

**Pavel Dubec: *Syntactic and FSP Aspects of the Existential Construction in Norwegian*.** Prague: Karolinum, 2019, 137 pages.

The present monograph deals with the existential construction in Norwegian. The structure is described from two points of view, namely syntactically and within the framework of the Functional Sentence Perspective theory. The author claims allegiance to the Prague School linguistic tradition where the core of Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) had been shaped by Vilém Mathesius before it was elaborated into a compact theory by Jan Firbas. The author presents his data-based study in two major sections.

First, the theoretical foundation of the exploration of existential sentences is presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6. In chapter 4 the reader is provided with an informed introduction to FSP theory including the definitions of its concepts, the explanation of its terminology and the description of the four FSP factors (linearity, context, semantics, and intonation) whose interplay determines the communicative perspective of a sentence. Chapter 5 describes the existential construction in Norwegian. From the syntactic point of view, the bare existential construction and the existential construction with adverbial(s) are differentiated. The personal pronoun “*det*” is described in its five syntactic functions. The verb typical of this syntactic structure in Norwegian seems to be more varied than in English; except for the verb “*be*”, intransitive verbs or transitive verbs used intransitively appear (p. 35). In the next section we find the syntactic description of the notional subject, which also takes account of the semantic implications related to the use of articles and modification with the head noun. The author also adduces the syntactic classification of adverbials both in Norwegian and in English. For the purposes of FSP analysis, the English way of classifying adverbials as those incorporated into the sentence structure (adjuncts) and as those outside the sentence structure (disjuncts and conjuncts) appears to be more relevant (p. 42). Further on, the FSP aspects of the existential construction are explained. The FSP functions of theme, rheme and transition are described and explicated, together with the dynamic semantic functions mapped onto them. In Firbasian tradition, the author distinguishes between the actual linear arrangement of FSP functions and the interpretative arrangement, the latter ruled by the rising degree of communicative dynamism (p. 57). The FSP pattern that existential sentences display is characteristically Th-Tr-Rh. Besides, two other minor patterns were detected, namely Th - Tr/Rh and Th-Tr-Rh-Rh<sub>pr</sub>, the latter implementing the extended presentation scale (pp. 61–62), a relatively new concept in the FSP theory. Both the syntactic and the FSP accounts are completed by notes on potentiality, a valued contribution to the diversity of language, specifically the multifarious relation between the meaning and the form.

Second, the author presents the analysis of the corpus of 1000 existential sentences manually excerpted from twenty different sources; ten representing fiction, ten academic prose (chapter 7). It is worth mentioning that each of the excerpted existential sentences in Norwegian is completed with a reliable English translation: if a translation of the source was not available, respected translators from Norwegian were asked to provide it.

Section 7.1 deals with the syntactic analysis of the construction under study. The reader is provided with an in-depth analysis encompassing both the composition of the individual elements within the structure and the static semantics of these. The most sig-

nificant difference between the academic prose and fiction was detected in the composition and static semantics of the noun phrase realizing the notional subject. The fiction subsample displayed the dominance of single noun phrases and noun phrases comprising single modification. It appears that such a composition of notional subject promotes a kind of a dramatic effect. The academic prose subsample displayed prevalence of noun phrases comprising all types of modification. It is assumed that such a composition of notional subject complies with the informative character of the style. The category of verb also displayed a significant difference in dependence on style. The fiction subsample displayed much greater variety of verbs (41) than the academic prose subsample (25). It is accounted to the utilization of synonymy as a tool in achieving variety of expression typical of literary style.

Section 7.2 offers a detailed FSP analysis of the existential sentences in the author's corpus organized into parts dealing with the FSP function of the notional subject, the verb and of the adverbials. As for the notional subject, its dominant FSP function was that of the rheme both in academic prose and in fiction. Both subsamples contained notional subjects realizing the FSP function of the theme, however in a marginal quantity. The prototypical FSP function of the verb is that of the transition; in the academic prose subsample, 96% of the verbs performed the FSP function of transition, in the fiction subsample it was 93.5%. The adverbials were found in three different FSP functions: the diatheme (usually realized by an adjunct), the rheme proper (most frequently performed by temporal and locative adjuncts), and the transition proper oriented element (realized by disjuncts, conjuncts and adjuncts of indefinite time). The author found differences related to style, mainly in the variation of static semantic types. Out of the FSP patterns implemented by the existential construction, the pattern Th – Tr/Rh is interesting: it does not introduce any new phenomenon onto the scene, but its function is to confirm the existence of a phenomenon. The author evaluates it as a structure implementing the Quality Scale (pp. 116–117). Such a communicative perspective of the existential construction has not been described in the literature in the field. Pavel Dubec has thus thrown new light on the syntax/FSP interface issues.

An interested reader will find in Pavel Dubec's monograph an exciting encounter with FSP. The monograph has significantly contributed to the research in the field. It has proved the FSP theory to be also applicable to Norwegian, which demonstrates its universal nature as well as its firm place in contemporary research.

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