

SLOVO A SLOVESNOST

Časopis pro otázky teorie a kultury jazyka
založený v roce 1935 Pražským lingvistickým kroužkem
ročník 68 číslo 2

A journal for the theory of language and language cultivation
founded in 1935 by the Prague Linguistic Circle
volume 68 number 2

Vedoucí redaktor/ Editor-in-Chief: Jan Kořenský

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Vydává Ústav pro jazyk český Akademie věd České republiky, veřejná výzkumná instituce
Published by the Czech Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, a public research institution

Redakce/Address: Slovo a slovesnost, Ústav pro jazyk český AV ČR, v. v. i., Letenská 4, 118 51 Praha 1, Czech Republic, tel. (+420) 226 228 041, e-mail <slovo@ujc.cas.cz>

Vychází čtyřikrát do roka/ Published quarterly

Toto číslo vyšlo v květnu 2007/ This issue was published in May 2007

SLOVO A SLOVESNOST je citováno v Bibliografii Językoznawstwa Slawistycznego, Bibliografii české lingvistiky, Bibliographie Linguistique/ Linguistic Bibliography, Modern Language Association International Bibliography, The Year's Work of Modern Language Studies.

SLOVO A SLOVESNOST is cited in Bibliografia Językoznawstwa Slawistycznego [Slavic Linguistics Bibliography], Bibliografie české lingvistiky [Czech Linguistics Bibliography], Bibliographie Linguistique/ Linguistic Bibliography, Modern Language Association International Bibliography, The Year's Work of Modern Language Studies.

Elektronická verze časopisu **SLOVO A SLOVESNOST** je dostupná na internetové adrese/ The electronic version of **SLOVO A SLOVESNOST** is available at: <<http://www.ceeol.com>> (Central and Eastern European Online Library).

Informace o předplatném podá a objednávky přijímá redakce Slova a slovesnosti a výhradní distributor firma MYRIS TRADE, s. r. o., P. O. Box 2, 142 01 Praha 4, tel. 234 035 200, fax: 234 035 207. Další distributor-ské firmy nejsou oprávněny titul v ČR šířit. Cena předplatného pro české předplatitele: 308 Kč.

Podávání novinových zásilek povolila Česká pošta, s. p., odštěpný závod Praha, čj. nov 6204/97 ze dne 1. 4. 1997. – Reg. č. MK ČR E 559.

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Toto číslo je v prodeji v knihkupectví Fišer FF UK, nám. J. Palacha 2, 116 38 Praha 1, tel. 222 319 516, v prodejně Academia, Národní tř. 7, 110 00 Praha 1, tel. 224 229 649, Václavské nám. 34, 110 00 Praha 1, tel. 224 223 511, nebo Na Florenci 3, 110 00 Praha 1, tel. 224 814 621.

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Sémantické slapy v textových strukturách

LUDEK HREBIČEK

Semantic cataracts in text structures

ABSTRACT: Assume a semantic space demarcated by a set of lexical units occurring in a text. Their transition into word forms is a dynamic semantic process connected with the collocation of the units in text segments. The aim is to find semantic constructs and constituents and to apply Menzerath-Altmann's law, which defines the relationship of language constructs and constituents to the semantic text level. Any text is expected to provide a characteristic arrangement of lexical units in their contextual bonds. This can be explained as a feature of semantic dynamism and possibly also of human thinking. We can metaphorically call it a *semantic cataract*.

Key words: language construct and constituent, Menzerath-Altmann's law, text segment, semantic construct, semantic (contextual) weight of lexical units

Klíčová slova: jazykový konstrukt a konstituent, Menzerathův-Altmanův zákon, textový segment, sémantický konstrukt, sémantická (kontextuální) váha lexikálních jednotek

SUMMARY

Semantic cataracts in text structures

The search for text structures is an important subject for text linguistics. Recently, this problem appeared to be solvable with the help of Menzerath-Altmann's law. The formal structure of this law is expressed by formula (1). Its basic notions are *language construct* and its size (x), *language constituent* expressed by a mean-size value (y) and their relationship (given by parameters A and b). This is a general law valid for all language levels, including the semantic text level. In this way, any text (in a natural language with an uninterrupted sequence of sentences) actually becomes something like a language unit.

The standard manner of detection of this law at the semantic level is documented in Table 1, where z is the number of lexical units, each of which is a base for semantic constructs of a text. Their sizes equal the number of text segments, each containing a given lexical unit; the (usually approximate) identity of the semantic construct's size with frequency, i.e. $x \approx f$, is thus defined. These segments are constituents of a construct and their average size is expressed in number of words.

Another manner of treating this structure considers each lexical unit i occurring in a text. The *semantic* or *contextual weight* of a unit is defined in formula (2), where S_i is the sum of segment sizes of a given i , and f_i is word frequency in the text. If the values of w_i are treated in relation to f_i as its function, i.e. as $w_i(f_i)$, and the Zipfian arrangement of word frequencies is applied to f_i and w_i , an L-formed curve for f_i together with a "cataract curve" for $w_i(f_i)$ is obtained, see Figure 1 concerning the same Czech text as in Table 1.

This typical arrangement of lexical units was observed in different texts and different languages, as is documented by the Turkish text in Figure 2. Both texts, Czech and Turkish, are items from literature (a short story and a chapter of a novel), but similar structures can be found in different kinds of texts.

Each “wave” of the semantic cataract represents a distribution of values that can be characterized by three variables: $\max w_i(f_i)$, a mean value $\langle w_i(f_i) \rangle$ and $\min w_i(f_i)$ – or simply $\max w_i$, $\langle w_i \rangle$, $\min w_i$. Each wave, however, seems to hang on the first of these variables. Its relevance for the whole structure is proven by the fact that the points of $\max w_i$ (or, simply, the peaks of the waves) are situated on a Menzerathian curve. This curve corresponds to the transformed formula (1), where y is substituted by $\max w_i$. It is evident that this new curve better captures the basic idea of Menzerath-Altman’s law: the greater the construct, the smaller the constituent.

Any text is a complex system, therefore the descriptive variables and curves experience the interference of random fluctuations. However, it is rational to expect that in the future some typical deviations from the ideal forms of the characteristic curves will be found and combined with pathological digressions proper to certain brain functions.

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Znovu o reciprocitě

JARMILA PANEVOVÁ

Reciprocity revisited

ABSTRACT: In this paper, we present a follow-up and modification of the approach to the description of reciprocal constructions taken in Panevová (1999) (see Sections 1 and 2). Inherent lexical reciprocity as a part of lexical meaning is distinguished from reciprocal constructions which are syntactic. The syntactic operation of reciprocalization could be applied to the verbs from three classes proposed in Sections 3.1 – 3.3. The vagueness of reciprocal constructions is demonstrated in Section 4. The relation of symmetry between individual participants is, in general, present only in syntactic reciprocal constructions. The specific formal expressions used in Czech reciprocal constructions are analyzed in Sections 5 – 8. The possible participation of an item in the position of the valency slot in the process of reciprocalization is marked in the respective valency frame of the verb.

Key words: reflexives, lexical reciprocals, syntactic operation of reciprocalization, valency, vagueness

Klíčová slova: reflexiva, lexikální (inherentní) reciprocita, syntaktická operace reciprokalizace, valence, vágnost

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Ke komentujícím vedlejší větám se spojovacím výrazem *jak*

JOSEF ŠTĚPÁN

Commenting subordinate clauses with the connective *jak*

ABSTRACT: In the framework of the functional-semantic analysis of the system of the complex sentence, the paper deals with commenting subordinate clauses with the connective *jak*. These clauses cannot be classified as one of the basic types of subordinate clauses (adverbial clauses, content clauses, etc.); they are on the periphery of the concept of the subordinate clause, at a point of transition between determination and parenthesis. The transitional area between commenting subordinate clauses and adverbial subordinate clauses of manner is determined. The core of the article is, however, the analysis of the commenting subordinate clauses which refer to the content of the whole main clause. In using these clauses, the speaker comments on the content of the main clause from his point of view (attitude, stylization). In the first phase, commenting clauses are therefore classified as either attitudinal clauses (“inferential meanings”), stylization clauses (“reportive meanings”) or contact subordinate clauses. In the second phase, they are classified according to the manner of expression of the modality and the semantics of their predicates. Finally, subordinate clauses with *jak* which comment on only one word from the main sentence are mentioned.

Key words: commenting subordinate clause, speaker attitude, modality, stylization of the message

Klíčová slova: komentující vedlejší věta, postoj mluvčího, modalita, stylizace sdělení

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Genitiv *třech, čtyřech* – kodifikace a úzus

PAVLA CHALUPOVÁ – JOSEF ŠIMANDL

The genitive forms *třech, čtyřech* – codification vs. usage

ABSTRACT: The genitive of the Czech cardinal numerals 3 and 4, in addition to its regular forms *tří, čtyř*, has also had the analogous forms *třech, čtyřech* for many decades. The latter forms appeared in *Mluvnice češtiny 2* (Komárek et al. 1986) within the paradigms for these numerals; nevertheless, their value was (roughly) indicated as informal. Among the changes in the codification of Czech that took place in 1993/1994, they have been presented as unmarked. However, having explored the corpora SYN2000 and SYN2005, we cannot support this classification. The percentage of these forms in published written texts (*třech* 1.52% and *čtyřech* merely 0.59%) is far too small to have any importance. This article offers an analysis of occurrences in both corpora, situates the newly accepted forms in the system of Czech declension, and reflects on the mechanisms by which certain forms may become codified. These mechanisms may not always correspond with broadly shared notions and claims.

Key words: forms of numerals *tři* and *čtyři*, corpora of contemporary Czech, codification mechanisms

Klíčová slova: tvary číslovek *tři* a *čtyři*, korpusy současné češtiny, mechanismy kodifikace

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Genitiv *třech, čtyřech* – Kodifizierung vs. Sprachgebrauch

Die tschech. Kardinalia *tři, čtyři* weisen seit vielen Jahrzehnten neben den Genitivformen *tří, čtyř* auch die durch Analogie entstandenen Formen *třech, čtyřech* auf. Letztere wurden in der sog. akademischen *Mluvnice češtiny 2* (Komárek et al. 1986) erstmals als Teil des Paradigmas genannt, wurden jedoch als „umgangssprachlich“ bewertet. Bei den Neuregelungen der Kodifikation von 1993/1994 wurden sie dann als merkmallos eingestuft. – Recherchen in den Korpora SYN2000 und SYN2005 lassen diesen Schritt nicht als gerechtfertigt erscheinen. In gedruckten Texten weisen die neuen Formen keinen nennenswerten Anteil auf (*třech* 1,52 %, *čtyřech* sogar nur 0,59 %). Unser Artikel analysiert Belege aus beiden Korpora, erörtert die Stellung der neu aufgenommenen Varianten im System der tschechischen Deklination und stellt auch Überlegungen zu den Mechanismen der Kodifizierung an. Die Praxis der Kodifizierung entspricht wohl nicht immer den allgemein herrschenden Vorstellungen und Postulaten.

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