are rather focussed, foregrounding[6] a single major Thematic Discourse Subject (hereinafter only DS), corresponding to the "topic entity" in Brown, Yule (1983, 137). In other words, the content of their P-theme seems to be considerably hierarchized and due to this, the authors focus on its narrowest layer, i.e., on what they choose to see as its prominent, salient DS, i.e., its dominant Thematic entity (bold-typed in example l).[7]

> Example 1 *I*<u>*The mink*</u> (bold original, R.P.) *was widely introduced for fur in 1929 and immediately _escaped to colonize "wetlands" extensively but irregularly throughout Britain and north-eastern Ireland. 21t is a serious predator of poultry, game-birds and fisheries and _may locally exterminate ducks and waders. 3Despite all counter-measures it is probably by now permanently established. (Al, 32)[§]*

This, however, does not mean that elements of the other layers may be ignored. Even though, as a rule, either not explicitly represented at all or only marginally so, the other layers are nevertheless indispensable, as they contribute in their own right to the perception of paragraph's coherence. What is characteristic, however, is their

self-evident backgrounding. At this point we may recall that according to Brown, Yule (1983, 268), we operate with the "no-spacio-temporal-change-unless-indicated" principle. In the authors' view, the hearer assumes that "entities referred to will remain constant, that the temporal setting will remain constant, unless the speaker indicates some change in any of these, in which case the hearer will minimally expand the context." (ibid, 59) In the example above, for instance, we presuppose continuity of the author, purpose, register, text-type, co-text, etc.

The explicit exponent of the dominant Thematic DS (bold-typed in the example above) is typically launched through the Topic Sentence which, in turn, is prone to appear paragraph-initially. Since, from that introduction on, this salient DS becomes co(n)textually bound and remains the centre of attention throughout the rest of the paragraph, it comes as natural that it is either regularly thematized itself or else any noteworthy constituent of it. All the same, it motivates all the U-thematic functions throughout the paragraph. Therefore, a favourite, clearly prevalent (though by no means exclusive) arrangement is paradigmatic.

It follows that the foregrounding of the above-mentioned dominant Thematic DS is achieved primarily by the extreme stability of choices from the Thematic area. The narrow P-theme paragraphs thus accord an explicit exponent to the narrowest layer of their Theme. Connected with this is undoubtedly also the limited turnover detected in thematic DSs.

Such constrained selection from the Thematic area is matched by a considerable degree of thematic as well as cohesive bonding. Indeed, the Thematic DS exponents are interlaced by thematic progressions and cohesive links. Due to their consistent use, all paragraph utterances are bonded through their prominent thematic elements. Thus, generally speaking, in the group of paragraphs in question, these links are accorded great significance and are viewed as enhancing coherence. Moreover, even if more thematic elements may be featured in utterances, the bonding hierarchizes them explicitly. Indeed, by interlinking some rather than others, the author assigns the bonded ones a critical role in inducing paragraph's coherence.

Moreover, there is a pronounced constraint on the range of such bonding. As a rule, to foreground the prominent thematic DS, authors employ a limited variety of both, thematic strings and cohesive links interrelating such DSs. Naturally, the U-themes tend to be interwoven by paradigmatic progressions[9], and the cohesive links between them establish, and never exceed, the narrow thematic cohesive paradigm (embracing identity, equivalence, and inclusion links).

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We have seen that in principle, authors of narrow P-theme paragraphs may employ two distinct, though by no means unrelated methods of foregrounding the dominant Thematic DS. Either its exponent (prototypically launched in the Topic Sentence) is simply reiterated throughout all the U-themes (Example 1 - stable P-theme paragraph), or else the individual U-themes are motivated somewhat less directly, being related to the foregrounded Thematic DS (and derived from its explicit exponent) as its parts, constituents, types, species, instances, etc. (Examples 2, 3 - Unfolded P-theme paragraph)

Example 2 *1 <u>Committees of Members of Parliament</u> examine certain types of secondary legislation. 2For example, <u>a 'siftine' committee</u> examines European Community legislation, and _reports important Community proposals. 3<u>A Joint Select Committee of Lords and Commons</u> examines most Ministerial orders to report on the drafting, whether the Minister has followed the correct procedure, and whether the instrument contains certain constitutionally questionable provisions. 4<u>Another committee</u> even examines the merits of certain instruments. (A5, 17)*

Example 3 *l<u>Amons deer, the red and the roe</u> are the only true natives, having survived through the last glaciation. 2<u>The fallow deer</u> arrived later, having perhaps been introduced by Phoenician sailors or, more likely, by the Romans. 3<u>Other more exotic species like the Sika. muntiacs and Chinese water deer</u> were introduced from 1860 onwards to decorate gentlemen's parks -from which some of them inevitably escaped. (Al, 13)*

It follows, then, that U-themes may be either referentially identical/equivalent to the foregrounded exponent of the P-theme (Example 1), or else they may convey its various constitutive parts, segments, types, features, etc., and thus may be related to the P-theme exponent also by way of cohesive inclusion (Examples 2, 3). It is perhaps needless to add that these two approaches to the dominant Thematic entity differ in the relative measure of its foregrounding. Naturally, the foregrounding is more pronounced in the former than in the latter.

Generally speaking, in the narrow P-theme paragraphs, the units featured in the U-themes (establishing a particular thematic layer or thematic track) are semantically rather homogeneous. It should be noted, however, that the degree of homogeneity is more self-evident in the stable P-theme paragraphs than in those displaying an unfolded P-theme.

Moreover, the relationships between individual thematic exponents in all the narrow P-theme paragraphs tend to be made linguistically overt, i.e., either explicitly signalled or, due to language economy, suggested by ellipsis. In other words, by employing such means as personal pronouns, repetitions, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, meronyms, appositions, and others, the cohesive links

exploit their systemic backing. Given the truism that cohesion facilitates coherence (without, however, guaranteeing it), it is only natural that the narrow P-theme paragraphs tend to be perceived as inducing coherence rather strongly.

In this context it may be worthwhile to recall the scale of "recoverability" posited by Geluykens (1991). In U-thematic functions, the narrow Theme paragraphs unequivocally employ elements which are recoverable from the co-text either directly or almost directly, where inferencing is minimal or moderate.

At this point, we shall suspend the discussion of the narrow P-theme paragraphs and will turn our attention to the other major group.

2.3. Broad P-theme Paragraphs

By definition, the broad P-theme paragraphs display a conspicuous degree of instability in their build-up. In their thematic layer they are semantically much more heterogeneous. Since, considering their thematic layers, they are multi-DS paragraphs, they are clearly marked by a significant degree of DS turnover. Therefore, the content unity, the common ground establishing paragraph's coherence (embodied by the P-theme) is more tenuous, or even much less noticeable, and may be backgrounded with varying degrees. What is foregrounded, however, is diversity, heterogeneity, be it in terms of the choices from the Thematic area, in terms of the range of cohesive links established, in terms of thematic patterns pursued in paragraph construction, or in terms of the measure of significance generally accorded to thematic progressions and cohesive links for the perception of paragraph's coherence.

Presumably, compared to the narrow P-themes, the content of the broad P-themes is much less hierarchized. Though the narrowest Thematic layer may be represented even in these paragraphs, it is more often not displayed at all. However, even when it does appear, it is never encoded alone, as the authors thematize also diverse elements from the other Thematic layers. In other words, the authors are not so constrained in their thematic choices and thus may thematize elements virtually from all the Thematic layers of the Thematic area. It follows, then, that such paragraphs usually exhibit considerable turnover of thematic DSs.

It is perhaps unnecessary to mention that if constructed along a clear, easily detectable or predictable pattern (whatever its type), these paragraphs are more prone to induce a greater degree of coherence than otherwise. However, the broad P-theme paragraphs often fail to follow an obvious pattern (and, occasionally, make a point of doing so), which alone frequently lowers the recipient's perception of the paragraph's coherence. At times this may even call the respective graphic paragraphing

into question, simultaneously making room for the perception of various conceptual/notional paragraphs. Conversely, from the producer's point of view, the lack of a binding, self-evident and consistent pattern often leads to diverse departures, digressions and surprising developments.

In principle, the broad P-theme paragraphs fall into two major subtypes. Whereas some do display a common integrative P-theme (content frame paragraphs - in Example 4 it may be tentatively formulated as "the Japanese case, i.e., current economic situation in Japan"), in others, a single (common) P-theme is missing altogether (developing ones - Example 5).

> Example 4 *lBut the Japanese case is rather different, and Jiighlights why some economists have become concerned at the emphasis on fighting inflation. 2The Bank of Japan's aim is to move back to the point at which prices start rising again. 3The world's second-bieeest economy is currently in the grip of deflation, a phenomenon not seen in the industrial economies since the Depression of the 1930s. 4The price level is falling, the economy is slumping and, notwithstanding the central bank's policy adjustments, Japan has so far failed to get to grips with its problems. 5Indeed, in the summer of 2000, the Bank of Japan raised interest rates at a time when most economists thought that doing this would be a mistake, so ingrained has the need to fight inflation become. (J6, 2/1/2002)[10]*

> Example 5 *IThe Devil yelled with pain and anger, but St Dunstan held on tight. 2The Devil sprang this way and that, roaring vengeance and calling up curses onto the head of the agile saint-archbishop. 22Still Dunstan held on. 3Then, with a mighty wrench, the Devil pulled himself free, and leaped, high over forge and smithy, high over church and village, high over the lovely countryside where Kent and Sussex meet, till he came to earth again in the middle of Tunbridge Wells. 4There. at the foot of the Pantiles. a spring gushes clear and cold, and with a growl of anguish the Devil plunged his burnt nose into the cooling water. 5Steam and fumes of sulphur rose and hissed as cold water met the scorching flesh: and from that day to this the sprine at the Pantiles has had the chalybeate qualities that have made "the waters" of Tunbridge Wells famous over. (F3, 56)*

When the integrative P-theme is attested (content frame paragraphs), it mostly fails to be expressed by an exponent conceptually enclosing all the U-themes. The P-theme, however, may be suggested by a kernel expression (common conceptual base), by (a number of) keywords (central frame slots) evoking the respective frame, by the whole T-R nexus (see Danes, 1989), or it may be rather vague, or else remain solely implicit.

Since the unity or integrity is prototypically backgrounded, comparably tenuous or even questionable, it may be somewhat more demanding to disclose it. At times, the common denominator of all the U-themes is extremely vague, its boundaries

being rather diffuse and fuzzy. Tellingly, the P-theme may be even suggested by such notions as "process", "event", "case", "episode", "situation", etc.

Conversely, paragraphs in which the P-theme develops are characterized by activating initially a particular content frame which, however, gradually infiltrates in another frame. In practice it means that across the thematic functions in such paragraphs, we first detect elements which activate in recipients a certain conceptual frame but at a particular point we come across others which fall outside the original frame, transcending it, and in doing so they induce the activation of another, however loose, indistinct or dubious the relationships between the two frames in question may be. It also follows that the transformation may be gradual and that the author tends to be relatively focussed in his/her initial choices only to gradually turn attention to another set of thematic DSs. It follows that even the arrangement of thematic choices (their grouping) is significant, through which the activation of one frame is made possible and may be eventually superseded by another. At this point it should be recalled that when dealing with paragraphs where the P-theme develops, Mathesius (1982, 144) himself adduces an example in which we basically witness the infiltration of one type of frame into another. Moreover, in his example, the essentially descriptive text-type (frame) gradually infiltrates into a narrative one.

Compared to the narrow P-theme paragraphs, in the broad P-theme paragraphs as such, the significance ascribed to cohesive links and thematic progressions in paragraph build-up generally decreases. At times, the perception of coherence is not induced by these means at all and instead exploits other devices.

Furthermore, these paragraphs may display thematic progressions and cohesive links with varying intensities and consistencies. Some such paragraphs exhibit them very systematically, in others their incidence is debatable, sporadic or marginalized (example 6 below), and yet others do not display them at all.

Example **6** 1 *There are also economic considerations. 2One might expect the retirement age simply to be pushed back by a decade or three and for the economy to expand as the number of dependants, children and pensioners became a much smaller proportion of the overall population. 3Unfortunately, our experience is of just the opposite. 4In today's world, more and more workers are laid off well before the existing retirement age of 65, and these are most frequently those with insufficient private means to support themselves. (J5, 9/2/2002)*

What is more, if available, the thematic links established may be solely paradigmatic, only syntagmatic, or of a mixed type (whether or not one of the foregoing categories prevails). In other words, the choice of the thematic progressions is far

less principled and much more heterogeneous, frequently producing various complex patterns and hierarchies.

Naturally, compared to the narrow P-theme paragraphs, in the broad P-theme group the syntagmatic progressions generally gain in significance. As was pointed out already by Cervenka (1982), unlike the paradigmatic links, the syntagmatic ones mostly relate only pairs of utterances. Thus, numerous local links are established at the expense of all-paragraph integrative ones. The following example(s) illustrate(s) the dynamic content-frame pattern, despite being sporadically interspersed by paradigmatic links. Significantly, unlike in some static content frame paragraphs, most of the U-themes are motivated linguistically.

> Example 7 *1 However, <u>hish in the earth's atmosphere - between about 20 and</u> 50 <u>kilometres up - there</u> is a band in which ozone is relatively plentiful. 2<u>This region. part of the stratosphere,</u> is exposed to powerful radiation coming directly from the sun. 3 <u>When this radiation strikes the atmosphere it</u> imparts sufficient energy to the oxygen gas to cause some of it to be converted into ozone. 4Consequently, <u>at this altitude ozone</u> is naturally common. 5Of course, <u>ozone molecules</u> continue to revert to the more stable form but <u>this rate of conversion</u> is matched by the continuous creation of new ozone. 6<u>The two processes</u> long ago reached equilibrium and _created a spherical band around the earth, rich in ozone. (A6, 12)*

> Example 8 *1<u>The office of justice of the peace or masistrate</u> (the two expressions mean the same thing) can be traced back to the thirteenth century when "conservators of the peace" were appointed in each country to assist in the maintenance of order. 2<u>Shortly afterwards they</u> were given the power to try minor offences to save the time of the Assize judges. 3<u>For this purpose the justices</u> met quarterly for the more serious offences and informally when required for the less serious ones. 4<u>From these meetings</u> developed the Courts of Quarter Sessions and Petty Sessions. (A5, 27)*

In the margin it should be noted that the afore-cited paragraph suggests its P-theme in the sub-headline ("Justices of the Peace").

Furthermore, the cohesive links exhibited between the U-themes and the P-theme exponent (conceptual base) regularly exceed the narrow paradigm. Incorporating also the parallelism and contiguity types, they establish the broad thematic paradigms instead. Occasionally, however, as has been observed above, the cohesive links may be even missing altogether.

As regards the recoverability scale proposed by Geluykens (1991), the broad P-theme paragraphs obviously employ thematic items arranged along the entire posited continuum, ranging from those which are recoverable directly, via those which are partly recoverable, all the way to the clearly irrecoverable ones.

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It should be noted, however, that the thematization of the narrowest layer of Theme is feasible, but only in so far as this dominant Thematic DS is not alone in the thematic layer and other DSs are also encoded as U-themes. This fact is suggestive of the attention paid to the contextualization of the central DSs, and also of the focus on mutual interrelations between the various thematic DSs. More prototypically, however, the author chooses a whole range of thematic DSs from the respective Thematic area. It follows that writers often tend to thematize at least some items from the central or broad Thematic layers. Moreover, in extreme cases, it is even possible to focus on the broadest Thematic layer exclusively.

In addition, unlike in the narrow P-theme specimens, the introduction of thematic DSs is often motivated purely pragmatically, invoking the relevant portion of the shared world knowledge. Analogously, links between thematic units in broad P-theme paragraphs frequently receive no purely linguistic (formal) signals. Equally, their detection and interpretation is in many cases a function of the ability to activate the relevant portion of pragmatic knowledge. Understandably, in the absence of purely linguistic clues, paragraph categories and boundaries may become somewhat fuzzier.

> Example 9 *1LIFE would be so much easier for the Communists who rule China if it were not for those pesky democrats on its periphery. 2The grumpy (though, these days, not quite so old) men in Beiiins have been waxing bellicose against Taiwan, whose parliament this week was voting on the sensitive principle of referendums. 3Presidential elections are due next March on the island, and China fears that the incumbent, Che Shui-bian, may use his re-election bid, plus this tool, to push Taiwan closer to declaring its formal independence from the mainland. 4 Hone Kone is also turning into a headache. 5Instead of showing gratitude for China's recent efforts to boost its economy, voters there have just hammered the main pro-China party in local council elections. (J6, 28/11/2003)*

> Example 10 *1 Animosity aside, it looks like the NYPO and Avery Fisher Hall are stuck with each other. 2There was briefly a plan to raze the hall to the ground and build a new one but it collapsed due to the estimated cost (in excess of $400 million) and because of resistance from the Fisher family who assumed that their father's name would stay above the door in perpetuity. 3So a refurbishment is in the offing instead. 4Getting better acoustics is a notoriously tricky business - attempts to improve sound at the Barbican and Royal Festival Hall in London have had mixed results. (J5, 29/11/2003)*

Furthermore, it appears that the division between the two subtypes of the broad P-theme paragraphs may be in some extreme cases rather subjective, being based on the idiosyncratic perception of the respective frame's boundaries. Since, generally speaking, the frame boundaries seem to be far from clear-cut (see, e.g., Bedna-

rek, 2005), by analogy, the division between the two paragraph subtypes may be at times necessarily just as continuous. The analyst's interpretation may then ultimately reflect the idiosyncratic extent of the activated frame(s).

Example 11 *IHowever, <u>lead</u> is not the sole pollutant associated with exhaust fumes. 2In addition <u>they</u> contain oxides of nitrogen (mentioned already in the context of global warming and smog), carbon monoxide (a highly poisonous gas present in very low concentrations), unbumedfuel gases (known as "hydrocarbons" and linked with cancer) and carbon dioxide (not toxic, but as we have seen, a "greenhouse" gas). 3<u>The first three of these, the toxic substances,</u> can all be reduced if vehicles are fitted with a "catalytic converter", a component of the exhaust system which results in the thorough breakdown of these gases. 4<u>Catalvtic converters</u> can only work if the vehicle uses lead-free petrol, otherwise <u>the lead</u> damages the chemical catalysts in the converter. 5Even when fitted with a converter, <u>cars</u> continue to produce carbon dioxide. 6However modified, <u>petrol-driven cars</u> contribute to the greenhouse effect. (A6, 38)*

Thus, it seems that paragraph types result from an interplay of factors. The choice of the build-up pattern is ultimately determined by the author's particular intent, including the manner of his/her presentation of the particular content.

3. Conclusion

This paper essentially follows the paragraph typology pioneered by Mathesius (1942/1982) and elaborated by Danes (1994/5). Establishing the original paragraph types on a wider range of tentative criteria, the paper posits a decisive opposition between the two paragraph supratypes - viz. narrow and broad P-theme ones. These two major types of paragraphs differ radically in their build-ups and epitomize two distinct configurations of features. The choice between them is determined primarily by the author's intent.

However, these supratypes represent solely two extremes of a relatively continuous cline. As a matter of fact, infiltration of prototypical features is frequently attested in both ways. To our knowledge, there is a remarkable transition area between them in which considerable attention is paid to a salient Thematic DS. This prominent Thematic DS, however, is set in a network of broader contextual links.

Although the paper explores some of the conspicuous tendencies in the build-up of paragraphs, strictly speaking, the concepts of narrow Theme together with its opposite, broad Theme, are by no means confined only to paragraphs. Given the recursive tendencies detected in texts, the concepts may be extended to apply virtually to any level of macrotextual build-up, e.g., to paragraph groups, text sections, or whole texts.

Notes

¹ To distinguish between the two homonymous terms of "THEME", in what follows (outside citations), we shall reserve the capital-preceded "themes" - i.e., (Textual) Theme and its conspicuous variety, P-theme (Paragraph Theme) as interpreted on the textual, hierarchically superior level. The non-capitalized "theme", on the other hand, will label its counterpart delimited on the hierarchically inferior FSP level and contrasted with the rheme.

² In the present approach, the content aspect of the Theme, constituting the so-called Thematic area, is conceived of as enclosing in all three distinct layers arranged from the broadest to the narrowest, to resemble a kind of a pyramid. The lowest and broadest layer, which is simultaneously the most diffuse of all, follows from the overall communicative framework. It corresponds to all the given elements of the speech event. The central layer embraces a number of hierarchized, closely interrelated and regularly co-occurring elements organized as a cognitive structure, or a content frame. The third, the most restricted one of all, though also potentially available (at least) in (some) texts, embodies some of its most conspicuous or foregrounded elements, or else, its dominant Discourse Subjects.

³ "As discourse subject (DS) I treat anything - be it an object, a group or class of them, a quality, state, process, action, circumstance, event, episode, and the like - that the speaker has just in mind when applying a nominating (or deictic) unit in the process of text production in order to introduce/present/mention/re-introduce/recall something." (Danes, 1989, 24)

⁴ The term "thematic progressions" is adopted in the sense defined by Danes (1974, 114), i.e., 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 paragraph, chapter,...) to the whole text, and to the situation." Their comprehensive classification is provided in Danes (1989, 25-6).

⁵ In this paper, cohesive links are conceived of as arranged on a tentative scale running from full identity, via equivalence, inclusion, all the way to parallelism and contiguity. Identity and equivalence do not involve any change in reference from their antecedents, although the latter is characterized by change of other modes of meaning; inclusion represents referential overlap; parallelism presupposes referential commensurability with respect to a common reconstructable superordinate unit; and contiguity, the least clear-cut type of all, involves some relation of mutual expectability, co-occurrence, semantic relatedness, association, etc.

Somewhat modifying the concept of thematic paradigm introduced by Červenka (1982), we distinguish between the narrow thematic paradigm on the one hand, and the broader thematic paradigm on the other. The former is taken to include the proportion of identity, equivalence and inclusion among the thematic elements related to a single Discourse Subject, while the latter is conceived of as incorporating all the remaining cohesive relations established between thematic units linked to a single Discourse Subject.

⁶ "Foregrounding" will be understood essentially in line with the Prague linguistic tradition, particularly with Mukařovský, 1932 (2000). Mukařovský argues that the purpose

of foregrounding is "to attract the reader's (listener's) attention more closely to the subject matter expressed by the foregrounded means of expression." (ibid., 227) In his view, "foregrounding is the opposite of automatization, that is, the deautomatization of an act; the more an act is automatized, the less it is consciously executed; the more it is foregrounded, the more conscious does it become", (ibid., 226) (In the present study, however, rather than with "automatization", we have contrasted the term with "backgrounding").

Apart from its intentionality and its contrast with the background, Mukarovsky stresses "the consistency and systematic character of foregrounding" (ibid., 227). Moreover, foregrounding also implies choice, as "a complete foregrounding of all the components is impossible." (ibid.) Furthermore, foregrounding is related to hierarchy. "The component highest in the hierarchy becomes the dominant. All other components, foregrounded or not, as well as their interrelationships, are evaluated from the standpoint of the dominant. The dominant is that component of the work which sets in motion, and gives direction to, the relationships of all other components", (ibid.)

The opposition foregrounding/backgrounding (automatization) has gained wide currency in linguistics and has been employed with varying interpretations in diverse contexts. It seems worthwhile to recall also Leech, Short (1981, 48) who distinguish between qualitative and quantitative foregrounding. Among others they maintain that "the quantitative foregrounding... (adapted by R.P.) of a prominent pattern of choices within the code itself shades into the qualitative foregrounding... (adapted by R.P) which changes the code itself." (ibid., 139)

[7] At this point some methodological comments should be made. For simplicity's sake, in the examples adduced in this paper the unit of analysis is the main clause. We focus on the thematic build-up of paragraphs. Central to this approach is the relationship between the P-theme and the themes in individual main clauses. The latter are scrutinized, in line with the above criteria, for a number of parameters, i.e., the variability of DSs featured in them, the types of thematic progressions and cohesive links these units enter, etc. Whenever there are more thematic units per a main clause, priority is naturally given to that/those which is/are more directly relevant to the P-theme. Hence sometimes it is possible to distinguish between more local links and those critical for the overall integrity of the paragraph.

Although we have focussed on the thematic build-up of the paragraphs in question, it should be stressed that coherence can also exploit various other devices (e.g., explicit connectives, *e.g., for example* (example 2); *consequently, of course* (example 7), etc.; syntactic parallelism (elements of which may be detected in example 2), etc.), and be further enhanced by some such means. However, as is well known, the perception of coherence need not be established on the existence of any such links and devices at all.

[8] It should be noted that in example 1 the foregrounded Thematic DS (bold-typed) is introduced explicitly in the thematic function of in the Topic Sentence (appearing initially in this paragraph). Its exponents feature in the thematic functions of all the main clauses,

and are intertwined, establishing a paragraph-exhaustive identity chain and a continuous theme progression. Note also that pronominal exponents are favoured in thematic functions following utterance boundaries. Due to language economy (and other reasons, including stylistic ones), ellipsis is occasionally employed. Significantly, however, it is preferred in intrasentential thematic functions. The paragraph is marked by a strikingly low DS turnover in the thematic functions. The DSs themselves form an exemplary narrow thematic paradigm.

[9] Paradigmatic progressions include continuous theme, derived continuous theme, theme derived from the Hypertheme.

[10] The P-theme in example 4 has been tentatively formulated as "the Japanese case, i.e., current economic situation in Japan". The existence of this P-theme, among other things, induces the pragmatically desirable interpretation of "world's second-biggest economy"(3). In a similar vein, it particularizes the interpretation of the thematic units "the price level"/ "the economy"('4'l: indeed, what is meant is not the price level/the economy in general, these thematic units are to be interpreted as pertaining to (the particular) Japan(ese case). The activation of the relevant frame further ensures that the perception of coherence is not impaired by the relatively high thematic DS turnover in the paragraph and a relatively high measure of novelty exhibited by its thematic units, etc.

A b b r e v i a t i o n s   a n d   S y m b o l s

DS	Discourse Subject	P-theme	Paragraph Theme
R.P.	Renata Pipalova	T-R nexus	theme - rheme nexus
U-theme	utterance theme	theme	theme in the theory of FSP

R e f e r e n c e s

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Renata Pípalová: ON NARROW AND BROAD P-THEME PARAGRAPHS

This paper follows in principle the paragraph typology pioneered by Mathesius (1942/1982) and Danes (1995). In this study the original paragraph types are established on a wider range of tentative criteria which include at least the relationship between the Paragraph Theme and the (FSP) themes, (i.e., the degree of in/stability of choices from the Thematic area, affecting the range of the thematic Discourse Subjects and their variability across the paragraph); the types, arrangement and hierarchy of thematic progressions; the type of thematic paradigm (the cohesive ties and means involved in thematic units); the role assigned to thematic progressions and cohesive links (their incidence); and the placement and characteristics of the Paragraph Theme exponents.

Furthermore, the paper posits a decisive opposition between the two paragraph supratypes - viz. narrow and broad Paragraph Theme ones. These two major types of paragraphs represent two opposite ends of a relatively continuous cline and epitomize two radically different configurations of features following from the above criteria. The choice between the two constructional patterns, however, is determined primarily by the author's intent, including the manner of his/her presentation of the particular content. What is more, given the recursive tendencies in the build-up of texts, the concepts of narrow vs. broad Theme may be extended to apply virtually to any level of macrotextual build-up.