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RELATIVE SALIENCY AND INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN
MARK'S PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

Steven E. Runge

Logos Bible Software | Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Abstract: This study applies the cognitive model of Chafe and Givón, and the information-structure model of Lambrecht as applied by Levinsohn and Runge to the Markan explanation of the Parable of the Sower (4:14–20). The primary objective is to identify and analyze other linguistic devices, besides demonstratives, which might clarify the apparent prominence given to the unfruitful scatterings in Mark's account. This study provides the necessary framework for comparing Mark's pragmatic weighting of saliency to that found in Matthew and Luke's accounts in order to determine whether Mark's version is consistent with or divergent from the other traditions. (Article)

Keywords: saliency, information structure, Mark 4:14–20, Matt 13:19–23, Luke 8:11–15, οὗτος, ἐκεῖνος.

Relative Saliency and Non-Deictic Demonstratives

In Levinsohn's study of the demonstratives οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος, he claims that the near demonstrative οὗτος is prototypically used in narrative anaphorically to encode thematic or "central" participants, especially if the referent temporarily displaces a more globally thematic participant, e.g., Simeon displacing Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in Luke 2:25. On the other hand, the far demonstrative ἐκεῖνος is used in similar contexts to encode athematic or "non-central" participants, as in Mark 16:10–11 to refer to "that one/those ones" as athematic while Jesus remains

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thematic. Levinsohn also demonstrates that these demonstratives are used to contrast competing participants, using the near demonstrative οὗτος for the more salient or important of the two (cf. Matt 9:26; 12:45; Luke 18:14; John 1:33; 5:19, 38; 6:29; 10:6; 21:23; 1 Cor 10:6, 11, 28; 1 John 3:3).¹

Consider now the use of demonstratives in Mark 4:14–20.² The near demonstrative οὗτος is used in vv. 15, 16, and 18 to encode the seed scattered along the path, on the rocky ground, and among the thorns, respectively. On the other hand, the far demonstrative ἐκεῖνος is used to encode the seed scattered on good soil. Is Levinsohn's claim applicable here, viz. that the unfruitful scatterings of seed are more thematically salient to the writer/editor? This article will consider other linguistic devices used in this pericope to evaluate whether a thematic/athematic distinction exists as suggested by the contrasting use of demonstrative pronouns. I will begin with an overview of information structure by looking at how hearers process and categorize information. This will provide the necessary background for understanding how and why speakers structure their utterances.

*Mental Representations and Information Status*³

When reading a text, readers form a mental representation of the information communicated in the discourse, which has been likened to filing the information into cognitive files.⁴ Givón states that discourse is made up of a combination of new and old information. We shall refer to the new information as focal and the old information as presupposed or topical. Presupposed,

1. See Levinsohn, "Unified Linguistic Description," 204–216.

2. It should not be ruled out that the writer/editor intended these terms to be understood deictically, as though Jesus was literally pointing at the kind of ground in question. Even granting this point, the fact still remains that a distinction between the two groups has been made using the prototypically thematic οὗτος and the prototypically athematic ἐκεῖνος.

3. For a more accessible introduction to information structure for non-specialists, see Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 179–206.

4. Lambrecht, *Information Structure*, 43.

topical information is “assumed by the speaker to be accessible to the hearer,” either from the preceding text or from a general knowledge of the world. Focal information is “assumed by the speaker to be inaccessible to the hearer.”⁵ Presupposed information serves as the “grounding point” or framework within which the focal information is processed.⁶ By definition, focal information is the most important part of the utterance, with the presupposed information grounding it to the context.

According to the cross-linguistic principle of “natural information flow,” utterances are prototypically structured to move from what is most known to what is least known.⁷ Stated another way, presupposed or topical information is most naturally placed before focal information, as much as the syntactic typology of the language allows. In the following example the bolded constituents are the **focal** information, the plain italics are *presupposed*.

1. Default flow of information

- (a) Once upon a time there was **a handsome prince**.
- (b) *The prince lived in a large, ornate castle, which was surrounded by a moat.*
- (c) *The prince wanted to see the world...*

5. Givón, *Grammar of Referential Coherence*, 8.

6. Givón, *Grammar of Referential Coherence*, 8. A simple old/new dichotomy is admittedly insufficient to differentiate focal information from what is presupposed in some cases, but it provides a heuristic starting point. Lambrecht states, “the information conveyed by a proposition cannot be factored out and matched with individual sentence constituents. In particular, the difference between ‘old information’ and ‘new information’ cannot be equated with the difference between ‘old’ and ‘new’ referents” (*Information Structure*, 49). What makes information “new” is the relation between the presupposition and the assertion. Lambrecht defines focus as “The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition” (213). Focus is not formally distinguished on the basis of a constituent being textually or situationally “new.” It is pragmatically and cognitively established based upon the difference between what is presupposed in a hearer’s mental presentation and what is asserted by a speaker in a given context.

7. Cf. Comrie, *Language Universals*, 127–28; Givón, *Syntax*, 8.

The story begins by predicating the existence of a handsome prince, only making a comment about him after he is activated. The second line introduces a large, ornate castle, and makes a comment about it using a relative clause. In our mental representation, a file has figuratively been created for the prince, and the information about his dwelling and his aspirations are filed inside it.

Information Structure

Markedness

Andrews' account of markedness proposes an asymmetrical set of oppositions where members of the set are either marked or unmarked for a particular feature. Use of a marked form explicitly signals the presence of a particular feature in the context. Use of the unmarked member of a set does not specify whether or not the feature is present. It is unmarked for the feature.⁸ From a methodological standpoint, we will describe the unmarked member of the opposition set as the default, i.e., the most basic member of the set. The default becomes the canon against which marked forms are identified and described.

The principle of natural information flow represents the default ordering of constituents when a speaker has no particular reason to use a marked order or structure.⁹ When speakers use a marked order, it means that they have pragmatically chosen to signal the presence of a particular feature, such as discontinuity or added prominence. To summarize, use of a marked order, by definition, signals the presence of a particular feature in the context. If speakers use a default order, they have chosen not to signal the presence of the feature. It may or may not be present;

8. Andrews, *Markedness Theory*, 9–29.

9. See Stephen C. Levinson's neo-Gricean pragmatic implicature expressed in his M-principle, which states that a speaker should not use a marked expression unless he or she intends some meaning other than that signaled by a default expression ("Pragmatics and the Grammar of Anaphora," 379–434).

the default form is unmarked for it. Thus, a default expression does not inherently mean the opposite of a marked expression; it simply implies that the expression is unmarked for the feature in question.

Frames of Reference

Speakers have a certain degree of flexibility in how they structure an utterance, based on the conventions and constraints of the particular language. Utterances can be pragmatically structured to create certain effects, prototypically signaling that a constituent is marked for a particular feature by moving it to an initial position in the clause, which I will refer to as preposing. Preposing a constituent has one of two pragmatic effects, depending on whether the constituent is presupposed or focal.

Lambrecht has found that preposing topical information pragmatically creates a new frame of reference for the following clause, with several effects. While the writer/speaker could have communicated the same information by placing the constituent in its default position, preposing a noun phrase (NP) or an adverbial expression of place, time, or situation creates a disruption or discontinuity in the flow of the text by signaling a non-default switch in the context.¹⁰ A second effect is cohesion, wherein this preposed topical constituent becomes the primary basis of relating the discourse that precedes the constituent with the discourse that follows it.¹¹ I will refer to clause-initial presupposed constituents as frames of reference or simply frames, to refer to what Levinsohn calls points of departure.¹² Frames of reference are identified graphically by underlining. While preposing the presupposed information does add prominence to it, it does not make it more salient than the focal information. By definition, the focal information is the most important part of the utterance,

10. Lambrecht, *Information Structure*.

11. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 8; Dooley and Levinsohn, *Analyzing Discourse*, 68–69.

12. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 8.

regardless of its location. I now turn to the pragmatic effect of preposing focal information.

Emphasis

When both topical and focal information is preposed, Dik has found that languages place the topical information before focal information, as expected based on the principle of natural information flow.¹³ The default position for focal constituents is as close to the end of the clause as the typology of the language allows. Preposing the focal constituent pragmatically marks the constituent, giving it prominence it would not have naturally received in its default position. It reflects the writer's choice to add extra prominence to what is already relatively most salient in the context. The pragmatic effect of preposing focal constituents has long been recognized but is usually referred to as placing "emphasis" on the constituent.¹⁴ I will follow this convention but with a much more limited scope. Emphasis, in this sense, refers to placing what was already the most important information in the clause in a marked position to draw additional prominence to it. Emphasis will be graphically represented using italics.

This study considers the following constituent order to be the most basic and unmarked order in New Testament Greek when all constituents are present, as informed by the principles of natural information flow and of language typology.¹⁵

2. Proposed constituent orders of nuclear clauses in New Testament Greek¹⁶
 Frames of Reference—Emphasized Elements—Verb—Pronoun(s)
 —Subject—Complement(s)—Adjuncts

If one or more clause constituents is preposed before the verb, I will construe this as being pragmatically motivated. Compare the

13. Dik, *Functional Grammar*. See Givón, *Syntax*, 257.
14. Cf. BDF §472(2).
15. See Lehmann, "Structural Principle"; "Conclusion."
16. For a fuller treatment of constituent ordering principles, see Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 1–62.

pragmatic effects of changing the structures found in Appendix 1.

A constituent's discourse context determines whether it should be construed as presupposed or focal. Consider the pragmatic change to the word "yesterday" depending upon the context in which it occurs.

3. Presupposed versus focal: the importance of discourse context

(a) What did you do yesterday?

Yesterday, I **arrived**. (Today, I am **going fishing**.)

(b) When did you arrive?

Yesterday I arrived. (as opposed to some other day).

Both (a) and (b) contain the exact same clause, but "yesterday" plays a different pragmatic role in each, based on the change in context. In (a), "yesterday" establishes a specific temporal frame of reference for the clause that follows. "Today" in the following clause serves the same purpose, with the pragmatic effect of sharpening the contrast between "yesterday" and "today." In the case of (b), "yesterday" provides the missing element of the question, filling in the gap between what is presupposed and what is asserted, making it focal. Preposing it adds extra prominence, hence receiving emphasis. For more examples illustrating these information structure concepts in both English and Greek, see Appendix 1.

Analysis of Information Structure in Mark 4:14–20

There are several factors that serve to separate the unfruitful plantings from the fruitful: changes in the utilization of marked constituent order, lexical changes in the use of demonstratives, and changes in verbal aspect.¹⁷ Each of these issues will be

17. Gould notes these factors, but does not draw any specific conclusions from them. He states, "We have three different pronouns, or adjectives, used in pointing out the various classes of hearers. οὗτοι, then οὗτοι ὁμοίως, indicating a general resemblance; then ἄλλοι, denoting a specific difference; and finally ἐκεῖνοι, denoting contrast with all that precede. οἱ σπαρέντες—that were sown. The part. in the other cases has been present, denoting the general

discussed below. Their overall contribution to the interpretation of the pericope will be presented in the final section.

*The Structuring of the Account*¹⁸

Mark's explanation of the parable begins in v. 14 by explaining what the seed symbolizes using a very tidy marked clause ὁ σπείρων τὸν λόγον σπείρει. The sower is reactivated from the original parable using a frame of reference to indicate a new topic, and the explanation of what he sows is preposed for emphasis, highlighting the identification of "the seed" as "the word." The preposed focal information fills in the blank between what was presupposed (the sower sowed something) and the new information that is being asserted. Mark's explanation makes regular use of such marked structures.

First, Mark's account uses non-default constituent order to structure the pericope, viz. the repeated use of preposed demonstrative pronouns to begin each new segment of the explanation (cf. vv. 15a, 16a, 18a, 20a). But, while the Matthean and Lukan accounts use the demonstratives in referential frames of reference to signal the transition to a new segment, Mark uses the pronouns cataphorically for emphasis, pointing ahead to highlight a referent that follows the pronoun. For instance, in v. 15 he writes οὗτοι δέ εἰσιν οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν. By default, οὗτοι as a pronominal element would be expected to immediately follow the verb.¹⁹ Mark's strategy has the same type of effect as the

fact about seed sown in such places. The aor. here confines it to the particular case of the parable" (*Mark*, 76).

18. In reading this next section, it may be helpful to make reference to the complete analysis of the information structure of the different Synoptic versions provided in Appendix 2.

19. Cf. Matt 20:21; 25:46; John 6:5. The vast majority of occurrences using οὗτοι are marked, either frames of reference or preposed focal/emphasized constituents. This is where the asymmetrical view of markedness is crucial, in that I do not take the most frequently occurring form or position to be default. Instead, the most basic form is selected as default, and forms the canon against which marked forms are described. One should not be surprised that demonstratives are utilized so frequently for marked constructions since demonstratives are virtually the only pronominal option for anaphorically

other accounts, but is achieved via a different path by cataphorically highlighting the referent before introducing it. This strategy has the effect of drawing extra attention to the referent before it is introduced.

Mark's account also uses non-default structures to highlight salient ideas, like the location of the scatterings. In vv. 15a, 16a, 18a, and 20a, each demonstrative is followed by a NP specifying the location of the scattering. Verse 15a employs a relative clause to encode the scattering, ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος. The choice of the relative clause affords the writer/editor another opportunity to reinforce the correlation of "the seed" to "the word." Each of the following segments encodes the scattering using a participial phrase, e.g., οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη σπειρόμενοι in v. 16a. Preposing the focal information within the participial clause adds prominence to where the seed fell, but the scope of the prominence is limited to the participial clause.

Second, while each segment of Mark's explanation utilizes nearly parallel structures to introduce the scatterings, distinctions between the fruitful and unfruitful scatterings are made using other devices. The unfruitful scatterings each use present tense/imperfective aspect to encode the act of scattering.²⁰ This stands in contrast to the aorist tense/perfective aspect found describing the fruitful scattering in v. 20a. Perfective aspect portrays the action as an undifferentiated whole; imperfective aspect marks the action as ongoing or incomplete, allowing attention to be given to some facet within the action.²¹ The choice to encode the first three scatterings using imperfective aspect opens the door for more attention to be given to the actions or results. In contrast, the final scattering in Mark is viewed as a complete, undifferentiated whole. These differences in verbal aspect correspond

referring to entire propositions; cf. Gundel, Hedberg, and Zacharski, "Demonstrative Pronouns."

20. Though v. 15a does not use a participle, the verb in the subordinate relative clause, functionally parallel to the participles in vv. 16a and 18a, is nonetheless present passive.

21. See Porter, *Idioms*, 21–49.

to the amount of description that the results of each scattering receive (see below).

Third, the scatterings are differentiated by lexical changes in the use of demonstratives. As noted above, οὗτος is used to refer to the three unfruitful scatterings, while ἐκεῖνος is used to refer to the fruitful one. An important clarification must be made though. In the explanation of the seed falling among the thorns in v. 18a, the cataphoric pronoun is not οὗτος but ἄλλος, a correlative pronoun. Correlatives are prototypically used to link non-initial members of a correlated set. The correlative ἄλλος can be used for each non-initial member of the set, explicitly linking each to the other (e.g., Matt 13:4–8; 13:24, 31, 33). This is the strategy the writer/editor uses in the parable itself (see Mark 4:5, 7, 8).

There is no exact parallel in Mark to the usage of ἄλλος with only the final member of the set, as found here in 4:18a. However, Mark does create a similar effect by using ἄλλος for all but the final item, where the writer/editor creates a distinction between the correlated set and the final item (see Mark 6:15–16; 8:28–29; 12:3–6). The effect created in the explanation of the Parable of the Sower is to separate the scattering on the good soil from the other scatterings, corroborating the apparent distinction between groups created by varying the use of demonstratives and the use of verbal aspect mentioned above. Though the correlative pronoun is used cataphorically in v. 18a, the demonstrative οὗτος is used in v. 18b as a frame of reference to reassert the preceding topic, and thus is linked with the other scatterings introduced by οὗτοι by virtue of the repetition.

Highlighting within the Account

Mention has already been made of how emphasis is used to give added prominence to focal information (viz. preposing the prepositional phrases in vv. 16a, 18a, and 20a). Mark also makes use of marked orders to highlight certain aspects of the results of the scatterings. The relative clauses of v. 15b and 16b share a similar structure. Both begin by establishing an explicit temporal

frame of reference for the clause that follows, ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν....²² The default position for subordinate adverbial adjuncts, according to this framework, is clause-final. Preposing it indicates that the primary basis for relating what follows to the preceding discourse is a switch from the one sowing to the ones hearing, concentrating specifically on what happened when they heard.

Both relative clauses also prepose adverbial constituents to highlight the manner in which the following action takes place. In v. 15b, εὐθύς is preposed to highlight how quickly “Satan comes and takes the word which was sown in them.”²³ In v. 16b, a second adverb is preposed, highlighting that the hearers not only responded quickly but with joy. Verse 17b describes these hearers using the preposed focal constituent πρόσκαιροι, an implicit consequence of not having roots.²⁴ Verse 17c elaborates on the circumstances contributing to the plants’ fleeting existence. The verse begins with two temporal frames: “then,” to indicate that what follows is closely linked chronologically to what precedes (viz. “immediately” and “with great joy receiving the word”), and the second outlining the circumstances that lead to their demise, encoded using a genitive absolute circumstantial clause. Thus, 17c could be translated “Then, when affliction and persecution come about on account of the word, **immediately** they turn away.” The adverb εὐθύς is preposed before the nuclear verb to highlight that just as quickly as they received the word, these hearers fell away.

In addition to the cataphoric use of the correlative ἄλλοι discussed in the previous section, it is also important to note the

22. The noun phrase τὸν λόγον is likely elided in v. 15b due to the presence of ὁ λόγος in the preceding relative clause. Verse 16 does not contain such an occurrence, hence the explicit object noun phrase in 16b.

23. The appositional modifier τὸν ἐσπαρμένον εἰς αὐτούς is semantically redundant, and likely functions to sharpen the contrast that what had only just been sown is now being taken away. Cf. Porter, *Idioms*, 39–41 for the significance of using the perfect tense in such a context.

24. The preposing of ῥίζαν in Luke’s version (8:13c) gives more prominence to the factor leading to their being short-lived than in Mark’s version.

preposing of focal information in vv. 19a and b. Based on the parable told in 4:1–9, the reader presupposes that something chokes out the seed, allegorized as weeds. While the manner was highlighted describing seed scattered along the path and on the rocky place, the instrument is highlighted in the description of the weeds. The term ἄκαρπος is also preposed, clearly highlighting the poor results of this scattering. Note that Matthew preposes both the instruments and the result (cf. Matt 13:22c), while Luke only preposes the instruments (cf. Luke 8:14c).

Finally, and in stark contrast to the unfruitful scatterings, the description of the seed scattered upon the good soil makes no use of marked constructions other than the initial description of the location (i.e., οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν σπαρέντες). One would think that if this portion were the most salient of the four, the “thirty-, sixty- and hundred-fold” return on the seed would be given more prominence by preposing or by some other linguistic device. Interestingly enough, the other Synoptic traditions (with a minor exception in Luke)²⁵ do not use marked devices either.

Conclusions

I have presented a number of linguistic devices that encode how the writer/editor conceptualized the explanation of the Parable of the Sower. I demonstrated the ways that marked constituent order was used above the clause level to organize the pericope, breaking the explanation into four distinct segments. Such structures were also shown to be used at the clause level for establishing new cognitive frames of reference for the clause that followed, and providing cohesive links back to the preceding discourse. I also pointed out that the preposing of focal constituents forms emphasis, reinforcing the fact that these clause elements were relatively more salient than the other constituents in the clause. The description of the scatterings along the path

25. Cf. the use of ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ to describe the manner in which the “good soil” hears the word. The crop produced is not highlighted at all.

and on the rocky place used emphasis to highlight the manner. In the scattering among the thorns, emphasis highlighted the instrument that made the scattering unfruitful. In the description of the fruitful scattering, on the other hand, the writer/editor gave no marked prominence to any constituent after the introduction in v. 20a. It is as though the seed scattered on good soil produced the expected result, whereas the other scatterings produced seemingly unexpected results.

There are two options here. The first is that Mark was simply trusting that the natural prominence of mentioning the fruitful scattering last was sufficient to mark it as most salient. But in light of the contrasting use of marked structures, combined with the apparent distinction made between the unfruitful and fruitful scatterings using the near and far demonstratives, this is an unlikely option. Alternatively, I suggest that Mark pragmatically structured his explanation of the parable to highlight the various “road-blocks to a bountiful spiritual harvest” as being more salient than “good soil bearing a good crop.” The hearer of the parable might well have expected poor results based on the description of the first three scatterings. There are few marked constituents in the actual parable (with the exception of vv. 6b and 7d), creating the impression that each scattering is equally salient. However, the spiritual factors contributing to the unfruitfulness of the scatterings, as disclosed in the explanation, would not have been expected. For this reason, it is more reasonable to conclude that Mark uses these linguistic devices to focus his readers’ attention on the pitfalls to spiritual growth that should be avoided.²⁶

Such an interpretation is reasonable in light of current research. Gundry comments on the linguistic devices that serve to separate the unfruitful scatterings from the fruitful, but he draws no conclusion regarding salience.²⁷ France notes that the

26. Williamson suggests something along these lines, saying “The thrust of this explanation is not encouragement but exhortation. The reader is led to ask, ‘What kind of soil am I?’” (*Mark*, 94).

27. Gundry, *Mark*, 206.

final group receives little interpretation compared to the others, without mentioning the conventions used to delineate the groups.²⁸ Finally, Mann states, “The end of the explanation of the parable is an anti-climax. So intent are all three versions in the synoptic gospels on the failures and shortcomings of the previous types that the triumph of the word in the fully converted is almost omitted. Certainly the harvest is left to explain itself.”²⁹ Geulich makes a similar claim, stating that “the interpretation explains the parable as a warning against ‘hearing’ in the first three categories of respondents and an admonition for all ‘hearers’ to be like the fourth category that ‘bears fruit’.”³⁰ Though the other Synoptic traditions do not make a comparable distinction between the fruitful and unfruitful scatterings using demonstratives, this preliminary survey points toward a comparable weighting of the unfruitful scatterings using other devices, but this is beyond the scope of this study.

28. France, *Mark*, 207.

29. Mann, *Mark*, 267–68.

30. Guelich, *Mark 1–8*, 223.

Appendix 1: The Pragmatic Effects of Preposing Various Kinds of Constituents

(1) Illustration of default versus marked ordering in English

- (a) Preposing temporal expressions for a new temporal frame of reference:

Default: John went outside after dinner. OR John ate dinner and went outside.

Marked: After dinner, John went outside. OR John ate dinner, then he went outside.

- (b) Preposing nominal constituents for a new referential frame of reference

Default: John went outside after dinner.

Marked: As for John, he went outside after dinner.

- (c) Preposing certain prepositional phrases for a new spatial frame of reference:

Default: John finished eating dinner in the kitchen and went outside.

Marked: In the kitchen, John finished eating dinner and then went outside.

- (d) Preposing conditional clauses for an explicit conditional frame of reference:

Default: John will not go outside if he doesn't finish eating dinner.

Marked: If John doesn't finish eating dinner, he will not go outside.

- (e) Preposing "new" information for marked focus (emphasis):

- (i) What were you working on?

Default: I was working on my paper.

Marked: It was my paper (I was working on).

(ii) When did you arrive?

Default: I arrived yesterday.

Marked: Yesterday I arrived.

(2) Illustration of default versus marked ordering in Koine Greek

(a) Preposing temporal expressions for a new temporal frame of reference:

Default: καὶ εὐθὺς ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν. (Variation of Mark 4:15b)

Marked: καὶ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν, εὐθὺς ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς.

(b) Preposing nominal constituents for a new referential frame of reference:

Default: σπείρει ὁ σπείρων τὸν λόγον. (Variation of Mark 4:14a)

Marked: ὁ σπείρων σπείρει τὸν λόγον.

(c) Preposing certain prepositional phrases for a new spatial frame of reference:

Default: καὶ ἔπεσεν ἄλλο ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν. (Variation of Mark 4:5)

Marked: καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες ἔπεσεν ἄλλο ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν.

(d) Preposing conditional clauses for an explicit conditional frame of reference:

Default: τίνα γὰρ μισθὸν ἔχετε ἐὰν ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς; (Variation of Matt 5:46)

Marked: ἐὰν γὰρ ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε;

Appendix 2: Information Structure Analysis of Each Gospel

Matthew 13:19–23

19a παντὸς ἀκούοντος τὸν λόγον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ μὴ
συνιέντος³¹

19b ἔρχεται ὁ πονηρὸς

19c καὶ ἀρπάζει τὸ ἐσπαρμένον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ·

19d οὗτος³² ἐστὶν ὁ παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν³³ σπαρεῖς.

20a ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη³⁴ σπαρεῖς,³⁵

20b οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων

20c καὶ εὐθύς μετὰ χαρᾶς³⁶ λαμβάνων αὐτόν·

21a οὐκ ἔχει δὲ ρίζαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ

21b ἀλλὰ πρόσκαιρός³⁷ ἐστίν,

21c γενομένης δὲ θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον³⁸
εὐθύς³⁹ σκανδαλίζεται.

22a ὁ δὲ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας⁴⁰ σπαρεῖς,⁴¹

31. Underlined clause is a left-dislocated phrase—syntactically independent from the following main clauses—to activate a new topic. This dislocated phrase establishes the framework within which the following predications hold (see Li and Thompson, “Subject and Topic”; Chafe, “Givenness”). Verse 19a is coreferent with οὗτος in 19d.

32. Referential frame of reference resumes topic established in 19a.

33. Emphasis within the frame of reference highlights the place where the seed is sown.

34. Emphasis within the frame of reference highlights the place where the seed is sown.

35. Underlined clause is left-dislocated with respect to v. 20b to establish a new topic, resumed by οὗτος.

36. Emphasis highlights the manner in which the word is received, immediately and with joy.

37. Emphasis highlights the duration of the plants’ existence.

38. Initial clause establishes a temporal frame of reference as the basis for relating what follows to what precedes.

39. Emphasis highlights the manner in which the person falls away, immediately.

40. Emphasis within the frame of reference highlights the place where the seed is sown.

41. Underlined clause is left-dislocated with respect to v. 22b to establish a new topic, resumed by οὗτος.

22b οὗτός ἐστὶν ὁ τὸν λόγον⁴² ἀκούων,

22c καὶ ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου⁴³

συμπνίγει τὸν λόγον

22d καὶ ἄκαρπος⁴⁴ γίνεται.

23a ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν καλὴν γῆν⁴⁵ σπαρείς,⁴⁶

23b οὗτός ἐστὶν ὁ τὸν λόγον⁴⁷ ἀκούων

23c καὶ συνιείς,

23d ὅς δὴ καρποφορεῖ

23e καὶ ποιεῖ ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἐξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα.⁴⁸

Mark 4:14–20

14a ὁ σπείρων τὸν λόγον⁴⁹ σπείρει.

15a οὗτοι⁵⁰ δὲ εἰσὶν οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν· ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος

15b καὶ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν, εὐθύς⁵¹ ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς

15c καὶ αἶρει τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐσπαρμένον εἰς αὐτούς.

16a καὶ οὗτοι⁵² εἰσὶν οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη⁵³ σπειρόμενοι,

42. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Matt 13:19a; Mark 4:20b.

43. The parable presupposes that something chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the emphasis highlights the means of choking.

44. Emphasis highlights the resulting state of the seed, unfruitful.

45. Emphasis within the frame of reference highlights the place where the seed is sown.

46. Underlined clause is left-dislocated with respect to v. 23b to establish a new topic, resumed by οὗτός.

47. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Matt 13:19a; Mark 4:20b.

48. Verse 23d is a continuative relative clause, which provides further description of the left-dislocated topic of v. 23a.

49. Emphasis highlights the new information of the clause.

50. Emphasis cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν by preposing the demonstrative pronoun.

51. Temporal frame of reference to establish the temporal frame of reference for what follows.

52. Emphasis cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη σπειρόμενοι by preposing the demonstrative pronoun.

53. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

- 16b οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν τὸν λόγον⁵⁴ εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς⁵⁵
λαμβάνουσιν αὐτόν,
17a καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ρίζαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς
17b ἀλλὰ πρόσκαιροί⁵⁶ εἰσιν·
17c εἶτα γενομένης θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον
εὐθὺς⁵⁷ σκανδαλίζονται.
18a καὶ ἄλλοι⁵⁸ εἰσιν οἱ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας⁵⁹ σπειρόμενοι·
18b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ τὸν λόγον⁶⁰ ἀκούσαντες,
19a καὶ αἱ μέριμναι τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου
καὶ αἱ περὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιθυμίαι⁶¹ εἰσπορευόμεναι συμ-
πνίγουσιν τὸν λόγον,
19b καὶ ἄκαρπος⁶² γίνεται.
20a καὶ ἐκεῖνοί⁶³ εἰσιν οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλήν⁶⁴
σπαρέντες,

54. Temporal frame of reference to establish the temporal frame of the continuative relative clause that it begins.

55. Emphasis highlights the manner in which the word is received, immediately and with joy.

56. Emphasis highlights the duration of the plants' existence.

57. Emphasis highlights the manner in which the person falls away, immediately.

58. Emphasis cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας σπειρόμενοι by preposing the correlative pronoun. Use of correlative—instead of the proximate demonstrative οὗτοι—indicates the end of correlated entities. Compare to Matt 13:4, 5, 7, 8; 13:1, 24, 31, 33; 20:1, 3, 6 and Mark 4:4, 5, 7, 8, where correlative pronouns are used for each non-initial entity of the correlated set, including the last. Contrast with Mark 12:3, 4, 5, 6, where the final related member of the set is contrasted with the other members of the set. Similar usages are found in Mark 6:14, 15, 16; 8:28, 29.

59. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

60. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Mark 4:20b.

61. The parable presupposes that something chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the emphasis highlights the means of the choking.

62. Emphasis highlights the resulting state of the seed, unfruitful.

63. Emphasis cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλήν σπαρέντες by preposing the demonstrative.

64. Emphasis within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

20b οἵτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον

20c καὶ παραδέχονται

20d καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν.

Luke 8:11–15

11a ἔστιν δὲ αὕτη ἡ παραβολή·

11b ὁ σπόρος⁶⁵ ἔστιν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.

12a οἱ δὲ πὰρὰ τὴν ὁδόν⁶⁶ εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες,

12b εἶτα⁶⁷ ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος

12c καὶ αἶρει τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν,

12d ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν.

13a οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας⁶⁸

13b οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν⁶⁹ μετὰ χαρᾶς⁷⁰ δέχονται τὸν λόγον,

13c καὶ οὗτοι ῥίζαν⁷¹ οὐκ ἔχουσιν,

13d οἱ πρὸς καιρὸν⁷² πιστεύουσιν

13e καὶ ἐν καιρῷ πειρασμοῦ⁷³ ἀφίστανται.

14a τὸ δὲ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας⁷⁴ πεσόν,⁷⁵

65. Referential frame of reference for a marked switch to a different topic.

66. Referential frame of reference for a marked switch to a different topic.

67. Temporal frame of reference to establish the temporal frame for the clause that it begins.

68. Left-dislocated referential frame of reference for a marked switch to a different topic for the continuative relative clause in v. 13b, resumed by οὗτοι in v. 13c.

69. Temporal frame of reference to establish the temporal frame for the continuative relative clause that it begins.

70. Emphasis highlights the manner in which the word is received, with joy.

71. Emphasis highlights what these plants are missing, roots.

72. Emphasis highlights the duration for which the word is believed, for a time.

73. Temporal frame of reference to establish the temporal frame for the clause that it begins.

74. Emphasis within the frame of reference highlights the place where the seed is sown.

- 14b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες,
 14c καὶ ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ βίου⁷⁶
 πορευόμενοι συμπνίγονται
 14d καὶ οὐ τελεσφοροῦσιν.
 15a τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῆ,⁷⁷
 15b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἵτινες ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ⁷⁸
 ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσιν
 15c καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ.

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75. Left-dislocated referential frame of reference for a marked to switch to a different topic, resumed by οὗτοί in the following clause.

76. The parable presupposes that something chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the emphasis highlights the means of choking.

77. Left-dislocated referential frame of reference for a marked to switch to a different topic, resumed by οὗτοί in the following clause.

78. Emphasis highlights the inner qualities of some who hear the word and respond favorably.

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