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Characteristics of subordinate clauses in Indo-European languages: Iconic syntax

Abstract

While in Old Indic subordinate clauses (with or without a correlative) are located either in the left or the right periphery of the matrix clause, Old Latin (Cato) has free relative clauses also in intermediate position within subordinate clauses. This phenomenon is called genuine embedding. The position of subordinate clauses, however, is dominated by topicalisation, which allows them even to be put in front of the whole sentence. As this reflects a chronology of events, we can speak of iconic syntax here. In this sense, the syntax of Old Latin differs from the rigid word order patterns which we find in Old Indic subordinate clauses.

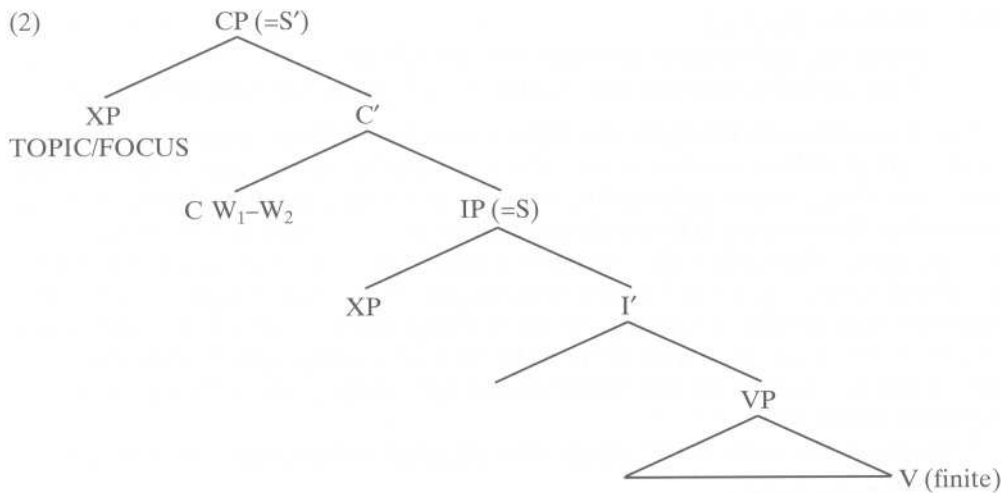
1. Introduction

Older descriptions of Indo-European syntax have almost exclusively dealt with conjunctions and moods as characteristics of subordinate clauses. The question whether these sentences are really embedded or simply subordinated, however, has not been addressed. It was only recently that linguists became aware of this problem. The unanimous opinion now is that those languages which are the best representatives of Indo-European syntax, viz. Old Indic, Hittite and Old Latin, had only adjoined finite subordinate clauses.

This means that subordinate clauses are not internal constituents of matrix clauses in the sense that they occupy an argument or modifier position. Instead, they are located either in the left or in the right periphery of the matrix clause. According to KIPARSKY (1995: 155), relative clauses are base-generated in a peripheral position and not extraposed, because they have a correlating pronoun in the matrix clause, subject-pro-drop notwithstanding. The correlative is assumed to bear a grammatical function as in (1):

- (1) Old Indic: RV I 1,4
agne yám yajñám adhvarám
viśvátaḥ paribhūr ási /
sá íd devéṣu gachati
'Agni! Which sacrifice (and) religious ceremony you embrace all around, this indeed reaches the Gods.'

As Indo-European is supposed to have two left-peripheral operator positions, KIPARSKY, following HOCK (1989) and GARRETT (1992), assumes a constituent structure which has one TOPIC and one FOCUS position. In his more recent structural description of Indo-European clause structure, especially on the structure of Old Indic adverbial clauses, KRISCH (2002), on the other hand, assumes a single CP with several **Wackernagel-positions** between TOPIC/ FOCUS and IP. I will take his approach as the basis for the following survey.



The two approaches have in common that the subordinate clause is not adjoined to a projection of V in them; in both cases we have no embedding (for illocutionary dependency of topicalisation see JACOBS 1996: 1ff., 1997: 110ff.; MOLNÁR & ROSENGREN 1996: 49ff.). A closer examination of the structure of examples from our project “Indo-European competitive syntax”¹ yields a subtly differentiated picture, however. In subject relative clauses without a correlative, i.e., without a resumptive pronoun in the sense of KIPARSKY – so-called free relatives –, one has to take into account which part of the sentence they represent. Furthermore, one has to consider whether the relative clause precedes or follows the matrix clause.

For the Old Indic text corpus examined in our project – Taittirīya-Saṃhitā book 1 and 2 – we get the following results: 61 % of the subject relative clauses located in the left periphery have no resumptive pronoun in the matrix clause.

(3a) Old Indic: TS 1,5,9,3

yá evāṃ vidvān agnīm upatiṣṭhate paśumān bhavati

‘Who with the knowledge [about these things] worships Agni will be rich in cattle.’

On the other hand, we find 39 % of left peripheral relative clauses which have a correlating subject in the matrix clause.

(3b) Old Indic: TS 2,1,5,1

yáḥ paśúkāmaḥ syāt śá etám aindrám unnátám ā labheta

‘Who desires cattle, this one should immolate this humpbacked [one] to Indra.’

When looking at relative clauses located within the right periphery, we obtain a different result: 30 % of the relative clauses appear without a correlating subject, while 70% appear with a correlating subject.

(3c) Old Indic: TS 2,5,11,3

ālūkṣo bhavati yá evāṃ véda

‘Soft will be who knows that.’

¹ Research project sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

(3d) Old Indic: TS 1,5,2,1

pārā vā eṣá yajñám paśūn vapati yò 'gním udvāsáyate

'That one indeed disperses the sacrifice [and] the cattle, who removes the fire.'

This means that different types of relative clauses have different degrees of adjunction. While right peripheral relative clauses, which function as subjects, appear in over 50 % with a correlating subject in the matrix clause, this is not the case with left peripheral relative clauses. If we assume that subordinate clauses serving as a subject are more integrated into the matrix clause when the correlative is absent, we come to the conclusion that left peripheral relative clauses in the prose text examined have a higher degree of integration than their right peripheral counterparts. All in all, our material confirms that subordinate clauses in Old Indic prose appear either on the left or the right periphery of the clause. We have found no evidence for subordinate clauses appearing in intermediate position, e.g., within the **middle field**.

Example (4) shows an instance of topicalisation, which is also common in prose texts.

(4) Old Indic: TS 2,2,8,2

gáur yátrād hiṣkannā ny ámehat tátu bálbajā úd atīṣṭhan

'Wherever the cow, after having been mounted, urinated, there grew balbaja grass.'

(lit. 'The cow, wherever mounted she urinated, there balbaja grass grew.')

Another characteristic feature regarding the integration of subordinate clauses has been observed by AXEL (2002: 8). In her diachronic comparison of the structure of subordinate clauses in German, she found out that adverbial clauses which precede a complement clause introduced with *daz* 'that' occur in older German, while they are no longer used in present-day language.

(5a) Modern German

?? *Peter sagt, wenn es regnet, daß er nicht kommt.*

(lit. 'Peter says when it rains that he not comes.')

(6) Early New High German prose (Lancelot II 186,1)

und weiß wol, so bald er mich erkente, das er gern keme

'And (I) am sure that he, as soon as he would recognise me, would like to come.'

While in New High German the adverbial clause 'as soon as he would recognise me' would have to be integrated into the *that*-clause as in the English translation (*und ich weiß wohl, daß er, sobald er mich erkennen würde, gerne käme*), it precedes the *that*-clause in Early New High German.

Correlatives are also possible in these structures in older German.² In present-day language, correlatives are only marginally acceptable, actually only in such cases, in which the adverbial clause is picked up again by a resumptive element.

(5b) Modern German

Peter sagt, wenn es regnet, daß er dann nicht kommt.

(lit. 'Peter says when it rains that he then not comes.')

² For detailed information on the use of correlatives in other Germanic languages (e.g. Old English), see FISCHER et al. (2000: 57).

If we now combine the two characteristics of subordinate clauses, viz. their position and the presence/absence of a correlative, in order to determine the level of integration, we obtain the following possibilities:

(7a)	initial position	correlative in the matrix clause	
(7b)	initial position	—	
(7c)		correlative in the matrix clause	postposition
(7d)		—	postposition
(7e)	intermediate position	correlative in the matrix clause	
(7f)	intermediate position	—	
(7g)	intermediate position within subordinate clause	correlative in the matrix clause	
(7h)	intermediate position within subordinate clause	—	

Option (h) shows without doubt the highest degree of integration that a subordinate clause can have. The examples from Old Indic, however, made it clear that the degree of integration also depends on the function which the subordinate clause has within the matrix clause. If we now impose options (a) to (h) onto Old Latin, we again encounter the phenomenon of topicalisation. While this phenomenon serves as a means of emphasising in present-day German and is caused by the topic-comment structure³, the Latin case requires a different explanation. Cato's prose text *De agri cultura*, which is part of the "competitive syntax" corpus, will serve as a database for our survey.

2. Fronting and postposition

2.1. Subject clauses

Subject clauses always appear without a correlative. This is valid for subordinate clauses introduced with *ut* 'that' as well as for subordinated structures in the subjunctive appearing without a conjunction. Cf. (8a) and (8b):

(8a) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 73

ut valeant refert

'That they (the oxen) are strong, [that] is what matters.'

(fig.: 'It is important for their health.'⁴)

(8b) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 161,3

usque licebit vellas, donicum in semen videris ire

'It will be permitted, [that] you tear out [the asparagus], until you see that it is going to seed.'

(fig.: 'You may continue pulling until you see it is going to seed.')

³ Topicalized elements in these cases are neither quantifiers nor operators (see GREWENDORF 2002: 75).

⁴ The figurative translations are taken from W. D. HOOPER and H. B. ASH (1954 [1934, 1935] *Cato and Varro: De Re Rustica*. London: William Heinemann).

2.2. Object clauses

For object clauses the situation is different. When object clauses introduced with *ut(i)* ‘that’ precede the matrix clause, which is only rarely attested, they do not have a correlative:

- (9a) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 48,2
ut *subtus* *homo* *ambulare* *possit* *facito*
 ‘See to [it], that a person be able to walk along below there.’
 (lit.: ‘That a person be able to walk along below there, do.’)
 (fig.: ‘Make the covering high enough for a person to walk under.’)

If object clauses appear on the right periphery, however, a correlative is possible but not obligatory:

- (9b) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 9
et *id* *videto*, *ut* *aut* *domu[m]* *opus* *siet* *aut* *ut* *vendere* *possit*
 ‘And that consider that it be either needed in the house or could be sold.’
 (fig.: ‘But be sure that the master will need them or that he can find a market for them.’)
- (9c) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 107,2
videto *ne* *aduras*
 ‘Take care that you do not let it burn.’
 (fig.: ‘...stirring constantly to prevent scorching.’)

2.3. Adverbial clauses

Among the adverbial clauses, final clauses have no correlative, no matter if they appear in left or right peripheral position.

- (10a) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 15
et *ut* *sublinat* *locari* *potest*
 ‘And in order to get the undercoat, it is necessary that [somebody] be employed.’
 (fig.: ‘and let out the plastering.’)
- (10b) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 18,6
in *iis* *tignis* *parietes* *extruito* *iungitoque* *materiae*, *ut* *oneris* *satis* *habeat*
 ‘Across these beams erect walls and establish a junction to the timber so that they have enough weight.’
 (fig.: ‘and on these timbers build a wall and join it to the timber to give it sufficient weight.’)

The absence of correlatives in final clauses is not unusual. Even in New High German there are no such words to be found in final contexts. In the case of German, the reason lies in the fact that the volitive meaning of the final context – as illustrated in the example from PASCH (1987: 141): *Es ist nötig, das Fenster zu schließen, weil keine Fliegen ins Zimmer kommen sollen*. ‘It is necessary to close the window so that no flies come into the room’ – immediately results from the final conjunction *damit* ‘so that’ and not from the condition-effect relation expressed in the subordinate and the main clause of the type: *Wenn das Fenster geschlossen ist, dann kommen keine Fliegen ins Zimmer* ‘When the window is

closed, then flies do not come into the room'. As other Latin authors, however, usually do employ correlatives like *eō* and *ideō* in these contexts, the absence of such words in Cato's text is obviously due to his idiolect.

The remaining types of left and right peripheral adverbial clauses, on the other hand, show structures both with and without a correlative. Causal clauses introduced by the conjunction *quia* constitute an exception, as they always occur with a correlative.

(11) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 6,4

nam convenit harundinetum cum corruda, eo quia foditur et incenditur et umbram per tempus habet

'For the reed goes well together with the wild asparagus, for the reason that it is worked and burned and occasionally shadowed.'

(fig.: 'For a reed thicket goes well with the wild asparagus, because it is worked and burned over and furnishes a shade when shade is needed.')

In New High German such causal clauses also appear with a correlative, viz. *deshalb* 'therefore/for that reason'. According to THIM-MABREY (1982: 208f.), *deshalb* signals that the statement made in the matrix clause is not yet concluded.

Until now it seems that in cases where the subordinate clause is either shifted to sentence initial position or postponed we find the highest degree of integration with subordinated clauses serving as a subject (comparable with the examples from Old Indic), since they always occur without a correlative. In cases of right peripheral object sentences, on the other hand, the presence of a correlative is optional. In the case of adverbial sentences Cato uses both structures with and without a correlative. The only exception are final clauses, as they always appear without a correlative.

3. Intermediate position

When looking at cases of subordinate clauses appearing in intermediate position within complex sentences, one should make a distinction between the position they occupy in matrix clauses and the one they occupy in subordinate clauses.

3.1. In matrix clauses

There are instances in which an object clause follows its matrix clause but precedes another subordinate clause which is as well dependent on the matrix clause. This means that the object clause, although it appears in intermediate position, is still located in the right periphery of the matrix clause.

3.2. In subordinate clauses

Similar rules are valid for subordinate clauses which are dependent on another subordinate clause. It is, however, possible to integrate a free relative into an adverbial clause:

(12a) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 142

hoc amplius, quo modo vilicam uti oportet et quo modo eae imperari oportet, uti adventu domini quae opus sunt parentur curenturque diligenter

'Furthermore this, in what manner the housekeeper should be managed and how she should be instructed so that upon the arrival of the master, what is necessary, be carefully prepared and arranged.'

(fig.: 'Furthermore, he must know how to manage the housekeeper and how to give her directions, so that the master, at his coming, will find that all necessary preparations and arrangements have been made with care.')

In addition, there are instances in which free relatives are integrated into an object clause:

(12b) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 141,1

cum divis volentibus quodque bene eveniat, mando tibi, Mani, uti illace suovitaurlia fundum agrum terramque meam, quota ex parte sive circumagi sive circumferenda censeas, uti cures lustrare

'As everything, when the Gods want, will happily succeed, I instruct you, Manius, that that sacrifice of purification the estate, the acre and my land, on which part [it] according to your decision will be led or carried around, that you make an effort [that it] purify [it].'

(fig.: 'That with the good help of the gods success may crown our work, I bid thee, Manius, to take care to purify my farm, my land, my ground with this *suovitaurlia*, in whatever part thou thinkest best for them to be driven or carried around.')

Incidentally, *uti* 'that' is repeated after the relative clause here. Nonetheless, example (12b) together with (12a) shows that embedding in Cato's text has already reached a higher level than the one we find in example (6) from early New High German. KIPARSKY'S assumption that subordinate clauses in Old Latin exclusively appear left or right peripheral has thus to be revised. Example (13) illustrates that the classification of subordinate clauses into right peripheral, left peripheral and intermediate is not sufficient for Old Latin.

(13) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 9

hoc est praedium quod, ubi vis, expedit facere

'This is the estate which you build in a profitable way, wherever you want.'

(lit.: 'This is the estate, which, wherever you want, is profitable to build.'

(fig.: 'This is the sort of farm which it is profitable to make anywhere.')

Here we observe a phenomenon which enables us to distinguish the syntax of Old Latin clearly from the syntax of older German which has been consulted for comparative reasons.

4. Topicalisation

4.1. Structural description

A point that has until now been overlooked in the literature is that Old Latin has not only the option to topicalise NP's, but also the possibility to move subordinate clauses themselves into SpecCP⁵. This movement is part of a complex mechanism of topicali-

⁵ For more details concerning the derivation of left dislocated complex DPs, see GREWENDORF (2002: 85f.).

sation, of which up to now only a phenomenon described in Latin school grammar, namely the prolepsis of a constituent which serves as the subject of both the matrix and the subordinate clause, has been mentioned.

- (14) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 17,2
ulmus, cum folia cadunt, tum iterum tempestiva est
 'The elm, on the other hand, is then, when the leaves fall down, ripe.'
 (fig.: 'The elm is fit for cutting a second time when the leaves fall.')

There are instances, however, in which only material from a matrix clause is topicalised, and that independent of case:

- (15) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 117
manibus siccis, cum uti voles, sumito
 'With dry hands take out [the preserved olives], if you want to consume [them].'
 (lit.: 'With dry hands, if you [them] want to consume, take [them] out.')
 (fig.: '...and take them out with dry hands when you wish to serve them.')

The temporal clause *cum uti voles* 'if you want to use them' is thus not located in an intermediate position, but instead in the left periphery of the matrix clause below the topic position. There are as well instances of topicalisation movement towards the left periphery of a subordinate clause which follows another subordinate clause.

- (16) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 18,4
eo capitulum robustum indito, uti siet stipites ubi stent
 'There place an oaken main beam, so that it be, where the stakes should stand.'
 (lit.: 'There place an oaken main beam, so that it be, the stakes where [they] should stand.')
 (fig.: '...and cap it with an oak head so as to make a place for the posts to stand.')

Furthermore, there are instances of topicalisation movement out of the subordinate clause into the front position of the whole sentence.

- (17) Latin Cato Agr. 22,1
orbis cavere oportet ne quid mortarium terant
 'It is necessary to take care that the collerstones do not rub the mortar in some way.'
 (lit.: 'The millstones, [of them] to take care is necessary, so that they do not rub the mortar in some way.')
 (fig.: 'See that the stones do not rub the basin at all.')

Topicalisation out of subordinated matrix clauses is also possible:

- (18) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 83
eam rem divinam vel servus vel liber licebit faciat
 'It will be permitted that either a slave or a free man perform this offering.'
 (lit.: 'This offering either a slave or a free man will it be permitted [that] he perform.')
 (fig.: 'Either a slave or a free man may make this offering.')

Example (19) shows cases of topicalisation both out of the matrix clause and the subordinate clause:

- (19) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 1,4
ad villam cum venies, videto vasa torcula et dolia multane sient
 ‘When you reach the estate, take a look whether there are many winepress vessels and vats.’
 (lit.: ‘To the estate when you come, take a look winepress vessels and vats many if are.’)
 (fig.: ‘When you reach the steading, observe whether there are numerous oil presses and wine vats.’)

Topicalisation of subordinate clauses as a whole has to be viewed within this framework, too. First of all, this affects subordinate clauses which are constituents of a matrix clause, e.g. the adverbial clause of place in (20).

- (20) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 47
si pecus pascetur, ubi vitem serere voles, ter prius rescato quam ad arborem ponas
 ‘When the cattle will be turned out to grass, cut [the vine shoot], where you want to plant the vine, three times before you put [it] under the tree.’
 (lit.: ‘When the cattle will be turned out to grass, where you want to plant the vine, three times earlier cut [the vine shoot] than you put [it] under the tree.’)
 (fig.: ‘If the ground on which you wish to plant the vine is to be used for pasture, see that the vine has been cut back three times before it is tied up to the tree.’)

The adverbial clause of place is a constituent of the matrix clause and occupies a topic position which is located below the subordinate clause within the left periphery. (21) illustrates a temporal adverbial clause with more TOPIC-positions preceding that subordinate clause:

- (21) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 72
boves, ne pedes subterant, prius quam in viam quoquam ages, pice liquida cornua infima unguito
 ‘To prevent the oxen from rubbing sore their feet, besmear, before you lead [them] on the way to some place, their hoofs with melted pitch.’
 (lit.: ‘The oxen, so that they do not rub sore their feet, before you lead [them] on the way to some place with melted pitch besmear their hoofs.’)
 (fig.: ‘To keep the oxen from wearing down their feet, smear the bottom of their hoofs with melted pitch before you drive them anywhere on a road.’)

(21) shows that topic projections are recursive (see GREWENDORF 2002: 71). It is even possible to topicalise more than one subordinated constituent of a matrix clause:

- (22) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 114,1
vinum si voles concinnare, ut alvum bonam faciat, secundum vindemiam, ubi vites ablaqueantur, quantum putabis ei rei satis esse vini, tot vites ablaqueato et signato
 ‘If you want to make wine, so that it makes a good stomach, hack and mark after the vintage, as soon as the vines are hacked, as many vines as you think is enough for this purpose.’
 (lit.: ‘Wine if you want to prepare, so that it makes a good stomach, after the vintage, as soon as the vines are hacked, as many [as] you believe are enough for this purpose [of] vines, that many vines hack and mark.’)

(fig.: 'If you wish to make a laxative wine: After vintage, when the vines are trenched, expose the roots of as many vines as you think you will need for the purpose and mark them.')

Let us now turn back to example (13). In connection with the examples mentioned in section 4, (13) as well seems to be an instance of topicalisation. Here, *ubi vis* 'where you want', a constituent of the subordinate clause, has been moved to a topic position below the relative pronoun. This implies that the relative operator is located in a projection above the topic projection (GREWENDORF 2002: 72). In addition, topicalisation can be observed in subordinate clauses which are by themselves part of other subordinate clauses. In this sense, *si pluat* 'if it rains' in (23) has been moved to the left periphery of the final clause of which it is a constituent:

- (23) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 40,4
insuper lingua bubula obtegito, si pluat, ne aqua in librum permanet
 'Cover [it] from above with [a leaf of] ox-tongue, so that the water, if it rains, does not soak into the bark.'
 (lit.: 'Cover [it] from above with [a leaf of] ox-tongue, if it rains, so that the water does not soak into the bark.')

(fig.: '...cover the whole with ox-tongue, so that if it rains the water will not soak into the bark.')

Compare the free relative clause in (24):

- (24) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 23,1
fac ad vindemiam quae opus sunt ut parentur
 'Take care that [that,] which is necessary for the vintage, be ready.'
 (lit.: 'Take care [for it] for the vintage, what is necessary, that be ready.')

(fig.: 'Have everything that is needed ready for the vintage.')

Formally, the sequence of the subordinate clause corresponds to that in example (6) from New High German. The New High German example, however, is no instance of topicalisation. As movement of simple NPs to a position in the left periphery was not very common in Middle High German and late Middle High German (LÖTSCHER 1995: 47; AXEL 2002: 10), it is very unlikely that topicalisation took place in subordinate clauses. Example (25), which shows the same sequence as German, illustrates that topicalisation in Old Latin was not prescriptive but optional:

- (25) Old Latin: Cato Agr. 113,1
ponito in dolio et operito, ne odor exeat, ante quam vinum indas
 Place [the fragment] into a vessel and close it, so that the odour does not escape, before you fill the wine into it.'
 (fig.: '...place in a jar and cover, so that the odour will not escape before you pour in the wine.')

The topic system is thus only realised when it is "needed" (GREWENDORF 2002: 70).

4.2. Function

Concerning the function of topicalisation of the type discussed here, one can assume that these are cases of "iconic syntax", based on the following principles:

- The linear order principle:
The order of clauses in coherent discourse will tend to correspond to the temporal order of the occurrence of the depicted events (HAIMAN 1980).

For the position of subordinate clauses this implies that, e.g., a subordinate clause which denotes a cause precedes a subordinate clause that encodes an effect. In addition, we have to take account of the principle of

- sequential order and topicality:
 - (a) More important or urgent information tends to be placed first in the string.
 - (b) Less accessible information tends to be placed first in the string.

This means that the first member of a chain demands the highest attention (GIVÓN 1990: 971 ff.). These two principles cannot only explain the topicalisation of nominal constituents within main and subordinate clauses, but can be applied to the topicalisation of whole subordinate clauses as well. The sequence of events is reflected in the same way in which they enter into the consciousness of the speaker in accordance with the chronology of events. At first, a place has to be chosen, when the agent wants to carry out an action there. Therefore, adverbial clauses of place, which are constituents of the matrix clause, are topicalised directly to a position in front of this clause within the left periphery (20). In (13), an adverbial clause of place, which is a constituent of a subordinate clause, is moved to a position immediately following the one of the relative pronoun. Topicalised temporal adverbial clauses, which are again either constituents of the matrix clause or the subordinate clause, reflect the sequence of events iconically in a similar way. In addition, in example (21) the object occurs in sentence-initial position to mark it as the most important referent. In cases where more subordinated constituents of the matrix clause are topicalised, the temporal adverbial clause precedes the second subordinate clause, which is topicalised as well (cf. 22). If the subject appears in form of a free relative clause, it also precedes the subordinate clause (cf. 24). It is very likely that these constituents are genuine TOPICS, as a sentence can have more than one TOPIC but only one focussed constituent.

In all examples cited topicalisation thus reflects the natural sequence of events. This is remarkable, as the syntax of Latin differs fundamentally from the syntax of Old Indic with respect to these cases of optional topicalisation.

5. Conclusion

If we turn back to the classification according to degrees of embedding in (7), we get the following picture for Cato's prose text: we find possibilities (a), (b), (c) and (d), with and without a correlative. Subject sentences, left peripheral object sentences and final clauses, however, appear without a correlative. Possibility (h) was found in free relatives. Subordinate clauses in Cato's text – in some cases with a correlative – are not only right or left peripheral, but can also appear in an intermediate position. In these cases they are embedded according to the degrees proposed in (7) for older German.

The positioning of subordinate clauses in the left or right periphery of the sentence or in an intermediate position as well as the presence or absence of a correlative are genuine characteristics of subordinate clauses which are determined by principles of selection, and – according to RIZZI (1997: 281 ff.) and GREWENDORF (2002: 66 ff.) – encoded in projections within the complementiser system.

Regarding the projection which is associated with the illocutionary force of the subordinate clause one could refer to the phenomenon of ‘blocking of assertion’ mentioned by BOSSONG (1979; see also RAIBLE 1992: 247), because this “blocking” is – in contrast to an “assertive” matrix clause (in the sense of speech act theory) – mostly marked by special linguistic means. While this phenomenon again constitutes a characteristic feature of subordinate clauses, topicalisation in Old Latin is a phenomenon independent from the sentence type which is reflected by movement operations to several topic projections. Because of the recursivity of these projections, the elements in question are genuine TOPICS and not focussed elements. The reason for topicalisation, as regards content, lies in the iconicity of the chronology of events. As has been shown, this type of topicalisation dominates the positioning of subordinate clauses in Old Latin⁶. Thus, the language of Cato no longer follows the rigid word order patterns of Old Indic with regard to the syntax of subordinate clauses, but represents a later development.

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⁶ Modal verbs in Old High German, too, show a usage independent from the sentence type, although they have partly the same meaning as the subjunctive (LÜHR 1997: 205).

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