Toward Structuralizing Murik Sentence and Paragraph

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I. Introduction

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"The ability of people to develop or discuss a proposition is assumed to be a human universal". (Pike and Pike. 1978. pg 25) Linguistic application of this statement would assert that every language has the potential to combine predications in order to communicate a particular semantic idea. One potential combination of predications would be two or more concatenated, functioning as a whole so that elimination of one or more would result in ambiguities and/or incompleteness. i.e.

The man cooked the pig. + The man ate the pig. = The man cooked and ate the pig.

I saw the boy. + The boy stole the chicken. = I saw the boy who stole the chicken.

He cut the tree. + The tree fell. = He cut the tree and the tree fell.
If it rains tomorrow... + I will not go. = If it rains tomorrow I will not go.

Because language has proven to be intrinsically systemic one would deduce that system would be inherent within concatenated predications. Therefore, a language universal could be derived from these basic assumptions:

Every langauge has a systemative methodology for condatenating predications. Linguistic devices used to signal concatenation would be potentially phonological, grammatical, and/or semantic (lexicon + meanings).

- phonological perhaps intonation marking unit initial/terminus could be the linguistic clue signaling unitness.
- i.e. In a phonological analysis of Wik-Munkan, an aboriginal language spoken on the Cape York Peninsula, Australia, Barbara Sayers defined sentence as:
 - a. consisting of one or more phonological clauses which have a single stress,
 - b. characteristic feature of pitch at the onset (pitch described as when sentence-stress occurs in the first phonological-clause in a sentence of two or more phonological-clauses, the phonological sentence has an overall downdrift of pitch of successive phonological clause stresses) (Sayers 1976a: 48),

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c. bounded by obligatory pause. (Sayers 1976a:42).

However, phonological clues might not be an integral component of predicateconcatenation-system identification. Language specific phonological systems,
such as intonation marking sentence boundaries cannot be superimposed on
another language expecting duplicity of function. Phonological features do
not share the same functional load from language to language. i.e. In a
Mazatec language in Mexico tone markings carry a greater functional load than
do vowels. "I strongly suspect that a Mazatec could read more easily if
vowels, rather that tone, were eliminated". (Gudschinsky 1973. pg 122)

- ti (with low falling tone) = 'boy'
- ti (with low rising tone) = 'water jug'
- ti (with high level tone) = 'verbal particle'
- ti (without tone marker) = '??' (meaning unknown)
- 2. grammatical devices such as conjunctions, medial-final verb relations, or relative clause marders help define source constituency in many languages. However, not all languages have overt conjunctions or medial-final verb relations but that does not preclude that the language without them cannot concatenate predications or higher level hierarchical units. Suppose that a language has very few, inconsistent, or no phonological and/or grammatical features signaling unitness above the clause, does the sparsity, or inconsistency, or absence of these features preempt systematic relations of units above the clause? Emphatically not; system and/or structure must not be limited to being identified only in phonological and/or grammatical terms.
- 3. <u>semantics</u> interconstituent function and relation above clause could be determined on the basis of semantic criteria. Context spaces as a group of utterances with reference to a single issue (Reichman 1978 pg284) could be the domain within which concatenated predications are distributed. The purpose

of this paper is to present a language specific illustration of such a language and to describe the semantic criteria used for identifying or signaling source constituency above the clause in indeterminate cases.

II. Language in Focus

Murik, a non-Austronesian Papua New Guinea language (Nor-Family, Lower Sepik Sub-Phylum, Sepik Ramu Phylum (Laycock 1973 pg 33)) spoken in the East Sepik Province, is syntactically ordered Subject Object Predicate. Such ordering in many languages in Papua New Guinea signals clause chaining with medial-final or dependant-independant type clause relations. However, the Mulik language has no such verb distinctions. Subordinate verb relations are restricted to such constructions as relative clauses or are signaled by condition-result type clausel relations.

i.e. /wanga-verb root-rogo ewa/ signals relative clause construction
 rel. agr. dem.
 cl.mkr.

/-amba-verb root-rogo ewa/ signals condition-result if agr dem

ther grammatical features signaling boundaries or interconstituent relations above the clause are sparse while phonological features are inconsistent and sparse. i.e. Initial phonological analysis indicated contrastive intonation contours distinguishing phrase and sentence. However, firther analysis revealed that Murik speakers used these contours in an arbitrary and unpredictable manner concerning clause and noun phrase strings. The same intonation contour potentially marked phrase and/or sentence level units.

'The big man is hitting your /nor apo ewa/dwen mi-nago/nago o-kirin-ara/ man big dem dog 2S-poss int. 3S-hit -temp. dog very hard.' SPN mkr. 'If you go I will go.' k- w-amba- o-rogo ewa/ k- wara- o-ga/ /mi ma 1S fut-ls -spkr-go-tns 2S fut-2s if-qo-if dem tns SPN agr tns SPN ct. agr. asp

NOTE: Pauses optional and intonation contours freely variant.

Further evidence supporting lack of unit identifying functional load of phonological features is the lack of contrast between interrogative and declarative units. Straight to mid-falling intonation can occur on both declarative and interrogative units. i.e. (see declarative above)

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/mi amwo-temari-namena/ 'What are you doing?'
2S inter-make-inter.agr.
mkr.

/mi mari- me- o- ara-mena/ 'Where are you going?'
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2S inter-2s-go-temp-inter.agr.

source constituency above the clause.

mkr

mkr SPN

The semantic function of interrogation is signaled by the lexicon and morphology with no phonological feature distinguishing interrogation from declarative. Therefore, a non-grammatical non-phonological heiristic is needed to determine

III. Semantic Criteria

In a paper on distributional structure (focusing on phonemes) Zellig
Harris noted, "...a set of data is structured in respect to some feature, to
the extent that we can form in terms of that feature some organized system of
statements which describes the members of the set and their interrelations...".

(Harris 1954 pg 146). Various extended linguistic applications of the term

'structure' have oy'scured the semantic components of the term. For the purpose
of this paper structure will be defined as: a speech span made up of more or
less interdependent elements in which each element has a function and relation

within the span.

The non-grammatically non-phonologically signaled constituent relations could be identified by determining interconstituent meaning restrictions.

Analysis of indeterminate juxtaposed interconstituent relations will begin with the following definition: any constituent which decreases the range or scope of meaning or textual/contextual ingerence of another constituent together with taht constituent is defined as a semantically bound unit. A unit defining feature of this semantically bound unit is the sentence initial constituent as the unit topic which sets the spatial, temporal, or logical domain within which the semantically bound constituents are distributed.

Interconstituent relations of concatenated units vary as to restriction potential.

i.e. In English the potential for (...cooked and...) to be restricted is much lower than for (...breathed and...). That is, there is a much greater range of predications which can concatenate with second example than the first. Kasem, a Ghanaian language of West Africa, has a grammatical and phonological system for linking clauses together to form clause series. Hewer, concluded that a Kasem speaker links clauses together in a series on the basis of interclausal lexical affinity. He has systematized verbal relations as to lexical association and clause series co-occurrence restrictions.

i.e. Five types of clusters which form clause series in perfect aspect:

Rise Initiator Cluster, Start: Speech Cluster, Say: (Talk) Quote (Leave) Go-To Motion Cluster, Move: (Go-How) Hold Go-To (Give) (Go-How) (Take) Transport Cluster, Carry: (Give) (Take) (Use) Do Action Cluster, Act:

Each element of the clause is entered on a verb with the particular lexical feature indicated. Peripheral elements are enclosed in parentheses and are optional. (Hewer 1976 pg22).

Similarily, hypothesis for the Murik language is: units with low potential for restriction have a greater lexical affinity than do the higher potential

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restriction units. The following sequences (...cooked and...) and (...put it and...) are highly predictable in Murik.

/min nimben o- di-ri u-tim-ari o-ma -ri/ 'He killed the pig, cooked it,

3S pig 3S-kill-pst 3S-cook-pst 3S-eat-pst
SPN ths SPN ths

/ma mwan t-wa-sabwa t-o-pya/ 'I put something and it remains.'

1S something comp-1S-put comp-3S-remainsasp SPN asp SPN

Murik morphological support to this hypothesis is illustrated by the following:

/gay mwan k-age- ra-dwerapwa-rakimin-ga/ 'We two will broadcast lD some- fut-lD-spkr-broadcst-walk -tns. something around.'
thing tns SPN ct agr.

When two verbs have a great degree of lexical affinity with one decreasing the range or scope of meaning of the other, the Murik speakers optionally economize morphological inflection by concatenating the verb roots and inflecting them as a single unit.

The following examples illustrate application of the previous definition for units of varying lexical affinities, both in cases with and without overt grammatical signals. These examples demonstrate sentential cohesion not textual boundaries. Examples illustrative of both sentential cohesion and textual boundary identification will be provided in the textual analysis section VI. NOTE: Double underlined language data below indicates grammatical features identifying hypotactic relation between clauses.

Logical

Topic: Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

Cl 3: Restriction

1. /gar ko- bo- ta-timari/ nagun to- bo-atagamin/ kankimpwap k- a- rafeast fut-lPl-des-make skin comp-lPl-straighten victory fut- lPl-spkrtns SPN asp SPN leaves tns SPN ct
Cl 4: Restriction asp

rakimari-ga/ nim -rik dag aritambo k- a- ra-kokosa/ walk -tns woman-pl grass good fut-lPl-spkr-put on agr skirt tns SPN ct asp

'Wanting to make a feast, (when) we have straightened our skin, we will walk around with victory leaves (Taetsia Fructicosa), and the women will put on good grass skirts.'

Logical

Topic: Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

2. /"kwayn ajin a'in arewatana mi maning apanarogo/ mi ma-na nasen beachcrab ground talk all same 2S strong big-have 2S lS-poss daughter said

'Beachcrab, the ground says you have big strength (therefore) do you want to marry my daughter?' NOTE: Textual inference criteria applied for rendering.

Topic: Logical Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

3. Arim narin k - w- amba -tumon-dogo ewa/ma o ongwende/rain tomorrow fut -3PS-suppose-come- dem 1PS go negative tns SPN down

'If it rains tomorrow I will not go.'

Topic: Logical

Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

4. /nor nasen t - o - sanaytinara / kwayn t - 0 - aminara / kwayn t - 0 - aminara / beachcrab comp-3PS-give Asp SPN asp SPN

Cl 3: Restriction

t - o - merinara/ Comp-3PS- marry Asp SPN

'The man got his darghter, gave her to the beachcrab, and he (beachcrab) married her.'

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Topic: Temporal

Domain Cl 2: Restriction Cl 3: Restriction Cl 4: Restriction

'When we made the food, we finished it, got it, and put it on the table.'

Topic: Logical Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

'I saw the boy who stole the chicken.'

Three of the examples about are grammatically as well as semantically bound. The first clause in example three is in hypotactic relationship with the second clause as a supposition. The second clause in example six is relativized in hypotactic relationship with the first clause. A case could be made in example five that all of the clauses should be conjoined on the grammatical basis of sharing same grammatical subject and object. However, in examples one, two and four clauses with different grammatical subjects are semantically bound. According to the previously stated definition, basis for conjoining is the decreased range or scope of textual/contextual inference of the constitutents.

IV. Orthographic Representation

Identifying systematic interconstituent relations above the clause is obligatory for accurate orthographic representation of a language. Although grammatical and/or phonological criteria might not necessarily overlap consistently with semantically-bound-unit terminus, to arbitrarily mark sentence and paragraph in vernacular literature would be detrimental to reading fluency and/or comprehension. Sarah Gudschinsky asserts:

 Every time a contrast is not symbolized an ambiguity is created and no matter how small an ambiguity it is, the material is to that extent harder for people to read and to understand. (Gudschinsky 1973, pg 120.) Page 9

 Depending upon context to clarify an ambiguity often forces the reader to re-read, and if this happens frequently reading becomes slow and ineffecient. (Gudschinsky 1973, pg 125.)

3. It is seldom that a beginning reader goes back to correct a mis-reading in the first part of a sentence. (Gudschinsky 1973, pg 121.)

Pike notes:

- 1. Wrong or ambiguous symbolization obscures or destroys communication potential. (Pike 1947, pg 208.)
- 2. It is a hindrance to reading skills and understanding to break up units into more or smaller units than represent the actual language structure. (Pike 1947, pg 210)

While both Gudychinsky and Pike were writing in regard to lower level features such as phoneme symbolization or word boundaries, their observations are applicable to sentence and paragraph symbolization as well. Testing of vernacular literacy materials among newly literates in a basically illiterate ethnic group in Papua New Guinea has established that improper organization of discourse constituents resulted in a breakdown of comprehension and reading skills. (McDonald 1979, personal comm.)

as conjuctions or conjoining intonation does in language, then separation of the juxtaposed clauses in L₁ (i.e. by full stop) would create the same ambiguities as deletion of a conjunction would in L₂. Therefore, systematic description of individual discourse constituents functioning as a whole and their interrelationships is essential, i.e. clauses concatenated functioning as "sentences": sentences concatenated functioning as "paragraphs; and use of the terms 'sentence' and 'paragraph' is simply for convenience. They are labels for concatenated units functioning as a whole at a hierarchical level above the comprising constituents.

V. Systematic Constituent Description

A corpus of discourse data was analysed, amplying the semantic criteria

discussed in section III, in an attempt to identify sentence, paragraph, and discourse constituents, their function and interrelation. Various genre (narrative, procedural, behavioral, and expository) and oral versus written text materials were included within the corpus of data. From the analysis the following formulae were produced exemplifying functional structure by describing the constituents of the various hierarchical levels and their interconstituent relations.

Sentence Root Hcl.

Sentence Hcl.

<u>+</u>	Margin	Subordinate Clause
	Restriction	Grammatically & Semantically Bound to Sentence

This hypotactic sentence type was discovered by eliciting sentence constituents in alternate distribution within the sentence. Alternate distribution potential of a grammatically marked subordinate clause within a sentence is interpreted as evidence for subordination to the sentence as a whole rather than to a juxtaposed clause. This alternative clause order is also objective evidence that this string of four clauses is a unit. i.e.

k- o- ta-sarakimindi/ yara-mo ewa/
fut-3pS-des-look for blood-drink dem
tns SPN asp

(Original order) 'He (a mosquito) will get up, to walk around, to look for a man, to drink blood.'

VI. Textual Analysis

The following discourse was written by Micah Yarong of Darapap Village,
Murik Lakes, East Sepik Province, after a seminar concerning malaria contraction and prevention. Analysis will illustrate the preceding formulae.
The semantic criteria discussed in section III will be applied to concatenated clauses, sentences, and paragraphs.

A. Clause Concatenation

The strings of clauses below are concatenated functioning as structural units. In each, the initial clause sets the spatial, temporal, or logical domain within which the semantically bound clauses are distributed. This initial clause is referred to as the topic. The semantically bound units as a whole are defined as sentence context spaces. Sentence context

space boundaries are determined on the basis of:

- a. change of concatenated-clause topic,
 - i.e. Clause 1 below: 'I will talk the mosquito talk...' as the initial sentence constituent and therefore sentence topic is restricted by the following Clause 2: '...about the mosquito that has sickness.' However, the following justaposed Clause 3: 'Mosquitos are like this...' does not decrease the range of meaning of Clause 2 because Clause 2 is specifically about malarial mosquitos while Clause 3 about mosquitos in general. Therefore, Clause 3 signals a new topic (in this particular case, paragraph topic.).
- b. no decreased range or scope of meaning or textual/contextual inference between juxtaposed clauses.

Topic: Logical Domain

Cl 2: Restriction

'I will talk the mosquito talk (about) the mosquito that has sickness.'

Paragraph

Topic:LD Topic:LD Cl 2: Rest

2. /nawk darewa / abeba ongwende / abetabeta /
 mosquito dem one negative many

'Mosquitos are like this, there is not (just) one (kind but) many.'

Topic: LD C1 2: Rest

3. /nawk mwaga yagot-a-gu-rara / nago abeba Mokomap nawk ewa yagot-arogo / mosquito some sick- have-neg only one Mokomap mosquito dem sick-have

'Some mosquitos do not have sickness, only one, Mokomap, this mosquito has sickness.'

Paragraph

Topic: LD Topic: TD C1 2: Rest

4. /min-a pasin ewa / akin apambo / min k- o- ra- ga-ragari-ga/
3S-poss custom dem sun big 3S fut-3S -spkr-dur-sleep-tns
tns SPN ct asp agr

^{&#}x27;His custom is, (when) the sun is big, he will sleep first.'

Topic: TD C1 2: Rest

5. /sisinakat akin k- w-amba-si -rogo ewa / min k- o- ro-dikara-ga/ afternoon sun fut-3S -if -down-if dem 3pS fut-3S-spkr-get up-tns tns SPN agr tns Spn_ct agr asp

Cl 3: Rest Cl 4: Rest

/k- w -anta-rakimin-ga / nor-o nabin k- o- ta- sa-rakimindi /
fut-3S-des-walk -tns man-loc eye fut-3S- des-look-walk
tns SPN asp agr tns SPN asp for

Cl 5: Rest

yara-mo ewa / blood-drink dem

'If the afternoon sun goes down he will get up, to walk around, to look for a man, to drink blood.'

Topic: LD.

C1 2: Rest

6. /nor k- w-amba-sobo-rogo ewa / ayba k- o- ra-baba -sasa-ga / man fut-3S- if- see- if dem quickly fut-3S-spkr-quick-sit -tns tns SPN agr tns SPN ct asp agr asp

Cl 3: Rest

Cl 4: Rest

g-anda-gaymatin-ga / manimb gan k- o- ro-sabwatikimindi / k- o- ra-ba- o-ga/
3S-spkr-bite -tns (germs) fut-3S-spkr-leave fut-3S-spkr-it-go-tns
Spn unct agr tns SPN ct tns SPN ct asp agr
asp

'If he seen a man, quickly he will sit down, bite him, leave germs, and go back again.'

Paragraph Sent.

Topic & Topic: LD Cl 2: Rest

7. /g-amba-gaymatina-rogo / yaran mi-nago k- w-amba-rakimin-dogo ewa / 3S-if -bite -if blood 2pS-poss fut-3S-if -walk -if dem SPN agr tns SPN agr

Cl 3: Rest

manimb gan ewa nariba k- o- ra-rakimin-ga mi-na yaran-sar-o ewa / (germs) dem with fut-3S-spkr-walk -tns 2pS-poss blood-inside-loc dem tns SPN ct agr

'If he bites you (and) if your blood circulates (then) the germs will walk with it (blood) inside your blood stream.'

Topic: SD

Cl 2: Rest

8. / k- w-amba- o-rogo ewa / yaran abe aritogo k- w-amba-sobo-rogo ewa / fut-3S-if -go-if dem blood one good fut-3S-if -see -if dem tns SPN agr tns Spn agr

Cl 3: Rest

Cl 4: Rest

k- o- ra-napaketi-ga dewana / yagot k- w-anta-yrina / fut-3S-spkr-attach -tns finish sick fut-3S-des -come up tns SPN ct agr tns SPN asp asp

If they go (and) if they see some good blood, they will attach to it (and) sickness will come up.

Topic: LD

C1 2: Rest

9. / manimb abetabeta ki- r-amba-marirara / yaran ko- bo- ra-kibiqamin-ga / germs many fut-3P1-if -made blood fut-3p1-spkr-finish -tms the SPN ct agr

Cl 3: Rest

gime- ra-prena /
fut/2S-spkr-die
tns SPN ct
 asp

'If many germs are made, they will finish (your) blood, and you will die.

Topic: LD

C1 2: Rest

10. / nawk yaran k- w-amba-kibigamon-dogo ewa / marasin k- c- ba-mon-dogo ewa / mosquito blood fut-3S-if-finish -if dem medicine fut-2S-if-drink-lf dem the SPN agr the SPN agr

Cl 3: Rest

Cl 4: Rest

manimb ki- ra- ra-pepeta-ga / mi asiba gime- ra-ba -dana /
germs fut-3Pl-spkr-die -tns 2pS good fut/2S-spkr-it -exist
tns SPN ct agr tns SPN ct asp
asp

'If the mosquito finishes (your) blood, (but) you drink medicine again, the germs will die, (and) you will be all right again.'

Topic: LD

Cl 2: Rest

11. / marasin ma-gu -mba ewa / gime- ra-prena /
medicine drink-neg-if dem fut/2S-spkr-die
tns SPN ct
asp

'If you do not drink medicine, you will die.'

Paragraph
Topic: SD

12. /nawk ewa kwasan-sar-o o-daga-rogo / mosquito dem marsh-in -loc 3S-exist-# agr

'These mosquitos live inside the marsh.'

Topic: SD

Cl 2: Rest

13. /kwasan k- o- ba-sokoapi-rogo ewa / nawk ane da ongwende / marsh fut-3S -if -fill -if dem mosquito there exist neg tns SPN agr

'If you fill the marshes, mosquitos cannot exist there.'

Topic: SD

Cl 2: Rest

14. / min kuja kwasan-sar-o o-daga-rogo / tin pipian batak gerib arim galin 3S only marsh-in -loc 3S-exist-# agr tin rubbish coconut half water cance

mwan era aribo sisakimarara ewa / thing dem water fills dem

'He only exists in the marshes where water fills tin cans, coconut shell halves, (and) all of these kind of things.'

Topic: LD

Cl 2: Rest

15. / ki- ra-ba-kaytimari-rara ewa / nawk mi abe ti- k- na-gaymati-name / fut-2Pl-if-ruin -if dem mosquito 2S one imm-fut-2Pl-bite -neg tns SPN agr asp tns SPN

'If you ruin all of these things, mosquitos cannot bite one of you.

Topic: LD

Cl 2: Rest

16. / darewa nawk -o rausim-o gime-ba-mari-rogo ewa / tin pipian batak therefore mosquito-loc remove-loc fut/2S-if-want-if dem tin rubbish coconut tns SPN agr

gerib kwawn ewa ko-rausim-inka / half hole dem imp-remove-imp agr

'Therefore, if you want to remove mosquitos, remove tin rubbish, coconut halves, and these (type of) holes.'

Topic: SD

Cl 2: Rest

Cl 3: Rest

17. / arimank apo ewa / tant ko-rimabata-ka / tant nawk-na gawg waterhole large dem fish imp-put in -imp fish mosq-poss egg

agr

Cl 4: Rest

Cl 5: Rest

k- o- ra-min-ga / k- o- ra-kibigamin-ga / nawk k- o- ra-kaymari-ga / fut-3Pl-spkr-eat-tns fut-3Pl-spkr-finish -tns mosq fut-3Pl-spkr-terminate-tns tns SPN ct agr tns SPN ct agr tns SPN ct agr asp asp

'(For) the large water holes, put in fish (and) the fish will eat the mosquito eggs, will finish them, (and) the mosquitos will be terminated.'

Topic: LD Cl 2: Rest

18. / dewana / storin t- o-kibin / finished story comp-3S-finish asp SPN

'It's finished, the story is complete.'

B. Sentence Concatenation

The chart below symbolizes concatenated sentences functioning as paragraphs. The initial sentence sets the spatial, temporal, or logical domain within which the semantically bound sentences are distributed. This constituent is referred to as the paragraph topic. The semantically bound units as a whole are defined as paragraph context spaces. Paragraph context space boundaries are determined on the basis of:

- a. change of paragraph topic,
- b. no decreased range or scope of meaning or textual/contextual inference between juxtaposed sentences,
- c. Noun Phrase + darewa or introducer word or phrase i.e. (vocative).

C. Paragraph Concatenation

Concatenated paragraphs functioning as the discourse whole are best illustrated by indicating their specific function within this 'mosquito talk' discourse. The initial discourse constituent sets the spatial, temporal, or logical domain within which the semantically bound paragraphs are distributed. This constituent is referred to as topic. The semantically bound units as a whole are referred to as a discourse context space. Discourse context space boundaries are determined on the basis of:

- a. change of discourse topic,
- b. no decreased range or scope of meaning or textual/contextual inference between juxtaposed discourses.

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Mosquito Talk Narrative Discourse = + Topic Restricting + Closure
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+ Topic Introduction: Sentence | 'malarial mosquitos' + Restricting Paragraphs:

Paragraph A: Sentences 2-3 'malarial mosquito species identified'

Paragraph B: Sentences A=6 'malaria contraction'

Paragraph C: Sentences 7-11 'malarial parasites'

Paragraph D: Sentences 12-17 'carrier eradication'

+ Closure: Sentence 18

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