

# On the integration of Theme constituents in the predication in Latin \*

C. CABRILLANA  
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela

## 0. Introduction

One of the main issues posed in the field of pragmatics regards, by and large, the definition, characterization<sup>1</sup> and, therefore, the typology of the functions that can be established within it. Difficulties arise, in particular, when analysing the application of general criteria to a given dead language.

This paper shall study, as a prior question, the definition of the Theme function within the framework of Functional Grammar (*FG*), following the pattern developed by Simon C. Dik (1978, 1989), as well as the characteristics that have been ascribed to it; such an analysis requires that the function subject-of-study be dealt with in its own boundaries as far as another pragmatic function is concerned: the Topic. Subsequently, in section 2., I shall attempt to substantiate the degree of integration the Theme function shows in predication.

## 1. Approach to the theoretic status of the Theme function

According to Dik (1978: 19) «a constituent with Theme function presents a domain or universe of discourse with respect to which it is relevant to pronounce the following predication», therefore, this function belongs to the «extra-clausal pragmatic functions» (Dik, 1989: 265), whereas the Topic, defined (Dik: 1978: 19) as the function that «presents the entity about the predication in a given setting», is an «intra-clausal» pragmatic function (Dik, 1989: 265).

It is difficult to solve the problem posed by the above-mentioned characteristics, namely, a clear-cut division between the elements that function as Theme and those others that constitute the Topic of the predication, particularly when the latter are, following M. Somers (1994: 154), *fronted Topics*<sup>2</sup>.

Most certainly, there are cases in which both functions can be distinguished, as in (1), where the Focus would be represented by the part of new information (*locutus est te ita scripsisse, nihil esse iam quod laboraretur* and, more particularly, *nihil esse iam quod laboraretur*), and the Topic (*Tadius*), which appears explicitly expressed in

---

\* I am grateful to Professor H. Pinkster for his remarks on an earlier version of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., for example, M. HANNAY (1983: 207; 1985: 49), M. H. SOMERS (1994).

<sup>2</sup> A reference to this difficulty may also be found in M. E. HOFFMANN (1989: 193). A. M. BOLKESTEIN (1981) traces several cases and establishes a difference between those elements with a Theme function and those with displaced pseudo-arguments.

the predication, is syntactically independent of the Theme (*de Tadiana re*); the following interpretation being somewhat bizarre: 'Tadius has talked about Tadius' affairs':

(1) *de Tadiana re, mecum Tadius locutus est te ita scripsisse, nihil esse iam quod laboraretur*<sup>3</sup> (Cic. Att. 1,5,10).

However, as some scholars have already pointed out (P. Sgall *et al.*, 1983: 175 ff. or H. Pinkster, 1990: 175), and despite the differences which exist in the attribution of pragmatic functions, it does seem clear that, in some cases, it is not possible to establish a clear-cut boundary between Theme and Topic<sup>4</sup> or other types of constituents, especially in an initial position<sup>5</sup>. Such would be the case that follows:

(2) *Reliqua sic a me aguntur et agentur ut non committamus ut ea quae gessimus fortuito gessisse uideamur* (Cic. Att. 1,20,3)<sup>6</sup>.

At first sight, we could argue that *reliqua* is a constituent which functions, syntactically, as Subject and, pragmatically, as (initial) Topic. It can be inferred from the context that *reliqua* refers to something known to both the speaker and the listener. Yet, it would also be possible to consider *reliqua* as the Theme of the predication, for, taking the context into account, *reliqua* introduces a change<sup>7</sup> in the universe with respect to which the following predication proves relevant<sup>8</sup>. The grounds to support the interpretation of *reliqua* as Theme could be found in the function itself of the constituent as an introducer of a domain of discourse with respect to which it is appropriate to express the predication that follows it, this definition coinciding with Dik's formulation for the Theme function (1978)<sup>9</sup>.

On the other hand, – and the following statement is to be taken only as a note –, should *reliqua* be considered as Theme, there seems to be no reason whatsoever to assert that this constituent is not syntactically dependent on the predication. The question could be solved, according to Somers, in terms of gradation.

This issue leads us to the second problem posed above: the integration of the elements with Theme function in the predication.

## 2. The Theme function as part of the predication

Few studies have been devoted so far to the analysis of this particular issue. Moreover, they have been conceived of in a partial or monographical manner, carried out from a general perspective or applied to different languages (Li-Thompson, 1976: 461-465; Dik, 1981b; de Groot, 1981, etc.), some of them referring to Latin itself

<sup>3</sup> I will write the constituent functioning as Theme in plain text, and in italics the predication proper.

<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact, in some pragmatic binary frameworks these two functions are neither taken into account nor differentiated. Occasionally, however, such non-differentiation may be due to a lack of observation of the conditions of appearance of what in any case, and depending of terminology, is known as Topic or Theme; cf., for example, M. A. K. HALLIDAY (1967) or the *Kleines Wörterbuch sprachwissenschaftlicher Termen*, 1978 (2): 220, 271. A note referring to this issue can also be found in HANNAY (1983: 221).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. HOFFMANN (1989: 191-193) and, more particularly, SOMERS (1994).

<sup>6</sup> It is usually stated that, quite frequently, the fact that the Theme is separated from the predication itself is confirmed by the existence of a pause between both elements, as can be seen in many examples. However, I agree with J. LALLEMAN (1985: 70) who, talking of spoken Dutch, states that "*P2 constituents may be followed by a constituent in P1 without a pause*" (Lalleman's emphasis).

<sup>7</sup> Cicero has been referring, so far, to a series of matters related to the Republic.

<sup>8</sup> This interpretation seems to be corroborated by D. R. SHACKLETON B., *Tullius Cicero. M. Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, London, 1965-68 (repr. 1978): "as for the future, I am so acting and shall continue to act as to run no risk of having my achievements attributed to chance". This discussion, however, — the interpretation that becomes apparent from a translator's rendering — could certainly be considered as weak, or even non-applicable, therefore, we may demand a more solid basis to defend considering examples like *reliqua* as constituents of the Theme function.

<sup>9</sup> BOLKESTEIN (1981: 68) points out that since the initial element is in the nominative case, this may constitute some sort of basis for regarding this element as Theme; likewise, HOFFMANN (1989: 191) shows clear examples of constructions of elements with Theme function in the nominative.

(P. Boon, 1981<sup>10</sup>; Bolkestein, 1981; Hoffmann, 1989; Serbat, 1991; Somers, 1994), without their having reached, from my point of view, a clear and satisfactory solution to the problem created.

In this section, and starting from occurrences of elements with Theme function in Plautus' comedies, I shall attempt to study their integration in the predication. My analysis has been carried out in the following corpus: *Amph.*, *Asin.*, *Aul.*, *Bacch.*, *Capt.*, *Cas.*, *Curc.*, *Merc.*, *Mil.*, *Most.*, *Persa*, *Poen.*, *Pseud.*, *Stich.* and *Truc.*

The development of this section has been lead by two main criteria of analysis:

1. The particular constituent of the element functioning as Theme (Hoffmann, 1989) and
2. the presence of the 'resumptive' element of the Theme constituent in the predication.

These two criteria shed new light on the question raised here.

Notwithstanding, it seems appropriate to clarify, firstly, the concept of 'integration'. Thus, 'linear integration'<sup>11</sup> must be distinguished from 'functional integration', the latter being understood as the integration that exists when a given element fulfills a role in any of the linguistic levels (syntactic, semantic or communicative). Thus, on some occasions, there is no true break of the construction, say, in the syntactic level, but, rather, a displacement in the linear denotation of the term, i.e., a variation of the position in the linear order of the sentence; I shall refer henceforth to this fact as 'linear displacement'<sup>12</sup>. In other words, although in most cases both integrations (linear and syntactic) might go together, or rather, cases of linear non-integration are often accompanied by cases of syntactic non-integration, linear integration (and quite frequently, therefore, without the particular element being accompanied by pauses) does not necessarily imply that there should be a syntactic integration (ex. (2)). We will go back to this issue further on (cf. 2.1).

## 2.1. Typology

In accordance with the specific form that might be adopted by the constituents with Theme function, Hoffmann (1989) has established the following typology:

1. noun phrase;
2. prepositional phrase;
3. relative clause;
4. subordinate clause with *quod*;
5. infinitive construction.

The analysis of the comic texts substantiates the possibilities offered by this typology, which shows particular characteristics. Thus, in keeping with it, and in a first approach, it seems convenient to put forward the variety<sup>13</sup> and the preferences that have been observed in the corpus selected for this paper with regard to the epistolary texts<sup>14</sup>. Thus, whereas in Cicero, for instance, the 'de-construction' is found more regularly and with far more frequency, Plautus prefers the 'quod-clauses', NP and relative constructions, the two latter being frequently combined.

<sup>10</sup> Boon's contribution is more concerned with the appropriate denomination for a particular type of nominative, refusing the common name of «emphatic» and defending, rather, its status as a 'proleptic' or 'proleptic-anacoluthic'.

<sup>11</sup> DİK (1989: 265) seems to be referring to this type in particular when stating that the "extra-clausal constituents" may precede, interrupt or follow the clause itself.

<sup>12</sup> For the concept of 'displacement', cf., among others, DİK, (1981a: 23): displacement occurs "when a constituent is placed outside the normal domain defined by the predication to which it belongs", or BOLKESTEIN (1981: 63-64).

<sup>13</sup> This variety is also manifest in the diverse modality that might appear in the predication.

<sup>14</sup> As SOMERS (1994: 153) points out, the Theme function is particularly frequent in this type of texts.

However, the constituents comprised by this typology do not always show all the necessary features to be considered Theme in a clear way. Thus, we may occasionally find cases that could be regarded as being 'borderline'. Let us pay attention, for instance, to (3), a combination of NP and relative clause:

(3) *cultrum, securim, pistillum, mortarium, / quae utenda uasa semper uicini rogant, / fures uenisse atque abstulisse dico* (Plaut. *Aul.* 95-97).

Everything we find before *fures* could at first be regarded as Theme, since it presents the universe of discourse with respect to which it is relevant to express what is said in the predication. Yet, it seems that in the case of being omitted it would not be possible for the predication to remain complete and with whole sense (which is a characteristic of the Theme), for the infinitive *abstulisse* would, to say the least, be left without an Object. It would seem certainly inadequate, therefore, to state that this element is completely independent of the predication; it would be, rather, another case of linear displacement.

Similarly, what appears to be Theme in (4) (*nunc quod me dixi uelle uobis dicere*) – given that it somehow makes reference to the framework within which it is relevant to express what follows – makes in fact *dicam* syntactically complete:

(4) *nunc quod me dixi uelle uobis dicere, / dicam* (Plaut. *Asin.* 9-10).

There are nevertheless several other cases that I would consider Theme *sensu stricto* within the types of constituents set up by Hoffmann and used by Plautus. The relative constructions in (5) and (6) may be analysed thus:

(5) *Nicobulus. – euge litteras minutas. :: Chrysalus. – Qui quidem uideat parum; luerum, qui satis uideat, grandes satis sunt* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 991-992),

(6) *quos nemo posse superari ratust, / eos auspicio meo atque ductu primo coetu uicimus* (Plaut. *Amph.* 656-657);

or the *quod*-clause in (7) and (8):

(7) *nam quod ad argumentum attinet, sane breuest* (Plaut. *Asin.* 8);

(8) *uerum quod tu dicis, mea uxor, non te mi irasci decet* (Plaut. *Amph.* 522);

or the NP in (9):

(9) *pater tuos, is erat frater patruelis meus* (Plaut. *Poen.* 1069).

What has been previously said is also obvious in a type of construction which is much less frequent – both in general and, particularly, in Plautus –: the infinitive construction:

(10) *cur amem me castigare, id ponito ad compendium* (Plaut. *Cas.* 517).

With regard to this case, it must be pointed out the presence of a summarizing element in the predication, a rather infrequent type according to Hoffmann (1989:189).

Moreover, the typology established by Hoffmann could be enlarged. In fact some scholars (J. Haiman, 1978; A. Rijksbaron, 1986; Serbat, 1991: 30; G. Wakker, 1992, etc.<sup>15</sup>) have suggested the possibility that conditional clauses might develop a Theme function (M. van de Griend, 1989)<sup>16</sup>. It seems wise to bear this possibility in mind given the habitual role of the *if*-clause as such under normal conditions: its aim being the establishment of possible or hypothetical worlds within which a given fact may or may not be put into effect. Thus, when the conditional period fulfills this characteristic, it could be considered as Theme and reused by language with that pragmatic functional character.

In order to substantiate this possibility, it is necessary to study whether this type of sentences fulfills the basic conditions of the Theme constituents. These conditions could be summarized as follows:

1. they are usually displaced to the left side, in P2 position;
2. regarding their functional character, they present a universe of discourse in which it is relevant to express what is said in the subsequent predication;

<sup>15</sup> DIK (1990: 329) goes beyond the identification between Theme and conditional clauses and makes more precise the similarity of both types of constituents in so far as they possess the common function of creating a state of affairs.

3. they are extra-clausal constituents; they should not be essential for the maintenance of the grammatical structure of the predication itself, which may present any other modality.

Taking now the following examples<sup>17</sup>:

(11) tu si uis subigitare me, *probast occasio* (Plaut. *Cas.* 964);

(12) si istoc me uorsu uiceris, *alio me prouocato* (Plaut. *Stich.* 770).

The condition relative to their position is fulfilled in both cases for it appears at the beginning of the period; this is, on the other hand, required due to reasons of the informative linearity of the discourse<sup>18</sup>. It is doubtful, therefore, the existence of cases of conditional clauses in which these two facts are dissociated: the *fronted constituent* and the creation of a reference framework.

With regard to the second condition, we could argue that in (11) the communicative importance of *probast occasio* depends on the prior appearance of the idea provided by *subigitare*; similarly, in (12), the message set in the predication becomes relevant within the framework established by *si istoc me uorsu uiceris*.

Likewise, the conditional clause which precedes the main clause in the following examples establishes the framework in which it is relevant to state what is said in the predication:

(13) nam in mala uxore atque inimico si quid sumas, *sumptus est* (Plaut. *Mil.* 673);

(14) si umquam uidistis pictum amatorem, / *em illic est* (Plaut. *Merc.* 313);

(15) nam si uir scortum duxit clam uxorem suam, / id si rescuiit uxor, *impunest uiro* (Plaut. *Merc.* 819-820);

(16) nam si istuc ius est, senecta aetate scortari senes, / *ubi locist res summa nostra publica?* (Plaut. *Merc.* 985-986).

Nevertheless, the syntactic integration in the predication of this type of constituents – conditional sentences –, seems troublesome, for they have been provided with the status of Adjunct Satellites of the predication (Pinkster, 1990: 121). In this respect, A. Rijksbaron (1986: 6-7) points out that the Satellite, in the functional interpretation (Dik, 1978: 49), specifies additional aspects of the state of affairs referred to by the nuclear predication, a function which would not be fulfilled by the conditional clauses in those cases where the if-clause is regarded as Theme<sup>19</sup>. According to this point of view, we would have to conclude that if-clauses are not affected by the internal grammatical rules of the clause (Dik, 1989: 265). This does not seem likely taking into account, among other things, the fixed character of the correlation between the verb form's time and modal structures in Latin; this shows the syntactic link that exists between the two clauses<sup>20</sup>, both of them being part of a binary grammatical structure.

From my standpoint, it is difficult to assert that both sentence structures are mutually independent from a syntactic point of view: we are dealing with a complex structure that, in the case of being dissociated, loses the value it acquires by virtue of its conjunction; in other words, the aforesaid sentence structures are interdependent

<sup>16</sup> Due to reasons of space I will not deal with time clauses here; under certain conditions the latter would allow an analysis similar to the one applied to conditional clauses. Cf. e. g.: *adulescens quom sis, tuom quom est sanguis integer, / rei tuae quaerundae conuenit operam dare* (Plaut. *Merc.* 550-551).

<sup>17</sup> Examples in van de GRIEND (1989).

<sup>18</sup> The alteration of this position may be due to pragmatic reasons, among others, showing that the focal point of the expression falls on the main clause: *QUIS ego sum SALTEM, si non sum Sosia?* (Plaut. *Amph.* 438: FOR MERCY'SAKE, WHO I am, if I'm not Sosia?); within the context of this question of the true Sosia it takes place the equivocation lead to by Mercurio, who pretends to be Amphitryon's slave; therefore, *si non sum Sosia* does not imply any new information but, rather, picks up a former topic.

<sup>19</sup> Although RIJKSBARON (1986) puts forward the existence of conditional clauses that do function as satellites, he offers no examples of this constituent type.

<sup>20</sup> In spite of there being cases of a modal or time discord, which is most of the times imposed by the sense (cf. A. ERNOUT-F. THOMAS, 1953: 380).

both syntactically and semantically. We witness therefore an interdependence between them despite the fact that this interdependence has not been originally indicated in the same manner (Ernout-Thomas, 1953: 374); this fact confers a somewhat peculiar status on conditionals.

On the other hand, there seems to be no doubt that many conditional sentences show a discourse referent within whose framework what is subsequently stated turns out to be relevant<sup>21</sup>; in this sense, there exists a relationship of pragmatic character between if-clause and main clause. It is also crystal clear the semantic link between the two members of these periods given the interdependence which is observed in that level, whilst it is difficult to defend their syntactic independence. Therefore, we can argue that, although conditional sentences may be considered as Theme constituents under certain conditions, they do not share all the characteristics ascribed to those constituents: and more particularly, their syntactic autonomy.

On the other hand, these characteristics are not met in the same way in all conditionals: as is well known, although their tendency is towards fronting in most cases, conditionals are occasionally placed after the main clause, a position which does not favour the creation of a universe of discourse<sup>22</sup>, and where such a reference framework is not created:

(17) *abeo, si iubes* (Plaut. *Amph.* 857);

(18) *Asinariam uolt esse, si per uos licet* (Plaut. *Asin.* 12);

(19) *has (minas) ego, si uis, tibi dabo* (Plaut. *Asin.* 654);

(20) *multos homines, si optandum foret, / nunc uidere et conuenire quam te mauellem* (Plaut. *Mil.* 170-171).

Thus, it is only a few types of conditional clauses that have the possibility to share characteristics of the Theme function: those which, apart from occurring in front position with respect to the main clause, fulfill the function of establishing a framework of discourse with regard to which it what is said in the second part of the sentence structure is relevant.

Finally, I would like to add a further point in the first part of my analysis regarding another feature of the constituents that may function as Theme by virtue of the particular class to which such constituents belong, namely, the type of *universe of discourse* they create. Thus, as the examples show, the Theme constituent may refer:

1. either to a particular entity (personal or non-personal):

(21) *centum in Cilicia / et quinquaginta, centum in Scytholatronia, / triginta Sardos, sexaginta Macedones / sunt homines quos tu occidisti uno die* (Plaut. *Mil.* 42-45);

(22) *qui ero suo seruire uolt bene seruos seruitutem, / ne illum edepol multa in pectore suo conlocare oportet / quae ero placere censeat praesenti atque apsentis suo* (Plaut. *Persa* 7-9);

(23) *mulier quae se suamque aetatem spernit, speculo ei usus est* (Plaut. *Most.* 250);

(24) *de tunica et chlamyde et machaera ne quid speres, non feres* (Plaut. *Mil.* 1423);

(25) *quodque ad ludorum curatores attinet, / ne palma detur quoiquam artifici iniuria / neue ambitionis causa extrudantur foras, / quo deteriores antepnantur bonis* (Plaut. *Poen.* 36-39);

2. or to a whole situation:

(26) *de Tadiana re, mecum Tadius locutus est te ita scripsisse, nihil esse iam quod laboraretur* (Cic. *Att.* 1,5,10);

(27) *si ea domist, si facio, ut eam exire hinc uideas homo, / dignum es uerberibus multis?* (Plaut. *Mil.* 341-342);

(28) *ubi uoluptatem aegritudo uincat, quid ibi inest amoeni?* (Plaut. *Merc.* 359);

<sup>21</sup> A fact derived, as stated above, from the semantic character itself of the if-clause and its relationship with the main clause

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, in some time clauses: *patiar, quando ita Venus uolt* (Plaut. *Mil.* 1227).

(29) *filium tuom quod redimere se ait, id ne utiquam mihi placet* (Plaut. *Capt.* 586);

(30) *uerum totum insanum amare, hoc est quod meus erus facit* (Plaut. *Curc.* 177).

Bearing this criterion in mind and paying attention to the main uses of each of the constituent types dealt here, the classification may be established (Fig. 1):

	entity	situation
Noun phrase (e. g. 21)	+	–
Relative clause (e. g. 22)	+	–
Noun phrase + Relative clause (e. g. 23)	–	+
Prepositional phrase ( <i>de</i> -construction) (e. g. 24; 26)	+	+
[Conditional-temporal clauses] (e. g. 27; 28)	–	+
<i>quod</i> -construction (e. g. 25; 29)	+	+
Infinitive construction (e. g. 30)	–	+

Figure 1

## 2.2. Presence of an anaphoric element

As for the possible implications of the presence of an anaphoric element, – and, as it may be inferred, against Dik's views (1989: 265) – D. Clément (1991: 9) refers to syntactic integration and points out that such anaphoric element constitutes a link which shows its pertaining to the predication<sup>23</sup>. According to this point of view, we should conclude that whenever there is an anaphoric element somehow summarizing the element functioning as Theme, it would be necessary to consider the latter as integrated in the predication and non-integrated in the reverse case; thus, in such a case as (31):

(31) *qua causa eum in Ephesum miseram, / accepitne aurum ab hospite Archidemide?* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 249-250)

it would not be syntactically integrated in the predication, whereas in (32), for instance, which shows the anaphoric element *eis*, it would be:

(32) *tum piscatores, qui praebent populo pisces foetidos, / qui aduehuntur quadrupedanti crucianti cantherio, / quorum odos subbasilicanos omnes abigit in forum, / EIS ego ora uerberabo surpiculis piscariis* (Plaut. *Capt.* 813-816).

However, both the first and the second case constitute, two examples in which the Theme is independent of the predication from the point of view of syntax, for, in fact, neither of them fulfills a function in the predication. The fact that they may or may not contain an anaphoric element summarizing the entity presented by the Theme shows the co-reference of both. From such co-reference, however, implied by the anaphoric element which picks up the Theme with regard to the term itself that introduces the Theme, the iso-functional character of the two co-referent terms cannot be inferred. The presence of the anaphoric element together with the absence of the Theme's syntactic role is precisely what allows a greater freedom of construction: in these cases where the Theme is picked up by an anaphoric element, it is the latter that fulfills a specific syntactic function.

A similar distinction may be established between (33) and (34):

(33) *patronus qui uobis fuit futurus, perdidistis* (Plaut. *Asin.* 621),

(34) *nam unum conclauē, concubinae quod dedit / miles, quo nemo nisi ipse inferret pedem, / IN EO CONCLAVI ego perfodi parietem* (Plaut. *Mil.* 140-142).

<sup>23</sup> Accurately, the French author states (1991: 9): "un lien anaphorique est une marque d'intégration".

In (33) – a full of sentiment exclamation uttered by Argiripus – we can see how the liveliness of the expression is enhanced even by the absence of an anaphoric element that should have occurred, if we look at the structure from a strictly grammatical point of view, given that *perdo* is transitive.

As far as (34) is concerned, the distance between the Theme and the predication proper, advises the inclusion of an anaphoric element in order to favour the understanding of the predication's message. In these cases where the Theme is summarized by an anaphoric element, it is the latter that carries out a given syntactic function within the predication.

Likewise, it is worthwhile considering other instance where two types of Theme can be observed: one of them containing a summarizing element in the predication and the other lacking such an element; the old woman Cleareta censures her daughter Philenium for her behaviour in (35):

(35) *illos qui dant, eos derides; qui deludunt, deperis* (Plaut. *Asin.* 527).

The fact that there is no pronoun summarizing the Theme in the second case (i.e. *qui deludunt, deperis*) might possibly indicate either that its presence is unnecessary to prove its pertaining to the predication or, rather, that what we find here is a case of omission of *eos* in the second case, given that it is already present in the first one and they can be regarded as parallel constructions (*eos* would be a 'gapped' element): it is clear that *deperio* has to be considered transitive here: its intransitive use would not have any sense in this context.

In (36), the presence of the anaphoric element is not required neither by the Theme size nor by the peculiarities of the verb construction; so, the reason for the presence of *i* cannot be any other than pragmatic: the focalization of this element – co-referent with *illis* – in contrast with the previous *qui inuident*:

(36) *qui inuident egent; illis quibus inuidetur, i rem habent* (Plaut. *Truc.* 745).

Another enlightening case is derived from the comparison between (37) and (38)<sup>24</sup> where there is a similar lexical and syntactic context under both possibilities<sup>25</sup>; however, the presence or absence of an anaphoric element does not change the nature of the element functioning as Theme as far as its degree of integration is concerned:

(37) *hunc chlamydatum quem uides, / ei Mars iratust* (Plaut. *Poen.* 644-645);

(38) *'o' inquit 'Oenothea, hunc adulescentem quem uides, malo astro natus est* (Petron. 134,8).

One of the reasons that supports the fact that the Theme falls in fact outside the syntactic domain of the predication is the diversity of modalities that the predication itself may adopt – affirmative ((5), (7), etc.), interrogative ((31) or (43)), imperative ((10) or (41)) –, without its affecting the Theme at all. The following example of imperative modality clarifies the syntactic autonomy of the Theme:

(39) *simul autem plenis semitis qui aduersum eunt: aspellito, / detrude, deturba in uiam* (Plaut. *Merc.* 115-116).

Bearing in mind what has been previously said, it is not possible, from a strictly syntactic point of view, to uphold the integration of the elements which unambiguously fulfill a Theme function.

Nevertheless, the issue proves to be clearly different when analysed from the semantic and the communicative points of view. There is a clear unity from the first standpoint, especially when in the presence of the anaphoric element, since this element becomes meaningful, so to speak, thanks to the presence of the Theme; they share the same referential universe. Apart from the aforementioned examples it is worthwhile taking into account the following:

(40) *eius seruos qui hunc ferebat cum quinque argenti minis, / tuam qui amicam hinc arcessebat, ei os subleui modo* (Plaut. *Pseud.* 718-719);

<sup>24</sup> Cf. A. TOTH (1994: 193).

<sup>25</sup> Although it should be borne in mind that the anaphorical element in Plautus' text may be required by the distribution of the verb used in the predication, however, as has already been pointed out, this kind of grammatical requirements are not always met: cf. (33), (35).

(41) *istos captiuos duos, / heri quos emi de praeda a quaestoribus, / eis indito catenas singularias / istas* (Plaut. *Capt.* 110-113);

(42) *qui consilium iniere, quo nos uictu et uita prohibeant, / is diem dicam, irrogabo multam, ut mihi cenas decem / meo arbitrato dent, cum cara annonae sit* (Plaut. *Capt.* 493-495).

Anaphoric *ei*, in (40), makes sense in so far as *eius seruos qui hunc ferebat cum quinque argenti minis, / tuam qui amicam hinc arcessebat* has already appeared: it provides it with semantic content. The same would apply to (41) and (42): in (41), *eis* does not carry any semantic content by itself, on the contrary, this content is supplied by the Theme (*istos captiuos duos, / heri quos emi de praeda a quaestoribus*); in (44), the referent of the dative *is* can be traced by the presence of *qui consilium iniere, quo nos uictu et uita prohibeant*.

From the communicative standpoint, unity becomes obvious, as well as the Theme's function which is, in many cases, that of focalising what is expressed in the predication<sup>26</sup>, and granting more liveliness in the expression of certain messages. Thus, for instance, (43):

(43) *uerum meam uxorem, Libane, nescis qualis sit?* (Plaut. *Asin.* 60),

in which the old Demenetus complains (before his slave Libanus) about his wife's behaviour, whom further on he straightforwardly describes as: *fateor eam esse importunam atque incommodam* (*Asin.* 62).

The pragmatic relevance of strategies such as the one analysed here becomes particularly apparent in structures like (44):

(44) *nam procreare liberos lepidumst opus. / :: Hercle uero liberum esse tete, id multo lepidiust* (Plaut. *Mil.* 682-683).

Starting from examples like these it seems clear that the speaker has the possibility to articulate a declarative message in several ways: more particularly, the young Pleusicles, has firstly used a copulative construction with a nominal predicate; however, when a specific idea wants to be focalized in contrast with that which has just been enunciated (in this case the fact of living without the usual preoccupations derived from family life), the speaker – this time the old Periplectomenus – uses the construction split by means of a Theme constituent with a summarizing element in the predication (the neutre *id* since it refers to the whole previous infinitive construction). The unity of the whole construction is clear from a pragmatic point of view, for it is precisely the Theme fronting what aids the focalization of the idea picked up by the anaphoric element and the adverb; the rest of the predication holds elements that have been already introduced (*lepidumst; lepidiust*): 'for to procreate children is a beautiful task. But, to be a free man, by Hercules!, that is indeed truly beautiful'. Thus, it is possible to assert that the syntactic means are here at the service of a pragmatic objective.

The same strategy is revealed in (45). The expression is placed in a speech by Megadorus concerning the drawbacks of marrying a woman with a dowry; at some stage Megadorus makes reference to the woman without a dowry, *that* (and not any other) is the one who is subject to her husband's will. Opposed to this way of articulating the message and, in contrast of contents, we find a predicative expression:

(45) *nam quae indotata est, ea in potestate est uiri; / dotatae mactant et malo et damno uiros* (Plaut. *Aul.* 534-535).

Similarly, in the following examples, those elements which constitute the Theme specify the way and reference in which the predication itself is to be understood. The presence of the Theme is certainly the element which confers the predication with the *vis comica* Plautus is aiming at by means of the enumeration and exaggeration which are present therein:

(46) *quicumque ubi ubi sunt, qui fuerunt quique futuri sunt posthac / stulti, stolidi, fatui, fungi, bardi, blenni, buccones, / solus ego omnis longe antideo / stultitia et moribus indoctis* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 1085-1088);

<sup>26</sup> Cf. C. DE GROOT (1981: 86); G. SERBAT (1991: 38).

(47) pater, auos, proauos, abauos, atauos, tritauos / quasi mures semper edere alienum cibum, / neque edacitate eos quisquam poterat uincere; / atque eis cognomentum erat duris Capitonibus (Plaut. *Persa* 57-60).

Hence, the Theme, Predication construction constitutes, above all, a communicative unit whose functional character is basically of pragmatic order.

### 3. Conclusions

Among the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis, I would like to put forward, firstly, that, although there exists a partial overlapping in the designation of the concepts of Theme and Topic, there is a different field of projection between these functions which are occasionally specified according to a scale of gradation: the whole predication in the first case (Theme) and the relevant content of the predication as regards the second (Topic). Thus, a clear-cut difference can only be argued rigorously in those cases of Theme, strictly speaking. Apart from the established typology of elements that may fulfill the Theme function, certain conditional sentences share the informative characteristics of such function.

To finish, and with regard to the integration of the constituents clearly functioning as Theme in a strict reference to the structure of the predication, the semantic and communicative integration can be maintained but not so the syntactic integration. The presence of an anaphoric element does not appear to be determinant in this respect; it indicates co-reference but not an iso-functional (iso-syntactic) character.

### References

- A. M. BOLKESTEIN, «Embedded Predications, Displacement and Pseudo-argument Formation in Latin», in A. M. BOLKESTEIN *et al.* (eds.), *Predication and Expression in Functional Grammar*, London, 1981, pp. 63-112.
- P. BOON, «“Isoliert-emphatischer” oder “proleptischer” Nominativ?», *IF*, 86, 1981, pp. 271-283.
- D. CLÉMENT, «Réflexions sur la notion d'intégration en syntaxe ou: qu'entend-on par «l'expression X est plus ou moins 'intégrée' à la phrase»», *Langages*, 104, 1991, pp. 7-21.
- S. C. DIK, *Functional Grammar*, Amsterdam, 1978.
- S. C. DIK, «Discrepancies between Predication and Expression in Natural Languages», in A. M. BOLKESTEIN *et al.* (eds.), *Predication and Expression in Functional Grammar*, London, 1981a, pp. 19-39.
- S. C. DIK, «Embedded Themes in Spoken Dutch: Two Ways Out» in A. M. BOLKESTEIN *et al.* (eds.), *Predication and Expression in Functional Grammar*, London, 1981b, pp. 113-124.
- S. C. DIK, *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part I: The structure of the clause*, 1989, Dordrecht.
- S. C. DIK, «On the Semantics of Conditionals», in J. NUYTS-A. M. BOLKESTEIN-C. VET (eds.), *Layers and Levels of Representation in Language Theory*, Amsterdam, 1990, pp. 232-261.
- A. ERNOUT- F. THOMAS, *Syntaxe Latine*, Paris, 1953, reimpr. 1989.
- M. E. VAN DE GRIEND, «Pseudoconditionals in Latin», in M. LAVENCY ET D. LONGRÉE (eds.), *Actes du V<sup>e</sup> Colloque de Linguistique latine*, Louvain, 1989, pp. 447-455.
- C. DE GROOT, «On Theme in Functional Grammar. An Application to some Constructions in Spoken Hungarian» in T. HOEKSTRA, H. VAN DER HULST and M. MOORTGAT (eds.), *Perspectives on Functional Grammar*, Dordrecht, 1981, pp. 75-88.
- J. HAIMAN, «Conditionals are topics», *Language*, 54, 1978, pp. 564-589.

- M. A. K. HALLIDAY, «Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English», *JoL*, 3, 1967-68, pp. 37-81, 199-244; 4, pp. 179-215.
- M. HANNAY, «The Focus function in Functional Grammar: questions of contrast and context», in S. C. DIK (ed.), *Advances in Functional Grammar*, Dordrecht, 1983, pp. 207-223.
- M. E. HOFFMANN, «A typology of Latin theme constituents», in M. LAVENCY et D. LONGRÉE (eds.), *Actes du V<sup>e</sup> Colloque de Linguistique latine*, Louvain, 1989, pp. 185-196.
- J. LALLEMAN, «A functional approach to some constructions of spoken Dutch», in A. M. BOLKESTEIN, C. DE GROOT and J. L. MACKENZIE (eds.), *Syntax and Pragmatics in Functional Grammar*, Dordrecht, 1985, pp. 65-74.
- CH. N. LI and S. A. THOMPSON, «Subject and topic: a new tipology of language», in Ch. N. LI (ed.), *Subject and Topic*, New York, 1976, pp. 457-489.
- H. PINKSTER, *Latin Syntax and Semantics*, London-New York, 1990.
- A. RIJKSBARON, «The pragmatics and semantics of conditional and temporal clauses: Some evidence from Dutch and Classical Greek», *WPF*, 13, 1986.
- G. SERBAT, «Intégration à la phrase latine d'un groupe nominal sans fonction syntaxique (le «nominativus pendens»)», *Langages*, 104, 1991, pp. 22-32.
- P. SGALL, E. HAJICOVÁ and J. PANEVOVÁ, *The Meaning of the Sentence in Its Semantic and Pragmatic Aspects*, Dordrecht, 1986.
- M. H. SOMERS, «Theme and Topic. The relation between discourse and constituents fronting in Latin», in J. HERMAN (ed.), *Linguistic Studies in Latin*, Budapest, 1994, pp. 151-163.
- A. TOTH, «Thema, Topik und Koda. Zu einigen syntaktischen, semantischen und pragmatischen Problemen der lateinischen Grammatik», in G. CALBOLI (ed.), *Papers on Grammar*, IV, Bolonia, 1994, pp. 177-210.
- G. WAKKER, «Conditionals in the Layered Structure of Functional Grammar», in M. FORTESCUE, P. HARDER and L. KRISTOFFERSEN (eds.), *Layered Structure and Reference in a Functional Perspective*, Amsterdam, 1992, pp. 369-386.

## RESUMEN

En este trabajo se analiza, en primer lugar, la definición de la función Tema – en el marco de la *Functional Grammar* (FG), según el modelo desarrollado por Simon C. Dik (1978; 1989). En este análisis es necesario que sea tenido en cuenta el límite que el concepto de la función objeto de estudio presenta con respecto a la noción de otra función pragmática: la de Tópico. En segundo lugar, se intenta verificar el nivel de integración que los constituyentes que desempeñan la función objeto de estudio presentan en la predicación, distinguiéndose para ello diversos niveles lingüísticos. La tipología de constituyentes que realizan la función Tema y la presencia de anafórico proporcionan elementos de juicio en la aclaración de la cuestión planteada.