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A contrastive approach to the thematic analysis of text and genre: An examination of lead news articles in Le Monde, Al-Ittihad, and The New York Times

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A CONTRASTIVE APPROACH TO THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF TEXT AND GENRE: AN EXAMINATION OF LEAD
NEWS ARTICLES IN LE MONDE, AL-ITTIHAD,
AND THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of

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by

Christine Marie Burlaga

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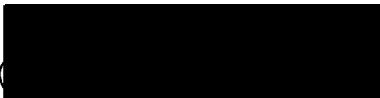
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines thematization and patterns of thematic progression (TP) in French, Arabic, and English lead news articles (LNAs). The results suggest that these languages divide sentences similarly into themic and rhemic elements and that, within the lead news article genre, each language relies on similar TP patterns to organize ideas at the textual level. In addition, the similarities between French, Arabic, and English LNAs at the clausal and textual levels suggest that there may be a fundamental principle underlying how the mind organizes language.

In addition to their theoretical relevance, my results have two real-world applications. First, the results can be used in the second language (L2) classroom to help students understand better how words are organized into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into texts representing specific genres. Second, my findings are also applicable to information technology, as a firmer grasp of thematization and TP patterns can facilitate the creation of translation software that is faithful to source texts at the sentential and global levels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the much-appreciated assistance I received from my committee members, who took time from their busy schedules to provide constructive feedback, suggest sources, and offer guidance. Although this thesis would not have been possible without their assistance, I remain solely responsible for its contents and shortcomings.

To Mohamed
Mon Ami
ألف شكر

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores whether French, Arabic, and
English lead news articles display similar patterns of
thematic progression (TP). This identification of
similarities in the three languages' LNAs is predicated
upon an analysis of how each language divides sentences
into themic and rhemic elements. To examine thematization
(i.e., the division of sentences into themic and rhemic
elements) in French, Arabic, and English, I rely on
Halliday's sentence functional perspective; to delineate
the TP patterns in the three languages' LNAs, I rely on
Daneš' patterns of thematic progression.

The impetus for this study stems from the need to
understand better the relationship between language and
thought. Kaplan (1966) wrote that different languages have
different logic structures as a result of different
cultural paradigms. However, based upon my examination of
French, Arabic, and English LNAs at the levels of sentence
and text, I find that such linguistic relativism is
unwarranted. Instead, my research suggests that there may
be a fundamental principle underlying how the mind

1

structures language. Thus, my research points to the possibility of a language universal that may account for how the mind organizes language at and above the level of the clause.

The results of my thesis have implications for both the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom and computer translation software. In the ESL classroom, the instructor may be able to use TP patterns as a means of demonstrating text development and helping students understand how ideas are connected between sentences, paragraphs, and within a specific genre. For computer translation software, my findings may lead to a more accurate way of defining themic and rhemic sentential elements so that such software can more accurately maintain, in the translation, the thematic structure of the source text. Thus, in addition to having theoretical relevance, my research also has pedagogical and technological applications.

The theoretical and real-world applications notwithstanding, the primary goal of this thesis is to analyze the thematic progression patterns of French, Arabic, and English lead news articles. To this end, this thesis addresses three primary issues: thematization,

thematic progression, and genre. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of the Prague School and Hallidayan approaches to thematization and, as this thesis' approach to thematization is predominantly Hallidayan, Chapter 3 summarizes the specific criteria used to define theme and rheme in French, Arabic, and English clauses. In Chapter 4, I address the relationship between thematization and thematic progression, drawing in large part upon Daneš (1970, 1974) work. Chapter 5 departs from the discussion of sentential elements to address genre and the rationale for selecting lead news articles as the genre of analysis in this thesis. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the TP patterns in French, Arabic, and English LNAs, while Chapter 7 discusses the theoretical, pedagogical, and technological implications of my findings. Chapter 8 concludes the thesis with a summary of its main ideas.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

As this thesis examines French, Arabic, and English
lead news articles (LNAs) at the sentential and global
levels, it is necessary to detail the existing research on
thematization, thematic progression, and genre. This
chapter discusses the Prague School and Hallidayan
approaches to theme and rheme while the next chapter
identifies the criteria by which I define themic and rhemic
elements in French, Arabic, and English clauses.

The Prague School's Approach to Theme and Rheme

Two dominant approaches to thematization (i.e., the
analysis of theme and rheme) are the Prague School approach
and the Hallidayan approach. The latter has its roots in
the former, and the former can be traced to the 19th century
linguist Henri Weil. In 1879, Weil argued for a theory of
word order based on the division of a sentence into two
parts, the point of departure and the utterance proper:

> There is a point of departure, an initial notion,
> that is equally present to the speaker and the
> listener, that represents the place where the two

intelligences meet; and another part of discourse that represents the utterance proper. This division is found in all that we say. (p. 20, emphasis in original)[1]

Building on this, Vilem Mathesius (1928), one of the founders of the Prague School, proposed the binary division of a sentence into a basis and a nucleus. As Kurzon (1988) explains, the basis ". . . is what the speaker is talking about and the nucleus what he is saying about the basis" (p. 155). Firbas (1964), another leading member of the Prague School, introduced the terms theme and rheme to replace basis and nucleus, respectively.

As Bubenik (1979) notes, the Prague School theory of language distinguishes between three levels of syntax:

1. The level of the semantic structure of the sentence

2. The level of the grammatical structure of the sentence

3. The level of organization of the sentence.
    (p. 215)

---

[1]This quote is translated from the French, which reads, "Il y a donc un point de départ, une notion initiale, qui est également présente et à celui qui parle et à celui qui écoute, qui forme comme le lieu où les deux intelligences se rencontrent; et une autre partie du discourse, qui forme l'énonciation proprement dite. Cette division se retrouve dans presque tout ce que nous disons."

The third level represents the textual component of the clause structure, which the Prague School calls the Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP). As Deyes (1978) explains, the syntactic ordering of a sentence is termed its perspective, and the functional sentence perspective of an utterance is related to the communicative needs of an author within a specific context. According to Hatim (1987), this has meant that:

1. In the sentence, an order predominates in which the theme precedes and is commented on by the rheme.

2. Context-dependent (thematic) elements are of lesser communicative importance than context-independent (rhematic) elements.

3. Thematic elements may be identified as those that present known information while rhematic elements carry new information.

The notions of known and new information, as well as of context-dependent and context-independent elements, relate to Firbas' (1964) communicative dynamism (CD), which Janoš (1979) defines as ". . . the extent to which the sentence element [i.e., the theme or rheme] contributes to the development of the communication" (p. 21). Thus, those elements that are given (and therefore context-dependent) carry the lowest degree of CD while those elements that are new (and therefore context-independent) carry the highest

degree of CD. With respect to theme and rheme, the theme is the element with the lowest degree of CD while the rheme is the element with the highest degree thereof.

Although the notion of communicative dynamism is important from a theoretical perspective, the vagueness of Firbas' innovation made it ". . . almost impossible to utilize in a rigorous linguistic description" of theme and rheme (Adjémian, 1978, p. 266). Thus, the problem is that CD, intertwined as it is with given/new and context-dependent/context-independent sentential elements, does not supply a firm basis upon which one can accurately and consistently identify themic and rhemic elements within the clause.

To compensate for the equivocal nature of CD, Vallauri (1995) describes two tests to determine theme and rheme more accurately within the clause. The "About-Context" test was developed by Reinhart (1982) and is applicable to sentences containing one clause. However, as most clauses are clause complexes composed of:

1. One main clause together with subordinate clauses that directly or indirectly depend on it, or

> 2. Two or more coordinated main clauses, not separated by a full stop or a colon, of which not more than one has subordinate clauses depending on it, (Vallauri, 1995, p. 369)

a more appropriate test is the "Wh-Question Test," which:

> Consists of imagining every clause as the answer to one or more wh-questions [who, what, how, etc.]. The nature of these questions allows one to decide which elements of the clause must be considered the rheme. (Vallauri, 1995, p. 357)

That is, in the Wh-Question test the part of the sentence used to form the question is the theme while the part of the sentence that answers the question is the rheme. For example, consider the following sentence and its corresponding Wh-question:

```
Sentence:      The bikers road to the coast.
Wh-Question:   Who road to the coast?
Answer:        The bikers.
```

In this example, "road to the coast" constitutes the theme because it forms the basis of the Wh-question. In contrast, "the bikers"--the answer to the Wh-question-- constitutes the rheme. Although influential Prague School linguists such as Sgall and Daneš have relied heavily on this test, ". . . there is no general agreement on its validity" (Vallauri, 1995, p. 357). This lack of agreement

8

stems partly from debates over the role that context plays in knowing which wh-questions to ask and partly from concerns that the test can only be applied to utterances that have been separated from their context and placed into the "wh-question" context.

Based upon the above review of the Prague School's functional sentence perspective, it is clear that FSP does not provide a consistent definition of theme. However, this stems from the fuzzy nature of theme, which Daneš (1970) emphasizes by stating:

> We have to be aware of the fact that the boundary
> line between T[heme] and R[heme] is often not
> sharp; there are either transitional elements
> between the T proper and R proper . . . or the
> elements of the two components of FSP are
> interwoven to some extent. (p. 135)

Thus, within the Prague School's FSP, one can summarize theme and rheme in the following manner:

- Theme
  1. Carries the lowest degree of communicative
      dynamism;
  2. Associated with given information;
  3. Context-dependent;

4. Constitutes the question portion of the "wh-question" test.

- Rheme

  1. Carries the highest degree of communicative dynamism

  2. Associated with new information

  3. Context-independent

  4. Constitutes the answer formed in response to the "wh-question" test.

Halliday and Systemic Functional Linguistics

Halliday's definition of theme and rheme is based upon the Prague School's definition thereof. However, apart from using the Prague School's terminology, Halliday's approach to thematization shows considerable variance with its predecessor. Specifically,

Whereas the Prague School . . . considered the articulation of theme and rheme within the clause, Halliday argues that 'we find thematic organization appearing in different guises throughout the system of . . . language, with manifestations both above the clause and below it. (Vallauri, 1995, p. 360, emphasis in original)

Similarly, in comparing the Hallidayan and Prague

School definitions of theme and rheme, Ping (2000) writes,

> Although borrowing the Prague School terminology,
>
> Halliday departs from the general approach of
>
> Firbas and others by adopting the simple theme-
>
> rheme division . . . . Specifically, 'one element
>
> in the clause is enunciated as the theme; this
>
> then combines with the remainder so that the two
>
> parts together constitute a message.' (p. 3)

Halliday's (1985) theme-rheme division stems from his

statement that

> The Theme is the element which serves as the
>
> point of departure of the message; it is that
>
> with which the clause is concerned. The
>
> remainder of the message, the part in which the
>
> Theme is developed, is called in Prague School
>
> terminology the Rheme . . . . Whatever is chosen
>
> as the Theme is put first [in the sentence]. (p.
>
> 38, emphasis in original)

Thus, unlike the Prague School definition in which

theme can be any sentential element with the lowest degree

of communicative dynamism, Halliday's definition stipulates

that the theme must be the initial clausal element(s).

To understand Halliday's definition of theme, one must view it in terms of his overarching systemic functional linguistic (SFL) framework.[2] Fries (2001) notes that the purpose of SFL is,

> To account for the ways that language is used in
>
> social interaction . . . [as] the meanings that
>
> language is used to express derive from the
>
> nature of the social interactions which language
>
> is used to encode. (pp. 89-90)

To this end, SFL emphasizes the importance of function over form, recognizing three separate functions of language:

1. The social functions of language;

2. The metafunctions of language, which can be experiential, interpersonal, and/or textual;

3. The internal functions of language, including grammatical functions. (Fries, 2001, p. 90)

The themic and rhemic elements of a sentence are part of the textual metafunctions of language, which in turn consist of two subsystems: the thematic system and the information system. Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain the difference between the two subsystems by stating that the thematic subsystem assigns themic and rhemic elements while

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[2] In the literature, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is also known as Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

12

the information subsystem assigns given and new elements. Thus, unlike the Prague School's definition of theme as the element most likely to be associated with given information, Halliday recognizes that ". . . the functions 'given' and 'new' are . . . not the same as those of 'theme' and 'rheme.' The two are independently variable" (Bubenik, 1979, p. 296).

Explaining the terms given and new in greater detail, Kress (1976) writes,

> The terms 'given' and 'new' are to be interpreted, not as 'previously mentioned' and 'not previously mentioned' but as 'assigned' or 'not assigned' by the [writer] . . . . Thus, what is treated by the speaker as given may not in fact have been said, and what is treated as new may be contrastive or contradictory. It is in this sense that the element to which information focus is assigned can be said to have the value 'new' in the structure. (p. 176)

Thus, whereas given and new relate, from the writer's perspective, to the information being conveyed, theme and rheme refer to the physical structure of the sentence and to the location of elements within it. Taking this

analysis one step further, Martin (1993b) notes that with regard to the social function of language, "Theme is genre-oriented, angling a text in relation to its social purpose . . .[Given and] new on the other hand focus on field, developing the [topic] at hand" (p. 244).

Like the Prague School of linguistics, the Hallidayan approach to theme and rheme suggests that theme can be (and often is) associated with given information. However, whereas the Prague School holds that the theme can occur anywhere within the sentence, from the SFL perspective the theme must be clause-initial. For this reason, Halliday (1985) argues that when given information is paired with the theme (i.e., with the sentence-initial element), and when new information is paired with the rheme, the result is an unmarked thematic sequence. Conversely, when the theme is paired with new information and the rheme with given information, the result is a marked thematic sequence (Bubenik, 1979).

Halliday's SFL definition of theme as the sentence-initial element that in unmarked clauses is associated with given information and in marked clauses with new information is useful in two respects. First, unlike the Prague School's definition of theme, which is often

14

ambiguous, the Hallidayan definition is concise and applicable to clauses in spoken and written discourse. Second, while the Prague School linguists do not state that their approach to thematization is unrelated to linguistic structures above and below the level of the clause, neither do they describe what relationship might exist between thematization and a text's structure. In contrast, Halliday's SFL conceptualization of thematization has important links to the social and syntactic functions of language. As Ventola (1988) notes, Halliday's

> Correlation between context . . . and [theme]
> . . . is encouraging [because] language systems
> and language structures can be seen as
> realizations of social systems and structures.
> (p. 57)

Thus, Halliday's SFL definition of theme and rheme illustrates how linguistic features at the clausal level are linked to the global and syntactic levels as well.

Theme and Rheme Reconsidered

Despite the above discussion of the Prague School and Hallidayan interpretations of theme and rheme, it is important to bear in mind that these terms remain ambiguous

(Combettes, 1997, p. 232). Part of this ambiguity arises from the words that are used interchangeably with theme and rheme. Ruppli (1979) lists these terms as:

-Topic/Comment
-Given/New
-Support/Contribution
-Presupposed/Supposed. (p. 46)

Although these terms are often used interchangeably in the literature, they are not synonymous (i.e., theme is not synonymous with given, rheme is not synonymous with new, etc.). In addition, although refraining from using such terms interchangeably will help to clarify a writer's ideas, it will not necessarily ameliorate the somewhat ubiquitous nature of theme and rheme. In fact, such ubiquity will be resolved only when a more precise definition of these terms is established. However, as Gómez-González (2002) explains, such definitions are still outside linguists' grasp, as even within the SFL literature ". . . five different and . . . not necessarily concurrent [definitions] of theme are used" (p. 17). These definitions include:

1. A psychological notion wherein the theme represents the concern of the message.

2. A spatial metaphor in which the theme represents the clause's point of departure.

16

3. A matter metaphor that equates theme with aboutness.

4. A realization statement that associates theme with sentence-initial position.

5. A functional description in which the theme organizes the clause as a message. (Gómez-González, 2002, pp. 17-19)

Thus, even within SFL, theme remains ineffable. Also, given the variation between the Prague School and SFL approaches to theme, one can appreciate the difficulty involved in defining it. Nevertheless, the intent herein is to demonstrate not the contentious nature of theme but how one can use it to understand patterns of thematic progression within a specific genre.

CHAPTER THREE

DEFINING THEME AND RHEME IN FRENCH,
ARABIC, AND ENGLISH

My definition of theme and rheme is predominantly Hallidayan (i.e., sentence-initial) and, in the discussion that follows, I provide an overview of the literature discussing the delineation of theme and rheme in French, Arabic, and English. Following this, a summary of the specific criteria I use to define theme and rheme in the three languages is provided.

Determining Theme and Rheme in English

In English, the theme is realized by occupying ". . . the first position in the clause" (Halliday, 1993b, p. 90). However, as Halliday (1985) notes, "First position in the clause is not what defines the Theme; [rather,] it is the means whereby the function of Theme is realized" (p. 30, emphasis in original). Thus, the theme's location enables one to identify it within the clause complex.

Knowing that the theme is the clause-initial element(s) is helpful but does not allow one to identify where it ends and the rheme begins. To define more accurately the boundary between theme and rheme, a more

detailed delineation of theme is necessary, particularly in regards to the different contexts in which it can occur.

These different contexts can be broken down into subcategories representing the English clause. Ventola (1988) provides the following diagram of the English clause:
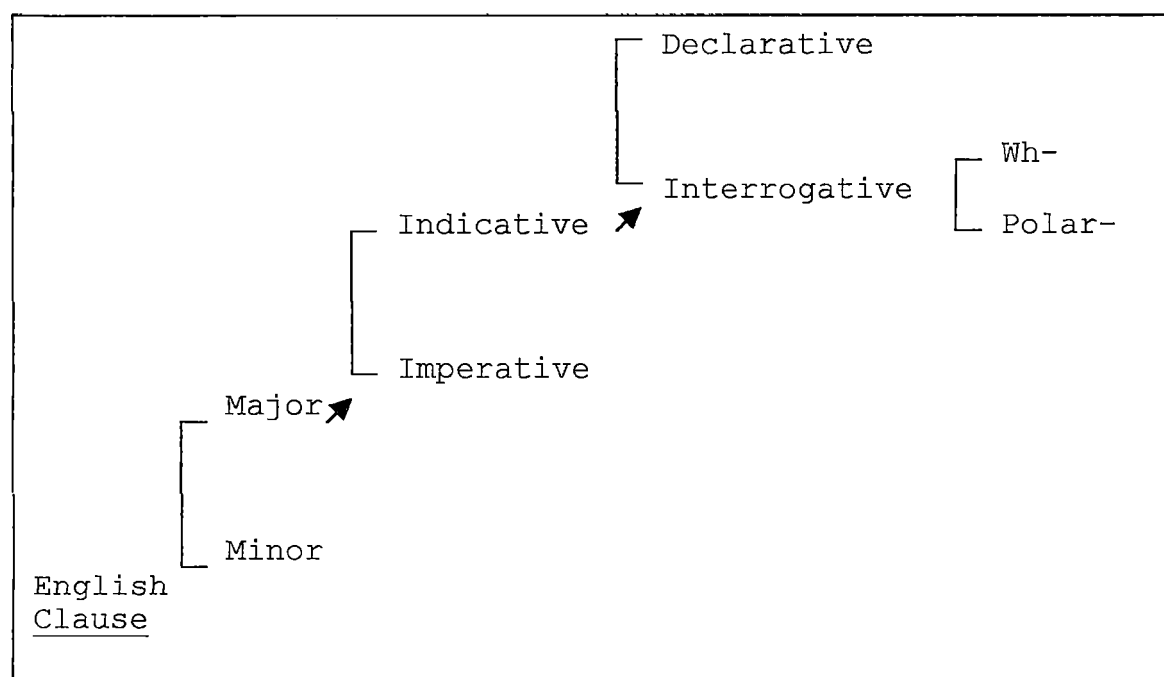
Figure 1. The English Clause
Source: R. Fawcett & D. Young (Eds.) (1988), New Developments in Systemic Linguistics, Volume 2, Theory and Application (p. 53), London: Pinter Publishers.

As minor clauses do not contain a subject and verb, my discussion of theme is concerned with major (i.e., subject + verb) clauses and their various forms. First, as Dubois

(1990) notes, in indicative, declarative sentences, the unmarked theme is usually the grammatical subject:

1. The thief and her accomplice | departed silently.

   Unmarked Theme   Rheme

In contrast, marked themes of indicative, declarative sentences are rhemic elements that have been thematized (Halliday, 1985). In such cases, the clause-initial element is no longer associated with the grammatical subject (i.e., with the given information) but with the thematized new information. For example:

2. A lot of fresh air | is what the body needs.

   Marked Theme   Rheme

In indicative, interrogative sentences, two sentence types are possible: a wh-interrogative and a polar interrogative. In a wh-interrogative (i.e., a sentence beginning with a wh-based question word), the unmarked theme is "constituted solely by the wh-element . . . or [the wh-element] plus a nominal group" (Halliday, 1985, p. 48). For example:

3. Why | did you leave me?

4. Which house | does he like?

   Unmarked   Rheme
   Theme

As with the declarative sentences, wh-interrogatives
may also have marked themes, which occur when the wh-
element is rhematized:

    5. At the park, | why did you tease your friend?

       Marked Theme   Rheme

Polar interrogatives, also referred to as yes/no
questions, are unique in that the unmarked themic element
". . . includes the finite verb and extends over the
subject as well" (Halliday, 1985, p. 48). For example,

    6. Can you | tell me if a bus stop is nearby?

       Unmarked   Rheme
       Theme

Although a marked theme in a polar interrogative is
less common, when it does appear it is the result of
placing the finite verb and subject in sentence-final
position:

    7. In the evening, | can we go for a walk?

       Marked Theme   Rheme

In imperatives, Dubois (1990) points out that the
initial verb is the thematic element.[3] However, even though
you is understood and not written, it also can be
considered the theme. For this reason, Halliday (1985)

---

[3] In imperatives, the subject you is understood and generally not
written.

concludes that imperative unmarked themes ". . . can be
analyzed in either of two ways" (p. 49), wherein the
unwritten you is considered the theme or the verb alone is
considered thematic:

8. [You] | go to your room.

9. Go | to your room.

     Unmarked   Rheme
     Theme

In the above analysis of themic and rhemic elements,
the determination of where the theme ends and the rheme
commences is predominantly categorical in that the theme is
associated with a particular word and, therefore, what
follows it is assumed to be the rheme. However, in
addition to identifying theme and rheme by clause type, it
is also possible to identify these elements on the basis of
their parts of speech.

In declarative sentences, adverbials and prepositional
phrases[4] used at the beginning of the sentence are
considered marked themes.[5] For example:

---

[4] Halliday (1988) refers to such adverbials and prepositional phrases as adjuncts.
[5] In these instances, the theme is considered marked because it is an element other than the grammatical subject.

10. Fortuitously, | the Lakers won the game.

11. At the end of the day, | I only want what's best.

    Marked Theme   Rheme

Additionally, words such as "it" and "there" are considered rhematizers because the elements following them provide new information. As Mauranen (1999) writes,

> Among the intriguing English themes are those
>
> which in terms of content are 'empty,' yet quite
>
> frequently used, namely <u>there</u> and <u>it</u>. <u>It</u> has
>
> often been associated with a focusing role, while
>
> <u>there</u> is mostly connected with existential
>
> clauses, or the need to remove a 'new' noun
>
> phrase from subject position. (p. 58, emphasis in
>
> original)

Thus, <u>it</u> and <u>there</u> should be considered thematic elements that are followed by rhematic elements. For example,

12. It | began raining.

13. There | is no excuse for your indolence.

    Marked   Rheme
    Theme

Last, certain signal phrases indicate the presence of thematic elements. As Halliday (1985) writes, "Sometimes

in English the Theme is announced explicitly, by means of
[an] expression [such as] as for, . . . with regard to,
[and] about" (p. 40). Thus, the presence of such phrases,
as in the examples below, can help one to identify a
clause's themic and rhemic elements:

14. As for the sapphire ring, | I gave it to Winston.

15. With regard to the heat, | it's here to stay.

16. About that ticket- | the officer kept it.

    Marked Theme   Rheme

As noted above, clause-initial position, clause type,
part of speech, and signal phrases can be used to identify
theme and rheme within the clause complex and, in addition,
to pinpoint where the theme ends and the rheme begins.
Before providing a diagram summarizing these features, two
further points should be made. First, the above discussion
has assumed that all elements within the marked or unmarked
thematized portion of the clause are equally thematic.
This, however, is not the case. As Martin (1993a) notes,
"There may be up to three different kinds of themes in a
clause" (p. 124). Such an arrangement represents what
Halliday (1985) terms "multiple themes" and defines as
". . . the part of the clause functioning as theme [that]
has a further, internal structure of its own" (p. 53).

The three different types of theme within multiple themes are the ideational, interpersonal, and textual. According to Martin (1993a),

1. Ideational themes, also known as topical themes, draw attention to what the clause is about.

2. Interpersonal themes reflect the speaker's evaluation of, or attitude toward, the message.

3. Textual themes help to connect the clause to the preceding one.[6]

My analysis is concerned only with the ideational (topical) theme, which, unlike the interpersonal and textual themes, must be present in each sentence. Thus, although only the ideational theme is relevant to my analysis of lead news articles, this should not be taken as an indication that only such themes are present within clauses.

A second point is that within systemic functional linguistics, the verb in declarative sentences is considered part of the rheme. There is, however, no universal acceptance of this premise. Specifically,

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[6]An example of the three theme types, taken from Halliday (1985), p. 55, is:

Oh,	soldier, won't	you	marry me?
Textual Theme	Inter- personal Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

linguists such as Deyes (1978) consider transitive verbs and verbs of placement, motion, or existence to be transition elements that are neither themic nor rhemic. In contrast, intransitive verbs are considered rhemic, although minimally so. To avoid confusion, and as the distinction between transition and rheme is not pertinent to my analysis, verbs will be considered rhemic in declarative sentences in both French and English. However, given the syntactic structure of Arabic, the verb is considered themic in most clauses.[7]

The chart below summarizes the delineation of themic and rhemic elements in English clauses:

I.

Clause Type	Unmarked Theme	Marked Theme
Declarative	Grammatical Subject	Any element that is not the grammatical subject
Interrogative		
1. Wh-	Wh-word	Wh-word rhematized
2. Polar	Finite verb + grammatical subject	Finite verb + grammatical subject rhematized

---

[7]As Baker (1992) notes, "Arabic rarely uses independent [subject] pronouns because [its] verbs are inflected for person, number, and gender. This means that any combination of pronoun plus verb, such as I took or I saw, is rendered by an inflected verb as theme in Arabic" (p. 127). Thus, one can state that, under most circumstances, verbs occur clause-initially in Arabic.

| Imperatives | Either understood you or the imperative verb | Imperative verb rhematized |

II. Other Factors to Consider

1. Adjuncts

    i.   Adverbials
    ii. Prepositional phrases

-Adjuncts represent marked themes.

2. It and There are thematic elements that act as rhematizers.

3. Expressions such as

    i.   As for
    ii. With regard to
    iii. About

-These expressions explicitly introduce the theme.

Determining Theme and Rheme in French and Arabic

In "Some Reflections on Systemic Functional Grammar,"

Gómez-Gónzalez (2001) asks,

> [Should the] initial position [of the theme] be
>
> used as a language-specific (English)
>
> identificational criterion of what a message is
>
> about, or rather [should it] be interpreted . . .
>
> [as having] linguistic validity as a result of
>
> the universal principle of linear organization of
>
> discourse? (p. 20)

This is a difficult question, especially as it reaches

to the heart of what differentiates one language from

another. However, for the purpose of this thesis, theme in

French, Arabic, and English clauses is defined as the

clause-initial element that, in unmarked declarative

sentences, corresponds to the grammatical subject.[8] This

definition of theme is justified on the following grounds.

First, Halliday (1985) emphasizes that although

occupying sentence-initial position is not what defines

theme, this position can be used to realize theme in

languages other than English provided that

> If in any given language the [clausal] message is
>
> organized as a theme-rheme structure, and if this
>
> structure is expressed by the sequence in which
>
> the elements occur in the clause, then it seems
>
> natural that the position for the Theme should be
>
> at the beginning, rather than at the end or at
>
> some other specific point. (p. 39)

---

[8] It should be noted that the clause-initial element in declarative sentences may follow an introductory prepositional phrase of time or place. In such cases, the phrase is disregarded and the initial element following it (which is generally the grammatical subject) is considered the theme. For example, in the sentence "On Thursday, 19 June, Jean-Pierre Raffarin assured that he is approaching the construction of health insurance with new foundations," the prepositional phrase "On Thursday, 19 June" is disregarded and the subject, "Jean-Pierre Raffarin," considered the theme.

As French and Arabic clauses have theme-rheme structures expressed in terms of the sequence in which these elements occur, one can state that the clause-initial definition of theme is appropriate. Consider, for example, the following sentences:

1. Elle | a loué un appartement.
   'She   rented an apartment.'

   Theme   Rheme

2. الطاولة . | حمدة ضربت
   Altawila | Hamda darabat
   the table| Hamda hit ('Hamda hit the table.')

   Rheme   Theme[9]

In these sentences, one can identify the theme-rheme structures present in both. For this reason, one can state that the clause-initial delineation of theme is applicable and appropriate to an analysis of French, Arabic, and English clauses.

Second, Caffarel (2000) states that

> "Although the [systemic functional] notion of
> Theme is not constructed as a theoretical
> category, it has been found to be relevant for

---

[9] In this instance, the theme-rheme order is reversed because Arabic is written from right to left. Hence, in Arabic the theme occurs on the right-hand side of the sentence while in English, which is written from left to right, it occurs on the left.

the descriptions of English, Tagalog, Chinese, Japanese, French, and other languages. (p. 248)

By stating this, Caffarel implies that a precedent has been established for using the Hallidayan approach to identify theme and rheme in non-English clauses. Furthermore, as Gómez-González (2001) writes,

It may be concluded that . . . [clause-] initial position is not simply used as a language-specific (present-day English) identification criterion, but rather is claimed to create a discoursal and cognitive zone of cross-linguistic validity. (pp. 20-21, emphasis in original)

CHAPTER FOUR

THEME/RHEME AND THEMATIC PROGRESSION

As Adjémian (1978) and Deyes (1978) suggest,

thematization at the sentential level (i.e., the

bifurcation of the sentence into theme and rheme) can also

be seen at the level of the text. This is because, within

a functional approach to language[10], "Language's primary

purpose—to permit human communication—is pertinent to its

structure: the function influences the form" (Adjémian, p.

253). This influence of function over form can be seen in

the symbiotic relationship that exists between the levels

of sentence and text, wherein the features of the former

influence the form of the latter.

In "Some reflections on systemic functional grammar,"

Gómez-González (2001) clarifies the symbiosis between

thematization and text by noting that although "Theme

---

[10] The functional approach to language, as reflected in the Prague
School of Linguistics and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics,
can be contrasted with the generative/transformational theories of
language, such as those put forth by Chomsky. One difference between
the functional and transformational views of grammar is that, in the
former, syntactic categories are relevant at the level of discourse
while, in the latter, these categories do not have an impact upon, and
should not be interpreted in terms of, text analysis. As Deyes (1978)
writes, "To summarize these approaches, it may be said that they fall
into two broad types, those [the transformational theories] which
consider the text as a string of sentences or smaller units. . . and
those [the functional theories] which recognize the necessity of
describing supra-sentential phonological, semantic, or grammatical
features" (p. 315).

represents a structural category at the level of the clause complex," it nevertheless "gives perspective for . . . texts across different languages and different genres" (pp. 21-22). Halliday (1985) also highlights the symbiotic nature of this relationship by noting that

> By itself, the choice of Theme in each particular
> [clause] . . . may seem fairly haphazard; but it
> is not. The choice of clause Themes plays a
> fundamental part in the way discourse is
> organized; it is this, in fact, which constitutes
> what is often known as the 'method of
> development' of the text. (p. 62)

Martin (1993b) notes that method of development reflects ". . . the pattern of Theme selection in [a] text" (p. 247). Similarly, Fries (1981) specifies the relationship between theme-rheme clausal structures and method of development by noting that

> The Themes of each sentence [in] a paragraph
> indicate the point of departure of the message
> expressed by that sentence, and the information
> contained within the Themes of all sentences of a
> paragraph creates the method of development of
> that paragraph. (p. 35)

For this reason, one can conclude with Martin (1993a)
that sentence themes are predicated upon paragraph themes
and paragraph themes upon text themes. Thus, the pattern
of sentence themes in a text represents the text's method
of development.

Perhaps the best analysis of a text's method of
development is that presented by Daneš (1970; 1974). A
member of the Prague School, Daneš developed the notion of
thematic progression (TP) in order to analyze theme and
rheme beyond the level of the sentence and, thus, ". . .
rid FSP theory of its sentence-oriented perspective"
(Hatim, 1987, p. 56). In his writings, Daneš (1970)
explains thematic progression in the following terms:

> It is obvious that the principles of FSP, which
> can also be interpreted as 'thematic
> organization,' are not confined to single
> [sentences] only. [Rather,] they permeate . . .
> the structure of the whole text [and can be found
> in] portions of text . . . such as paragraphs,
> sections, chapters, etc., or the text (discourse)
> as a whole. (p. 137)

When applied to the text as a whole, the linking of
sentence-level theme-rheme elements results in TP patterns

that reflect "The linking together of particular themes and
their connection with the text, its subparts, and the
situation" (Daneš, 1970, p. 137). Below, Daneš' six
patterns of thematic progression are diagrammed and
explained in greater detail.

$T_1 \longrightarrow R_1$

$T_2 \longrightarrow R_2$

$T_3 \longrightarrow R_3$
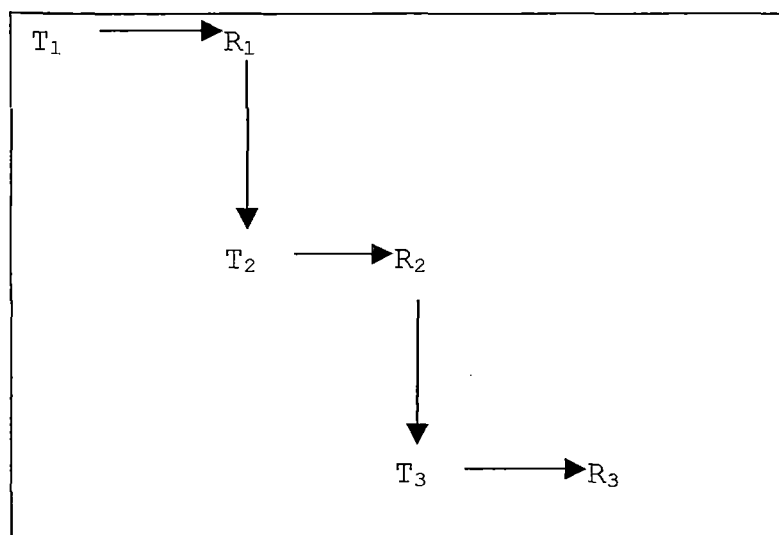
Figure 2. Simple Linear TP

    In this pattern, each rheme becomes the next
sentence's theme.
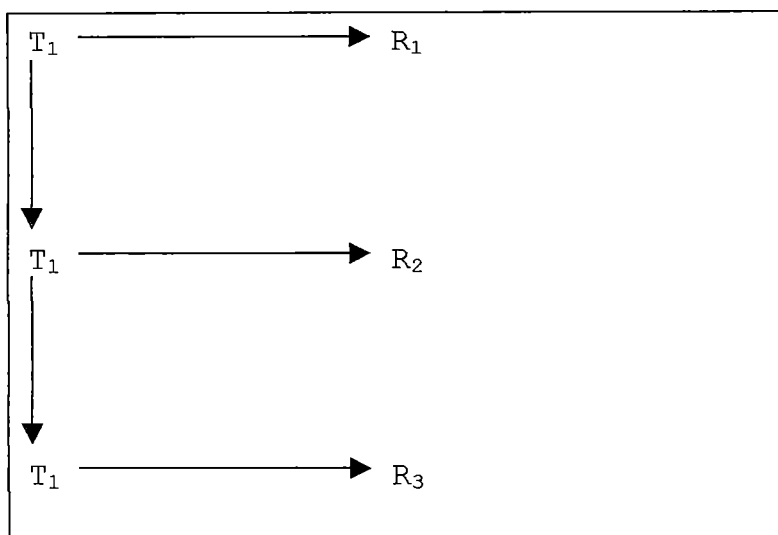
Figure 3. Constant Theme TP

In this pattern, the same theme appears in a series
of sentences to which different rhemes are linked.
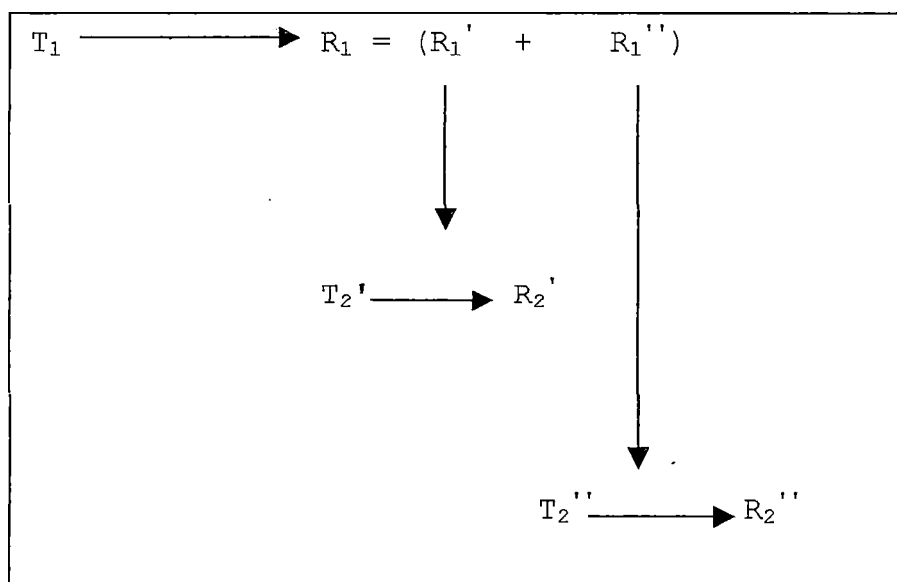
Figure 4. Split Theme TP

In the above pattern, one rheme(R_1) is composed of two parts that generate two separate themes dependent upon R_1.

$$(T)$$

$$T_1 \longrightarrow R_1 \qquad T_2 \longrightarrow R_2 \qquad T_3 \longrightarrow R_3$$
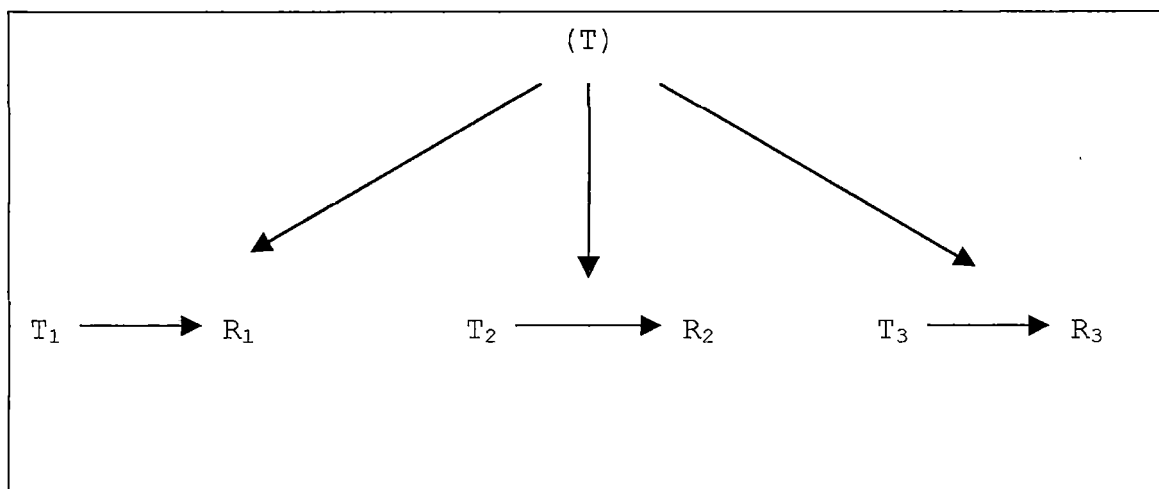
Figure 5. Derived Theme TP

In this pattern, the theme is derived from a hypertheme of hierarchically superior portions of text.
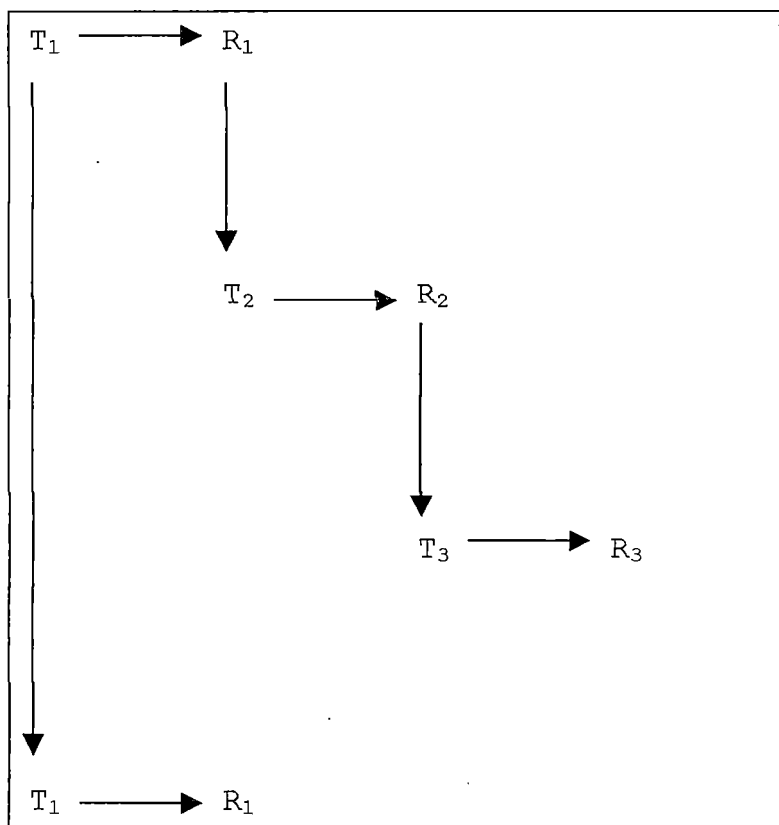
Figure 6. Omitted Link TP

This is a special TP pattern that consists of one or
more utterances in which the thematic content is omitted
because it is redundant.

```
                              (T)



     T₁ ──────► R₁      T₂ ──────► R₂      T₅ ──────► R₅

                         │
                         ▼
                        T₂ ──────► R₃

                                    │
                                    ▼
                                   T₄ ──────► R₄
```
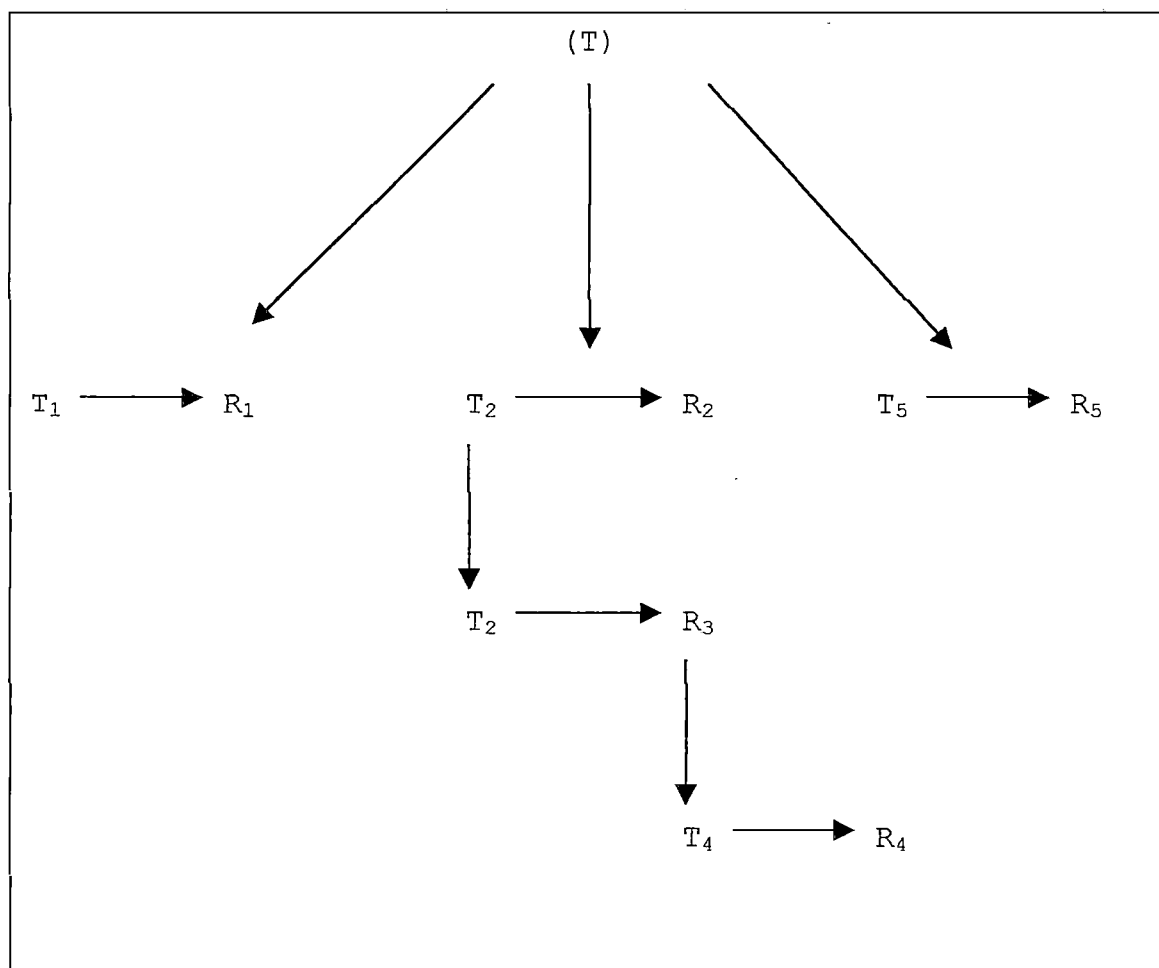
Figure 7. Combination Theme TP

In the combination theme TP, figures 2-6 can be combined in various ways within different texts. In many texts, one frequently finds combinations of the Simple Linear and Constant Theme TP patterns.

The above patterns indicate the ways in which Daneš brought the sentence-level analysis of theme and rheme to the analysis of discourse. Cloran (1995) explains this by noting that Daneš developed thematic progression ". . . in

order to conceptualize the role of Theme in text

organization and construction" (p. 387). The significance,

then, of patterns of thematic progression is that they

allow one to see how linguistic functions such as theme and

rheme shape the form that a text takes. Thus, contrary to

transformational linguistics, language is not locked into

syntax but, rather, uses functions above and below the

level of syntax to shape discourse. Okada (1997)

summarizes this point well when he states,

> The notion of theme is often considered to be a
>
> part of the exclusive domain of discourse and
>
> text analysis, yet . . . both sentence-formation
>
> and text-formation have the same features when
>
> observed from the communicative viewpoint of
>
> theme-rheme combination. [However,] this is
>
> exactly what is to be expected if one adopts a
>
> functional view, that of regarding a sentence as
>
> a text-fragment that keeps many of the
>
> characteristics of the enveloping textual
>
> structure. (p. 251)

CHAPTER FIVE

GENRE AND LEAD NEWS ARTICLES

Just as theme and rheme can be analyzed at the level

of text using thematic progression, so too can the thematic

progressions within the text be analyzed at the level of

genre. As Halliday (1993) writes, patterns of TP

progression help one ". . . to understand how the language

of [specific] texts is organized" (p. 124).

Genre

Until recently, genre was defined as a written text

that is ". . . (a) primarily literary, (b) entirely defined

by textual regularities in form and content, and (c) fixed

and immutable" (Johns, 2002, p. 3). However, the notion of

genre as a fixed and inviolable construct has changed

significantly since the early 1980s, when social

constructionism became popular as an epistemological

framework for applied linguistic analysis. According to

Hruby(2001),

> [Social] constructionism deals with knowledge
>
> formation between participants in social
>
> relationship [and] is usefully understood as
>
> being about the way knowledge is constructed by,

for, and between members of a discursively

mediated community. (p. 51)

The social constructionist approach to knowledge has

led to a redefinition of genre such that it is no longer

viewed as fixed and immutable but as purposeful and

constructed in response to social contexts.

This broadening of genre to incorporate the

interaction of language and social context has led writers

such as Badger (2002) to define it as ". . . a purposive

language event" that synthesizes a text's ". . . purpose,

function, [and] goal" (p. 257). Although there is general

agreement in linguistics that genres should be viewed as

purpose-oriented events linked to language and context,

Hyon (1996) notes that there exist three different genre

theories that are variations on this theme: English for

Specific Purposes (ESP), North American New Rhetoric, and

Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Within ESP, genres are defined by their formal

properties and communicative purposes within social

contexts. More specifically, ESP's concern for a genre's

social function and form is reflected in the definition

that leading ESP researcher John Swales provides. Hyon

(1996) paraphrases Swales' view as follows:

[Genres are] 'communicative events' that are

characterized both by their 'communicative

purposes' and by various patterns of 'structure,

style, content, and intended audience.' (p. 695)

What differentiates the North American New Rhetoric

approach to genre from ESP is that, whereas the latter

examines a genre's context and form, the former is

interested in context, almost to the exclusion of form.

For the New Rhetoricians, what matters most is ". . . the

situational contexts in which genres occur" and the ". . .

social purposes, or actions, that . . . genres fulfill"

(Hyon, 1996, p. 696, emphasis in original). Thus, the New

Rhetorician wants to understand the social constructs, and

not the linguistic variables, that give a text its specific

qualities.

Like ESP and New Rhetoric, Australian Systemic

Functional Linguistics aims at understanding how context

shapes discourse. However, the Australian SFL approach

differs from the other two in the extent to which it

addresses how linguistic functions influence a text's

discoursal features. As Halliday and Hasan (1976) note,

the linguistic and contextual analysis of a genre is

". . . not an interpretation of what [a] text means; it is

an explanation of why and how a text means what it does"

(p. 328).

Australian genre studies are grounded in Halliday's

systemic functional grammar and were developed by Jim

Martin, one of Halliday's students. For Martin, genre

represents the ". . .staged, goal-oriented social processes

. . . that cultures use in certain contexts to achieve

various purposes" (Hyon, 1996, p. 697, emphasis in

original). Thus, in Australian genre studies, particular

attention is paid to understanding how genre, register, and

language interact within the context of a specific text.

The Systemic Functional Linguistic Approach to Genre

This thesis' approach to genre is based on that of the

Australian school, which is rooted in Halliday's systemic

functional linguistics. Perhaps one of the best treatments

of Halliday's functional approach to grammar and its

relationship to genre is that presented in Fries (2001).

According to Fries (2001), SFL takes a multi-stratal

approach to language in that it includes various levels of

analysis: phonology, lexicogrammar, semantics, and social

interaction. These levels are interconnected and ". . .

the relation between them is one of realization" (p. 90,

emphasis in original). That is, social interaction is realized in semantics, which is realized in lexicogrammar, which in turn is realized in phonology. Thus, the study of language at the level of social interaction (i.e., genre) may be separated by semantics (i.e., patterns of thematic progression) from the study of lexicogrammar (i.e., thematization), but the three levels remain interconnected and help to explain how thematization and TP patterns coalesce within texts to contribute to the creation of specific genres.

According to Martine and Sitri (1997), linguistic constructs such as theme and rheme represent the delicate connection between syntax and discourse. Within the Hallidayan framework, this delicate connection can be attributed to the interaction of the three functions of language: the function of language in social interaction, the function of language as used to express meaning, and language-internal functions (Fries, 2001). While the language-internal functions include the textual metafunctions responsible for thematization, the function of language as it is used to express meaning reflects how material, verbal, and relational considerations can impact a writer's use of thematization. Similarly, the function

of language in social interaction consists of three

metafunctions that influence patterns of thematic

progression as well as choices concerning thematization.

These metafunctions are:[11]

1. Field

    Denotes the type of interaction taking place
    (i.e., lecture, conversation, etc.);

2. Tenor

    Addresses the relationship between the
    participants in the interaction (i.e.,
    friends, teacher-student, expert-novice);

3. Mode

    The role of language in the interaction (i.e.,
    how important language is to the interaction).

It is within the mode metafunction that thematization

and thematic progression influence the text's form and

genre. Thus, without the simultaneous interaction of

phonological, lexical-grammatical, semantic, and social

variables genres could not exist and constructs such as

thematization and thematic progression would be

meaningless. As Martin (1993b) writes,

    Theme is genre-oriented, angling a text in

    relation to its social purpose . . . [similarly,]

---

[11] The following descriptions of the three metafunctions are adapted
from Fries (2001), pp. 93-95.

45

the pattern[s] of theme selection within a text

constitute its method of development.

[Together,] the various types of method of

development reflect in part a text's genre. (pp.

244-247)

Visually, one can represent the relationship between

language, genre, thematic progression, and thematization as

shown in Figure 8.

The arrows in this diagram reflect the degree to which

the myriad levels of language interact with one another to

produce meaning. Thus, although factors other than

thematization and thematic progression coalesce to develop

a specific genre, that theme and rheme are essential

constituents of genre is undeniable. Ventola (1988)

recognizes this when he writes,

To understand the social meaning of a text, . . .

we have to consider what structures are . . .

created (realized) on the [levels of language].

The meanings that are created on these separate

[levels] are not separate meanings . . . It is
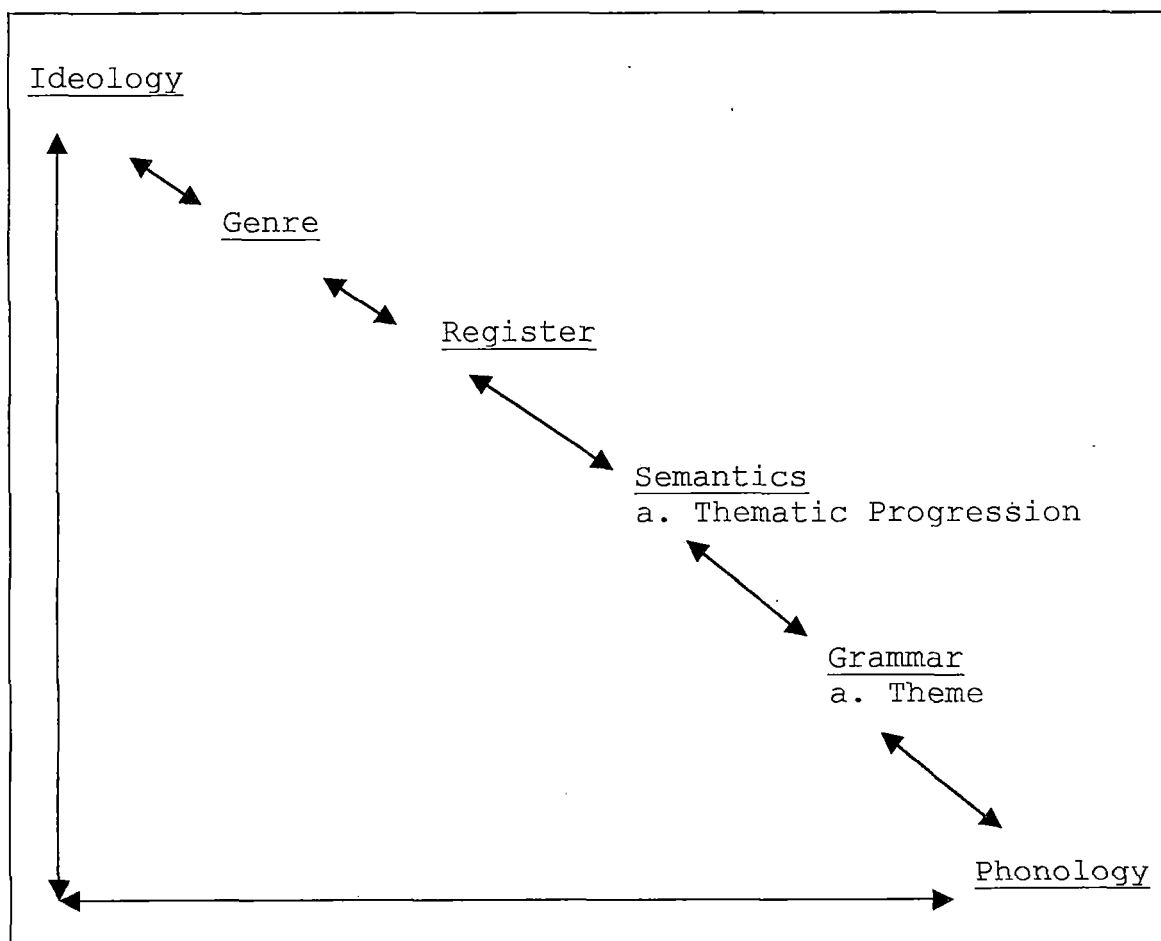
Figure 8. Language and Context
Source: B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (1993), The Powers of
Literacy: A Genre Approach to Teaching Writing (p. 132),
London: The Falmer Press.

not the case that phonological structures have

nothing to do with the semiotic generic

structures, nor is it the case that

lexicogrammatical choices have nothing to do with

contextual choices . . . [Thus,] a multilayered

approach is necessary if we are to understand how a [text] fully realizes the meaning it does. (p. 75)

Genre and Patterns of Thematic Progression

As this analysis examines thematic progression patterns within the specific genre of lead news articles (LNAs), it is important to consider whether specific TP patterns can be linked to specific genres. The answer, however, is somewhat ambiguous and underscores the necessity of analyzing not only whether lead news articles in French, Arabic, and English display the same TP pattern(s) but, also, whether their TP pattern(s) correspond to those developed by Daneš.

According to Halliday (1976), every genre has its own discourse structure, which suggests that specific TP patterns are associated with specific genres. Martin (1993a) lends credibility to this statement by noting that ". . . pattern[s] of theme selection . . . both reflect and construct a genre's staging" (p. 125). To determine the validity of such statements, writers such as Caffarel (2000), Francis (1990), and Nwogu (1993) have looked at patterns of thematic progression within specific genres.

Caffarel examined TP patterns in literary biographies, noting that the patterns she identified ". . . reflect patterns found in texts of similar types" (p. 260).

Francis (1990) examined TP patterns in lead news reports, editorials, and letters of complaint, and suggested that such patterns are genre-related. Similarly, Nwogu (1993) looked at TP patterns in different sections of research papers and concluded that "There is a relationship between thematic progression and text structure" (p. 96). On the basis of such studies, one is inclined to conclude with Wikberg (1990) that ". . . each discourse type is characterized by specific types of thematic progression" (p. 236).

Although the above suggests a direct link between TP patterns and genre, studies by Caffarel, Francis, and Nwogu found that the predominant TP patterns were simple linear and constant theme. Thus, whereas each author concluded that specific TP patterns were linked to her or his specific genre, what they collectively discovered is that the same TP patterns appeared with similar frequency in other genres as well.

From the above, one can conclude that, across genres, the simple linear and constant theme TP patterns

predominate, at least in English texts. The goal of this thesis is to take this research one step further by ascertaining whether LNAs in French, Arabic, and English use similar TP patterns that reflect those identified by Caffarel (2000), Francis (1990), and Nwogu (1993).

Lead News Articles and Genre

The decision to focus on lead news articles as a genre was based upon their importance to native English speakers and to speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL). This is particularly true for students who, as Martin (1993a) writes, are exposed in school to genres that will remain useful to them in their academic, professional, and personal lives. As a genre, lead news articles are particularly important because, whether at school, work, or home, students need the ability to comprehend events of local, national, and global importance.

In "Long-term effects of genre-based instruction," Hyon (2001) adds validity to the importance of LNAs for students, particularly ESL students. Following a one-year study to determine whether genres such as hard news stories, feature articles, textbooks, and research articles were connected to students' future reading requirements and

interests, she concluded that these genres ". . . were related to some of the students' academic and non-academic reading materials" (p. 417). More specifically, she notes that of the eight students who participated in the study ". . . two . . . mentioned reading newspapers or magazines as required supplementary reading for their courses" (p. 424). Similarly, in terms of non-academic reading, the students surveyed ". . . most commonly mentioned newspapers or magazines as texts they read outside their courses" (p. 424). Thus, as a genre lead news articles are important to students, and in particular ESL students, in their academic, professional, and personal lives.

A second reason lead news articles were selected for analysis is that, as they are relatively short and concise, they offer a unique opportunity to examine how features such as thematization and patterns of thematic progression contribute to this genre's flow of discourse. As Halliday (1993b) explains, within genres such as lead news articles one can see how the layers of language:

1. Give texture to a single clause;

2. Construe clauses into coherent, logical sequences;

3. Contribute to the genre's discursive power.

Thus, as a genre, lead news articles enable one to understand the forms of linguistic expression by ". . . considering them in [their] discourse context and . . . studying how their function in that context influences their form" (Adjémian, 1978, p. 269).

Characteristics of Lead News Articles

Hyon (2001) examines hard news articles (herein referred to as lead news articles) in terms of content, structure, language style, and communicative purpose.[12] The content, or topical focus, of lead news articles concerns interesting or important recent events. The LNA's structure, or global organization pattern, is that of an inverted pyramid in which information is presented in descending order of importance. The language style of LNAs refers to linguistic features that convey the writer's stance toward the text's content or audience and, generally, such language tends to be balanced and yet emotive. Last, the communicative purpose of LNAs is to report newsworthy events efficiently and objectively.

While the lead news articles in English, French, and Arabic share similar features in terms of content,

---

[12]The following discussion of content, structure, style, and communicative purpose is adapted from Hyon (2001), pp. 420-422.

structure, style, and communicative purpose, they differ in terms of sources of information and topics covered. Below, these differences are discussed in greater detail.

English Lead News Articles

The sources of information for English LNAs in the New York Times include Associated Press (AP) wires, staff journalists' contributions, and foreign press releases. Given the variety of information sources, the topics covered in the newspaper's LNAs include those of both national and international importance.

French Lead News Articles

The source of information for articles in Le Monde is staff reports, which results in LNAs that focus primarily on issues of national importance. Thus, in contrast to The New York Times' LNAs, the French LNAs focus on national events and rely heavily on local journalists as sources of information.

Arabic Lead News Articles

The sources of information for Arabic LNAs in Al-Ittihad include AP news wires, local correspondents, and foreign sources. As with the French and English LNAs, the sources of information reflect the topics that the Arabic LNAs cover. In Arabic, the LNAs address both national and

international events, with AP sources covering events in the West, local correspondents providing information on events of national importance, and foreign, non-AP sources offering information on events in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The above discussion of LNAs in English, French, and Arabic illustrates how, despite their being classified as a single genre, they reflect interests and values that give them a distinct style. Thus, through an examination of linguistic features such as thematization and thematic progression, coupled with an understanding of LNA sources and topics, one can appreciate the extent to which language and context interact to shape a specific genre.

CHAPTER SIX

LEAD NEWS ARTICLE ANALYSIS

Within typology, considerable emphasis is placed on
identifying universals at the levels of phonology,
morphology, and syntax (Ferguson, 1978). However, using
Halliday's definitions of theme and rheme, together with
Daneš' patterns of thematic progression, one can also
identify universals at the sentential and textual levels.
Specifically, the data in my analysis suggest that a
language universal may account for how and why disparate
languages organize ideas in a similar manner at the levels
of sentence and text.

My findings also suggest that a language universal may
help to explain how the mind orders thought into specific
patterns at the sentential and textual levels. Using
thematization (i.e., the bifurcation of the clause into
theme and rheme) and thematic progression (i.e., the
simple-linear, constant-theme, and omitted-link patterns)
one can identify and compare patterns of idea development
in disparate languages. Below, the similarity in patterns
of idea development in French, Arabic, and English lead
news articles is explored in greater detail.

The Corpus

This study examines 45 lead news articles, 15 each from Le Monde, Al-Ittihad, and The New York Times. The LNAs in each newspaper are dated between 14 June and 3 July 2003 and were selected on the basis of their front-page location. Given the editorial constraints facing each newspaper, the length of the lead news articles varied considerably. For example, while the LNAs in Le Monde and Al-Ittihad contained between five and eighteen sentences, with an average of 7.7 and 7.3 sentences per LNA, respectively, the LNAs in the New York Times contained between 25 and 50 sentences, with an average of 29.4 sentences per LNA[13]. Given these disparities in length, the number of sentences analyzed in all LNAs was based on the average number of sentences in Le Monde, the newspaper with the fewest sentences. Thus, on average I analyzed seven sentences from Le Monde and Al-Ittihad and eight sentences from The New York Times. This gap in the number of sentences analyzed stems from how individual articles were structured, as some articles in Le Monde and Al-Ittihad

---

[13] Please refer to Appendix A for the quantitative features of lead news articles in Le Monde, Al-Ittihad, and the New York Times.

contained only five or six sentences while all articles in

The New York Times contained at least eight sentences.

Although my analysis is based on an average number of

sentences in each lead news article, the thematic

progression patterns are analyzed on the basis of sentence

groups composed of two sentences, as at least two sentences

are needed to identify a TP pattern. For example, in a Le

Monde lead news article with eight sentences, the maximum

number of sentence groups analyzed is seven. As the

sentence length of the lead news articles varied amongst

the three newspapers, so too did the number of sentence

groups analyzed.

French Lead News Articles

In the 15 French lead news articles, I analyzed 101

sentences, 86 sentence groups, and an average of 7

sentences per lead news article. My results indicate the

following:

1. Among Daneš' TP patterns[14], the constant theme pattern

appeared with the greatest frequency. Of the 86 sentence

groups, 34 (40%) were constant theme. In addition, within

each of the 15 LNAs, the constant theme pattern appeared at

---

[14]In my analysis of French, Arabic, and English LNAs, the following TP
patterns appeared most frequently: Constant Theme, Simple Linear,
Derived Theme, and Omitted Link.

least twice per article. An example of this pattern is

provided below, with the theme of each sentence underlined.

Given Halliday's functional definition of theme, what

follows the underlined word(s) is necessarily the rheme.

Example 1

a. Theme/Rheme

1[15]. Dans un long entretien au   Monde,   <u>le   premier</u>
   In   a long discussion with Le Monde, <u>the prime</u>

   <u>ministre</u> déclare: <<nous sortons   d'   un
   <u>minister</u> declares: "we   are leaving from a

   printemps tendu, en raison du débat   sur
   spring   tense, on account of the debate about

   les retraites>>.
   the pensions."

2. Alors qu'   une nouvelle journée de mobilisation
   While   a   new   day   of protests

   contre le projet Fillon affectait faiblement
   against the plan   Fillon affected weakly

   les services publics, jeudi,   19 juin,
   the services public, Thursday, 19 June,

   <u>Jean-Pierre Raffarin</u> assure qu' il aborde
   <u>Jean-Pierre Raffarin</u> assures that he approaches

   le <<chantier>>   de l' assurance-maladie <<avec
   the "construction" of the insurance-health   "with

```
       des nouvelles bases>>.
       the new          foundations."

3.   Il assure  au contraire     vouloir poursuivre les
     He assures on the contrary to want to pursue  the

       baises.
       the lowering of taxes.

4.   [Il]¹⁶  et  va          creer    <<une deduction pour
      He      and is going to create "a    deduction for

       permettre à  tous les Français d' épargner pour
       to allow  to all  the French   to save      for

       leur  retrait>>.
       their retirement."
```

b. Literal Translation

¹In a long discussion with Le Monde, the Prime Minister

declares, "We are leaving behind a tense spring, on account

of the debate over pensions." ²While a new day of protests

against the Fillon bill barely affected public services, on

Thursday, 19 June, Jean-Pierre Raffarin assures that he is

approaching the construction of health insurance "with new

foundations." ³He assures, on the contrary, that he wants

to pursue lowering taxes and ⁴is going to create "a

deduction to allow all the French to save for their

retirement."

(6-20-2003. "Raffarin: 'le choix de l'apaisement'"
          "Raffarin: 'the Choice of Appeasement")

---

¹⁶This Il is zero anaphoric and marked in the verb va, which is the
present, 3ʳᵈ-person singular form of aller (to go).

59

As the initial four sentences of this LNA contain the
same theme (i.e., "the Prime Minister" or "Jean-Pierre
Raffarin), when examined visually they create a constant
theme TP pattern. This is illustrated in the following
diagram.

c. Diagram[17]

S1: T1 ─────────────────────▶ R1
     Le   premier ministre   déclare.
     The prime   minister   declares.

S2: T1 ─────────────────────▶ R2
     Jean-Pierre Raffarin   assure.
     Jean-Pierre Raffarin   assures.

S3: T1 ─────────────────────▶ R3
     Il   assure.
     He   assures.

S4: T1 ─────────────────────▶ R4
     [Il]   va   créer.
     He   is going to create.
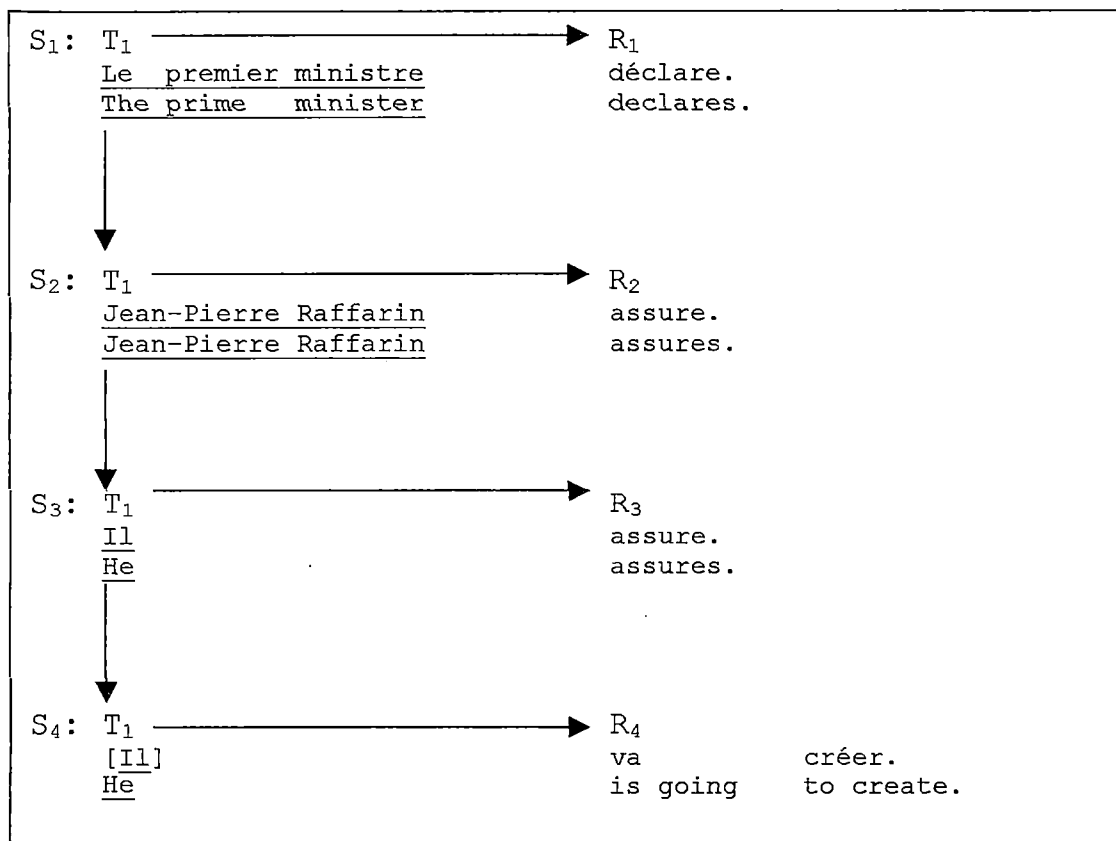
Figure 9. Example of Constant Theme TP Pattern in
Le Monde Lead News Article

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[17]To illustrate this and subsequent French lead news article TP patterns
clearly, only the essential themic and rhemic elements of each sentence
are provided. In addition, the theme of each sentence is underlined.

2. The second most common TP pattern in the French LNAs was the simple linear. Among the 86 sentence groups, 12 (14%) represented the simple linear pattern. Although this pattern was the second most prevalent, on average it appeared less than once per lead news article. Below, an example of this pattern, taken from two sections of the 14 June 2003 Le Monde lead news article, is provided.

Example 2

a. Theme/Rheme

1. La convention pour l' avenir de l' Europe,
   The convention for the future of the Europe,

   presidée   par Valery Giscard d'Estaing,
   presided over by Valery Giscard d'Estaing,

   a conclu, vendredi 6 juin, quinze mois   de
   concluded, Friday   6 June, fifteen months of

   travaux rendant   publique   l' ébauche
   work   resulting in making public the draft

   d' une future Constitution pour l' Union élargie.
   of a   future Constitution for the Union growing.

2. Fruit de laborieux compromise, ce   texte ne
   Fruit of laborious compromise, this text does

   suscite pas l' enthousiasm des Etats.
   arouse not the enthusiasm of the states.

5. Le president de la Convention, qui espère
   The president of the Convention, who hopes

   laisser une trace dans l' histoire de la
   to leave a   mark on   the history of the

```
construction européene,  estime    donc      que son
construction European,   considers therefore that his

projet servira    de base  à  l'  accord    final.
plan    will serve as basis to the agreement final.
```

6. Son texte a été publié   à la veille   du
   His text was   published on the day before the

```
principal référendum d' adhésion.
principal referendum of membership.
```

b. Literal Translation[18]

[1]The Convention for the future of Europe, presided over by Valery Giscard d'Estaing, concluded Friday, 6 June, 15 months of work making public the draft of a future Constitution for the growing Union. [2]The fruit of laborious compromise, this text does not arouse states' enthusiasm. [5]The President of the Convention, who hopes to leave a mark on the history of European construction, considers that his plan will serve as the basis for the final agreement. [6]His text was published the day before the principal membership referendum.

(6-14-2003. "L'Europe en cours de constitution"
            "Europe on Course for a Constitution")

---

[18]In this LNA, the terms outline, text, and plan are used interchangeably, denoting continuity between the rhemes of sentences 1 and 5 and the themes of sentences 2 and 6. As Nwogu (1993) writes, "The theme [and rheme] of an utterance [can be] identified by reference to a . . . synonymous expression, [which] is taken to mean the occurrence . . . of an element which communicates information that is similar in meaning to an expression in [the] preceding [or subsequent] text" (p. 95).

In this example, the rheme of sentence 1 ("the draft
of a future Constitution) becomes the theme of sentence 2
("this text"). Similarly, the rheme of sentence 5 ("his
plan") becomes the theme of sentence 6 ("his text"). This
relationship between the rheme and theme constructs the
simple linear TP pattern depicted in the following diagram.
c. Diagram
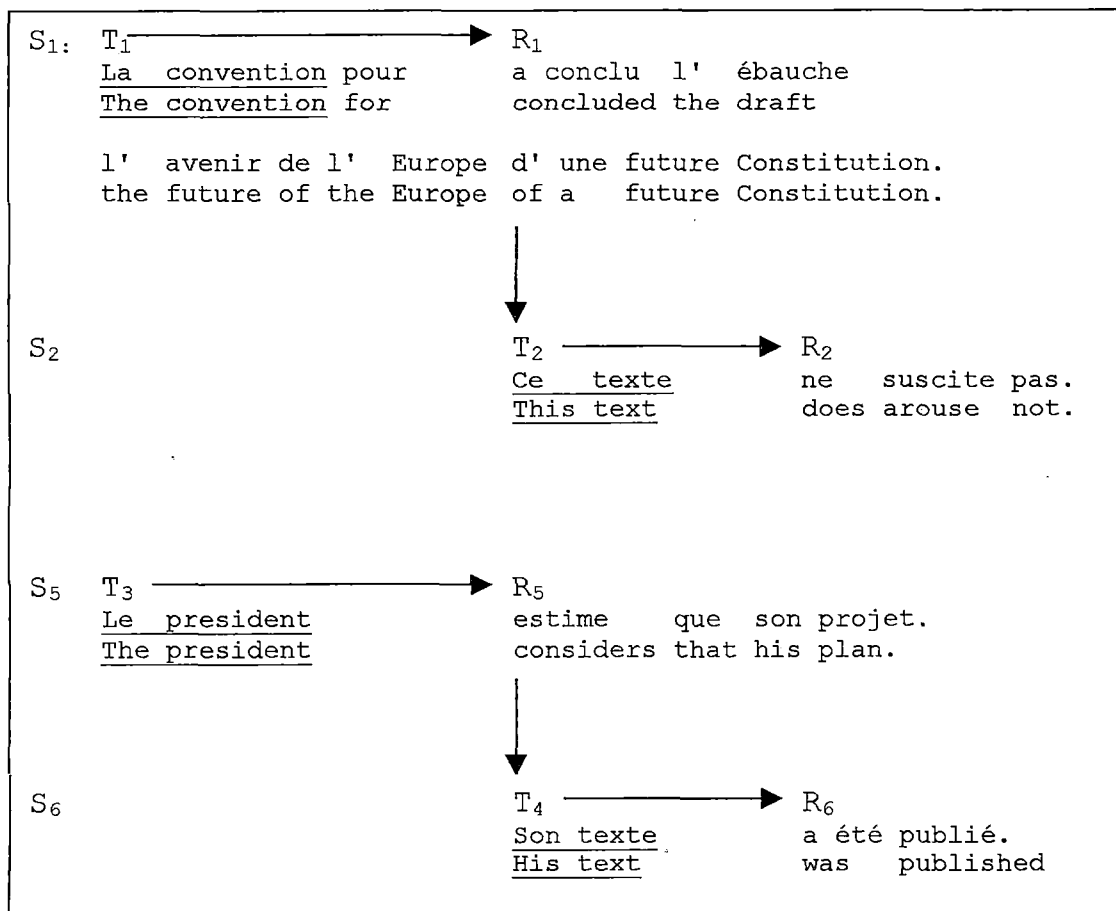
Figure 10. Example of Simple Linear TP Pattern in Le Monde
Lead News Article

3. The omitted link TP pattern is the third most common

pattern in the French lead news articles, although it

appears only 4 times among the 86 sentence groups.

Although this pattern accounts for only 5% of the TP

patterns appearing in the French LNAs, this is in

accordance with the findings of Nwogu and Bloor (1991), who

argue that TP patterns other than constant theme and simple

linear appear less frequently in narrative texts such as

lead news articles. Below, an example of the omitted link

TP pattern in a French LNA is provided.

Example 3

a. Theme/Rheme

1. Dans un entretien au   quotidian Corse-Matin,
    In   an interview in the daily   Corsica-Morning,

    Jacques Chirac s'engage pour le <<oui>> au
    Jacques Chirac commits by   the "yes" to

    référendum   du 6 juillet.
    the referendum of 6 July.

2. Voter <<oui>> est <<la meilleure manière
    To vote "yes" is   "the best   way

    d' affirmer [leur] attachement à la République>>.
    of to affirm [their] attachment to the Republic."

3. Jacques Chirac argumente contre la tentation
    Jacques Chirac argues   against the temptation

    du   vote <<non>>.
    of the vote "no."

64

b. Literal Translation

[1]In an interview in the daily newspaper Corsica Morning, Jacques Chirac commits a "yes" vote to the 6 July referendum. [2]To vote "yes" is "the best way to affirm [their] commitment to France and to the Republic." [3]Jacques Chirac argues against the temptation to vote "no."

(6-28-2003. "Référendum en Corse: Le <<oui>> résolu du Chirac"
"Referendum on Corsica: The Resolute "Yes" of Chirac")

In this example, the theme of sentence 1 ("Jacques Chirac") is not repeated in the second sentence but is picked up again as the theme of sentence 3. The way in which the theme jumps from sentence 1 to sentence 3 results in the omitted link pattern illustrated below.

c. Diagram

```
S₁   T₁ ─────────────────────► R₁
     Dans un entretien au        s'engage pour le <<oui>>.
     In   an interview in the    commits  by    the "yes."

     quotidian Corse-  Matin,
     daily     Corsica-Morning,

     Jacques Chirac
     Jacques Chirac



S₂                              T₂ ───────────► R₂
                                Voter  <<oui>>    est la
                                To vote "yes"     is   the

                                                  meilleure manière.
                                                  best      way.



S₃   T₁ ──────────────────────► R₃
     Jacques Chirac             argumente contre  la  tentation
     Jacques Chirac             argues     against the temptation

                                du     vote <<non>>.
                                of the vote  "no."
```
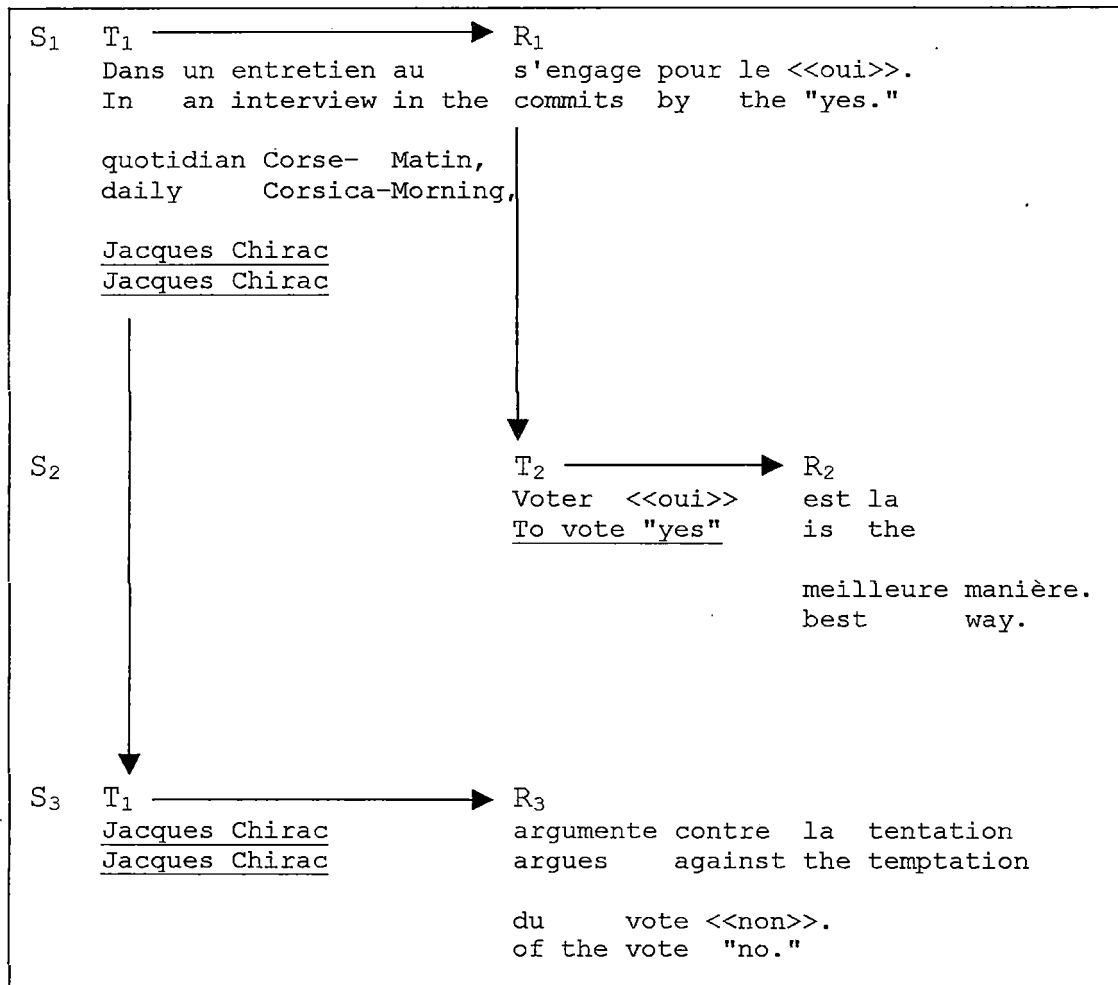
Figure 11. Example of Omitted Link TP Pattern in Le Monde
Lead News Article

4. Two additional points can be made about French lead news

articles. First, the derived theme TP pattern did not

appear in any of the 86 sentence groups analyzed. Second,

the number of sentence groups with unidentifiable TP

patterns (which I refer to as "zero patterns") was 36 of

66

86. This means that 41% of the grouped sentences did not have identifiable TP patterns linking them to preceding or subsequent sentences; however, this should not be taken as suggesting that these sentences are incoherent within the context of the lead news articles. Rather, the zero patterns represent instances wherein the topic changed between sentences, thereby creating gaps between TP patterns. In fact, where the zero pattern appeared, it was often the case that the sentences' rhemes—and not their themes—were similar[19]. An example of this absence of identifiable TP patterns between sentence groups is provided below.

Example 4

a. Theme/Rheme

3. <u>Le   premier ministre</u> réfléchit   à   cette
    The prime   minister reached a decision on this

    éventualité.
    eventuality.

4. <u>Patrick Devedjian</u>, ministre délégué aux libertés
    <u>Patrick Devedjian</u>, minister delegate to the liberties

    locales, se prononce en faveur d' une <<loi sur la
    local,   decides   in favor of a   "law on the

---

[19] This is an important point, as it indicates that there is more to textual cohesion than continuity of theme. Specifically, lexical and semantic cohesion within a text can also be located in sentences' rhemic elements, thereby suggesting that the coherence of a text depends upon something more than just its thematic structure.

67

```
neutralité de l'école>>.
neutrality of schools."
```

5.  ```
    Après dix années de débat,  de nombreux
    After ten years  of debate, of many

    parlementaires,        de droit comme de gauche,
    members of Parliament, of right as    of left,

    et  des intellectuals    jugent    désormais
    and of  the intellectuals consider from now on

    que  le  cadre     défini  en 1989 par le  Conseil
    that the framework defined in 1989 by  the Council

    d' Etat  ne suffit      plus.
    of State no is sufficient longer.
    ```

b. Literal Translation

[3]The Prime Minister reached a decision on this

possibility [of banning the wearing of scarves at school].

[4]Patrick Devedjian, a delegate minister for local liberties,

decided in favor of a "law establishing the neutrality of

schools." [5]After ten years of debate, many members of

Parliament, on both the right and the left, and among

intellectuals, consider that from now on, the 1989

framework defined by the State Council is no longer

sufficient.

```
(6-18-2003.  "Raffarin envisage une loi contre le foulard
                à l'école"
             "Raffarin considers a law against the scarf at
                schools")
```

Interestingly, in this example the themes of each sentence are unconnected and yet the rhemes display a degree of coherence, as each is focused upon the banning of the wearing of scarves at French schools. However, given the absence of a direct relationship between the sentences' themes, the pattern is considered an example of zero TP and is diagrammed as such below.

c. Diagram

S$_3$: T$_3$ ─────────────────▶ R$_3$
      Le   premier ministre   réfléchit   à
      The prime   minister   reached a decision on

                                 cette éventualité.
                                 this   eventuality.

               ─────────────────▶

S$_4$ T$_4$ R$_4$
      Patrick Devedjian   se prononce en faveur d' une
      Patrick Devedjian   decides   in favor of a

                                 <<loi sur la neutralité de
                                "law on the neutrality of

                                 l'école>>.
                                 schools."

               ─────────────────▶

S$_5$ T$_5$ R$_5$
      Après dix années   jugent   désormais   que
      After ten years   consider from now on that

      de débat, de nombreux   le   cadre   ne suffit   plus.
      of debate, of many   the framework no is enough longer.

      parlementaires,
      Members of Parliament

Figure 12. Example of the Zero Pattern in a Le Monde Lead
News Article

From these sentences, one can see that none of Daneš

TP patterns can explain the connection between them. For

this reason, I consider such sentences examples of a zero TP pattern. However, careful observation of these sentences in the original text suggests that in instances of zero TP in French lead news articles, what binds the sentences together is continuity of rheme rather than theme. In sentences 3, 4, and 5 above, the rhemes relate to decisions made regarding the wearing of scarves at school. Nevertheless, although the rhemes are continuous, their themes are less so and, as thematic progression patterns are based on continuity of theme, no TP pattern is identifiable between these sentences.

Arabic Lead News Articles

In the fifteen Arabic lead news articles, I analyzed 103 sentences, 88 sentence groups, and an average of 7 sentences per LNA. The results of my analysis of Arabic LNAs are similar to those of the French LNAs in that the constant theme pattern appears with the greatest frequency while the simple linear and omitted link patterns appear less frequently. My analysis of the Arabic LNAs shows that:

1. The constant theme pattern is the most common. Of the 88 sentence groups, 24 (27%) were constant theme. In addition, the constant theme pattern appeared nearly twice

71

per LNA. An example of this pattern in an Arabic lead news

article is provided below, with the theme of each sentence

underlined.

Example 5

a. Theme/Rheme[20]

1[21] . في   الامـيركية   المدنـية   الادارة   أعـلـنت
   fee <u>alamerikiya almudiniya alidara</u>   a'alanat[22]
   in <u>American   Civil   Administration</u> revealed

   العـراقـي   الـعـراقـي   لجيش   نـواة   تشكيـل   أمـس عن   العـراق
   al'iraqi lijaysh nawa tashkeel 'an ams   al'iraq
   Iraqi   army   plan creation on yesterday Iraq

   الجديـد.
   .aljadeed
   .new

2. العـسكريـن   مع   الـتهديـة   اعتـمـدت   و
   al'askreen   m'a altahdiya a'atamadat[23]   wa
   the military with relaxing <u>it</u> authorized and

   باعمـال   بـالقيـام   هدودوا   الـذي   المسرحين
   ba'amal balkiyam hududu   alathee almasraheen
   by work with doing threatened which   operation

---

[20]Note in the following analysis of Arabic lead news articles that
although Arabic is written from right to left, the transliterations and
English definitions move from left to right.

[21] The numbers identifying each sentence reflect the number of the
sentence as it appears in the LNA. Hence, sentence 1 corresponds to
the first sentence in the LNA, sentence 2 to the second sentence, and
so forth.

[22] As there are several phonetic representational systems used to
transliterate Arabic to English, those familiar with Arabic are
encouraged to read the Arabic script rather than rely on the English
transliterations.

[23]This is an instance of zero anaphora, as the ت at the end of the verb
اعتـمـدت indicates that it is past tense, 3rd-person singular, feminine.
This inflection refers back to the theme of sentence 1, المدنـية الادارة
الامـيركية (the American Civil Administration), which in Arabic is
feminine singular as denoted by the ة at the end of المدنـية, الادارة,
and الامـيركية.

صرف   باعدة   قرار   عبر   عنف

sarf   ba'ada   qarar   'abr   'anf

completely returning decision across protest

رواتبـهم.

.ruwatibhum.

.their salaries

3. بشعبتين   الاستعانة   قررت   كمـا

bisha'btayn   alisti'ana   qararat[24]   kama

by two groups seeking help _it_ decided as

رئيسـتين   فـي   جهـاز   الاستخبـارات   الـعراقي

al'iraqi   alistakhbarat   jihaz   fee   raisatayn

Iraqi   of information group   in   leading

المستشددة   السياسية   الحركات   لضبط   المنحل

almustashadada   alsiyasiya   alharakat   lidabt   almanhal

ignoring the U.S. political movements officers former

مباشرة   بصلات   تـرتبط   التي   ذلك   سيـما   لا

mubashar bisalat tartabat alatee thalika sima   la

people   religious ties   which   that   calling not

مـع اران.

.Iran m'a

.Iran with

4. الجيش   إن   فـإن   الاداارة   الامـيركية   وفـق   و

aljaysh   f'in   alamerikiya   alidara   wafaqa wa

army   that   American   Administration   agreed and

صفـوفـه   فـي   يضم   لـن   الـذي   الجديـد

sufufhi   fee   yadam   lan   alathee   aljadeed

its ranks   in   join   will not   which   new

المنحل   <<البعث>>   لحزب   عنـاصر   أي

almanhal   "al-b'ath"   lihazb   'anasar   aya

former   Bath   party   members   any

---

[24] This is the second instance of zero anaphora wherein the ت of قررت is
the inflected feminine, 3rd-person singular ending that refers back to
الادرة المدنـية الامـيركية (the American Civil Administration), the theme of
sentences 1 and 2. Please refer to footnote 23 for a more detailed
explanation.

ثـلاثـة   و   عـامـين   بـين   تـستمر   الـتي

thalatha   wa 'amain   bayna tastamara alatee

three   and two years   between lasts   which

.جنـدي   الـف   40

.jindee   alf   'arbaeen

.soldiers thousand forty

b. Literal Translation

[1]The American Civil Administration in Iraq revealed yesterday its plans for the creation of a new Iraqi army, and [2]it also authorized the relaxing of military operations so as to ease the protest of workers who are demanding that their salaries be paid in full. [3]The Administration also decided to seek help from two leading groups in the former Iraqi Central Intelligence Service in order that they can help to identify those who are resisting the American presence in Iraq and those with religious ties to Iran.

[4]The American Administration agreed that the new army will not include any members of the B'ath Party, will take approximately 2 years to create, and will enlist 43 thousand soldiers.

"<<الـتحـالف>> بـاق فـي الـعراق 5 سنـوات" .(6-24-2003
   "'The Alliance' to Remain in Iraq 5 Years")

In this example, the theme of each sentence is "The American Civil Administration." Given this consistency of theme, the thematic pattern that results is the constant theme pattern, which is illustrated below.

c. Diagram[25]

S_1: T_1 ──────────────▶ R_1

الادارة   أعلنت
Administration revealed

الامريكية
American

عن تشكيل نواة.
.plan creation on

S_2: T_1 ──────────────▶ R_2

اعتمدت   و
it authorized and

التهدية مع
with the relaxing

العسكرين المسرحين.
.operation military

S_3 T_1 ──────────────▶ R_3

قررت   كما
it decided as

الاستعانة بشعبتين.
.of two groups seeking help

S_4 T_1 ──────────────▶ R_4

الادارة   وفق و
Administration agreed and

الامريكية
American

فإن الجيش الجديد.
.new army to

Figure 13. Example of Constant Theme TP Pattern in an
Al-Ittihad Lead News Article

2. The second most common TP pattern appearing in the
Arabic lead news articles was the simple linear. However,
as in the French LNAs, this pattern appeared less
frequently than the constant theme. Of the 88 sentence
groups analyzed, the simple linear pattern appeared in only
5 (6%). Below, two examples of this pattern, taken from
two Arabic LNAs, are provided.

Example 6

a. Theme/Rheme

1. امس   فجر   الاميركية القوات اطلقت
   ams   fajra   alamerkiya alquwat atlaqat
   yesterday morning American   forces launched

   مسمى   تحت   جديدة   عسكرية   عملية
   masma tahat jadida 'askariya 'amaliya
   title under new   military operations

   الصحراء.   عقرب
   .alsahara 'aqrab
   .desert   scorpion

2. في   المناطق   و   المدن   العملية   تشمل   و
   fee almanatiq   wa   almudn   al'amaliya   tashmal wa
   in   the regions and the cities the operation covered and

   إلى بالإضافة   بغداد   غرب   شمال   و   شمال
   ila bilidafa   baghdad gharb shamal wa shamal
   to   in addition Baghdad west north and north

   العاصمة نفسها.
   .nafsha al'asima
   .itself the capital.

77

b. Literal Translation

[1]Yesterday morning American forces launched a new military operation under the name "Desert Scorpion." [2]The operation covered the cities and regions to the North and North West of Baghdad, in addition to the capital itself.

"<<عقرب الصحراء>> تلاحق فلول صدام." 2003-16-6)
"'Desert Scorpion': Wrapping Up After the Fall of Saddam")

In this example, the rheme of sentence 1 becomes the theme of sentence 2, thus creating a simple linear pattern.

c. Diagram
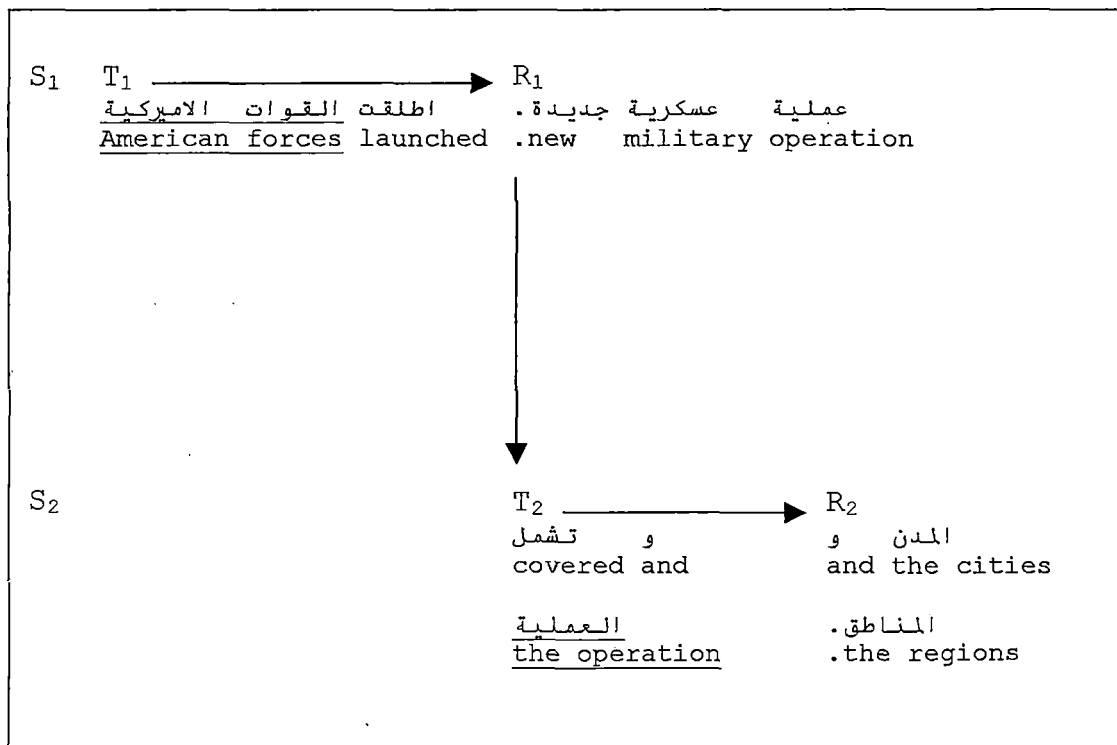
Figure 14. First Example of Simple Linear TP Pattern in an Al-Ittihad Lead News Article

Example 7

a. Theme/Rheme

1.
أكد   مـسؤولـون   امـيركيـون   أمـس   صحة
saha   ams   amerkiyun masuluun   akada
accuracy yesterday American authorities confirmed

فـر   صدام   سكرتـير   أن   قـالـت   تقـاريـر
far   saddam secratair an   qalat   taqarir
escaped Saddam secretary that saying of reports

مـرحلـة   فـي   سوريـا   إلى   صدام   نجـلي   مـع
marahla fee suriya ila saddam   najlee m'a
journey in Syria , to of Saddam family with

مـابـعد   الحرب.
.alharb   mab'ad
.the war following

2.
فـقـد   اعترف عيـد   حمود   الـتكرتـي   الـسكرتـير
alsecratair altakriti   hamood 'abd a'ataraf faqad
secretary Al-Takriti Hamood Abd admitted that

أن   المخلوع   العـراقـي   لـلرئـيس   الـشخصي
an   almakhluw'a al'iraqee lilraiss   alshakhsee
that former   Iraqi   President personal

مـوجودون   و   أحيـاء   ولـديـه   و   صدام
mawjudun wa   ahiya waladih   wa   saddam
present and alive his sons and Saddam

فـي   الـعـراق.
.al'iraq fee
.Iraq   in

b. Literal Translation

[1]Yesterday American authorities confirmed the accuracy of reports stating that Saddam's secretary escaped to Syria with Saddam's family in a journey following the war. [2]Abdu Hamood Al-Takriti, the personal secretary for the former

79

Iraqi President, admitted that Saddam and his sons are alive and present in Iraq.

"حملات مكثفة لاصطياد صدام و نجليه". 2003-22-6)
"Massive Searches Didn't Catch Saddam and His Sons")

As in example 6, the sentences in example 7 also illustrate the simple linear TP pattern, as the rheme of sentence 1 ("Saddam's secretary") becomes the theme of sentence 2. This is shown below.

c. Diagram

S₁   T₁ ───────────► R₁

مسؤولون أكد   أن سكرتير صدام
authorities confirmed   Saddam secretary that

اميركيون   فـر.
American   escaped.

T₂ ───────────► R₂

اعترف فقد   أن صدام و
admitted that   and Saddam that

السكرتير   ولديه أحيا.
the secretary   living his sons.
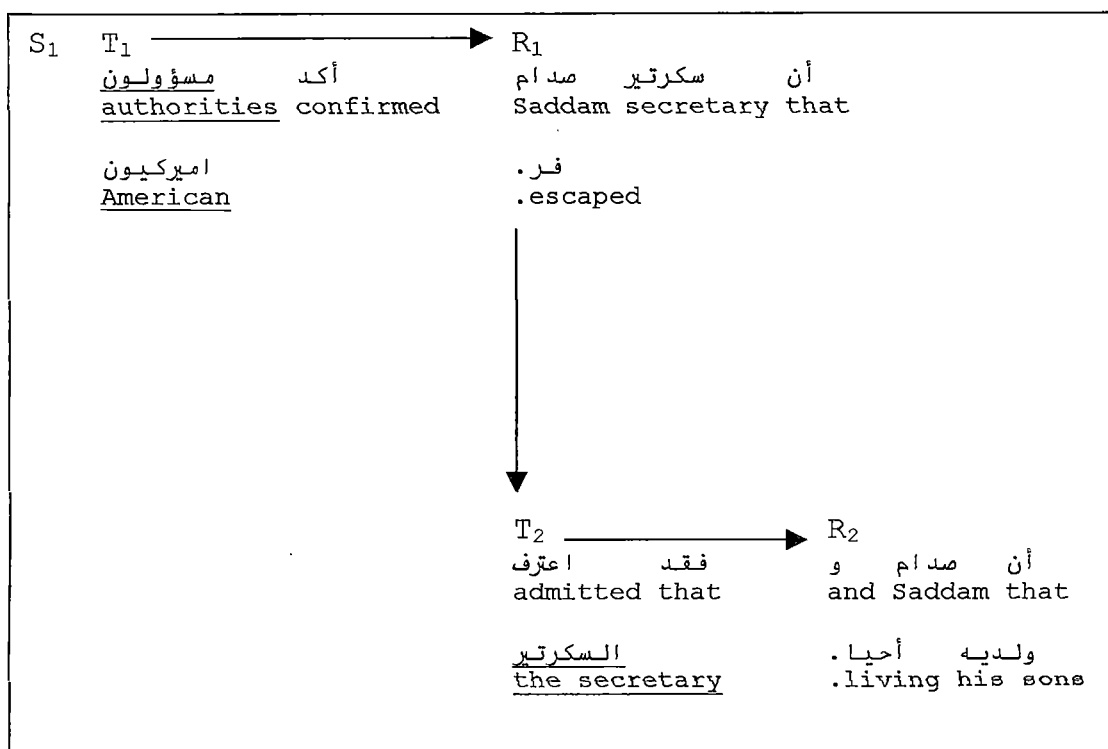
Figure 15. Second Example of Simple Linear TP Pattern
in an Al-Ittihad Lead News Article

3. The third most common TP pattern in the Arabic lead news articles was the omitted link. As with the French LNAs, this pattern appeared less frequently. Of the 88 sentence groups, only 4 (4%) represented this pattern, of which an example is provided below.

Example 8

a. Theme/Rheme

4.
إلى	جديدة	تحذيرات	بـاول	أطلق	و
ila	jadeeda	tahtheerat	Powell	atlaqa	wa
to	new	warnings	Powell	gave	and

إسرائيلية	مصادر	توقعت	بينما	سوريا
israiliya	masadir	tawq'at	baynama	suriya
Israeli	sources	speculations	about	Syria

دمشق.	يزور	أن
dimashq.	yazur	an
Damascus.	he is visiting	that

5.
واشنطون	أن	الإسرائيلية	التقرير	قالت	و
Washington	an	alisrailiya	altaqrir	qalat	wa
Washington	that	Israeli	reports	said	and

الحديدية	القبدة	سياسة	اتخاذ	في	تفكر
alhadeediya	alqabda	siyasa	atikhath	fee	tufakir
iron	ring	political	take	in	thinks

سوريا.	تجاه
suriya.	tajahi
Syria	around

6.
تقارير	عن	معاريف	صحيفة	نقلت	و
taqareer	'an	m'areef	saheefa	naqalat	wa
reports	on	M'areef	newspaper	commented	and

عقدوا	أميركيين	مسؤولين	أن	إسرائيلية
'aqdu	amerkiyeen	masuleen	an	israiliya
met	American	authorities	that	Israeli

81

مـغـلـقـة. مـبـاحـثـات مـؤخـرا
.mawkhalaqa mubahithat muwakhiran
.closed   discussions recently

7. الـتـي الـتـدابـيـر أن بـاول قـال و
alatee altadabeer   an   Powell qala wa
which the measures that Powell said and

الـمـطـالـب لـتـلـبـيـة اتـخـذتـهـا سـوريـا
almatalib litalbiya   suriya atikhaththiha
demands   for complying with Syria took

كـافـيـة. غـيـر و مـحـدودة الامـيـركـيـة
.kafiya 'khayer wa mahduda alamerkiya
.enough   not   and limited American

b. Literal Translation

[4]Powell gave new warnings to Syria concerning the

speculation of Israeli sources that he will visit Damascus.

[5]Israeli reports said that Washington is thinking about

making a political iron ring around Syria. [6]Also, the

newspaper M'areef commented on Israeli reports that

American authorities recently met for closed talks.

[7]Powell said that the steps that Syria took to comply

with American demands were limited and not enough.

"بـاول: دمـشق لم تـنـفـذ الـمـطـلـوب و ستـضر بـمصـالـها." (6-21-2003.
 "Powell: Damascus Did not Carry Out Washington's
  Requests and Will Have Problems as a Result")

In this example, "Powell" is the theme of sentence 4

but does not appear again as the theme until sentence 7.

This break between sentences 4 and 7 creates the omitted

link pattern diagrammed below.

c. Diagram

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  S₄   T₃ ─────────────────────────► R₄                            │
│       و   أطلق   باول              تحذيرات جديدة.                  │
│       Powell gave and              new    warnings.               │
│       │                                                            │
│       │                                                            │
│       │                                                            │
│  S₅   │  T₄ ─────────────────────► R₅                             │
│       │  و   قالت   التقارير        أن   واشنطن   تفكر.            │
│       │  sources  said  and        thinks Washington that.        │
│       │                                                            │
│       │  الإسرائيلية                                               │
│       │  Israeli                                                   │
│       │                                                            │
│       │                                                            │
│  S₆   │     T₅ ────────────────► R₆                               │
│       │     و        نقلت         عن  تقارير  إسرائيلية.          │
│       │     commented and         Israeli    reports  on.         │
│       │                                                            │
│       │     صحيفة    المعريف                                       │
│       │     Al-M'areef newspaper                                   │
│       │                                                            │
│       ▼                                                            │
│  S₇   T₃ ─────────────────────► R₇                                │
│       و   قال   باول              أن   التدابير   محدودة.         │
│       Powell said and              limited the measures that.     │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
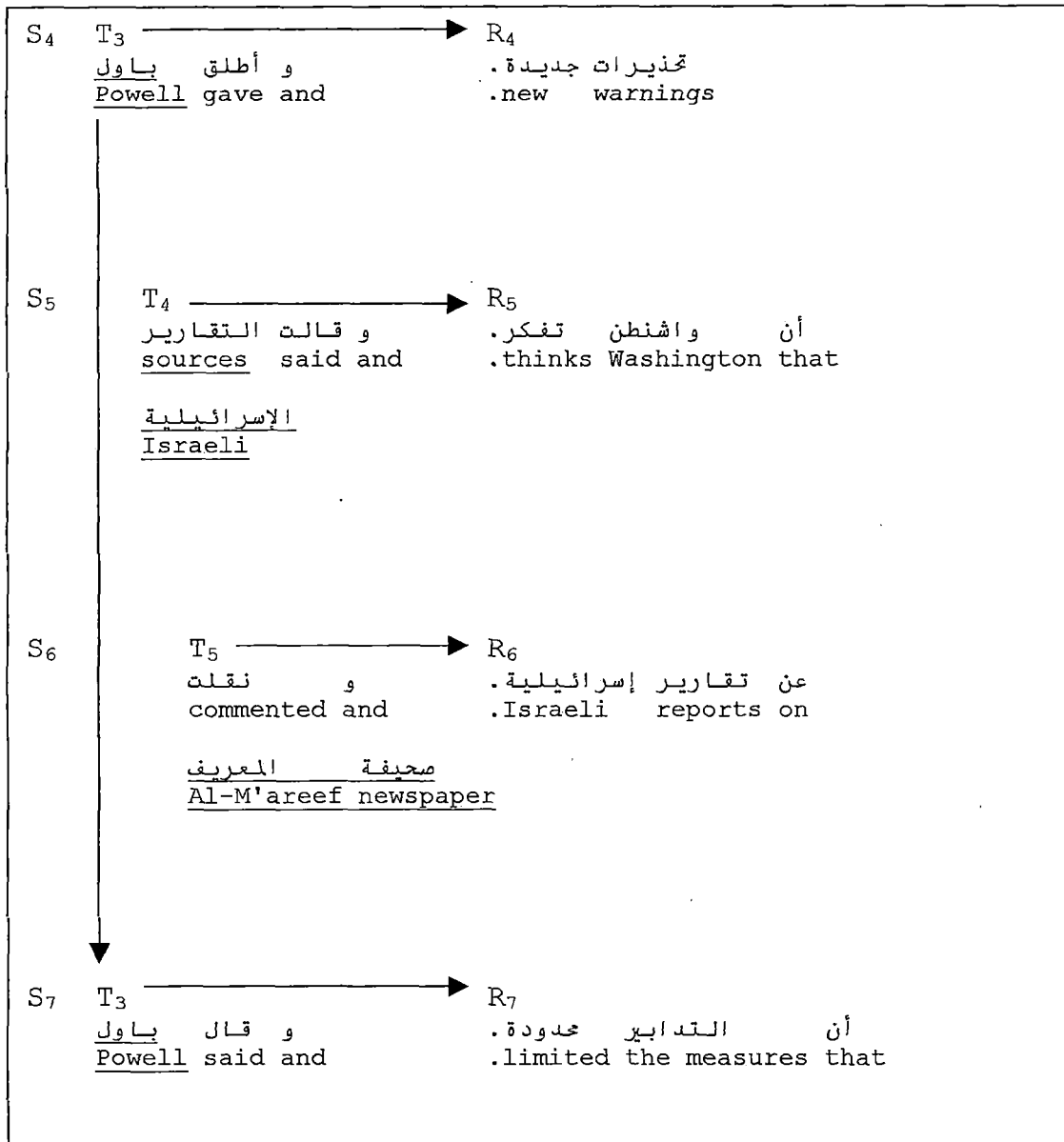
Figure 16. Example of Omitted Link TP Pattern in an
Al-Ittihad Lead News Article

4. The Arabic lead news articles did not display any

derived theme TP patterns, although this is not surprising

as this pattern is not one of the ". . . elementary and basic [pattern] types" (Daneš, 1970, p. 37). Rather, according to Daneš (1974), the constant and simple linear patterns are the most basic types.

In addition, the Arabic lead news articles also had sentence groups that did not fit any of Daneš TP patterns. Of the 88 sentence groups analyzed, 55 (63%) could not be classified according to a specific TP pattern. However, while in the French LNAs this absence of TP patterns was often the result of the writer switching topics between sentences, in Arabic this absence was due to the journalist switching information sources between sentences. That is, as Arabic journalists rely on different information sources, switching sources between sentences often leads to sentences with unconnected themes. An example of this switching of information sources between sentences, and of how it results in a zero TP pattern, is provided below.

Example 9

a. Theme/Rheme

4. الحكومة   جانبها   من   واشنطن   حملت   و
   alhukuma   janibha   min   Washington hamalat   wa
   government its side from Washington criticized and

معها   التعاون   عدم   مسؤلية   السوريا
m'aha   alt'awun   'adm   masuliya   alsuriya
with it cooperation lack   authority   Syrian

84

في   جهـود   اعتقـال   قـادة   النظـام
fee   juhood   i'atiqal qada   alnitham
in   endeavoring to arrest leaders administration

المخلـوع.
almakhlu'a.
former.

5. أمـس   اطبـاء عراقيـون   حـذر   ذلك,   إلى
   ams   'iraqiyun atba   hathara   ,thalik   ila
   yesterday Iraqi   doctors   warned   ,that   to

المصابة   الحـالات عـدد   ارتفـاع   مـن
almasaba alhalat   'adad   irtifa'   min
injured   people   number   increasing from

بالتسمم   الاشعـاعي.
alisha'aee biltasamam.
radiation by poisoning.

6. الخـارجيـة   وزيـر   اعترف   اخرى,   جهـة   مـن
   alkharijiya wazeer   a'atarif ,akhra   jiha   min
   Foreign   Minister admitted ,another side   from

الملف   أن   أمـس   البـريطانـيـة   جـاك سترو
almalf   an   ams   straw jack albritaniya
the file that   yesterday Straw Jack British

المـاضي   فبرايـر   في الحكـومـة   نشرتـه   الـذي
almadee   febrayer fee alhukuma   nashratih alathee
the past February in the government published that

الـدمـار   اسلحة   تـرسانـة   حـول
aldimar   aslaha   tarsana   hawl
mass destruction weapons arsenal   about

العـراقـيـة كـان   مـربكا   و   مـوجها   للصحـافة.
al'iraqiya kana   marabikan   wa mawajha   lilsahafa.
Iraqi   was   confusing   to and directed the press.

b. Literal Translation

[4]From its side, Washington criticized the Syrian Government authorities' lack of cooperation with it in helping to arrest the leaders of the former Iraqi administration. [5]Also, yesterday Iraqi doctors warned about the increasing number of people injured by radiation poisoning.

[6]In addition, the British Foreign Minister Jack Straw admitted yesterday that the file that his government published this past February concerning Iraq's weapons of mass destruction was confusing and directed to the press.

(6-25-2003. "يوم دام لـ>>الـتحالـف<< في الـعراق"
"Day of Blood for 'the Alliance' in Iraq")

c. Diagram

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  S₄    T₂ ──────────────────────────────▶ R₄                         │
│        و اشنطن        حملت        و      مسؤلية   السورية   الحكومة    │
│        Washington  criticized  and    authority  Syrian  Government   │
│                                                                       │
│                             معها.      التعاون      عدم               │
│                          .with it   cooperation   lack of             │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│  S₅    T₃ ──────────────────────────────▶ R₅                         │
│        أطباء عراقيون       حذر          عدد      ارتفاع       من       │
│        Iraqi    doctors  warned      number   increasing    from      │
│                                                                       │
│                          الحالات المصابة.                            │
│                          .injured people                              │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│  S₆      T₄ ────────────────────────────▶ R₆                         │
│        جاك سترو        اعترف        كان    الملف      ان              │
│        Straw Jack    admitted    was  the letter    that             │
│                                                                       │
│                          مربكا.                                       │
│                          .confusing                                   │
│                                                                       │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
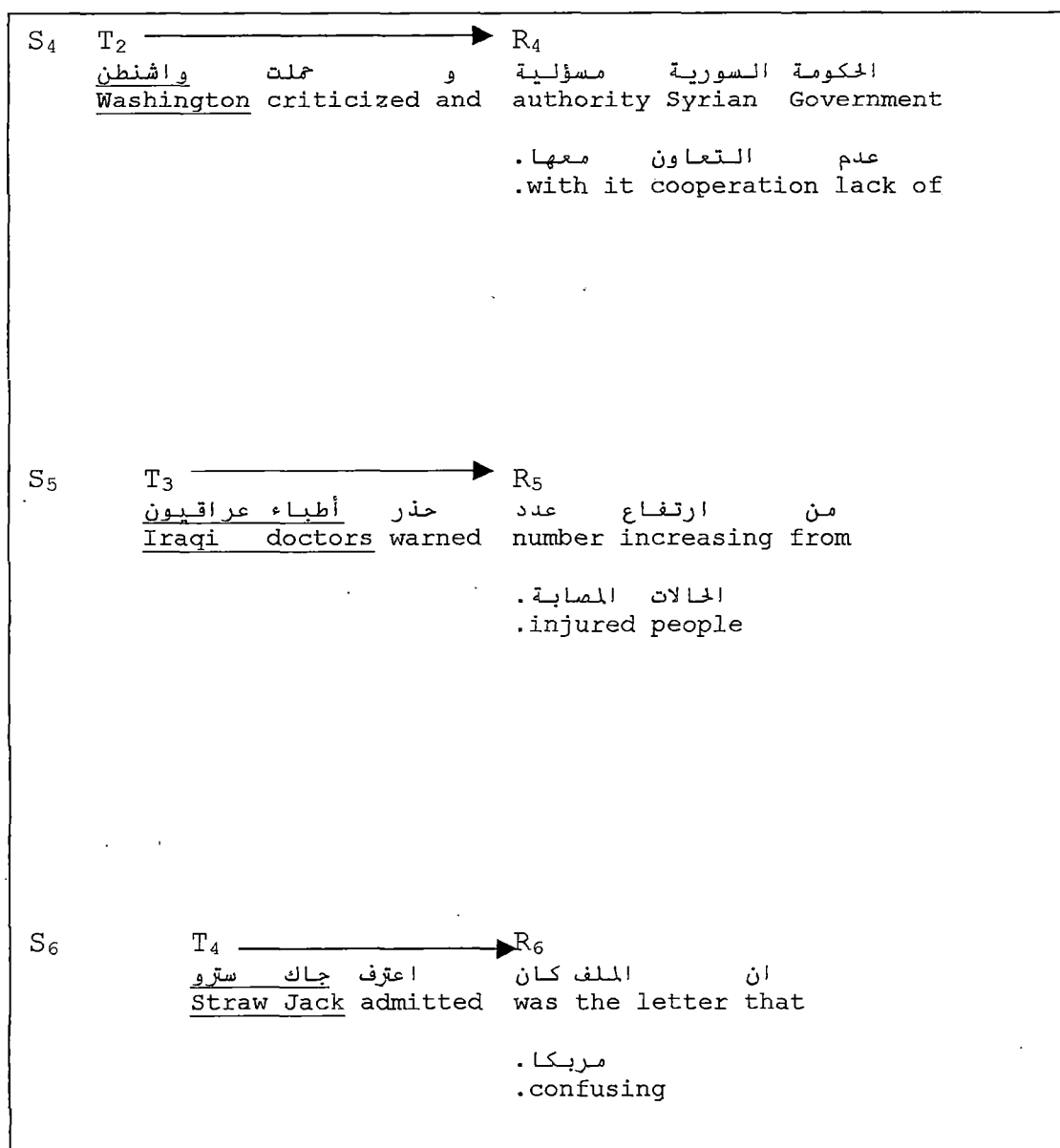
Figure 17. Example of the Zero Pattern in an Al-Ittihad
Lead News Article .

The sentences in the diagram above not only lack a

consistent thematic pattern, but they also suggest the

journalist's reliance on various sources to construct his

article. Specifically, sentence 4 refers to Washington's

criticism of Syria, and one can assume that this

information was drawn from American sources. In contrast,

sentence 5 discusses Iraqi doctors' concerns about

radiation poisoning—information that was likely culled from

sources in Iraq. Sentence 6 refers to British documents

concerning Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and it was

likely taken from British sources. Thus, that these

disparate sentences were likely taken from different

international sources can help to explain the absence of TP

patterns between them. However, although the sentence

groups do not display TP patterns, they are related in that

all touch upon aspects of the war in Iraq.[26]

English Lead News Articles

In The New York Times I analyzed 15 LNAs that included

119 sentences, 104 sentence groups, and an average of eight

sentences per lead news article. Although the number of

sentences and sentence groups analyzed in the English LNAs

was slightly higher than that analyzed in the French and

---

[26] It is possible that one could consider this an example of a derived
theme TP pattern, as each sentence is related (at least tangentially)
to the LNA's title "Day of Blood for 'the Alliance' in Iraq." However,
as the relationship of each sentence to the hypertheme (i.e., the
headline) is not explicit, in this thesis I consider it an example of
the zero TP pattern.

Arabic LNAs, the results are similar to those obtained from my analysis of French and Arabic lead news articles. Specifically, the constant theme pattern appeared with the greatest frequency while the simple linear and omitted link patterns appeared less frequently. The results of my analysis are presented below.

1. In the English LNAs, the constant theme TP pattern appeared with the greatest frequency. Of the 104 sentence groups, 51 (49%) represented the constant theme pattern. In addition, in each LNA the constant theme pattern appeared at least three times. An example of this pattern in an English LNA is presented below, with the theme of each sentence underlined.

Example 10

a. Theme/Rheme

1[27]. <u>Bishop Sean P. O'Malley</u>, a Franciscan friar, was appointed today by Pope John Paul II to lead the dispirited Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

2. <u>He</u> immediately set out to convey a new tone of episcopal humility and contrition.

---

[27] The numbers identifying each sentence reflect the number of the sentence as it appears in the LNA. Hence, sentence 1 corresponds to the first sentence in the LNA, sentence 2 to the second sentence, and so forth.

b. Diagram[29]

```
S₁   T₁ ─────────────────► R₁
     Bishop Sean P. O'Malley   was appointed today by Pope John
     │                          Paul II.
     │
     │
     ▼
S₂   T₁ ─────────────────► R₂
     He                     immediately set out to convey a
     │                      new tone of episcopal humility.
     │
     │
     ▼
S₃   T₁ ─────────────────► R₃
     He                     met with victims of sexual abuse.
     │
     │
     │
     ▼
S₄   T₁ ─────────────────► R₄
     He                     visited hospital patients.
```
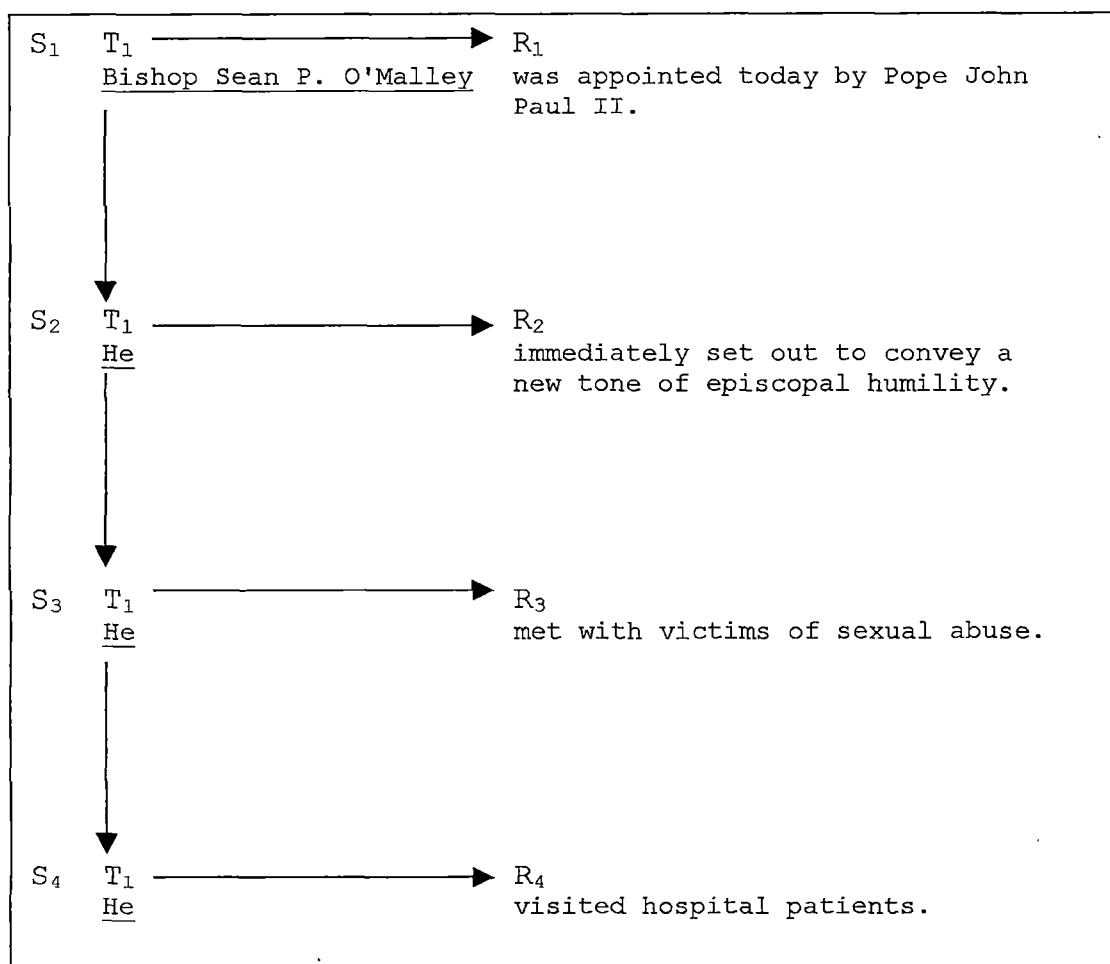
Figure 18. Example of Constant Theme TP Pattern in
a New York Times Lead News Article

2. The pattern that appeared with the second greatest

frequency in the English LNAs was, as in the French and

Arabic LNAs, the simple linear. However, as in the French

─────────────────────

[29]To illustrate this and subsequent English lead news article TP
patterns clearly, only the essential themic and rhemic elements of each
sentence are provided. In addition, the theme of each sentence is
underlined.

91

and Arabic LNAs, although this pattern was the second most common, it appeared less often. Specifically, of the 104 sentence groups, 8 (8%) represented the simple linear pattern. As the prevalence of this pattern in any one LNA `is low, two examples of it, taken from two LNAs, are provided below.

Example 11

a. Theme/Rheme

1. <u>President Bush</u> issued guidelines today banning federal agents from using race or ethnicity in their routine investigations.

2. <u>The policy</u>[30] carves out clear exemptions for investigations involving terrorism and national security measures.

(6-18-2003. "Bush Issues Racial Profiling Bans but Exempts Security Inquiries")

---

[30]In this instance, the words <u>guidelines</u> (from the rheme of sentence 1) and <u>policy</u> (from the theme of sentence 2) are considered synonymous.

b. Diagram
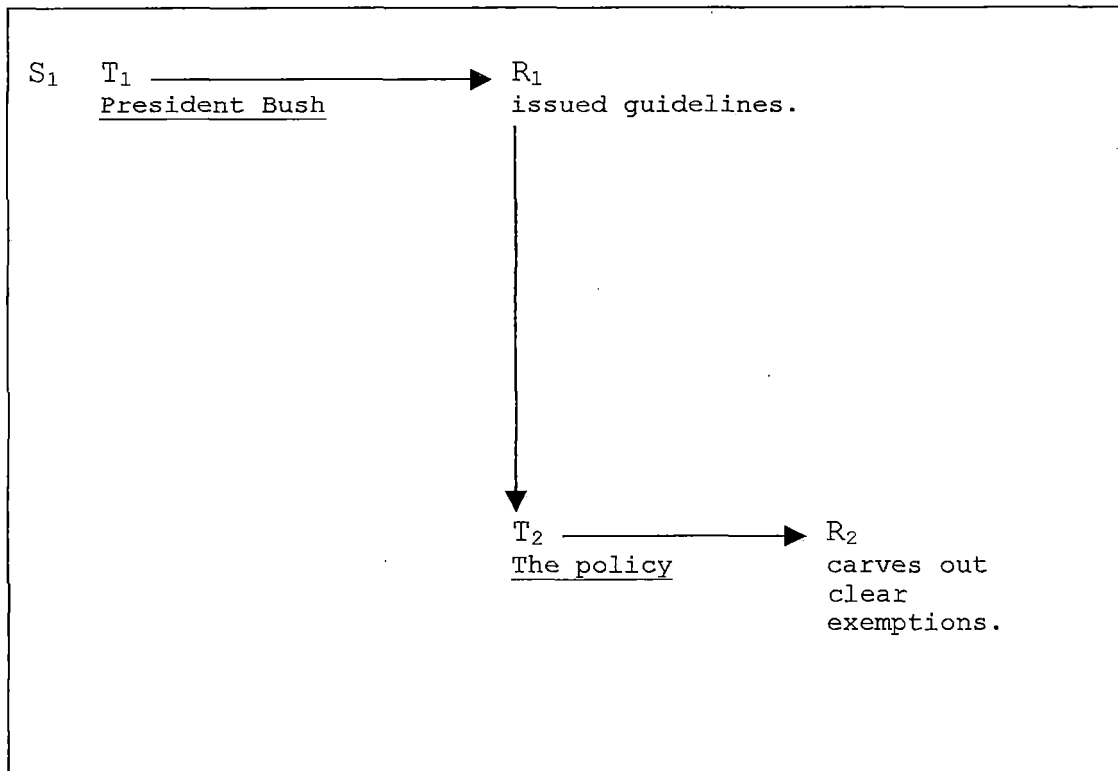
Figure 19. First Example of Simple Linear TP Pattern in a New York Times Lead News Article

Example 12

1. American forces carried out an aggressive series of predawn raids across central Iraq today.

2. The raids involved thousands of soldiers and hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles.

(6-30-2003. "American Forces Carry Out Raids in Central Iraq")

b. Diagram

S_1 T_1 ———————————————▶ R_1
       American forces   carried out an aggressive series of
                                predawn raids.

                        T_2 ———————————▶ R_2
                        The raids   involved
                                           thousands of
                                           soldiers.
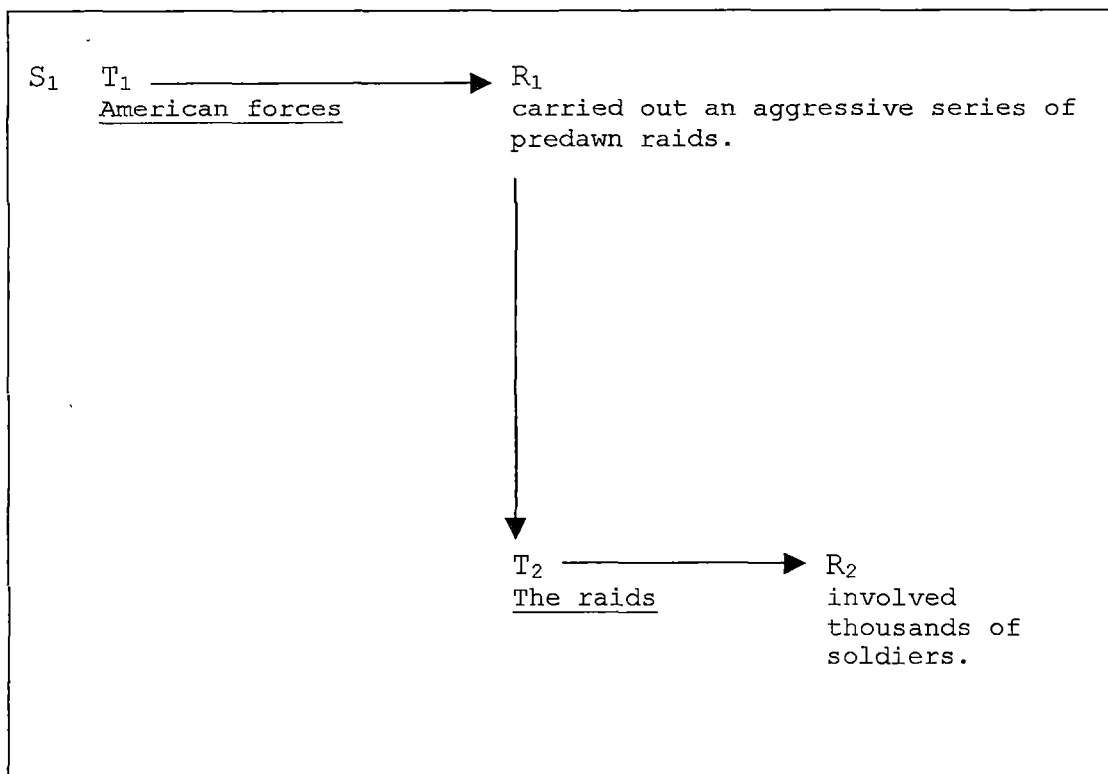
Figure 20. Second Example of Simple Linear TP Pattern in a New York Times Lead News Article

3. Like the French and Arabic lead news articles, the third most common TP pattern in the English LNAs was the omitted link. Of the 104 sentence groups, 7 (7%) were omitted link. An example of this pattern in an English LNA is provided below.

94

Example 13

a. Theme/Rheme

2. <u>Officials</u> said they had not yet assessed the accuracy of the claims by the aid, Abid Hamad Al-Takriti,

   who was arrested in Iraq earlier this week.

3. <u>They</u> said that they regarded the information as

   having enormous potential significance.

4. <u>A conviction</u> among Mr. Hussein's loyalists that he

   is still alive has emerged as a powerful motivating

   factor in the military resistance to United States

   forces in Iraq.

5. If <u>it</u> is truthful, the account[31] that Mr. Mahmoud has

   provided to his interrogators would be the most

   authoritative confirmation that neither Mr. Hussein

   nor his sons were killed in American attacks in March

   and April.

6. <u>Officials</u> would not say whether Mr. Mahmoud had

   revealed a link between the resistance and Mr. Hussein

   and his sons.

(6-21-2003. "Captured Official Is Said to Tell U.S. Hussein
            Survived"

---

[31] In this example, the non-referential "it" is synonymous with the definite noun "the account." For this reason, both are considered equally thematic.

b. Diagram

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  S₂    T₁─────────────────────────▶ R₂                               │
│        Officials                    said they had not assessed the    │
│        │                            accuracy of the claims.           │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│        ▼                                                              │
│  S₃    T₁─────────────────────────▶ R₃                               │
│        They                         said that they regarded the       │
│        │                            information as having potential   │
│        │                            significance.                     │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│  S₄      T₂───────────────────────▶ R₄                               │
│        │ A conviction               has emerged.                      │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│  S₅        T₃─────────────────────▶ R₅                               │
│        │ If it is truthful,         the account would be the most     │
│        │                            authoritative confirmation.       │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│        │                                                              │
│        ▼                                                              │
│  S₆    T₁─────────────────────────▶ R₆                               │
│        Officials                    would not say whether Mr. Mahmoud │
│        │                            had revealed a link.              │
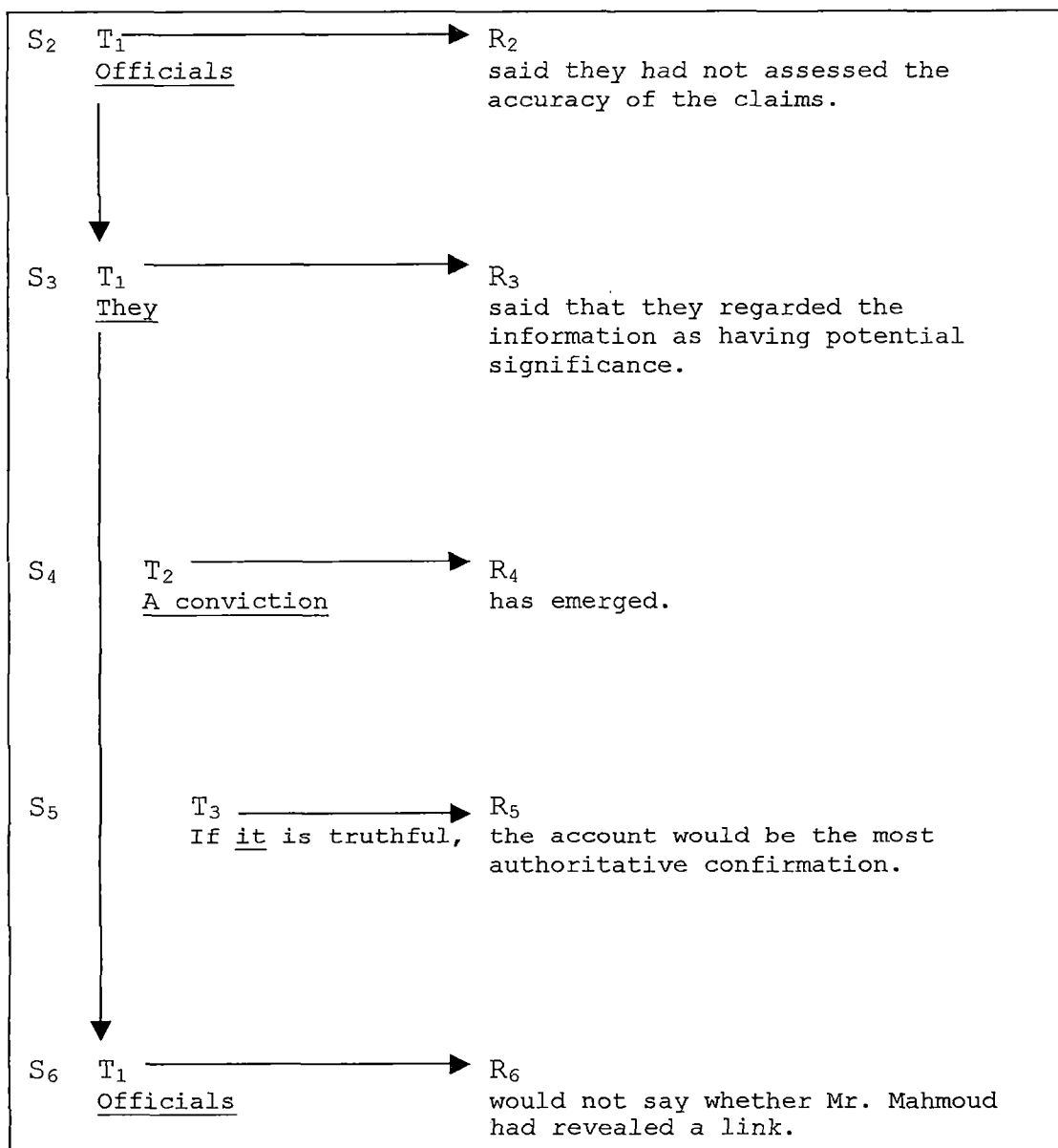└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 21. Example of Omitted Link TP Pattern in a
New York Times Lead News Article

4. Although the derived theme TP pattern did not appear in either the French or Arabic lead news articles, of the 104 sentence groups in the English LNAs, 4 (4%) represented this pattern. This pattern's appearance in the English LNAs may be attributed to the fact that, as Daneš' TP patterns are tailored to subject-verb-object (SVO) languages such as English, the derived them pattern might be more endemic to English texts. However, the pattern appeared in only two articles. Below, an example of this pattern is provided.

Example 14

a. Theme/Rheme

1. Israel and the Palestinians appeared today to be edging toward an agreement that would remove Israeli troops from the northern Gaza strip.

2. Visiting American and Egyptian delegations were trying to broker the deal with the larger goal of moving ahead on an international peace plan.

3. Violence persisted today, with Israeli troops shooting one Palestinian militant to death in northern Gaza.

(6-16-2003. "Deal Seems Near on Israeli Pullout from North Gaza")

b. Diagram

```
                              (T)
      Deal Seems Near on Israeli Pullout from North Gaza
```


S₁   → R₁   S₂   → R₂   S₃   → T₃
T₁   R₁   T₂   R₂   T₃   R₃
Israel and   appeared   Visiting   were trying Violence persisted
the   to be   American   to broker   today.
Palestinians edging   and   the deal.
             toward an   Egyptian
             agreement.   delegations
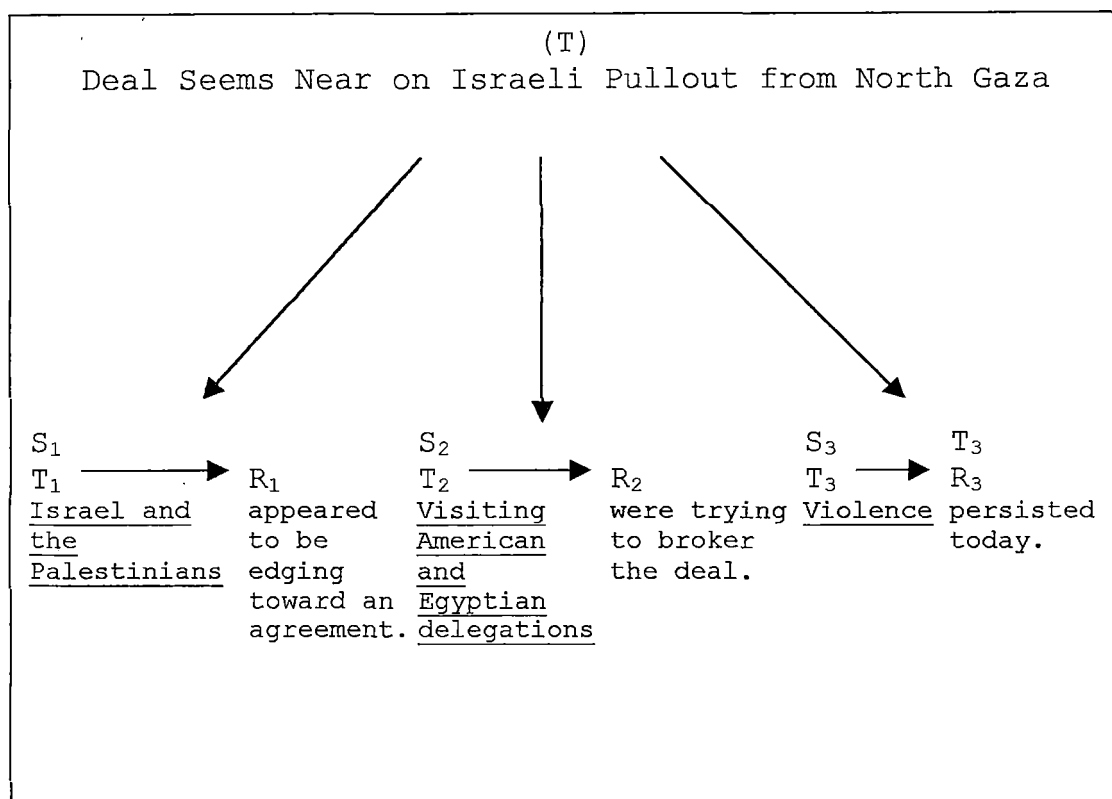
Figure 22. Example of Derived Theme TP Pattern in a
New York Times Lead News Article

This diagram illustrates two important points about the

derived theme pattern. First, the themes of sentences 1,

2, and 3 are disparate and, in addition, the rheme of each

sentence is unrelated to the theme of the following

sentence. As a result, it is difficult to categorize the

relationship between these sentences as representing either

98

the constant theme, simple linear, or omitted link TP patterns.

Second, although the themes of sentences 1, 2, and 3 are unrelated, the themic and rhemic components of the sentences are related to the hypertheme, which is the lead news article headline. For example, sentence 1 states that the Israelis and Palestinians appear close to reaching an agreement, and this relates directly to the headline, which states that a "Deal Seems Near" on Israeli withdrawal from northern Gaza. Similarly, sentences 2 and 3 also relate to Israel's withdrawal from northern Gaza. Thus, although the sentences' themic and rhemic elements are not directly related in ways required by the constant theme, simple linear, and omitted link TP patterns, their relationship to the LNA's hypertheme (or headline) provides a clear example of the derived theme TP pattern in an English LNA.

5. Among the English LNAs, and similar to the French and Arabic LNAs, there were instances in which some sentence groups did not display any TP patterns. Of the 104 sentence groups analyzed, 34 (32%) were classified as not having a discernible TP pattern. While in French LNAs this absence of a TP pattern was often the result of the journalist switching topics between sentences, and in

Arabic LNAs the result of the journalist using various

international sources, in English LNAs this absence of a TP

pattern was produced by emphasizing different aspects of a

given topic. Below, and example of the zero TP pattern in

English LNAs is presented.

Example 15

a. Theme/Rheme

6. They would not provide any details about their

   identities.

7. A senior Defense Department official said most had

   been released after it was determined that they did not

   pose a threat.

8. The fact that the Pentagon would authorize an attack

   along the Syrian border underscored the risky nature of

   the clandestine air-group attack.

(6-24-2003. "Syrians Wounded in Attack by U.S. on Convoy
         in Iraq")

b. Diagram

S_6	T_1 ————————▶	R_6
	They	would not provide any details.
S_7	T_2 ————————▶	R_7
	A senior Defense Department official	said most had been released.
S_8	T_3 ————————▶	R_8
	The fact	underscored the risky nature of the clandestine air-ground attacks.
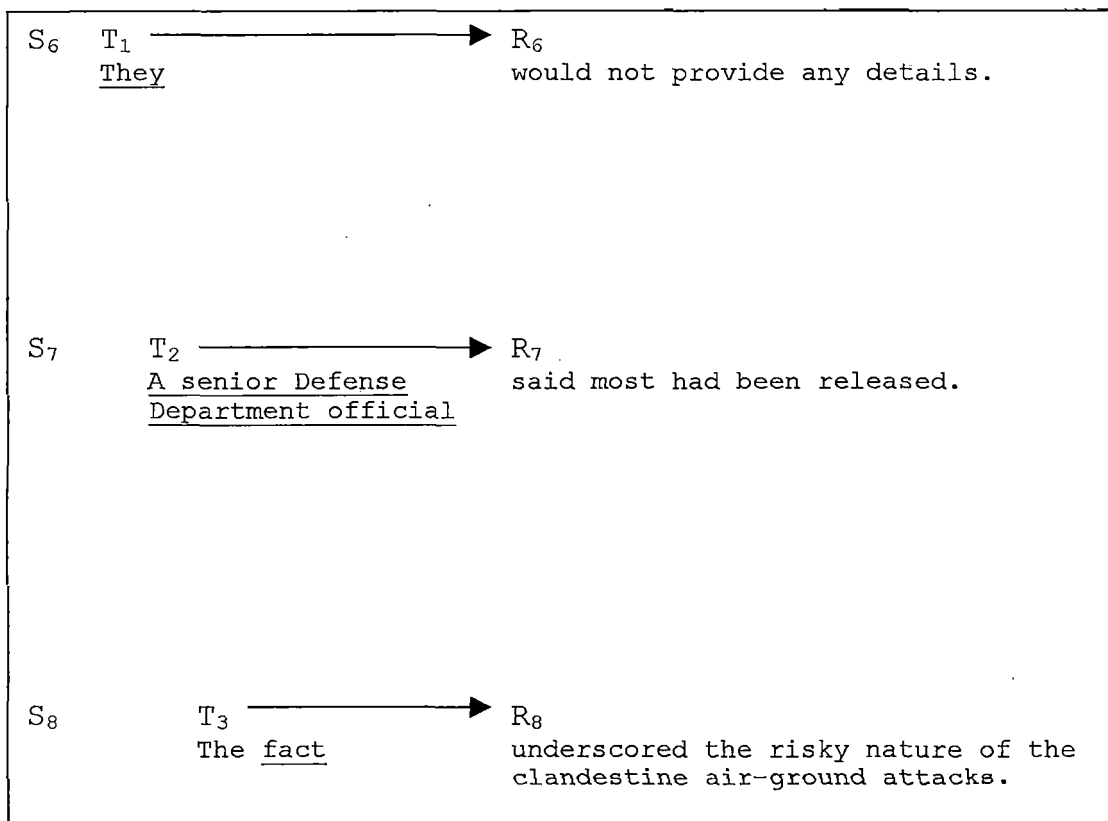
Figure 23. Example of the Zero Pattern in a New York Times Lead News Article

As the diagram above illustrates, there is no clear TP pattern linking the themes of sentences 6, 7, and 8. For this reason, these sentences are considered to be examples of the zero pattern found also in the French and Arabic LNAs.

Comparison of Lead News Articles
in French, Arabic, and English

My analysis of lead news articles in French, Arabic, and
English indicates that they share four important
similarities. First, the patterns of thematic progression
that appear in each language's LNAs can be explained using
Daneš' TP patterns. Although there were a significant
number (between 32-42%) of sentence groups in each
language's LNAs that did not display any TP patterns, the
sentence groups with TP patterns could all be identified as
either constant theme, simple linear, omitted link, or
derived theme. This similarity suggests that among these
languages, ideas are developed similarly in the lead news
article genre.

The second similarity among the LNAs in French, Arabic,
and English is that Daneš' TP patterns appear with similar
frequency. Specifically, by far the most predominant
pattern in each language's LNAs is the constant theme,
while the simple linear is the second most common. In
addition, the omitted link pattern appears the least
frequently in all three languages' LNAs. Below, Table 1
shows the number of grouped sentences in each language's
LNAs devoted to a specific TP pattern, while Table 2

presents these results as percentages of the number of

sentence groups analyzed in each language's LNAs.

Table 1. The Number of Grouped Sentences in Each Language's
LNAs Devoted to a Specific TP Pattern

TP Pattern	French (n=86)[32]	Arabic (n=88)	English (n=104)
Constant Theme	34	24	51
Simple Linear	12	5	8
Omitted Link	4	4	7
Derived Theme	0	0	4
Zero Pattern	36	55	34
Total	86	88	104

In Table 1, one can see that the constant theme pattern

appears most frequently, the simple linear pattern the next

most frequently, and the omitted link pattern the least

frequently in the French, Arabic, and English lead news

articles.   In Table 2, one can see, as a percentage, how

many of the grouped sentences in each language's LNAs are

devoted to a specific TP pattern.   From this table, one can

---

[32] N is the number of grouped sentences analyzed in each language's LNAs.

Table 2. The Percentage of Grouped Sentences in Each
Language's LNAs Devoted to a Specific TP Pattern

TP Pattern	French (n=86) [33]	Arabic (n=88)	English (n=104)
Constant Theme	40%	27%	49%
Simple Linear	14%	6%	8%
Omitted Link	5%	4%	7%
Derived Theme	0%	0%	4%
Zero Pattern	41%	63%	32%
Total	100%	100%	100%

also see that there is some variation in the degree to
which each pattern appears in the French, Arabic, and
English lead news articles. For example, while the
constant theme pattern appeared most frequently in French,
Arabic, and English, the percentage of sentence groups
devoted to this pattern varied across the three languages.
That is, 49% of sentence groups in the English LNAs were
constant theme, while 40% and 27% of the sentence groups
were constant theme in the French and Arabic LNAs,
respectively.

These differences in the degree to which each TP pattern
appears in a language's LNAs may be attributed to one of

[33] Ibid.

104

two factors. First, the constant theme pattern may appear more frequently in English LNAs because journalists may prefer it to either the simple linear or omitted link patterns. Thus, they may use this pattern more frequently than journalists writing in French or Arabic. Second, as my sample size is small (i.e., 15 lead news articles analyzed in each language), it may be the case that had I analyzed a larger sample (perhaps 50 LNAs in each language), the frequencies with which the constant theme, simple linear, and omitted link patterns appeared in French, Arabic, and English lead news articles would have been similar.

A third similarity between the French, Arabic, and English lead news articles is that, as the constant theme, simple linear, and omitted link patterns appear with similar frequency, it is likely the case that a basic principle of idea organization cuts across the three languages. This, in turn, suggests the possibility that all human languages share a similar pattern for how ideas are organized into sentences and sentences into units of written text.

A fourth similarity is that each language's LNAs consistently display a greater number of new rhemes than new themes. According to Hatim (1989), in analyses of

thematic progression it is generally the case that the number of new rhemes is equivalent to the number of sentences analyzed, while the number of new themes is slightly less. This stems from the fact that each sentence contains new information (a rheme) which has not previously been introduced, while the same sentence may repeat old information (a theme) found in previous sentences.

Despite their similarities, several differences also exist among the lead news articles in French, Arabic, and English. The first difference is that the derived theme TP pattern appears only in the English LNAs. As this pattern is found in only 4 of the 104 English LNA sentences analyzed, it could be the case that, had I examined a larger number of articles in each language, this pattern would also have appeared in either or both the French and Arabic LNAs. However, it is also possible that journalists writing English LNAs itemize, serialize, or sequence events in such a way that the appearance of derived-theme patterns is more likely. According to Nwogu,

> The TP with a derived theme pattern tends to
> constitute the main type of pattern used to
> organize information in paragraph units involving

the itemization, serialization, and sequencing of

events, usually from a hypertheme. (p. 90)

As English LNAs are considerably longer than their

French and Arabic counterparts, they may rely more heavily

on itemizing, serializing, or sequencing ideas to maintain

consistency and coherence throughout the LNA. If this is

the case, then the derived theme TP pattern is an important

thematic organizer that is necessary in English LNAs as a

result of their length but is not essential—and hence does

not appear—in French and Arabic LNAs that are shorter and

have less need to itemize and sequence within the limited

space of their lead news articles.

A second difference between the French, Arabic, and

English LNAs is the degree to which each relies on a

specific TP pattern. For example, in English LNAs 49% of

the grouped sentences represent the constant theme pattern,

5% the simple linear pattern, 7% the omitted link pattern,

and 4% the derived theme pattern. In contrast, the

corresponding percentages for the French and (Arabic) LNAs

are: constant theme 40% (27%), simple linear 14% (6%), and

omitted link 5% (4%). The differences between the

percentages for each TP pattern may be attributed to two

factors. First, as the TP patterns were initially based on

English texts, it is not surprising that these patterns appear more frequently in English LNAs than in either their French or Arabic counterparts.

A second possible explanation is that, although 15 LNAs were analyzed in each language, a larger number of sentence groups was analyzed in English (104) than in either French (86) or Arabic (88). As the English LNAs were twice as long as their French and Arabic counterparts, more sentence groups were analyzed, resulting in slightly higher percentages for each TP pattern in the English lead news articles. Had it been possible to analyze a larger number of sentences in French and Arabic (i.e., had their lead news articles been longer), or had a larger sample size been used (perhaps 50 lead news articles in each language instead of 15), the percentages may have been closer in terms of the degree to which each appeared in the French, Arabic, and English lead news articles.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THEORETICAL, PEDAGOGICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF LEAD NEWS ARTICLE ANALYSIS

Theoretical Implications

Given the similarities among the French, Arabic, and English LNAs, there are several important theoretical conclusions that one can draw. First, Kaplan's (1966) statement that logic ". . . is evolved out of culture [and] is not universal" (p. 2) may not be fully warranted. Kaplan's statement presupposes a linguistic relativism in which, according to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, ". . . different languages map onto the world in different ways. . . different cognitive structures" (Harley, 2001, p. 81). However, the findings of this analysis indicate that, at the level of the utterance, French, Arabic, and English map ideas onto the world in <u>similar</u> ways using <u>similar</u> cognitive structures. Thus, the implication is that in lead news articles, different languages use similar linguistic constructs to covey information, thereby suggesting that, at the levels of utterance and text, logic systems expressed as linguistic constructs are similar across languages.

A second theoretical implication of my findings is that, if disparate languages display a similar means of organizing ideas at the level of the sentence, and if these same languages follow similar principles for organizing texts, then there is perhaps a universal pattern underlying how sentences are structured. This suggests that the human mind may be constructed so as to arrange ideas in a specific manner, regardless of the language that one speaks. Perhaps, as Pinker (1994) suggests, there is not only a language instinct but also constructs within the brain that necessitate that all languages organize thoughts so as to express them in patterns such as those identified by Daneš. Thus, within the field of typology, thematic progression may be an infrequently studied language universal with important implications for how the mind structures language.

A third theoretical implication of my research is that it corroborates the findings of Francis (1990) and Nwogu (1993). Specifically, the predominance of the constant theme TP pattern in each language's LNAs, combined with the less frequent appearance of the simple linear and omitted link patterns, supports Nwogu's finding that the constant theme pattern is associated with narrative texts involving

". . .the description of a state, process, event, or procedure" (p. 98). In contrast, the simple linear TP pattern is used more frequently in expository texts that ". . . organize information in paragraph units involving the explanation or exposition of ideas, concepts, or results" (p. 97). Francis expands upon this by noting that in expository writing, one expects ". . . each successive idea to be an expansion of, and dependent on, a previous one . . .[Thus,] the theme of one clause picks up on an idea from the rheme of [the] previous clause" (p. 66), thereby generating a simple linear TP pattern.

As news reports are more akin to narrative than expository texts, particularly with respect to their description of events, it is not surprising that the combination theme TP pattern appears with the greatest frequency in the French, Arabic, and English LNAs. At the same time, as the discourse found within the LNA genre is often not explanatory or in other ways characteristic of expository writing, one anticipates the simple linear pattern to appear less frequently. Thus, the predominance of the constant theme pattern, and the infrequent appearance of other TP patterns in French, Arabic, and English LNAs, leads one to conclude that the three

languages not only structure sentences similarly but also

that, within the lead news article genre and the narrative

text type, they have patterns of thematic progression

similar to those delineated in studies such as Francis

(1989; 1990), Nwogu (1993) and Nwogu and Bloor (1991).

Pedagogical Implications

Several pedagogical implications can be drawn from

this study, particularly with respect to L2/ESL learners.

First, my results suggest that instructors should introduce

students to a genre's thematic patterns, as doing do may

facilitate students' ability to compose texts in different

genres. In this regard, this pedagogical implication of my

research is similar to the findings of researchers within

Australian genre studies, who stress that in examining

genres, one must identify both the global text features and

the sentence-level structures that allow the text to say

what it does.

Second, while instructors can address the global text

features of a particular genre, they can also examine

sentence-level structures by introducing students to

thematization (i.e., identifying theme and rheme) and

patterns of thematic progression (i.e., the simple linear

and constant theme TP patterns). This is particularly

useful if, as the results of this study suggest, similar TP

patterns can be found in similar genres across different

languages. Thematization and thematic progression are thus

two important tools that students can use not only to help

them understand the sentence-level structures of an L2

genre, but also to understand how these structures resemble

(or differ from) those found in the same genre in the

student's L1.

Martin (1993b) provides a powerful example not only of

how teaching ESL students about thematization and thematic

progression can help them to understand a genre's sentence-

level structure, but also of how such knowledge can improve

their writing. Examining a student essay on why the study

of history is important, Martin rewrites it to follow a

constant theme TP pattern that is more consistent with what

one expects to find in a narrative text. Changing only the

theme-rheme structure and TP pattern, Martin reconstructs

the text such that it reads more coherently and the

paragraphs are tied together more cohesively. As he

reflects,

> The point of this exercise has simply been to
>
> demonstrate that improving writing depends on

changing texture, not spelling, punctuation, and

usage, and that writing can be improved without

rejecting an apprentice writer's ideas." (p. 255)

Thus, introducing students to thematization and thematic

progression can help them to develop the writing skills

necessary to join words into sentences, sentences into

paragraphs, and paragraphs into well-written texts

exemplifying specific genres.

A third pedagogical implication of my study is that by

helping students understand the levels at which various

aspects of language interact, teachers can familiarize them

with a variety of genres that they will likely encounter in

college or within the workplace. As lead news articles

represent an important genre that students use in their

academic, professional, and personal lives (Hyon, 2001),

the approach to thematization and TP patterns discussed in

this thesis may provide the basis for introducing students

to this genre, helping them to understand its global and

sentence-level structures, and enabling them to compose

similar texts.

According to Martin (1993a), introducing students to

the textual features of particular genres that they are

likely to use in their academic, professional, and personal

lives is one way of reducing functional illiteracy and providing students with the linguistic skills they need to compose similar texts rather than being excluded from them. As Love (1993) writes, the power of thematization and TP patterns lies in their ability to help ESL students understand how disciplinary meaning is constructed within specific genres.

Traditionally, L1 and L2 writing pedagogy has focused on improving students' grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In the 1980s, the emphasis switched to helping students understand genres and the external forces that shape them. What is missing between the two levels of analysis is the role played by thematization and thematic progression in joining the syntactic elements of language to their textual and global counterparts. As Kress (1976) notes, thematization and patterns of thematic progression are aspects of the clause that ". . . remain a relatively neglected area, one that is still generally regarded as in some sense subordinate" (p. 174) to other levels of linguistic analysis. As the act of writing encompasses the levels of syntactic, textual, and global analysis, it is important to place as much emphasis on the middle level of analysis as on the sentential and global levels.

Technological Implications

Although this study is primarily concerned with how textual analyses such as thematization and thematic progression can be used to identify similarities in the generic structures of French, Arabic, and English lead news articles, and although the applications of my findings are relevant to second language teaching, it is also important to note the technological implications of my findings. Specifically, the finding that lead news articles in French, Arabic, and English have similar patterns of thematic progression can assist in the creation of more accurate computer translation software. As Janoš (1979) suggests, one limitation of such software is that although it maintains a high degree of accuracy at the level of lexicogrammar, it is unable to translate consistently theme-rheme structures and patterns of thematic progression.

One of the reasons for computer translation software's weakness in this regard is that ". . . there is no clear, explicit, and unambiguous definition of what is meant under the concept 'functional sentence perspective'" (Janoš, 1979, p. 20). To this end, this paper provides a clearer definition of FSP in French, Arabic, and English and thus

can contribute to the development of translation software that is faithful at the sentential and global levels to source texts in these languages.

The findings of this thesis are relevant not only for how students are taught second languages but also for how texts can be translated accurately through the use of computer software. Perhaps it is not too far afield to speculate that the computer translation software that translates texts effectively at the sentential and global levels can one day be incorporated within the classroom to enable students to switch between L1 and L2 translations of the same generic text, thereby enabling them to see the ways in which syntax, thematization, TP patterns, and genre interact within the L1 and L2 texts to produce similar features.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, my research was driven by the need to provide a cogent response to two questions: "Do dissimilar languages display similar divisions of sentences into themic and rhemic elements?" and "Do these languages use similar patterns of thematic progression to construct texts within a specific genre?" To answer these questions, I analyzed 15 lead news articles each in French, Arabic, and English, focusing specifically on the division of sentences in each language's LNAs into their themic and rhemic components based on Halliday's functional sentence perspective, and identifying the patterns of thematic progression in each language's LNAs according to Daneš' TP patterns. The results of my study indicate that French, Arabic, and English divide sentences similarly into themic and rhemic components, that the TP patterns appearing in the LNAs can be explained using Daneš' framework, and that the constant theme pattern appears most frequently, the simple linear pattern next frequently, and the omitted link pattern the least frequently in the three languages' LNAs.

The theoretical implications of my findings are, first, that how languages divide sentences into themic and rhemic constituents, and how they develop texts within a specific genre, is a product not of linguistic relativism or culture but of how the human mind organizes language. This leads to the second theoretical implication of my research, which is that the organization of the human mind influences how languages are structured. As a result, logic systems are similar across languages, and the structure of a language neither determines the way in which speakers of a particular language view the world nor predisposes them to adopting a particular worldview.

If there is a fundamental way in which the human mind structures language at the sentential and textual levels, it may point to the existence of language universals at these levels. As much research on universals has focused on phonology, morphology, and syntax, my findings suggest that it is necessary to explore the possibility of universals at the sentential and textual levels as well.

In addition to the theoretical implications of my research, there are also two important real-world applications. First, the similarities between how disparate languages divide sentences into themic and rhemic

elements and organize them into thematic progression

patterns within specific genres can form the basis of a

teaching pedagogy within an English as a Second Language

(ESL) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom. If

students can be taught to recognize and understand

thematization and thematic progression, and if they are

given an opportunity to explore these features within a

specific genre in their L1 and L2, they may be better able

to understand how and why texts are arranged in specific

manners. This arrangement of sentences and TP patterns

within specific texts can then serve as an outline for the

steps that students can take to compose a text in their L2.

A second real-world application of my findings is that

they may assist in the creation of more accurate computer

translation software. As one important element of

translation is maintaining in the translated work the

thematic structure of the source text, my research can

serve as the basis for understanding better how the mind

structures languages at the sentential and textual levels.

This information can then be used to develop software that

more accurately mimics the mind's ability to maintain

consistent thematic patterns across translations. Such

software may have important implications for L2 learners as

well as for the ease and speed with which one is able to obtain translations of books, magazine articles, and other important documents.

Although my research has shown a clear relationship between how French, Arabic, and English organize lead news articles at the sentential and textual levels, this area of research is in need of further exploration, particularly in the analysis of a greater number of languages and genres to determine whether my findings remain valid under different conditions. It is my hope that, after reading this thesis, others may be drawn into studying the intricacies of human language as they are played out within specific genres at the levels of sentence and text.

APPENDIX

QUANTITATIVE FEATURES OF
LEAD NEWS ARTICLES

Le Monde

Date[34]	Headline	# of Sentences Analyzed	# of Sentence Groups Analyzed
6/13	L'Europe en cours de Constitution	7	6
6/14	Santé, EDF-GDF, La Poste: Les réformes programmés	7	6
6/16	Affaire Alègre: Toulouse doute, Baudis accuse	8	7
6/17	Retraites: Après la manifs, la guerilla parlementaire	7	6
6/18	Raffarin envisage une loi contre le foulard à l'école	6	5
6/19	Retraites: Dernière journée de grèves avant la réforme	7	6
6/20	Raffarin: <<le choix de l'apaisement>>	8	7
6/21	L'Union européene tente de contenir l'immigration	5	4
6/22-23	Les colères de la France du travail	7	6
6/24	José Bové, l'anti-OGM, en prison pour l'exemple	8	7
6/25	Constitution: une procedure d'empêchement à l'américaine	5	4
6/26	Le <<droit à l'environnement>> entre dans la Constitution	6	5
6/27	L'Union européene fait sa revolution agricole	7	6
6/28	Référendum en Corse: le <<oui>> résolu de Chirac	6	5
6/29-30	Depuis sa prison, José Bové interpelle Jacques Chirac	6	5
	AVERAGE	6.7	5.7

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[34] The French lead news articles were published in 2003.

Date[35]	Headline	# of Sentences Analyzed	# of Sentence Groups Analyzed
6/16	<<عقرب الصحراء>> تلاحق فلول صدام 'Desert Scorpion: Wrapping Up after the Fall of Saddam'	8	7
6/17	واشنطن: إرساء الديمقراطية في العراق يطلب سنوات 'Washington: Anchoring Democracy in Iraq will Take Several Years'	7	6
6/18	مقتل 3 جنود اميركيين..و اعتقالات و مداهمات في بغداد '3 American Soldiers Killed...And Arrests and Police Raids in Baghdad'	8	7
6/21	باول: دمشق لم تنفذ المطلوب و ستضر عصاتها 'Powell: Damascus Did Not Carry Out Washington's Requests and Will Have Problems as a Result'	8	7
6/22	حملات مكثفة لاصطياد صدام و نجليه 'Massive Searches Didn't Catch Saddam and His Sons'	7	6
6/23	قصف قافلة لصدام قرب الحدود السورية 'Supporters of Saddam Attacked Near the Syrian Border'	8	7
6/24	<<التحالف>> باق في العراق 5 سنوات 'The Alliance to Remain in Iraq 5 Years'	8	7

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[35] The Arabic lead news articles were published in 2003.

Date	Headline	# of Sentences Analyzed	# of Sentence Groups Analyzed
6/25	يـوم دام لـ<<الـتحالـف>> في الـعراق 'Day of Blood for the Alliance in Iraq'	6	5
6/26	زايـد يـدعو إلى إنهاء احتلال الـعراق بـأسرع وقـت 'Zayed Calls for a Quick End to the Occupation of Iraq'	5	4
6/27	تـكريت تـتبرأ مـن صدام 'Takreet Freed from Saddam'	8	7
6/28	واشنطن تـراجع اسـتراتـيجيتها في الـعراق 'Washington Changes Its Strategy in Iraq'	6	5
6/29	بـاول يـدعو إلى الـصبر على الخسائر في الـعراق 'Powell Calls for Firmness in the Face of Casualties in Iraq'	5	4
6/30	<<الخريطة>> تـدخل أول اخـتبار في غزة الـيوم 'The Map Enters Its First Test in Gaza Today'	7	6
7/01	مقتل 30 عراقيا و إضافة الـعشرات في انفجار مخزن ذخيرة '30 Iraqis Dead and Dozens Wounded in Supply Warehouse Explosion'	5	4
7/02	بـرزان الـتكريـي في قبضة الـتحالـف 'Barzan Al-Takriti in the Hands of the Alliance'	8	7
	AVERAGE	6.7	5.9

Date[36]	Headline	# of Sentences Analyzed	# of Sentence Groups Analyzed
6/16	Deal Seems Near on Israeli Pullout from North Gaza	8	7
6/18	Bush Issues Ban but Exempts Security Inquiries	8	7
6/19	Report by E.P.A. Leaves Out Data on Climate Change	8	7
6/20	Talks Collapse on U.S. Efforts to Open Europe to Biotech Food	8	7
6/21	Captured Official Is Said to Tell U.S. Hussein Survived	8	7
6/23	Studies of Dietary Supplements Come Under Growing Scrutiny	8	7
6/24	Syrians Wounded in Attack by U.S. on Convoy in Iraq	8	7
6/25	Taking Action While Action Is an Option	8	7
6/26	Agency Disputes C.I.A. View on Trailers as Weapons Labs	8	7
6/27	Bush Calls for Changes in Africa to End Wars and Promote Trade	8	7
6/28	House and Senate Face Big Job to Settle Medicare Differences	8	7
6/30	American Forces Carry Out Raids in Central Iraq	8	7
7/1	In a Momentous Term, Justices Remake the Law, and the Court	8	7
7/2	Troubleshooter Is Named to Lead Boston Catholics	8	7
7/3	Terror Suspects Ordered Released	8	7
	AVERAGE	8	7

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[36] The English lead news articles were published in 2003.

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