

3. A theoretical–empirical analysis of restriction and concession

Abstract. Similarly to its predecessor (Békési 2003), this paper is a study of two inter-related types of contrast, restriction and concession. The theoretical part of my paper takes an example from E. Rudolph (Rudolph 1996, 393) as a starting point. By swapping the constituents making up the example, a paradigm with four components is established. This paradigm is then applied to an analysis of two further examples. The first simply serves to confirm the applicability of the paradigm to empirical studies. The second example is used to draw more far-reaching conclusions. Here, contrast appears embedded in a causal structure (first, as a precedent, then as a succedent). The empirical analysis demonstrates that contrast, if embedded, can function only as concession, not as restriction.

3.1. A theoretical analysis of restriction and concession

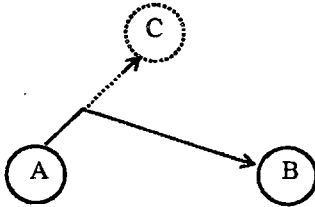
A comprehensive and systematic account of linguistic research into contrast (in what follows, mainly ‘adversative’ and ‘concessive’ relation) by Elisabeth Rudolph (Rudolph 1996) differentiates between two or three basic methodological orientations. “... there are studies more interested in theoretical questions and others looking for application in natural languages. In recent years one can observe a third group where theoretical results are discussed and confronted with examples of authentic language.

The theoretical interest is concentrated on the attempt to find formal patterns that can be used for abstract descriptions of the meaning of complex sentences. Because of the complicated nature of adversative relations and the impossibility of describing them without taking the concessive relations into consideration there are no convincing patterns of logical simplicity.” (Rudolph 1996, 157)

Although Rudolph has not provided a theoretically elaborate meaning structure, she presented a schema (*an indication mark* for the connection of contrast, p. 31., 245., 316., 386), illustrated in Figure [I] and exemplified in (1).

(1) But I began to learn the Thora, and my brother helped me, *although* he did not see why I, a girl, learned like a boy. [Elkezdtem a Thorát tanulni, és a bátyám *nem értette*, hogy én lányként miért tanulok úgy, mint egy fiú, *de segített benne nekem.*] (Rudolph 1996, 393)

[I/a]

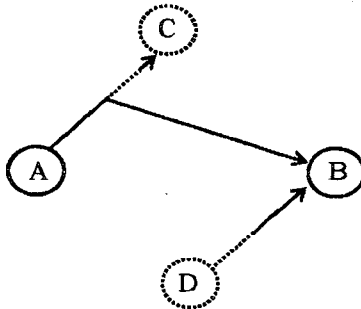


The constituent marked in [I/a] with a thin line represents the implicit proposition contained in (1). This proposition corresponds to a conclusion – possibly formulated under the given circumstances: If someone in a situation characterized by the state of affairs described in (1) *cannot understand* how he could help, then he *will not help*.

Schema [II/a] and example (2) represent the concessive variant of (1). The proposition *my brother did not see why* occupies here a place following the *although [bár]* which marks the main concessive relation.

(2) I began to learn the Thora, and *my brother helped me, although he did not see why* I, a girl, learned like a boy. [Elkezdtem a Thorát tanulni, és a bátyám ebben segített nekem, bár nem értette, hogy én leányként miért tanultam úgy, mint egy fiú.]

[II/a]



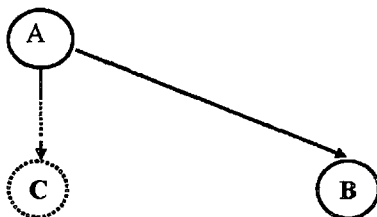
3.1.1 Swapping [I/a] and [II/a]

There are two implicit propositions in (2): C and D. Here, too, proposition D represents a possible but not realized action in this utterance; proposition D is a conclusion implicit in B: *it could not be expected that he would help*.

Note concerning schemata [I/a] and [II/b]

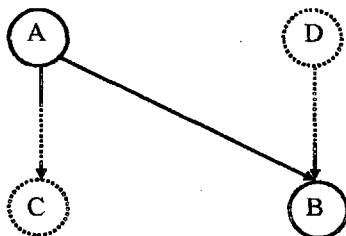
If we consider proposition A as an antecedent, a cause, then proposition C is a consequence, a reason; proposition B – as the second part of an adversative relation – is, again, a consequence, a reason. Swapping Schema [I/a], we get [I/b]:

[I/b]



Schema [II/b] is more than Schema [I/b] by proposition **D**. Here, proposition **D** is an antecedent, a cause of proposition **B**.

[II/b]



3.1.2 The order of the two constituents and the *de* [but] and *bár* [although] types of contrast yield the following four theoretical combinations. (Legend. p and q are two immediate constituents of the implication: if p, then q. 'pr' is used to denote pragmatic presupposition based on general knowledge.)

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|-----|--------|
| (1) | [I/a] | (2) | [II/a] |
| | [I/b] | | [II/b] |

ad (1) [I/a]

(A_{pr}*) KNOWLEDGE general

If someone does not understand something,
then he – usually – cannot be expected
to provide help.

ET

(A_p) FACT unique

My brother did not see why,

I, a girl, learned like a boy.

therefore*

(A_q*) EXPECTATION unique

(My brother) would not help

me.

(B_q) FACT unique

he did help me.

ad (1) [I/b]

(A_{pr}*) KNOWLEDGE general
If someone helps somebody
in something, then he – generally –
can be thought of as understanding that.

ET

(A_p) FACT unique
My brother helped me,
therefore*

(A_q*) PRESUMPTION unique
(My brother) understands why I
I learned like a boy.

(B_q) FACT unique
but did not see why
I learned like a boy.

ad (2) [II/a]

(B_{pr}*) KNOWLEDGE general
When someone does not understand some-
thing then he is – usually not expected to help.

ET

(B_p) FACT unique
although (my brother) did not see why ...
therefore*

(A_q) FACT unique
My brother helped me

(B_q*) EXPECTATION unique
(my brother) will not help.

ad (2) [II/b]

(B_{pr}*) KNOWLEDGE general
When someone helps another one in some-
thing then it can be presumed – usually – that
he understands it.

ET

(B_p) FACT unique
although (my brother) helped me,
therefore*

(A_q) FACT unique
My brother did not
understand why I learned
like a boy.

(B_q*) PRESUMPTION unique
(my brother) understands nevertheless
why I learn
like a boy.

3.2 An empirical analysis of restriction and concession

The idea of theoretical arrangement presented under the above section can be further elaborated on the basis of an excerpt from Attila József.

- (3) *“...akadt
nő, ki érti e szavakat,
de mégis ellökött magától.”*
(József Attila: Nagyon fáj)

- (3) *“... a woman
has been found who understands these words
but rejected me nevertheless.”*
(Attila József: It hurts so much)

3.2.1 Theoretical arrangement

The arrangement possibilities related to the two phrases in bold are identical to those of (1) and (2).

- [I/a] who understands these words but rejected me nevertheless
[I/b] who rejected me but understands these words nevertheless
[II/a] who understands these words although she rejected me
[II/b] who rejected me although she understands these words

3.2.2 Variants that can and variants that cannot be integrated in the line of thought of the poem

3.2.2.1 Only two, [I/a] and [II/a], of the four theoretical variants can be embedded in the line of thought of the poem: the one with the original arrangement and its concessive variant. This comes as no surprise since they share one and the same 'pragmatic presupposition':

'If I find a woman who understands these words, then she will not reject me.'

[I/a]
(Ap) FACT unique
**a woman has been found
who understands these words**

(Aq*) HOPE unique
this woman will not
reject me

(Bq) FACT unique
but she rejected me nevertheless

[II/a]

(Bp) PRESUMPTION unique.
**although she understands
these words**

(Aq) FACT unique
rejected me

since/therefore*
(Bq*) EXPECTATION unique
she should not have rejected me

3.2.3 Empirical analysis

Variants under [I/b] and [II/b] cannot be embedded in the line of thought of the poem. The reason for this lies in the fact that they have different 'pragmatic presuppositions':

'If a woman understands these words yet she rejects me, then either she does not understand these words anyway, or her relation to me does not depend on whether she understands those words, or not.'

[I/b]

(Ap) FACT unique
who rejected me,

(Aq*) PRESUMPTION unique
does not understand these
words

(Bq) CANCELLATION OF
EXPECTATION unique
**but she understands these
words nevertheless**

[II/b]

(Bp) FACT unique
although she rejected me

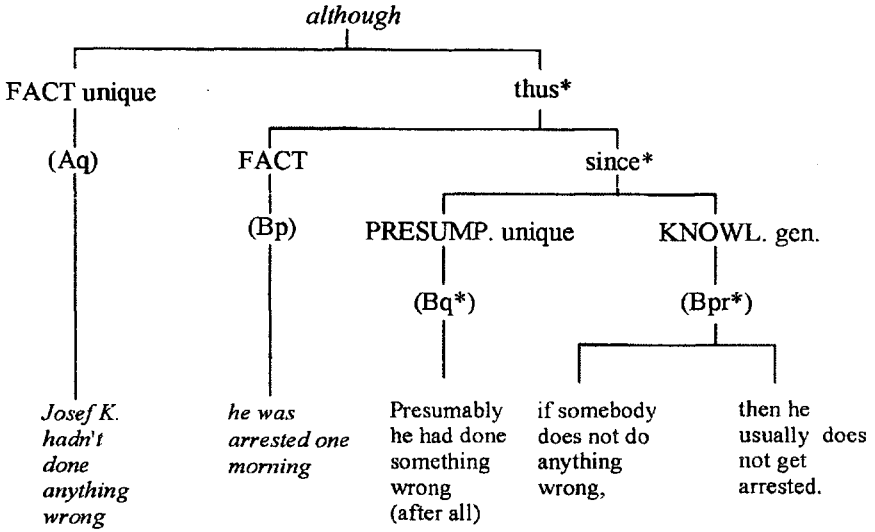
(Aq) FACT unique
who understands these words,

(Bq) EXPECTATION unique
she was not expected to have
been able to understand them

On the basis of empirical analysis, the two theoretical schemata of Elizabeth Rudolph used to express the essence of the *de*-[but]-type and the *bár*-[although]-type of interpretation can be simplified as follows. [The dotted line and the asterisk (*) indicate the implicit, linguistically not expressed character of the relation or component.]

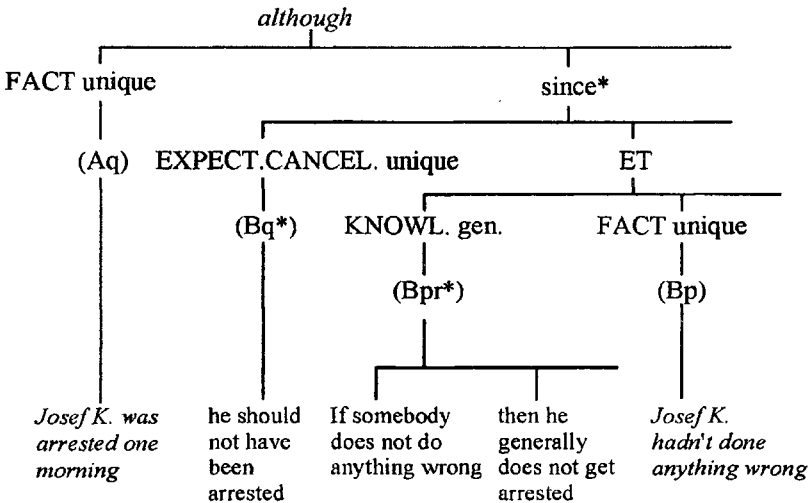
(2.2) ((Aq) *although* (Bp))

Josef K. hadn't done anything wrong *although* he was arrested one morning.



(1.2) ((Aq) *although* (Bp))

Josef K. was arrested one morning, *although* he hadn't done anything wrong.



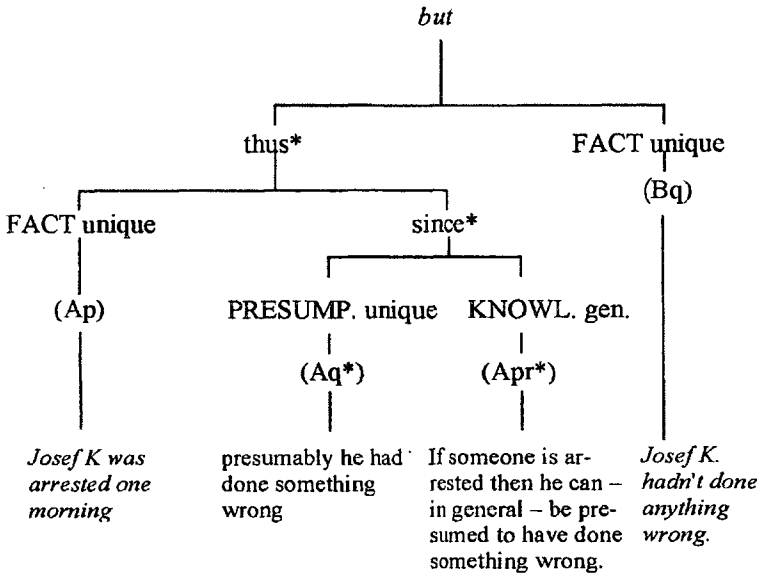
3.3.1 Theoretical description of the concessive and restrictive relations as notional structures

- (1.1) Josef K was arrested one morning but he hadn't done anything wrong.
- (2.2) Josef K. hadn't done anything wrong *although* he was arrested one morning.
- (1.2) Josef K was arrested one morning *although* he hadn't done anything wrong.
- (2.1) Josef K. hadn't done anything wrong *but* he was arrested one morning.

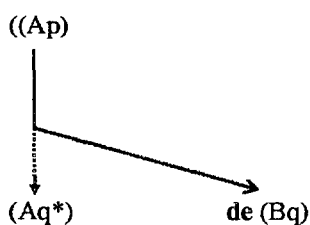
The above four theoretical meaning structures can be presented in the diagrams below as follows:

(1.1) ((Ap) *but* (Bq))

Josef K. was arrested one morning *but* he hadn't done anything wrong



de-[but]-type interpretation: ((Ap) de [but] (Bq))



A bár-[although]-type interpretation: ((Aq) bár [although] (Bp))
bár -[although] (Bp)



3.2.4 In addition to the actual lesson learned from the above analyses, one can also formulate a methodological conclusion. As we could see, the theoretical and the empirical methods of research are mutually dependent. In confirming the line of thought contained in the excerpt from Attila József's poem, we resorted to a notional structure arranged in a paradigm. Lack of uniformity in the four-element paradigm (which manifests itself in its division into two pairs) was revealed, on the other hand, with the help of the line of thought present in spoken text.

3.3 Embedded contrast

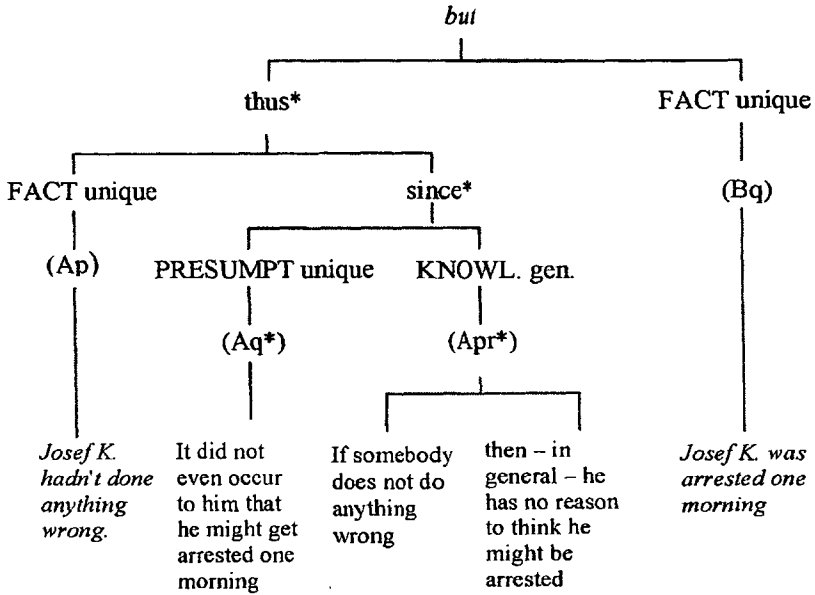
The first sentence of Franz Kafka's famous novel (*Der Prozeß*) goes like this: "*Jemand mußte Josef K. verleumdet haben, denn ohne daß er etwas Böses getan hatte, wurde er eines Morgens verhaftet.*" (Somebody must have accused Josef K., because although he hadn't done anything wrong, he was arrested one morning.)

The main relation of the notional structure is represented by *because*. The proposition contained in the precedent is explained in the succedent. The role of explanation is fulfilled by a concessive structure. We can demonstrate this in two steps.

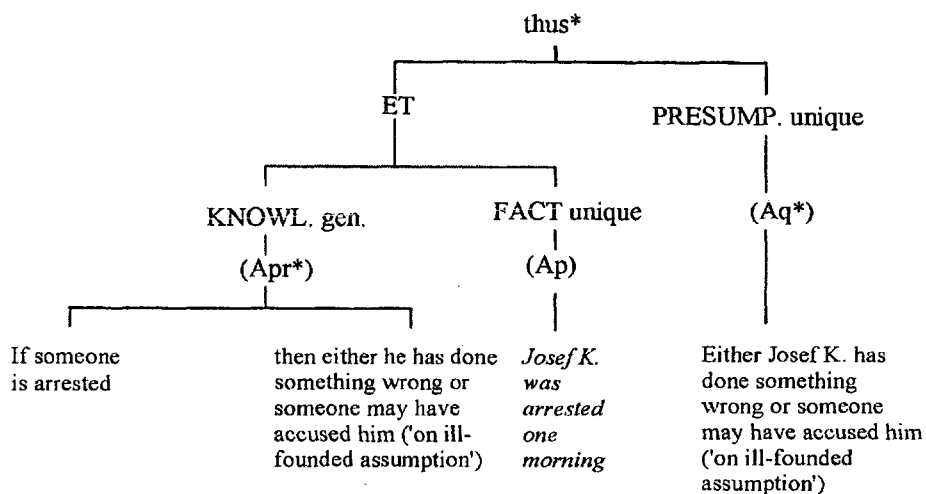
As a first step, we eliminate the concessive structure and identify its place in the contrastive paradigm consisting of four components. Then we specify which (which two) of the four components allow for embedding in the precedent or succedent of the cause-and-reason relation.

(2.1) ((Ap) but (Bq))

Josef K. hadn't done anything wrong *but* they arrested him one morning.



3.3.2 Theoretical description of the cause-and-effect relation as a notional structure



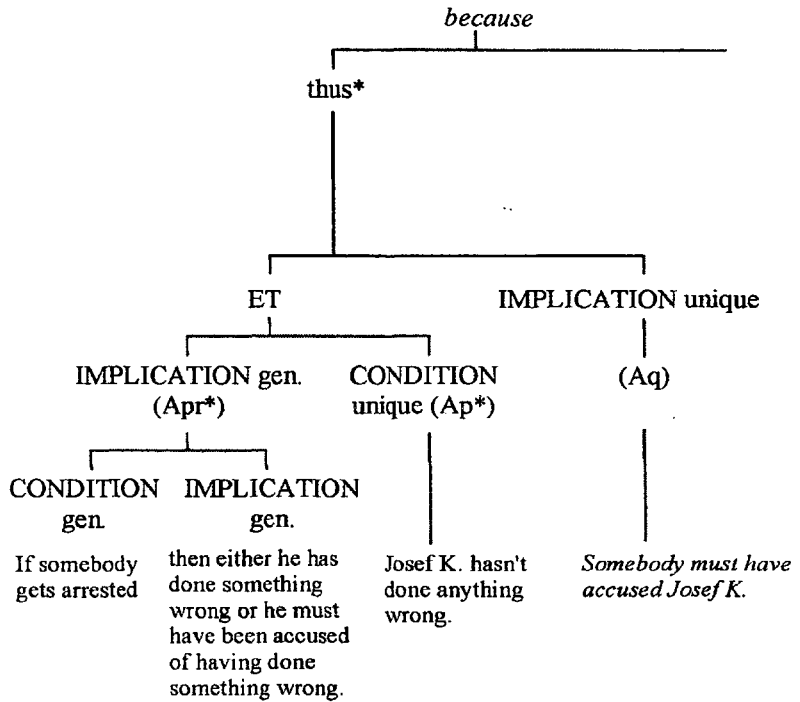
3.3 Theoretical description of the novel-initial global sentence as a complex notional structure

In the case below, component (2.1) of the contrastive paradigm is embedded in the *because*-relation (as its succedent). Then, the precedent of the contrastive structure plays a concessive role (*because although*). The precedent of the contrastive relation acquires a concessive function through repeating (thereby, admitting) the unique condition of the precedent:

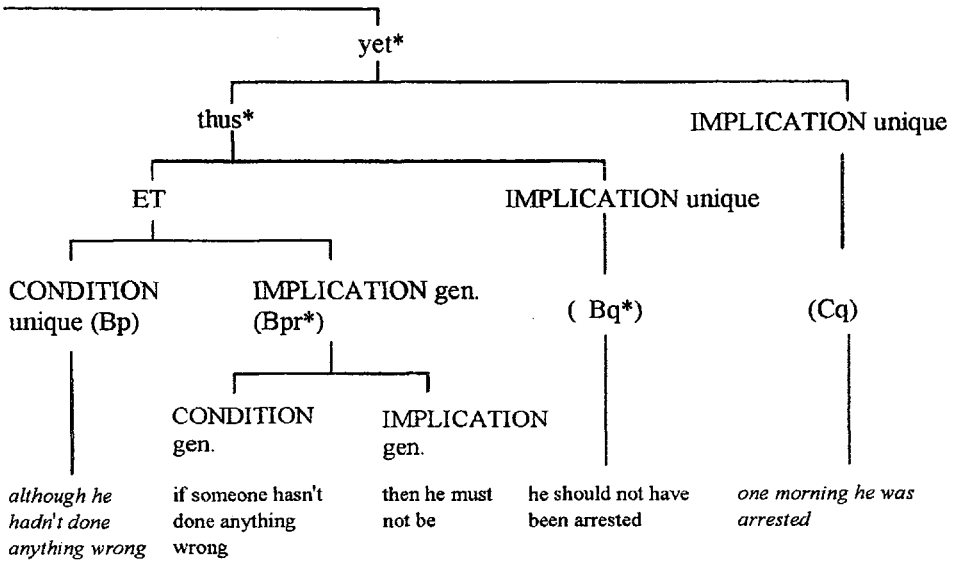
(Ap) *Josef K. hasn't done anything wrong.*

(Bp) *Although Josef K. hasn't done anything wrong.*

3.3.3.1 *Somebody must have accused Josef K., because although*

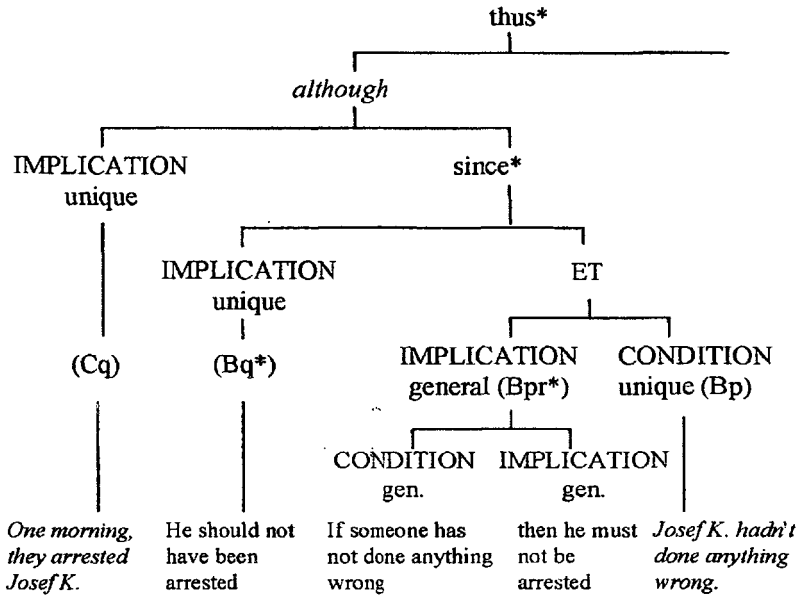


he hadn't done anything wrong, he was arrested one morning.

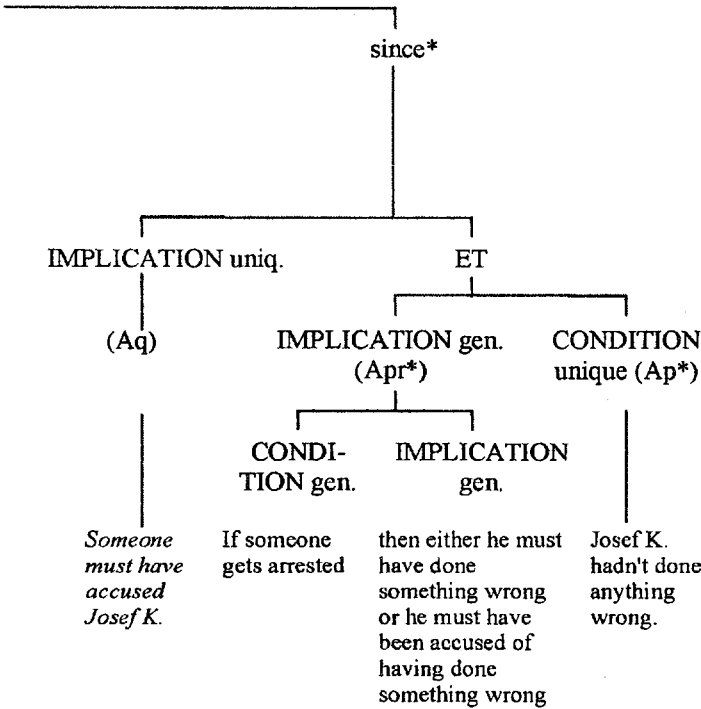


In figure (3.3.2), component (1.2) of the contrastive paradigm is embedded in the *thus*-relation (as its precedent).

3.3.3.2 *One morning Josef K. was arrested, although he*



hadn't done anything wrong, therefore someone must have accused him.



3.4 Summary

One may ask on the basis of the above examples taken from pieces of literary art whether research into literature can exploit the results achieved through linguistic analysis of textual meaning. To the extent linguistic analysis can provide clear interpretations, the answer should be yes. Providing that the first clause of Kafka's sentence is in fact a 'unique implicatum', the function at hand cannot allow for some "specific" conclusion (derived from its notional structure). Hence, instead of attaching no importance to whether *Josef K. was accused or he nevertheless did commit something*, we do not even ask such a question. The reader is made aware of the absurdity of the story of Josef K. through the very first sentence – the first notional structure of the first sentence – itself.

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