Relative Saliency and Information Structure in Mark's Parable of the Sower

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Levinsohn[1] claims that the near and far demonstratives (οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος respectively) can be used non-deictically to encode relative thematic saliency of discourse referents, with οὗτος being used to mark the more salient constituent. In applying this concept to the Markan explanation of the Parable of the Sower, Levinsohn's claim would indicate that the descriptions of the three unfruitful scatterings of seed are *more salient* to the writer than the productive scattering that bears fruit. The other synoptic accounts do not seem to make such a distinction in salience, using the near demonstrative οὗτος for both the unfruitful and fruitful plantings alike. Are there other means of analysis to either corroborate or overturn the view that the unfruitful plantings are more thematically salient in Mark's account?

This study applies the cognitive model of Chafe[2] and Givón[3], and the information-structure model of Lambrecht[4] as applied by Levinsohn[5] 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 salience to that found in the other synoptic accounts in order to determine whether Mark's version is consistent or divergent with the other traditions.

1. Relative saliency and non-deictic demonstratives

In Levinsohn's[6] SBL paper "Towards a Unified Linguistic Description of 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 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. Mt 9:26; 12:45; Lu 18:14; Jo 1:33; 5:19, 38; 6:29; 10:6; 21:23; 1 Co 10:6, 11, 28; 1 Jo 3:3).

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[1] Levinsohn, "Towards a Unified Linguistic Description of οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος."
[2] Chafe, "Givenness, Contrastiveness, Definiteness, Subjects, Topics, and Point of View.", and "Cognitive Constraints on Information Flow."
[3] Givón , "The Grammar of Referential Coherence."
[4] Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*.
[5] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*.
[6] Levinsohn, "Towards a Unified Linguistic Description of οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος."

Let us now consider the use of demonstratives in Mark 4:14-20.[7] 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 paper 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 analyzing how and why speakers structure their utterances.

2. Mental Representations and Information Status

As people read a text, they form a *mental representation* of the information communicated in the discourse, which has been likened to filing the information into cognitive files[8]. 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, 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".[9] *Presupposed* information serves as the "grounding point" or framework within which the *focal* information is processed.[10] By definition, the 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',[11] utterances are prototypically structured to move from what is *most* known to what is *least* known. Stated another way, *presupposed* or *topical information* is most naturally placed before *focal* information, as much as the syntactic typology of the language allows. Consider 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**.

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[7] It should not be ruled out that writer/editor intended these terms to be understood deictically, as though Jesus were 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.

[8] Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*, 43.

[9] Givón, "The Grammar of Referential Coherence", 8.

[10] Givón, "The 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". Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*, 43. 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". Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*, 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.

[11] Cf. Comrie, *Language Universals*, 127–128, and Givón, *Syntax*, 257.

   c)   *The prince* **wanted to see the world**…

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

3. Information Structure

3.1. Markedness
      Andrews'[12] 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. From a methodological standpoint, we will describe the unmarked member of the opposition set as the *default*, 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.[13] 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 pragmatically chosen *not* to signal the presence of the feature. It *may* or *may not* be present, but 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.

3.2. 'Points of departure' (PoDs)
      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[14] 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. A second effect is that this preposed topical constituent becomes the primary basis of relating the

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[12] Andrews, *Markedness Theory*, 9–29.
[13] Cf. Stephen C. Levinson's neo-Gricean 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. Levinson, *Presumptive Meanings*, 136-137.
[14] Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*.

discourse that precedes the constituent with the discourse that follows it.[15] I will refer to clause-initial presupposed constituents as *points of departure* or *PoDs*, following Levinsohn,[16] and identify them graphically by <u>underlining</u>. 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, regardless of its location. I now turn to the pragmatic effect of preposing focal information.

3.3. Preposed Focal Constituents (PFCs)

When both topical and focal information are preposed, Dik[17] has found that languages place the topical information before focal information, as expected based on the principle of natural information flow.[18] 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 gives it *marked prominence* that 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 by grammarians, but is usually referred to as placing 'emphasis' on the constituent (cf. BDF §472(2)). I will refer to *preposed focal constituents* using the abbreviation *PFCs*, and identify them graphically using **bolding**.

This study considers the following constituent order to be the most basic and unmarked order in NT Greek when all constituents are present, as informed by the principles of natural information flow and of language typology.[19]

3. **Proposed unmarked constituent orders of nuclear clauses in NT Greek**[20]
    PoD—PFC—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.

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 it occurs in.

4. **Presupposed versus focal: the importance of discourse context**
    a. *What did you do yesterday?*
       <u>Yesterday</u>, **I arrived**. (<u>Today</u>, I am **going fishing**.)

    b. *When did you arrive?*
       Yesterday I arrived. (as opposed to some other day).

Both (3a) and (3b) contain the exact same clause, but *yesterday* plays a different pragmatic role in each, based on the change of context. In (3a), *yesterday* functions as a PoD to establish a

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[15] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 8, and Dooley and Levinsohn, *Analyzing Discourse*, 68–9.
[16] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 8.
[17] Dik, *Functional Grammar*.
[18] Cf. Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*.
[19] Cf. Lehmann, "Toward an Understanding of the Profound Unity Underlying Languages", and "A Structural Principle of Language and its Implication."
[20] For a fuller treatment of constituent ordering principles, cf. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 1–62, on which my explanation is based.

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 (3b), *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 it is a PFC. For more examples illustrating these information structure concepts in both English and Greek, see Appendix 1.

4. Analysis of information structure in Mark 4:14–20

There are several factors that serve to separate the unfruitful plantings from the fruitful:[21]
- changes in the utilization of marked constituent order,
- lexical changes in the use of demonstratives, and
- changes in verbal aspect.

Each of these issues will be discussed below. Their overall contribution to the pericope's interpretation will be presented in the final section.

4.1. The Structuring of the Account[22]

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 **the word** sows'. The sower is reactivated from the original parable using a PoD to indicate a new topic, and the explanation of what he sows is preposed for marked focus, 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 PoDs to signal the transition to a new segment, Mark uses the pronouns *cataphorically* as PFCs, 'pointing ahead' to highlight a referent which *follows* the pronoun.[23] For instance, in v. 15 he writes **οὗτοι** δέ εἰσιν οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν, '**These** are the ones along the path'. By default, οὗτοι as a pronominal element would be expected to immediately follow the verb.[24] Mark's strategy has the same type of effect as the other accounts, but is achieved via a different

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[21] 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[iciple] in the other cases has been present, denoting the general fact about seed sown in such places. The aor. here confines it to the particular case of the parable". Gould, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of Mark*, 76.

[22] 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.

[23] Cf. Runge, "The Exegetical Significance of Cataphoric Pronouns in Luke's Gospel."

[24] Cf. Mt 20:21; 25:46; Jn 6:5. The vast majority of occurrences using οὗτοι are marked, either points of departure or preposed focal 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 referring to entire propositions, cf. Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski, "Demonstrative Pronouns in Natural Discourse."

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 uses a relative clause to grammaticalize the scattering, ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος, 'where the word was scattered'. 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 grammaticalizes the scattering using a participial phrase, e.g., οἱ **ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη** σπειρόμενοι 'the ones **on the rocky place** scattered' 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 grammaticalize the act of scattering.[25] 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.[26] The choice to grammaticalize 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 match the differences in the amount of description that the results of each scattering receives.

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 'other', 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., Mt 13:4–8; 13:24, 31, 33). This is the strategy the writer/editor uses in the parable itself (cf. Mk 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 (cf. Mk 6:15–16; 8:28–29; 12:3–6). The effect created in the explanation of the Sower parable is to *separate* the scattering in 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 PoD to reassert the preceding topic, and thus links with the other scatterings introduced by οὗτοι by virtue of the repetition.

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[25] 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.
[26] Porter, *Idioms*, 21.

4.2. Highlighting within the Account

      Mention has already been made of how PFCs are 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 cognitive frame of reference for the clause that follows using a temporal PoD, ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν...[27] '*when they would hear…*' The default position for subordinate adverbial adjuncts, according to this framework, is clause-final. Preposing it establishes a specific temporal frame of reference for the clause that follows, indicating that the primary basis for relating what follows to the preceding discourse is as 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, εὐθὺς '*immediately*' is preposed to highlight how quickly 'Satan comes and takes the word *which was sown in them*'.[28] 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 πρόσκαιροί or *short-lived,* an implicit consequence of not having roots.[29]

      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 in 17b and the second outlining the circumstances that lead to their demise, grammaticalized using a genitive absolute circumstantial clause. Thus 17c could be translated "<u>Then</u>, when affliction and persecution come about on account of the word, **immediately** they turn away." The adverb εὐθὺς is preposed before the nuclear verb to highlight that just as quickly as they received the word, these hearers fall away.

      In addition to the cataphoric use of the correlative ἄλλοι discussed in the previous section, it is also important to note the preposing of focal information in vv. 19a and 19b. 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 seed scattered among the weeds. The term ἄκαρπος or *unfruitful* is also preposed, clearly highlighting the poor results of this scattering. Note that Matthew's version preposes both the instruments and the result (cf. 13:22c), while Luke's only preposes the instruments (cf. 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 '*the ones **on the good soil** scattered*'). 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 some other linguistic device. Interestingly enough, the other synoptic traditions (with a minor

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

[28] 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.

[29] 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.

exception in Luke)[30] do not use marked devices either. With the analysis complete, we are now able to draw some conclusions regarding the relative salience of the different scatterings, as indicated by information structure and other linguistic devices.

5. Conclusions

I have presented a number of linguistic devices that help to grammaticalize 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 PoDs, which created new cognitive frames of reference for the clause that followed, and provided links back to the preceding discourse. I also pointed out the preposing of focal constituents, 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 and on the rocky place used PFCs to highlight the *manner*. In the scattering among the thorns, a PFC 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 option is that Mark was simply trusting that the natural prominence of mentioning the fruitful scattering last was sufficient to indicate that it should be considered most salient. 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.

The interpretation I would advocate in light of these linguistic data is that Mark pragmatically structured his explanation of the parable to highlight the various 'roadblocks 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.[31]

Such an interpretation is reasonable in light of current research. Gundry[32] comments on the linguistic devices which serve to separate the unfruitful scatterings from the fruitful, but he draws no conclusion regarding salience. France[33] notes that the final group receives little interpretation compared to the others, without mentioning the conventions used to delineate the groups. Finally, Mann[34] states, "The end of the explanation of the parable is an anti-climax. So

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[30] Cf. the fronting 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.
[31] 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.
[32] Gundry, *Mark*, 206.
[33] France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 207.
[34] Mann, *Mark*, 267–68.

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." 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'".[35]

Though the other synoptic traditions do not make a comparable distinction between the fruitful and unfruitful scatterings using *demonstratives*, this study points toward a comparable weighting of the unfruitful scatterings using other devices.

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[35] Geulich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 223.

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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 point of departure:***
*Default: John went outside after dinner. **OR** John ate dinner and went outside.*
Marked: <u>After dinner,</u> *John went outside.* **OR** *John ate dinner,* <u>then</u> *he went outside.*

b)   ***Preposing nominal constituents for a new referential point of departure***
Default: John went outside after dinner.
Marked: <u>As for John,</u> <u>he</u> *went outside after dinner.*

c)   ***Preposing certain prepositional phrases for a new spatial point of departure:***
Default: John finished eating dinner in the kitchen and went outside.
Marked: <u>In the kitchen,</u> *John finished eating dinner and* <u>then</u> *went outside.*

d)   ***Preposing conditional clauses for an explicit conditional point of departure:***
Default: John will not go outside if he doesn't finish eating dinner.
Marked: <u>If John doesn't finish eating dinner,</u> *he will not go outside.*

e)   ***Preposing 'new' information for marked focus (PFC):***
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 point of departure:***
Default: καὶ εὐθὺς ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν. (variation of Mark 4:15b)

Marked: καὶ <u>ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν</u>, εὐθὺς ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς.

b)   ***Preposing nominal constituents for a new referential point of departure:***
Default: σπείρει ὁ σπείρων τὸν λόγον. (variation of Mark 4:14a)
Marked: <u>ὁ σπείρων</u> σπείρει τὸν λόγον.

c)   ***Preposing certain prepositional phrases for a new spatial point of departure:***
Default: καὶ ἔπεσεν ἄλλο ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν (variation of Mark 4:5)

Marked: καὶ <u>ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες</u> ἔπεσεν ἄλλο ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν

d)   ***Preposing conditional clauses for an explicit conditional point of departure:***
Default: τίνα γὰρ μισθὸν ἔχετε ἐὰν ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς; (variation of Matt 5:46)
Marked: <u>ἐὰν</u> γὰρ <u>ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς</u>, τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε;

Appendix 2: Synoptic Accounts of the Explanation of the Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:19–23
19 παντὸς ἀκούοντος τὸν λόγον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ μὴ συνιέντος ἔρχεται ὁ πονηρὸς
καὶ ἁρπάζει τὸ ἐσπαρμένον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ,
οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν** σπαρείς.
20 ὁ δὲ **ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη** σπαρείς,
οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **τὸν λόγον** ἀκούων
καὶ **εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς** λαμβάνων αὐτόν,
21 οὐκ ἔχει δὲ ῥίζαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ
ἀλλὰ **πρόσκαιρός** ἐστιν,
γενομένης δὲ θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον **εὐθὺς** σκανδαλίζεται.

22 ὁ δὲ **εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας** σπαρείς,
οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **τὸν λόγον** ἀκούων,
καὶ **ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου** συμπνίγει τὸν λόγον
καὶ **ἄκαρπος** γίνεται.

23 ὁ δὲ **ἐπὶ τὴν καλὴν γῆν** σπαρείς,
οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **τὸν λόγον** ἀκούων
καὶ συνιείς,
ὃς δὴ καρποφορεῖ καὶ ποιεῖ ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἑξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα.

Mark 4:14–20
14 ὁ σπείρων **τὸν λόγον** σπείρει.
15 οὗτοι δέ εἰσιν οἱ **παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν**· ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος καὶ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν, **εὐθὺς** ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς καὶ αἴρει τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐσπαρμένον εἰς αὐτούς.

16 καὶ οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ **ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη** σπειρόμενοι, οἳ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν τὸν λόγον **εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς** λαμβάνουσιν αὐτόν,
17 καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ῥίζαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλὰ **πρόσκαιροί** εἰσιν, εἶτα γενομένης θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον **εὐθὺς** σκανδαλίζονται.

18 καὶ **ἄλλοι** εἰσιν οἱ **εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας** σπειρόμενοι· οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ **τὸν λόγον** ἀκούσαντες,
19 καὶ **αἱ μέριμναι τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου καὶ αἱ περὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιθυμίαι** εἰσπορευόμεναι συμπνίγουσιν τὸν λόγον καὶ **ἄκαρπος** γίνεται.
20 καὶ ἐκεῖνοί εἰσιν οἱ **ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν** σπαρέντες, οἵτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον καὶ παραδέχονται καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν.

Luke 8:11–15
11 Ἔστιν δὲ αὕτη ἡ παραβολή· Ὁ σπόρος ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.
12 οἱ δὲ **παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν** εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες, εἶτα ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος καὶ αἴρει τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν.
13 οἱ δὲ **ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας** οἳ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν **μετὰ χαρᾶς** δέχονται τὸν λόγον, καὶ οὗτοι ῥίζαν οὐκ ἔχουσιν, οἳ **πρὸς καιρὸν** πιστεύουσιν καὶ **ἐν καιρῷ πειρασμοῦ** ἀφίστανται.

14 τὸ δὲ **εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας** πεσόν, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες, καὶ **ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ βίου** πορευόμενοι συμπνίγονται καὶ οὐ τελεσφοροῦσιν.

15 τὸ δὲ **ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῇ**, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἵτινες **ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ** ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσιν καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ.

Information structure analysis of each Gospel:

Matthew 13:19–23

19a <u>παντὸς ἀκούοντος τὸν λόγον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ μὴ συνιέντος</u>[36]
19b ἔρχεται ὁ πονηρὸς
19c καὶ ἁρπάζει τὸ ἐσπαρμένον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ,
19d οὗτός[37] ἐστιν ὁ **παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν**[38] σπαρείς.
20a <u>ὁ δὲ **ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη**[39] σπαρείς</u>,[40]
20b οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων
20c καὶ **εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς**[41] λαμβάνων αὐτόν,
21a οὐκ ἔχει δὲ ῥίζαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ
21b ἀλλὰ **πρόσκαιρός**[42] ἐστιν,
21c γενομένης δὲ θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον[43] **εὐθὺς**[44] σκανδαλίζεται.
22a <u>ὁ δὲ **εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας**[45] σπαρείς</u>,[46]
22b οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **τὸν λόγον**[47] ἀκούων,
22c καὶ **ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου**[48] συμπνίγει τὸν λόγον
22d καὶ **ἄκαρπος**[49] γίνεται.
23a <u>ὁ δὲ **ἐπὶ τὴν καλὴν γῆν**[50] σπαρείς</u>,[51]
23b οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ **τὸν λόγον**[52] ἀκούων
23c καὶ συνιείς,
23d   ὃς δὴ καρποφορεῖ
23e   καὶ ποιεῖ ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἑξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα.[53]

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[36] 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 (cf. Li and Thompson "Subject and Topic"; Chafe "Givenness, Contrastiveness, Definiteness, Subjects, Topics, and Point of View"). Verse 19a is coreferent with οὗτός in 19d.

[37] Referential point of departure resumes topic established in 19a.

[38] Marked focal constituent within the point of departure highlights the place where the seed is sown.

[39] Marked focal constituent within the point of departure highlights the place where the seed is sown.

[40] Underlined clause is left-dislocated with respect to v. 20b to establish a new topic, resumed by οὗτός.

[41] Marked focal constituents highlight the manner in which the word is received, *immediately* and *with joy*.

[42] Marked focal constituent highlights the duration of the plants existence.

[43] Initial clause establishes a temporal point of departure as the basis for relating what follows to what precedes.

[44] Marked focal constituent highlights the manner in which the person falls away, *immediately*.

[45] Marked focal constituent within the point of departure highlights the place where the seed is sown.

[46] Underlined clause is left-dislocated with respect to v. 22b to establish a new topic, resumed by οὗτός.

[47] Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Mt. 13:19a, Mk 4:20b.

[48] The parable presupposes that *something* chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the marked focal constituent highlights the means of choking.

[49] Marked focal constituent highlights the resulting state of the seed, *unfruitful*.

[50] Marked focal constituent within the point of departure highlights the place where the seed is sown.

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

[52] Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Mt 13:19a, Mk 4:20b.

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

Mark 4:14–20

14a <u>ὁ σπείρων</u>⁵⁴ **τὸν λόγον**⁵⁵ σπείρει.

15a οὗτοι⁵⁶ δέ εἰσιν οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν· ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος

15b καὶ <u>ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν</u>⁵⁷, **εὐθὺς**⁵⁸ ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς

15c καὶ αἴρει τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐσπαρμένον εἰς αὐτούς.

16a καὶ οὗτοί⁵⁹ εἰσιν οἱ **ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη**⁶⁰ σπειρόμενοι,

16b   οἳ <u>ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν τὸν λόγον</u>⁶¹ **εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς**⁶² λαμβάνουσιν αὐτόν,

17a καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ῥίζαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς

17b ἀλλὰ **πρόσκαιροί**⁶³ εἰσιν,

17c <u>εἶτα γενομένης θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον</u> **εὐθὺς**⁶⁴ σκανδαλίζονται.

18a καὶ ἄλλοι⁶⁵ εἰσὶν οἱ **εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας**⁶⁶ σπειρόμενοι·

18b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ **τὸν λόγον**⁶⁷ ἀκούσαντες,

19a καὶ **αἱ μέριμναι τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου καὶ αἱ περὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιθυμίαι**⁶⁸ εἰσπορευόμεναι συμπνίγουσιν τὸν λόγον

19b καὶ **ἄκαρπος**⁶⁹ γίνεται.

20a καὶ ἐκεῖνοί⁷⁰ εἰσιν οἱ **ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν**⁷¹ σπαρέντες,

20b   οἵτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον

20c καὶ παραδέχονται

20d καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἓν τριάκοντα καὶ ἓν ἑξήκοντα καὶ ἓν ἑκατόν.

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⁵⁴ Referential point of departure for a marked to switch to a different topic.

⁵⁵ Marked focal constituent highlights the new information of the clause.

⁵⁶ Marked focal constituent cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν by preposing the demonstrative pronoun.

⁵⁷ Temporal point of departure to establish the temporal frame of reference for what follows.

⁵⁸ Marked focal constituent highlights the manner in which the enemy comes.

⁵⁹ Marked focal constituent cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη σπειρόμενοι by preposing the demonstrative pronoun.

⁶⁰ Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

⁶¹ Temporal point of departure to establish the temporal frame of the continuative relative clause which it begins.

⁶² Marked focal constituents highlight the manner in which the word is received, *immediately* and *with joy*.

⁶³ Marked focal constituent highlights the duration of the plants existence.

⁶⁴ Marked focal constituent highlights the manner in which the person falls away, *immediately*.

⁶⁵ Marked focal constituent cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας σπειρόμενοι by preposing the correlative pronoun. Use of correlative—instead of the proximate demonstrative οὗτοί—indicates the end of correlated entities. Compare to Mt 13:4, 5, 7, 8; 13:1, 24, 31, 33; 20:1, 3, 6; and Mk. 4:4, 5, 7, 8; where correlative pronouns are used for each non-initial entity of the correlated set, including the last. Contrast with Mk 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 Mk 6:14, 15, 16; 8:28, 29.

⁶⁶ Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

⁶⁷ Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights what was heard. Contrast with Mark 4:20b.

⁶⁸ The parable presupposes that *something* chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the marked focal constituents highlight the *means* of the choking.

⁶⁹ Marked focal constituent highlights the resulting state of the seed, *unfruitful*.

⁷⁰ Marked focal constituent cataphorically highlights the new topic οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν σπαρέντες by preposing the demonstrative.

⁷¹ Marked focal constituent within the participial phrase highlights the place where the seeds were sown.

Luke 8:11–15

11a Ἔστιν δὲ αὕτη ἡ παραβολή·

11b Ὁ σπόρος[72] ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.

12a οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν[73] εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες,

12b εἶτα[74] ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος

12c καὶ αἴρει τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν,

12d   ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν.

13a οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας[75]

13b   οἳ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν[76] μετὰ χαρᾶς[77] δέχονται τὸν λόγον,

13c   καὶ οὗτοι ῥίζαν[78] οὐκ ἔχουσιν,

13d   οἳ πρὸς καιρὸν[79] πιστεύουσιν

13e καὶ ἐν καιρῷ πειρασμοῦ[80] ἀφίστανται.

14a τὸ δὲ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας[81] πεσόν,[82]

14b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες,

14c καὶ ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ βίου[83] πορευόμενοι συμπνίγονται

14d καὶ οὐ τελεσφοροῦσιν.

15a τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῇ,[84]

15b οὗτοί εἰσιν οἵτινες ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ[85] ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσιν

15c καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ.

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[72] Referential point of departure for a marked to switch to a different topic.

[73] Referential point of departure for a marked to switch to a different topic.

[74] Temporal point of departure to establish the temporal frame for the clause which it begins.

[75] Left dislocated referential point of departure for a marked switch to a different topic for the continuative relative clause in v. 13b, resumed by οὗτοί in v. 13c.

[76] Temporal point of departure to establish the temporal frame for the continuative relative clause which it begins.

[77] Marked focal constituent highlights the manner in which the word is received, *with joy*.

[78] Marked focal constituent highlights what these plants are missing, *roots*.

[79] Marked focal constituent highlights the duration for which the word is believed, *for a time*.

[80] Temporal point of departure to establish the temporal frame for the clause which it begins.

[81] Marked focal constituent within the point of departure highlights the place where the seed is sown.

[82] Left dislocated referential point of departure for a marked to switch to a different topic, resumed by οὗτοί in the following clause.

[83] The parable presupposes that *something* chokes the growth of the seeds (cf. v. 7), and the marked focal constituent highlights the means of choking.

[84] Left dislocated referential point of departure for a marked to switch to a different topic, resumed by οὗτοί in the following clause.

[85] Marked focal constituent highlights the inner qualities of some who hear the word and respond favorably.