
Funktionale Satzperspektive und Phrasem-Konstruktionen

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The theory of Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP; Mathesius 1929; Daneš 1959; Firbas 1959) was conceived as a universal model of information structure. However, it soon became clear that it reaches its limits in many contexts: expressive and performative utterances, presentational sentences, idiomatic expressions, and elliptical forms cannot be consistently divided into “theme” and “rheme.” Even in prototypical informative statements, actual prosody often contradicts FSP principles – for instance, when new information is left unstressed or given information is emphasized. Illocution, lexical semantics, and specific constructions crucially influence what is interpreted as thematic or rhematic (see Pavlova & Svetozarova 2017).

This becomes particularly evident in *Phraseme Constructions* (PhCs) – idiomatic or semi-idiomatic schematic patterns with slots that are systematically filled in text production. Many PhCs “resist” the application of FSP, since their communicative function is primarily expressive or dialogic, as in *Dümmer geht’s nicht* (“That’s as stupid as it gets”) or *Es fehlt(e) noch, dass ...* (“That’s all we’d need, that ...”). Other PhCs, on the contrary, confirm the logic of FSP by schematizing information-structural principles, as in *Typisch X* (“Typical X”) or *Kein anderer als X* (“No one other than X”), where rheme position and focus are conventionalized.

The new German-Multilingual PhC-Repository¹, systematically documents semantic, pragmatic, and prosodic properties, allowing FSP-related questions to be examined across a broad spectrum of authentic examples. The findings show that PhCs are not merely “exceptions” within the FSP system, but rather reveal that information structure in actual language use is shaped not only by universal principles, but also by conventionalized patterns, prosody, and pragmatics. This opens a construction-based perspective that sheds new light on both the limits and the productive functions of FSP.

References: • Daneš, F. (1959). K otázce pořádku slov v slovanských jazycích. *SaS* 20, 1–10. • Firbas, J. (1959). Thoughts on the Communicative Function of the Verb in English, German and Czech. *Brno Studies in English I* (Prag), 39–68. • Mathesius, V. (1929). Zur Satzperspektive im modernen Englisch. *Arch. f. d. Stud. d. neueren Sprachen* 115, 202–210. • Pavlova, A. V. & N. D. Svetozarova (2017). *Frazovoe udarenie v fonetičeskom, funkcional’nom i semantičeskom aspektach*. (Sentence stress in its phonetic, functional, and semantic aspects). Moskva: Flinta.

¹ CA22115: A Multilingual Repository of Phraseme Constructions in Central and Eastern European Languages (PhraConRep), s.: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22115/>.