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## WORD ORDER IN PLAUTUS: INTERROGATIVE AND IMPERATIVE SENTENCES

The following article is a segment of M. A. thesis which was submitted in June 1990 at the Ljubljana University under the title: *Word order in Plautus' Comedies*. I wish to thank again the mentor, prof. dr. Erika Mihevc-Gabrovec, for her patience and help during the preparation of the thesis.

In the following article we shall attempt to show that word order is a field in which the Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) is not the only determinant.

Word order in Plautus' interrogative and imperative sentences is determined by three classes of factors:

- 1.) prosodic factors<sup>1</sup>;
- 2.) the function of the sentence in the communicative process;
- 3.) the FSP.

From the point of view of the FSP it of great importance to specify the part of the sentence which should be considered as the theme. It can be defined as:

- 1.) What has been in expresso mentioned in previous context;
- 2.) What can be understood without being explicitly mentioned; situations of that type are described by Wegener (1885, 21)<sup>2</sup>, who

<sup>1</sup> Panhuis (1982, 67) a priori eliminates prosodic focusing: „First, the function of prosodic focusing, for which no evidence is available in Latin, is taken over by the word order: the final position in the Latin question constitutes the equivalent of the prosodic focusing in English. “There is also no evidence *against* it. Even if the FSP in Latin were entirely taken over by the word order, this would not per se exclude other means of expressing the FSP in Latin. Similarly, the fact that Latin verb has imperative forms does not exclude other means of expressing command (such as independent ut-clauses).“

<sup>2</sup> „Die Situation wird bei der sprachlichen Mitteilung nicht bloss durch Worte bestimmt, viel gewöhnlicher und ausgedehnter durch die umgebenden Verhältnisse selbst, durch die unmittelbar vorhergegangenen Tatsachen und die Gegenwart der Person. mit der wir sprechen.“

also gives a list of sub-types (which he himself does not claim to be complete):

- a) Situation der Anschauung;
- b) Situation der Erinnerung;
- c) Situation des Bewußtseins.

Therefore a sentence may have a double theme, one part being known from the context, the other from the situation.

Examples:

Mer. 268ss<sup>3</sup>: the old Demipho has dreamed about a he-goat, a she-goat and a monkey; he tries to connect his dreams to what is going on: *Nunc hoc profecto sic est: haec illast capra; verum hercle simia illa atque haedus* (sc. quos dixi me in somnis vidisse) *mihi* (sc. qui hic adsum) *malum adportant* (rheme).

Per. 371ss: *Malusne ego sum?:: Non es, neque me dignumst dicere: verum ei rei operam do, ne alii dicant, quibus licet.:: Dicant, quod quisque volt. ego* (qui hic adsum) *de hac sententia* (quam praedicabam) *non demovebor* (rheme).

### Interrogative sentences

Normally, a question is complemented by an answer, therefore they have to be treated as a whole. When we answer the question, we react to it in a communicative way, so there is no need for us to repeat the topic of the question.

Poen.851s: *Heus, Synceraste.:: Syncerastum qui vocat? :: Tuos amicus.*

Am. 450: *Quo agis te?:: Domum.*

Ps.78s: the young Calidorus begs his slave for help: *Nilne adiuvare me audes?* The slave requests further information: *Quid faciam tibi?* The youngster's thoughts have already wandered far away: *Eheu.* The slave reacts to *Eheu* as if it had been the answer to his question: *Eheu? id quidem hercle ne parsis. dabo* (*Eheu? Hey, no problem! Keep going.*)

From the viewpoint of the FSP the Wh-questions are composed from:

- theme(T)
- transition(Tr)
- rheme(R).

The rheme is mostly represented by the interrogative word. However, the interrogative word may also connect the question to the previous context, thus it performs the theme role.

Cist.658ss: Phanostrata greets her slave: *Quid agis, Lampadio?* The slave, who has just found a casket, is curious about it: *Haec cistella numnam nobis ab domo est? nam hic ab ostio iacentem sustuli.*

<sup>3</sup> The passages are quoted from: *Plauti comoediae*, rec. W.M. Lindsay.

Phanostrata is not interested in the casket, so she shuts him up and asks for herself: *Quid (T) nuntias (Tr) super anu (R)?*

Aul.212s: Megadorus tries to impress Euclio, his future father-in-law:

*Dic mihi, quali me arbitras genere prognatum?*

Euclio replies coldly: *Bono.*

Megadorus tries again: *Quid fide?*

and gets the same answer: *Boa.*

and again: *Quid factis?*

he has no more success: *Neque malis neque improbis.*

Utterances of that type have the same FSP as English How-about-questions. The interrogative word occurs almost always in the sentence beginning. It usually bears the stress, therefore sentence it is followed by a set of (secondary) enclitics and the parenthesis (if there is one). The word order is basically identical to that of the sentences with emotive word order (R - T) and the sentence stress on the first word (capital letters mark the position of the sentence stress).

Mer.264: *aMAVi hercle equidem ego olim in adolescentia /.../*

Cas.277: *SUBolet hoc iam uxori, quod ego machinor.*

The interrogative word and the set of enclitics are followed by:

1.) T- Tr:

Most.636: *quid(R) eo est(e) argento(T) factum(Tr)?*

Cas. 236: *Unde(R) hic(e), amabo(p), unguenta(T) olent(Tr)?*

ibid.242: *Ubi(R) in lustra(T) iacuisti(Tr)?*

2.) Tr - T:

Cap.277s: *Quo de genere(R) natust(Tr) hic Philocrates(T)?*

ibid.647: *Sed qua facie(R) est tuos(e) sodalis(Tr) Philocrates(T)?*

3.) R - T (in such utterances the rheme is split, whereby the first part of it is the question word):

Mil.615: *quis(R<sub>1</sub>) homo sit(e) magis(R<sub>2</sub>) meus(T), quam tu es(R<sub>3</sub>)?*

Most.541: *sed quidnam(R<sub>1</sub>) hic sese(e) tam cito(R<sub>2</sub>) recipit domum(T)?* („But why is he back so soon?“)

A yes-no question can verify a statement:

a) in one point: the word to be verified is placed on the sentence beginning, as if it were a question word; usually *-ne* is added;

b) as a whole: the question is introduced by *ecquid*, *satin*, *iam*, *iam-ne*. Word order in yes-no questions is formed as in the Wh-questions:

1.) R - enclitics - T - Tr:

Cur.82: *eine(R) hic(e) cum vino sinus(T) fertur(Tr)?*

ibid.160: *Viden, ut anus tremula(T) medicinam facit(Tr)?*

2.) R - enclitics - Tr - T:

Ep.495: *mercatus(R) te hodie est(e) de lenone(Tr) Apoecides(T)?*

3.) R - enclitics - T - R:

Cas.598: *satin(R<sub>1</sub>) propter te(e) pereo(T) ego(R<sub>2</sub>) atque occasio(R<sub>3</sub>)?*

In question of the type *Quid tibi istum tactio est?* (Cur.626), the word order is more or less rigid:

Quid – enclitics – deverbal noun – estfuit.

Aul.423: *Quid tibi nos tactio est?*

Truc.622s: *Quid tibi huc ventio est?*

*qui tibi hanc aditio est?*

*quid tibi hanc notio est, amicam mean?*

Truc.258: *quid tibi ad hasce accessio aedis est prope aut pultatio?*

Most.377: *quid illi reditio etiam huc fuit?*

Poen.1308: *quid tibi hanc digito tactio est?* (*digito tangere* is employed as a single form cf. Rud. 810s: *si hercle illic illas hodie digito tetigerit invitas* (...))

The theme can occur in the very beginning of the sentence, even before the interrogative word. Such word order takes place in the following two utterance types:

1.) utterances, which are part of merchant talk:

Ps.1077s: *Viginti minas dabim? :: Dabuntur.*

Most.643ss: *Quid? eas quanti destinat? :: Talentis magnis totidem, quot ego et tu sumus.* („What about the price of the house? :: Speaking in talents, as many as you and I together.“)

Cap. 455: Hegio is pleased to have made a good bargain: *At etiam dubitavi, hos homines(T) emerem an non emerem(R), diu.* (the fact that the question is dependent does not affect the word order)

2.) utterances, used by the speaker, when he wants to „change the subject“; they are commonly introduced by *sed*.

Ps.737: *sed istic servos, ex Carysto qui adest(T), ecquid sapit?*

Mil.1019: Pyrgopolynices wants the plan to be made in the utmost secrecy: *Sed hic(T) numiquis adest?*

As.394s: a stranger looks for the housemaster: *Ubi est?* and gets some information from his slave Libanus: *Ad tonsorem se ire dixit.* The stranger asks again: *Quom venisset, post(T) non redit?* („But what about later? Has he not come back?“)

### Imperative sentences

Word order in the imperative sentences is always an interplay of the sentence stress and the FSP. If possible, one side is complemented by the other; otherwise the word order is a compromise between them.

In imperative sentences certain words are placed in regard to the sentence stress. If the command is composed from an imperative verb form, followed by one or more enclitics, the place of the sentence stress is evident:

a) imperative verb form + one enclitic:

Most.586: *abi modo, ausculata mihi.*

ibid.1174: *aperite hoc.*

St.37: *tace sis*.

ibid.670: *sequere me*.

Per.815: *suspende te*.

b) imperative verb form + two or more enclitics:

Most.1102: *surgedum huc igitur*.

St.762: *tene tu hoc*.

Men.262: *cape tibi hanc*.

Rud.785: *agedum ergo, accede huc modo*.

In school grammars words like *hic*, *istinc* or *quaeso* can not be found among enclitics. Yet in Colloquial Latin their accent should at least be considered as weakened. In sentences with exclamative intonation and strong sentence stress they lose their accent and become enclitic, i.e. they follow the word which bears the sentence stress; they are „secondary“ enclitics. Here is an incomplete list of mono- and polysyllabic words which occur in enclitic position:

1.) forms of personal pronouns: (mostly singular, rarely plural);

2.) forms of demonstrative pronouns:

*hoc, haec, huic, hunc, hanc,*

*iste, isti, istam, istum* etc.

3.) pronominal adverbs of place:

*huc, hinc, hac,*

*istic, istac, istinc;*

4.) particles:

*modo, iam, dum,*

*hercle, amabo, sis;*

As it is stated in Leumann (1965, 398)<sup>4</sup>, the order within the set of enclitics is not strictly determined, hence it is not possible to form an abstract string of enclitics, which would help us to foresee their order in an utterance. However, it seems:

a) that personal pronouns precede the others, but are themselves preceded by *modo*:

Ep.340: *crede modo mihi*.

b) that reflexive pronouns (or personal pronouns used as reflexive) are placed immediately after the verb form:

Trin.1027: *recipe te ad erum*.

Men.202: *cape tibi hanc, /.../*

The imperative form can be followed by personal pronoun *tu*, which does not bear the sentence stress (being therefore pionic):

St.758: a merry slave offers a drink to the flute player: *Tene, tibicen, primum*. and another (763s): *tene tu hoc, educe. /.../ tene tu*.

<sup>4</sup> „Diesen unbetonten Worten (sc. *-que, -ve, quidem*) können sich weitere Enklitika in nicht begrenzter Zahl anschließen, /.../, wobei ihre Reihenfolge, zumindest für das Altlatein, keinen festen Regeln unterlag“.

*tu* sometimes precedes the imperative form. As it does not bear the sentence stress, it serves as the sentence base (according to Mathesius<sup>5</sup> personal pronouns have similar function in Colloquial Czech): Most.261: *tum tu igitur cedo purpurissimum*.

Syntactically the main characteristic of the command is the imperative verb form. Hence the verb is placed on the sentence beginning, so that the hearer can tell a command from a non-command as quickly as possible. Nevertheless the verb form does not always bear the sentence stress, as in Latin the sentence stress is not bound to a particular word or position. In regard to position in the sentence, the imperative I and imperative II do not behave identically: whereas the imperative I tends towards the initial position, the place of the imperative II is more likely to be determined by FSP.

Aul.90ss: *cave quemquam alienum intro miseris, /.../ nam si ignis vivet, tu extinguere extempulo. tum aquam aufugisse dicito, si quis petet. cultrum, securim, pistillum, mortarium, /.../ fures venisse atque abstulisse dicito.*

ibid.81: *redi nunciam intro atque intus serva.*

ibid.89: *abi intro, occlude ianuam.*

From the point of view of the FSP the verb can be:

- a) theme(T)
- b) rheme(R)
- c) transition(Tr)

1.) if the verb is the theme of the sentence, the FSP does not interfere with the sentence intonation:

St.347: *ecferite huc scopas simulque harundinem.*

Most.248ss: Philematium is doing herself up; her maid hands her(T) various appliances and sorts of make-up(R): *cedo mi(T) speculum(R<sub>1</sub>) et cum ornamentis arculam(R<sub>2</sub>) actutum(R<sub>3</sub>).*

ibid.252: *cedo cerussam.*

ibid.261: *tum tu igitur cedo purpurissimum.*

ibid.265: *cape igitur speculum.*

ibid.267: *lintheum cape atque exerge tibi manus.* Once the treatment is finished, everything has to be checked:

ibid.282: *agedum contempla aurum et pallam, satin haec me deceat, Scapha.*

Most.635ss: the young Philolaches has borrowed a great sum of money to buy himself a mistress; the money-lender requires his money back; Philolaches' father, who has meanwhile returned from abroad, wants to know, why his son borrowed the money: *Responde mihi:*

<sup>5</sup> In his article *Pronominální podmět v hovorové češtině* (o.c., 287-291): „Tu tvoří pronominální podmět jakýsi nedurazný úvod k vlastní výpovědi, jehož je třeba, nemá-li řeč nabýti rázu úsečného. Nutnost takového úvodu je tím větší, že vlastní výpověď bývá silně emfatická“.

*quid eo est argento factum?* His slave Tranio tries to convince him, that the money has been invested: *Salvom est* (in fact meaning: „Oh, we said *salve aeternum aeternumque vale* to it long ago.“). Theopropides wonders: „What seems to be the problem, then?“ *Solvite(T) vosmet igitur(R), si salvom est.*

Trin.276: *Pater, adsum.impera(T) quidvis(R), /.../*

Rud.1266s: *Quaeso, qui lubet tam diu tenere collum? omitte(T) saltem tu altera(R).*

Per.660ss: *adulescens, vin vendere istanc? qui datur, tanti indica.: habe(T) centum minis(R).: Nimiumst.: Octoginta.: Nimiumst.* (as the theme does not need to be repeated every time, *habe* occurs only once.)

2.) if the verb form is imperative II or subjunctive, its position is generally determined by the FSP.

Per.159: *Πόθεν ornamenta?:: Abs chorago(R) sumito(T).*

ibid.459s: *quid istae (sc. litterae) narrant?:: Percontare(T) ex ipsis(R). /.../ At clare(R) recitato(T).* („Be sure to read it aloud!“)

Cap. 110ss: Hegio, an honest and understanding man, wants his new slaves to be treated in accordance with their noble provenance:

*istos captivos duos(T), heri quos emi(Tr) de praeda a quaestoribus(R),*

*eis(T) indito(Tr) catenas singularias(R).*

*istas maiores(T), quibus sunt iuncti(Tr), demito(R).*

*sinto(T) ambulare(R), si foris, si intus volent,*

*sed uti adservantur(T) magna diligentia(R).*

ibid.667: when he finds out, that these very slaves have misused his goodwill, his orders are different: *Adstringite isti sultis vehementer manus.*

Per.314: the slave Sagaristio is carrying a full purse; his fellow slave regards it as a dangerous tumour: *Quando istaec innata est tibi?:: Hodie.* He suggests immediate surgery: *Secari(R) iubeas(T).*

3.) when the position of the verb is not determined by the FSP (i.e. the verb occupies the initial position despite its own role in the FSP), there are three main types of word order:

a) verb – R – T (verb + emphatical word order):

Most.468: *tangite vos quoque(R) terram(T).*

Poen.784: *age omitte actutum(R), furcifer(Tr), marsupium(T).*

b) additional thematization (the imperative is preceded by the theme, but is followed by enclitics):

Men.934: *Nunc homo insanire occępat. de illis verbis(T) cave tibi.*

c) the imperative is preceded by the rheme:

Men.220: *Abi atque opsonium adfer. tribus(R) vide, quod sit satis.*

ibid.541s: *Amabo, mi Menaechme, inauris (R) da mihi faciendas, pondo duom nummum(R<sub>2</sub>), stalagmia(R<sub>3</sub>).*

4.) in cases of disjunction, the imperative is preceded by the part of theme or rheme which bears the sentence stress:

Per.815: *Restim tu tibi cape crassam ac suspende te.*

## Conclusion

The problem of Latin word order is not at all easy to solve. Word order is a mean, not a goal, therefore it is employed for various purposes on different levels of language. The distribution of its functions is not identical in Colloquial and Classical Latin.

Typologically, word order in Classical Latin may be considered as SOV<sup>6</sup>, whereas in Colloquial Latin it is rather SVO. In Plautus' language the FSP is not expressed entirely and only by means of word order; vice versa it is not the only purpose of the word order to express the FSP.

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## ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

### M. Babič: PLAUTINISCHE WORTSTELLUNG: FRAGE- UND IMPERATIVSÄTZE

Die Wortstellung in Plautus' Komödien dient nicht nur der funktionellen Satzperspektive (FSP). Eine wichtige Rolle spielt bei der Anordnung der Worte auch der Satzakzent und die damit verbundene. In Fragesätzen wird der Satzakzent enklize am meisten (jedoch nicht immer) an das Fragewort gestellt, deswegen folgen dem Fragewort die nichtbetonte Wörter, d. h., sekundäre Enklitika, die bei starkem Satzakzent ihren Wortakzent verlieren. In den Imperativsätzen unterscheidet sich der Gebrauch von Imperativ I und Imperativ II: während der Imperativ I gegen den Satzanfang strebt, wird die Stellung des Imperativs II am häufigsten durch die FSP bestimmt.

<sup>6</sup> According to Greenberg's typological method (S: subject, O: object, V: verb). Its application to different languages can be seen in Greenberg (1963).