# Formal Linguistics and the Teaching of Latin

Formal Linguistics and the Teaching of Latin: Theoretical and Applied Perspectives in Comparative Grammar

Edited by

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

The international conference *Formal Linguistics and the Teaching of Latin* was held in Venice on November 18-20, 2010. It was jointly organized by the Dipartimento di Glottologia e Filologia Classica of the University of Udine and the Dipartimento di Scienze del Linguaggio of the University Ca' Foscari of Venice. The conference was the first stage of a research project, supported by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR), which aims to contribute an improvement of language teaching in high schools and universities.

The debate over the role of grammatical reflection in language learning is nowadays more lively than ever. Our working hypothesis is that the achievements of formal linguistics, which compares different languages and tries to represent the way in which grammar rules are codified in the mind, may be useful to promote a new approach to the study of Latin.

The main theme of the conference, which brought together many researchers from all over Europe and the United States, was the comparison of certain linguistic phenomena in different languages (not only classical languages, but also modern languages), and their interpretation by means of the most updated theoretical tools of contemporary linguistics. The comparison leads us to highlight the similarities as well as the differences among languages: this results in a great advantage for the learners, who must be made aware of the limited area of linguistic variation.

A new comparative method, not only limited to the traditional Indo-European historical perspective, will allow students to approach Latin in a more motivating way: they will no longer learn by heart the inexplicable rules of school grammar, but will discover how human languages function and change, focalizing on what they already know of the language they are learning, before discovering the points of divergence from their mother tongue. In this perspective, the study of an explicit and scientific grammar loses any passive character, to become an activity which enhances linguistic awareness, meta-linguistic competence, and critical thought.

This volume is divided into three sections, reflecting the main subject areas that have been investigated by the conference participants, from the various methodological frameworks of contemporary Latin linguistics. The first section shows how formal accounts can revive the traditional fields of syntax and morphology. Particular attention is paid to some crucial problems of Latin grammar, such as word order, phrase and clause

structure, prefixation and composition. The second section is devoted to two other fields that have increasingly stimulated new research in recent years, semantics and pragmatics, and addresses issues such as the mental representation of lexical items and idioms, discourse structure and the cognitive activity involved in translation. The last section is more specifically concerned with teaching: it contains perspectives on new methodological patterns and historical overviews on the tradition of Latin teaching in some European countries.

—Renato Oniga, Rossella Iovino, Giuliana Giusti
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INTRODUCTION

WHY FORMAL LINGUISTICS
FOR THE TEACHING OF LATIN?

GIULIANA GIUSTI AND RENATO ONIGA

1. An interdisciplinary approach

The aim of this paper and of the whole book is to propose a new approach to the teaching of modern and classical languages that is solidly grounded in recent developments in formal linguistic theory. The approach we propose is *per se* not at all obvious in contemporary teaching methods and practices in high schools and universities, but is based on our independent experiences as scholars and teachers of respectively English Linguistics and Classical Latin, at different levels and in different programs.[1]

Contrary to the usual recommendations of general language pedagogy, which encourages a multidisciplinary perspective, current methods of teaching modern and classical languages have very little in common. The former focus on the use of language through interactive task-based activities and limit grammatical reflections to a minimum, while the latter are based on the prescriptive rules of "traditional" grammar, unrelated to the properties of natural languages and devoid of explicative power.

Paradoxically, the only real difference between classical and modern languages, namely the fact that there are no longer living L1-speakers of the former, is often dismissed by those who propose to go back to a "spoken Latin". But the most elementary historical considerations suggest that the revival of a dead language produces a new variety of that language, as was the case with Medieval and Humanistic Latin and, more recently, Hebrew.

The creation of a New Latin, going through the stage of a *pidgin* to become something inevitably different from the original, has already been censored by traditional Latinists, who have never ceased to deprecate the "barbarism" of a Modern Latin that would certainly have sounded ridiculous

to ancient Romans (Waquet 1998; Janson 2004; Stroh 2008). Learning a "barbarized" Latin would perhaps be easier and require a shorter time, but it would not help us learn Classical Latin. Likewise, a Common Latin would be of little use as a *lingua franca* of the globalized World.

All in all, there is little reason to deny that Latin can only be studied through a corpus of written language, and the competences to be acquired are reading, understanding and translating. In this book, we suggest another way to make the learning of Latin easier and faster. We believe that "metalinguistic awareness", namely the conscious knowledge of how our unconscious language faculty works, provides a useful support to all language competences, and serves, moreover, as an indispensable part of the students' cultural education.

We will introduce the discussion by bringing together some observations made in the last decades in different fields, such as educational psychology, neurolinguistics and studies in second language acquisition. Our proposal, corroborated by experiments conducted in independent fields, is that learners can benefit in the process of acquiring/learning a foreign language from explicit reflections not only on the languages they are learning, but also on their native language, on other languages or dialects they know and, very importantly, on the general properties of the language faculty itself, which underlie all these instances of the same human capacity. In other words, our hypothesis here is that explicit knowledge of the fundamentals of Universal Grammar and the parametric variation that differentiates languages supports and enhances adult learners' knowledge of language, otherwise unconsciously activated by sufficient exposure to raw data during childhood.

A corollary of this hypothesis is that learning/acquiring more than one language (modern or extinct) not only does not hinder but can support the learning/acquisition process. Therefore, the curriculum must include adequate instruction in general and comparative linguistics, taking into crucial consideration the linguistics of the students' mother tongue.

Our paper is structured as follows. In section 2, we report on two different fields of research which empirically support the idea that explicit instruction on how the cognitive system works can enhance acquisition and improve performance. In section 3, we present the basic notion of structural dependency, which forms the basis of phrase grammar, in a minimal version suitable for adoption in the classroom. In section 4, we consider the three major areas of clause structure: the structure of the predicate and the special role of the subject as external to the Verb Phrase (VP), the structural position for temporal reference (T), which is separate and hierarchically higher than the VP and hosts the subject in its specifier

to form a Tense Phrase (TP), and finally, the area of clause typing (CP), which hosts elements displaced by discourse features and is responsible for the apparent freedom of Latin word order.

2. The role of Universal Grammar in language learning

Many cognitive studies support the thesis of generative grammar that languages do not vary indefinitely and that, whatever language we speak, that language operates according to certain universal principles at the neural and conceptual levels (e.g. Jackendoff 1993: 28). In particular, some recent studies in neurolinguistics (cf. Musso et al. 2003, Moro 2008) have shown that explicit instruction about rules of a "possible language" can activate Broca's area, namely that part of the brain which is normally involved in the acquisition of language and results in learning and/or production disorders when damaged. Crucially, these experiments have demonstrated that logically plausible but linguistically "impossible" rules (for example, rules which make reference to linear order of words and not to structural notions), do not activate Broca's area (even if subjects perform the task successfully).

These experiments show that Broca's area can be activated by explicit rules, only if they conform to the abstract principles of mental grammar. On the basis of these results, we propose two hypotheses:

i. A grammar formulated in terms of deep properties of language (but not one based on acritical prescription, exceptions, and curiosities), can activate the area of the brain which is thought to be most properly involved in language acquisition.
ii. Such a grammar, by virtue of affecting a part of our cognitive system naturally related to linguistic competence, will enhance easier, faster and longer-lasting acquisition of that language.

Our hypotheses are corroborated by the independent observation by Cornoldi (1995) that, if learners (of any subjects) are made aware of how their cognitive system is activated with respect to a given task, they can control the task to a higher degree and, as a consequence of this, obtain better performances.

Consequently, we propose a "new comparative grammar" (Haegeman 1997), which aims at presenting the general properties of the human language faculty and how they are manifested in the given languages learned by the students. In our view, generative grammar is a good candidate for this goal, for the very reason that it has recently been

adopted in many different areas of applied linguistics (e.g. L1- and L2-acquisition, language pathology and rehabilitation, language attrition and contact), as well as in traditional areas of linguistic scholarship (e.g. language change, typology, language description and reference grammars).

One of the primary advantages of a formal approach to grammar is its empirical and explanatory adequacy. Such an approach aims to eliminate long lists of exceptions, special cases, and imprecise notions, by un-covering those mental mechanisms that are at the base of general rules, thus facilitating their memorization and application (cf. Cardinaletti 2007; 2008; Oniga 2008). The notions of grammar we need to give in class must be simple, intuitive, and easy to apply. They must utilize a terminology common to all studied languages, including the mother tongue of the learner and the modern languages taught in the curriculum.

Unfortunately, up to now the application of a generative approach to language teaching has been hampered by its conceptual and terminological complexity, which has made generative grammar a discipline only open to a restricted circle of specialists. In our view, it is possible to do away with the most technical and controversial aspects of generative grammar, while preserving its basic insights in order to articulate a framework that is simple enough to be disseminated but still precise and empirically valid. This has already been successfully attempted by reference grammars of different languages such as Italian (Renzi et. al. 1988-2001), Catalan (Solà et. al. 2002), Dutch (Broekhuis et al. 1994-2003), and Old Italian (Salvi and Renzi 2010).

3. The formal properties of syntactic structures

Language is a flux of sounds, produced and perceived one after the other, in a linear order. But these sounds phonologically realize a number of higher-level discrete elements (morphemes and words), which combine hierarchically in larger and larger configurations, such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. The network of relations between the two members of each pair of these elements is called "structural dependency", and is imposed by universal principles of grammar.

The universal principle of structural dependency is defined as follows. In (1a), X selects Y, and the resulting node X' (X-bar) is a projection of X. In (1b), X' is modified by Z, and the resulting node XP ends the projection possibilities of X (building what is defined as X-Phrase):

(1)   a.   X + Y → $[_{X'}$ X [Y]]
         b.   Z + X' → $[_{XP}$ Z $[_{X'}$ X [Y]]]

The order of the elements is determined by the type of language, but the hierarchical relation between two elements in the same pair is universal. In (1a) X selects Y, and we say that Y is the (structural) complement of X. In (1b) Z modifies X', and we say that Z is the (structural) specifier of X.

The relation between two members of a pair must be asymmetric. This is a crucial property of Universal Grammar. While the selecting element X is a zero level category, complements (like Y) and specifiers (like Z) must be phrases (maximal level categories). This means that they contain a head which may select a complement and/or be modified by a specifier. Structure (1b) should therefore be reformulated as in (2a), whose tree diagram is given in (2b):

(2) a. $[_{XP} \text{ ZP } [_{X'} \text{ X } [YP]]]$

 b.

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{XP} \\
\diagup \quad \diagdown \\
\text{ZP (Specifier)} \qquad \text{X'} \\
\diagup \quad \diagdown \\
\text{X} \qquad \text{YP (Complement)}
\end{array}
$$
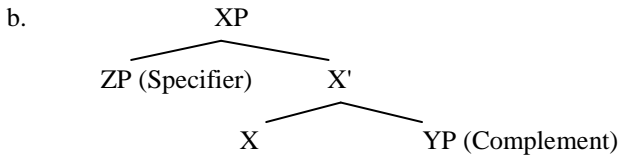
We can illustrate the abstract structure above through the analysis of Latin nominal expressions given by Giusti and Oniga (2007). Let us take a nominal expression such as that in (3a). The head N_i takes a complement (the object genitive NP_k) and a modifier (the subject genitive NP_j). Both NP_j and NP_k are phrases, even if NP_j is made of a single word, because the quantifier *omnis* "all" implies a non-overt head referring to human beings. The complement NP_k is in turn a complex nominal expression in the form of a gerundive construction:[2]

(3) a.

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{NP}_i \\
\diagup \qquad \diagdown \\
\text{NP}_j \qquad\qquad \text{N}_i' \\
\qquad \diagup \quad \diagdown \\
\qquad \text{N}_i \qquad \text{NP}_k \\
\end{array}
$$

omnium   exspectatio   visendi Alcibiadis
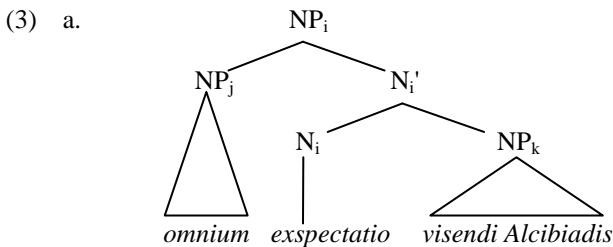
"everybody's expectation to see Alcibiades" (Nep. *Alc*. 6,1)

The structure in (3a) straightforwardly derives the unmarked order
SubjGen - N - ObjGen, as independently argued for Classical Latin by
Giusti and Oniga (2007) and Gianollo (2007).

Obviously, a nominal expression may be much larger: for example, it
can include an adjective, as in (3b). The adjective is also merged as a
specifier of N. This triggers sharing of gender, number and case features
(all bundled in a single morpheme). Following Giusti (2010), we propose
that N_i is moved or, better said, remerged, so that it can have two
specifiers (or more if needed).[3] For this reason, we suggest that there are
two occurrences of N_i in (3b): the one occurring in the lower position of
the hierarchy is spelled out, the one in the upper position is non-overt and
indicated in ~~strikethrough~~:

(3)   b.
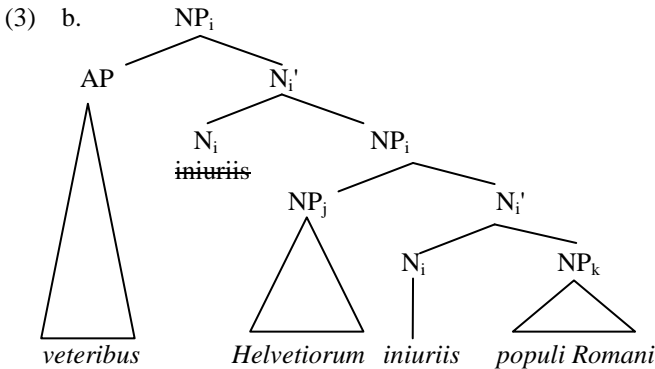
"the old offences by the Helvetii to the Roman people" (Caes. *Gall.*
1,30,2)

The merger of an upper copy of N_i in (3b) may look like a useless
complication, and should not be adopted unless independently necessary.
This is in fact the case of (4), where this operation derives the position of
N to the left of a single adjective in the above cited *populi Romani* "the
Roman people" (4a), or of an adjective and a genitive in *admiratio magna
vulgi* (Cic. *fam.* 7,1,3) "the great admiration of the people" (4b):

(4)   a.   [$_{NPi}$ [$_{Ni}$ *populi*] [$_{NPi}$ [$_{AP}$ *Romani*] [$_{Ni'}$ [$_{Ni}$ ~~populi~~]]]]
      b.   [$_{NPi}$ [$_{Ni}$ *admiratio*][$_{NPi}$ [$_{AP}$ *magna* [$_{Ni'}$ [$_{Ni}$ ~~admiratio~~] [$_{NPi}$ [$_{NPk}$ *vulgi*]
                                    [$_{N'}$ [$_{Ni}$ ~~admiratio~~]]]]]]

Comparing (3b) with (4b), we observe that the subject genitive is more strictly related to the head N than the descriptive adjective, in that the former is merged earlier in a bottom-up fashion. And in the same fashion, we can observe that the object genitive is more strictly related to N than the subject genitive. Hierarchy of merging is another crucial property of the language faculty that is generally ignored by traditional grammars. Remerge of a head allows for a straightforward representation of the relation between the head and its specifiers, at the same time representing the hierarchies among modifiers and arguments. For this reason, remerge (namely, syntactic movement) is a fundamental property of Universal Grammar, which can account for the great variation in word order typical of Latin.

Not only heads but also complements or specifiers can be remerged, as is illustrated in (5) for the phrases *caeli caerula templa* (Enn. *ann*. 48 Sk.) "the blue spaces of the sky" and *prima illa mea oratio* (Cic. *leg. agr*. 2,6) "that well-known my first speech":

(5) a. [$_{TOP}$ [$_{NPj}$ caeli] TOP [$_{NPi}$ [$_{AP}$ caerula] [$_{NPi}$ [$_{NPj}$ ~~caeli~~] [$_{Ni}$ templa]]]]
     b. [$_{TOP}$ [$_{AP}$ prima] TOP [$_{NPi}$ [$_{DemP}$ illa] [$_{NPi}$ [$_{PossP}$ mea] [$_{NPi}$ [$_{AP}$ ~~prima~~]
                                                        [$_{N'}$ [$_{Ni}$ oratio]]]]]

At this point, it is not important to discuss the nature of the category which hosts such phrasal movements. We only call it TOP hinting at its relevance to discourse features such as [Topic] or [Contrast] (Cf. Giusti 2006). We will briefly go back to this possibility in section 4 while discussing clause structure.

To sum up, our discussion so far has highlighted some important properties of structural dependency:

i. Merge proceeds in pairs, in a bottom-up fashion.
ii. The two elements of each pair are necessarily asymmetric (a head only merges with a maximal projection, a specifier of a head merges with a one-bar projection of that head)
iii. The elements in the structure are arranged hierarchically: subjects are structurally higher than objects, demonstratives are higher than adjectives, features are bundled in a hierarchy (gender > number > case).
iv. Merge (and remerge) either involves a zero level element (X) or a phrase (XP).
v. An element (X or XP) can remerge and therefore have relations in more than one position.

vi.   Only one copy of a remerged element is realized (for a general principle of economy), the other copies are silent.
vii.   All relations must be recoverable.
viii. Inflectional morphology makes these relations explicit.
ix.   For this reason, languages with rich inflection have more freedom of word order.

These notions are general and hold for all languages. We are convinced it is possible to present them in class in a fashion appropriate to the age and the level of the students/pupils (cf. Ghegin 2007). After all, notions of history, biology, astronomy and even genetics are introduced as early as second or third grade, establishing a foundation for later, more precise instruction.

The idea that all children speak a native language and that this language is a property of their minds; that 2000 years ago, the Latin language spread across Europe and was influenced by local languages, eventually giving rise to the Romance languages; that as regards the language faculty, the minds of ancient children were not different from the minds of those of the third millennium — these ideas are quite easy to articulate to students and may inspire them new motivation, new interest, and new affection for the discipline. In the following section, we give a sketch of how the structure of the sentence can be presented at a beginner's level.

4. The structure of the sentence

This section is divided into three parts. We start with a discussion of the traditional subject-predicate dichotomy, and observe that it is basically correct, provided the two elements are conceived as constituents (Noun Phrase and Verb Phrase), and not as words.

We go on observing that subject and predicate are not merged in a symmetric way, and that the clause hinges on a head T (tense) realizing semantic temporal reference in syntax. The complement of T is the predicate and its specifier is the subject.

The third point to be discussed is that the clausal structure further expands with a higher head C (complementizer), with its own phrase (CP). The CP area covers many different functions, one of which is to signal the type of the clause (embedded/main, declarative/interrogative, etc.); another is to host displaced elements remerged for discourse organization (topic, focus, etc.). The complete structure of the sentence, from VP to TP and further up to CP, is therefore given in (6):

(6)
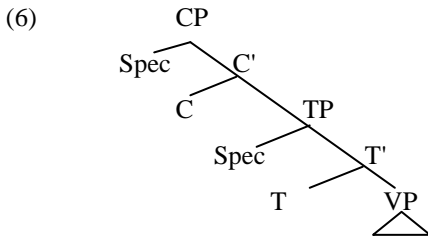
As above, we illustrate this abstract structure with concrete examples, in a bottom-up fashion: so, we start examining the structure of the VP.

Let us first consider how contemporary grammars define the "predicate". We may cite two very influential scientific works, but the same concepts are found in the generality of other grammars:

> Das Praedikat ist entweder ein Verbum (Verbalsatz, meist erzählend und feststellend, z. B. *Themistocles luxuriose vixit*; *sol lucet*) oder ein Nomen (Hofmann and Szantyr 1965: 411).

> Examples of predicate constituents are *laudat* and *simile est* in sentences *pater filium laudat* and *ovum ovo simile est* (Pinkster 1990: 1).

First of all, we notice that these current definitions reflect a very crucial ambiguity going back to the Greek and Medieval tradition. As was pointed out by Graffi (1986: 100), Aristotle uses the term *rhema* in the more general sense of "predicate" in *De interpretatione* (10, 19[b] 12), but in the more restricted sense of "verb" in *Poetica* (20, 57[a] 14). In the Middle Ages, Boethius introduces the Aristotelic ontological pair *to hypokeimenon* (*subiectum*) and *to kategoroumenon* (*praedicatum*) in the grammatical tradition. But, as is the case of the Aristotelian *rhema*, Boethius's *praedicatum* also remains ambiguous between the more general sense of "predicate" (including verbal and nominal predicate) and the strict sense of "noun" or "verb":

> Nomen subiectum est, oratio praedicatum (Boeth. *diff. top*. 1, p. 1175[b]).
> "The noun is the subject, the discourse is the predicate".

> "Homo animal est": "homo" subiectum est, "animal" praedicatum (Boeth. *syll. hyp.* 1, p. 832[b]).
> "'The man is a living being': 'the man' is the subject, 'a living being' is the predicate".

Ergo, ut arbitror, plene monstratum est, non semper subiectum nomen esse, semper autem praedicatum in solo verbo consistere (Boeth. *in herm. comm. sec.* 2, 5, p. 100, 25).
"Then, in my opinion, it has been fully demonstrated that not always the subject is a noun, but the predicate always consists in the single verb".

In our opinion, two mistakes emerge out of this tradition, and are still present in modern grammars. The first is defining the predicate as a single word (a verb or a noun/adjective), rather than a phrase. The second is that, despite seeing the verb/predicate as the pivot of the sentence, grammars claim that the minimal clause is made up of subject and verb, the object viewed as somehow less obligatory, less strictly related to the verb than the subject.

To sum up, the traditional analysis could be represented as in (7a). On the contrary, we argue that the correct structure of the clause is the one given in (7b):

(7)   a. [[SV] O]
      b. [S [VO]]

The reasons to prefer (7b) to (7a) are the following. The structure in (7a) may describe the sentences in (8)-(10), in which the object is apparently optional, but it is clearly wrong for the sentences in (11)-(13), in which the bare verb is not a possible predicate:

(8)   a. Mary eats
      b. Mary eats a doughnut

(9)   a. Maria mangia
      b. Maria mangia una focaccia

(10) a. [Nos] cenamus (Plaut. *Capt.* 481)
          "We have a meal"
      b. Nos cenamus avis, conchylia, piscis (Hor. *serm.* 2,8,27)
          "We are eating fowl, sea-shell and fish"

(11) a. *Mary devours
      b. Mary devours a doughnut

(12) a. *Maria divora
      b. Maria divora una focaccia

(13) a. *Ballaena voravit
     b. Ballaena meum voravit vidulum (Plaut. *Rud.* 545)
         "A whale devoured my bag"

The crucial observation is that, in (11)-(13), the object is obligatory, and is not only "the second argument of the predicate" (*contra* Panhuis 2006: 100). What is predicated of the subject is the complete predicate (verb plus object), and not just the verb. The intransitive verbs (8a)-(10a) mean something different from their transitive counterparts in (8b)-(10b). This is regularly observed in dictionaries: intransitive "eat", for example, means "have a meal" in the three languages observed. Latin provides many other examples. It is well-known that transitive *consulo* means "consult", "ask for advice", while intransitive *consulo* means "act", "take decisions", as appears in (14):

(14) a. Cumaeam consuluistis anum (Ov. *Fast.* 4,158).
         "You consulted the old Cumaean"
     b. Vultis crudeliter consulere in deditos victosque? (Liv. 8,13,15)
         "Do you want to act cruelly against those who surrendered and are defeated?"

It is important to make the learner aware that the clauses in (14) do not have the same predicate *consulere*. In (14a) the predicate is *consulere anum Cumaean*, while in (14b) the predicate is *consulere in deditos victosque*.

This method is not only more correct from the mental point of view, but it also encourages the student to search for the semantic value of the verb, looking up in the dictionary not just the possible meanings of the single word in isolation, but the interpretation of different structures, traditionally called "constructions", in which such a word may appear. This structural notion is not only relevant for direct objects, but for any kind of internal argument of the verb, such as a PP in (14b), or an indirect argument in (15), or a secondary predicate in (16), or a manner adverbial in (17):

(15) a. Pompeius awarded him *(citizenship)
     b. Pompeo lo insignì *(della cittadinanza)
     c. Eum Pompeius *(civitate) donavit (Cic. *Balb.* 7)

(16) a. Everybody considers you *(intelligent)
     b. Tutti ti considerano *(intelligente)
     c. Omnes te *(sapientem) existimant (Cic. *Lael.* 6)

(17) a. I feel *(good)
      b. Mi sento *(bene)
      c. *(Bene) est mihi (Plin. *epist.* 5,18,1)

We conclude that the verb and all its arguments (except the subject) form a constituent, which is the predicate of the sentence. This constituent has the verb as its pivotal element and is labelled Verb Phrase (VP).[4]

The structure of the VP is very important, not only to analyse the sentence correctly, but also to understand the mechanism of case assignment in a simple, intuitive fashion. Let us observe that, while hierarchical order of verb and object is the same in the four languages exemplified in (18), because the V always dominates the object NP, the linear order is verb-object in English and Italian (18a-b), but is object-verb in Latin (Cic. *Verr.* II 1,66) and German (subordinate clause), as in (18c-d):

(18) a.   [$_{NP}$ Rubrius]   [$_{VP}$ [$_{V'}$ invites [$_{NP}$ his friends]]
      b.   [$_{NP}$ Rubrio]   [$_{VP}$ [$_{V'}$ invita [$_{NP}$ gli amici di lui]]]
      c.   [$_{NP}$ Rubrius]   [$_{VP}$ [$_{V'}$ [$_{NP}$ istius comites] invitat]
      d.   weil   [$_{NP}$ Rubrius]   [$_{VP}$ [$_{V'}$ [$_{NP}$ Freunde von dem] einladet]

This fact leads us to argue that the structural dependency of the object on the verb is what accounts for Accusative case assignment, not only in Latin or German, but also in English and Italian, as is clear with the personal pronouns in (19):

(19) a. Mary invites him/*he and her/*she
      b. Maria invita lui/*egli e lei/*ella

Notice that Accusative assignment does not imply a specific semantic relation of the nominal expression with the verb, but a given structural configuration. Precisely, Accusative is assigned by V to its complement.

In the following, we consider how Nominative case is assigned in the structure. First of all, let us observe that Nominative is assigned to the subject of a finite verb, as in (20a), but it is not assigned to the subject of an infinitival clause, as in (20b):

(20) a. Tu/*te ad me venies (Cic. *fam.* 5,19,2)
              "You will come to me"
      b. Scribis te/*tu ad me venturam (Cic. *fam.* 14,3,5)
              "You write that you will come to me"

So, Nominative assignment is clearly a property of finite T, while the subject of a non-finite T can be assigned case from an external head (as in the Accusativus cum Infinitivo), or can be a null element of a different kind.[5]

We must conclude that the subject NP and the predicate VP, which we claimed to be two separate constituents, do not combine in a symmetric configuration like (21a), which is not allowed by universal principles, but merge in an asymmetric configuration like (21b):

(21) a.   *S
            ⎧⎯⎯⎯⎩
         NP   VP

      b.   TP
            ⎧⎯⎯⎯⎩
         NP   T'
                ⎧⎯⎯⎩
              T   VP
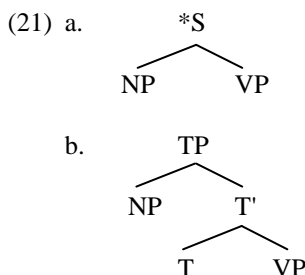
A theory that requires an asymmetric relation between the subject and the predicate does not really complicate the picture. On the contrary, it can describe and explain a number of properties of clauses in natural languages, including the differences in case assignment noticed above between finite and non-finite clauses.

More specifically, modern linguistic advances have established that "subject" is a structural notion and is combined with a predicate by the mediating role of Tense (cf. Lepschy 2000: 84). A finite clause like (18) does not only refer to a given inviting situation involving two arguments (Rubrius and the friends), but also locates it at a given time (the present). So the sentence is true if and only if a given individual (Rubrius) is doing something (inviting the friends) at a time contemporary to speech time, and it is not true otherwise. If the interpretive component is fed by the syntactic component, the structure of the clause must contain (overtly or covertly) the semantic features that locate this situation in the given TIME. Such a feature is a good candidate to be the pivot of the clause, and we call it Tense (T).[6]

Let us now inquire how T is realized in English, Italian and Latin. To express future time, as in (22), in Italian we have a single word realizing V and future Tense (*inviterà*), but in English we clearly see that the two categories are realized by independent words (*will invite*). To express a time in the past, previous to a past point of reference, we use the past

perfect Tense as in (23), and we have two words in both languages. The adverbial inserted in SpecVP marks the VP-boundary overtly:[7]

(22) a. [$_{TP}$ [$_{NP}$ Mary] will   [$_{VP}$ soon [$_{V'}$ invite her friends]]
     b. [$_{TP}$ [$_{NP}$ Maria] inviterà   [$_{VP}$ presto [$_{V'}$ ~~inviterà~~ i suoi amici]]

(23) a. [$_{TP}$ [$_{NP}$ Mary] had   [$_{VP}$ just   [$_{V'}$ invited her friends]]
     b. [$_{TP}$ [$_{NP}$ Maria] aveva   [$_{VP}$ appena [$_{V'}$ invitato i suoi amici]]

In (22b), we propose that in Italian the verb remerges from its base position in VP to the position of T, in order to incorporate Tense morphology. This does not occur in English, for the obvious reason that future tense morphology is not an affix but a free morpheme. Notice that in (22) the English order adverb-verb is reversed in Italian, while in (23) the order auxiliary-adverb-verb is the same in the two languages. The difference in (22) and the similarity in (23) fall naturally from the remerge proposal.

In this perspective, *will invite*, *had invited* and *ha invitato* cannot be analysed simply as "(complex) verbs". The verb is the head of the predicate, while the auxiliary is the head of the clause. Furthermore, despite being a single word, *inviterà* is not just a verb but a structurally complex element, which is at the same time the head of the predicate (VP) and the head of the clause (TP).

The independent nature of auxiliary and verb is witnessed by the fact that it is possible to insert more elements between them (e.g. two hierarchically ordered adverbials and a floating quantifier), as in (24), and that the auxiliary can remerge in a higher position (to be defined below) in certain constructions leaving the verb unaffected, as in (25):

(24) [$_{TP}$ The children have repeatedly all kindly [$_{VP}$ invited their friends]]

(25) Has [$_{TP}$ Mary ~~has~~ just [$_{VP}$ invited her friends]]?

What happens in Latin? More than in Italian, the Tense inflection is an affix on the verb, in the sense that in Latin auxiliaries are less present in the verbal paradigm. But this richness of inflection does not make it necessary for the verb to move to T. This is witnessed by the fact that, contrary to Italian, "time and place adverbials are well attested in preverbal position" (Devine and Stephens 2006: 69), as in (26):

(26) a. Sed hoc mox videro (Cic. *Tusc*. 2,26)
          But this soon see.1stP. Fut.Perf.
          "But I will soon see that"
      b. Ad quae mox revertar (Cic. *div*. 1,47)
          To which soon come1stP.Fut.
          "To which I will soon come back"

We conclude that in Latin the verb is usually realized in its base position within the VP, but it can be realized also in T, as in Italian.

In order to better understand this and many other aspects of syntax in all languages, but especially in Latin, we must remember that TP is not the final layer of the clause, which has a third portion of structure. This part of clause structure is called CP, because in subordinate clauses its head is occupied by complementizers (subordinating conjunctions).

The CP area includes not only subordinators, but also discourse markers and displaced constituents. Since the seminal works by Cinque (1990) and Rizzi (1997), this area is defined as the "left periphery" of the clause. For example, the head of the CP is occupied by the auxiliary in (25) above, repeated here in (27a), whereas in (27b) we see a parallel case in Latin, from Cic. *off*. 3,59 *invitat Canius postridie familiares suos* "the next day Canius invites his friends":

(27) a. [$_{CP}$ Has [$_{TP}$ Mary ~~has~~ just [$_{VP}$ invited her friends]]]?
      b. [$_{CP}$ Invitat [$_{TP}$ Canius ~~invitat~~ postridie [$_{VP}$ familiares suos ~~invitat~~]]]

In (27b) we propose that the verb first merges in VP, then remerges in T (where the specifications for tense and subject agreement are contained), and finally remerges in C, due to the topicalization of the verb itself. Notice that the analysis in (27b) presupposes the intermediate step of V in T, which is independently observed in sentences like Sen. *epist*. 14,8 *gubernator contempsit Austri minas* "the pilot despised the menaces of the South-Wind", whose structure is given in (28):

(28) [$_{TP}$ gubernator [$_{T'}$ contempsit [$_{VP}$ Austri minas ~~contempsit~~]]]

Freedom in word order is naturally related to richness in morphology, but a motivated analysis goes much further than this. We observe that richness in verbal inflection allows for the verb in Latin to freely remain in its base position within the VP, as well as to remerge in T or even in C.

For the same reason, richness in case morphology allows for arguments to appear in displaced positions, because overt case morphology allows for

reconstruction of the structural configuration in which the argument receives case. For example, as we know from (4a) in section 3, a NP like *suas copias* may also appear in the form *copias suas*, and now we can understand why this NP appears in its base position in (29a) from Caes. *Gall*. 1,22,3, but may also appear displaced in first position as in (29b), from Caes. *Gall*. 1,24,1:

(29) a. [_TP_ Caesar suas copias in proximum collem subducit]
      b. [_CP_ copias suas [_TP_ Caesar ~~copias suas~~ in proximum collem subd.]]
          "Caesar withdraws his troops to the nearest hill"

Following this line of argument, we claim that it is uninteresting to classify languages as configurational or non-configurational. What is interesting, in our opinion, is to observe how universal properties of sentence structure allow for a restricted number of options and how these options interact in a given language to produce different word orders. These different arrangements arise out of precise structural relations. For this reason, despite the apparent freedom of word order in Latin, it is never in fact indifferent (in Marouzeau's terms), and conveys different discourse values (Salvi 2004; Devine and Stephens 2006).

Conclusion

In this brief overview of syntactic structures, we have argued that it is possible to express in a unified way the partial similarity and the partial differences characterizing simple sentences in Latin, English and Italian. We have seen that these languages, and probably all languages, make use of the same universal principles of phrase structure, even if some parameters are set differently in each language.

In general, we suggest that the concepts of "phrase" and "remerge" (namely, syntactic movement) are highly useful tools of contemporary formal linguistics: they are intuitive to native speakers of every language, they are appropriate for a scientifically advanced theoretical model, and they can be easily applied to language pedagogy.

Our main point has been that there are compelling reasons to formulate a new methodology of language teaching that emphasizes linguistic awareness more than traditional approaches. This methodology newly conceptualizes grammar as a science of the mind that both contributes to the students' overall education and facilitates learning modern and classical languages.

Notes

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[1] Our professional profiles are typical of many Italian academics of our generation: after obtaining a PhD, we held tenure positions as high school teachers before receiving university appointments. Our every-day experience of the old time as well as of today never fails to support our strong belief that an explicit instruction characterized by descriptive and explanatory adequacy can enhance the cognitive process of a learner of any language. Cf. our handbooks on English (Giusti 2003) and Latin (Oniga 2007) to be used in university courses.

[2] Complex structures not spelled out in detail are indicated as triangles. Notice that NP_j and AP are also represented as triangles. Despite being a single word, they have the status of specifiers, which can be complex structures. For this reason, we assume they are always phrases.

[3] "Remerge" of an element (or merge of a copy) refers to what is generally called "movement" in the principles-and-parameters framework. The minimalist program (Chomsky 1995; 2005) reduces all operations to merge and we believe this innovation provides a more intuitive representation of the idea that a given element can have a structural relation to more than one element at the same time. Other contributions in this volume (notably Salvi's and Iovino's) keep the notation of "movement" with no real difference in descriptive power.

[4] For reasons of space, we cannot enter into the issue of how the different orders within the VP are derived. There are two possibilities, the first is to assume that OV languages like Latin directly merge the head to the right of the complement. A competing theory claims that all languages are VO and that the OV order is derived by remerge of O to the left of V. A disseminating theory of grammar applied to Latin has to consider these two options seriously since Latin may have both orders. Other important factors to consider are frequency, markedness, and discourse structure. But these are beyond the scope of this paper. Cf. Salvi (this volume) for further details.

[5] Cf. Cecchetto and Oniga (2002; 2004); Szilágyi (this volume).

[6] Notice that TIME is a semantic feature, while Tense is its morpho-syntactic counterpart.

[7] In a finer analysis, the subject is first merged as the Specifier of the VP where it receives the thematic role as external argument of the verb, and then remerged in an external position (cf. Sportiche 1988, Larson 1988 for a seminal presentation of this fruitful hypothesis). This makes it parallel to the subject genitive that we claimed was merged in the specifier of the lower NP (sect. 2). In this brief sketch of how to teach linguistic advances in a Latin grammar, we do not pursue this apparent complication. However, we believe that it is worth presenting in a more complete description of the language, because it can derive "quantifier float", the only case in which the two modern languages considered here display a

discontinuous nominal expression, e.g. *The children have all eaten a cookie, I ragazzi hanno tutti mangiato un biscotto*.

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