

On Theme, Topic and Givenness: The state of the art*

MARÍA ÁNGELES GÓMEZ-GONZÁLEZ
Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

1. INTRODUCTION

Whereas it seems that a consensus has been reached that *Theme/Topic* should be described within some kind of *functionalist*¹ framework, very different positions have been taken on the appropriate criteria for the definition of the notions and, as a result, with respect to their linguistic manifestation. Indeed, these notions have been associated with a myriad of terms in the relevant literature, such as *(De)-Topic(alization)*, *Theme Proper*, *DiatHEME*, *Functional Sentence Perspective*, *Communicative Dynamism*, *Topic-Focus Articulation*, *Psychological Subject*, *Basis*, etc., as well as with different constructions, such as zero anaphora, clitic pronouns, dislocations, definite NPs, the passive voice, preposings, cleft constructions, etc. (cf. Güblig/Raible 1977; Allerton 1978; Brömser 1982). As I see it, two factors are re-

* A preliminary version of this paper appeared in Gómez-González (1996). I am especially grateful to M.A.K. Halliday, Christopher S. Butler, Margaret Berry, Angela Downing, Peter Fries, T. Fanego Lema, T. Jiménez Juliá and Bari Samitta for questions and comments that I endeavoured to bear in mind as I was writing up the paper. None of them, of course, is accountable for the way I have interpreted their recommendations. This research was funded in part by the Xunta de Galicia and by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science DGICYT, grant numbers PB90-0370 and PB94-0619, whose support is gratefully acknowledged.

Halliday's *Systemic-Functional Grammar* exemplifies the functionalist approach, which: (i) is paradigmatically-based; (ii) is influenced by ethnography and rhetoric, and posits an *iconic*, or non-arbitrary, relation between form and meaning; (iii) describes language on purely functional terms, so that the terms *functional* and *function* may be used in two senses: (a) as a *functional label*, that is, indicating a *proportional*, or paradigmatic, relation (or a term in such a relation or some means whereby such a relation is expressed) alongside classes or categories), and (b) as an indication of the *meaning* or *purpose* with which language is used (see Halliday 1994: xxxiii); and (iv) implies a historical passage from a probabilistic preference for a particular structure, based on universal tendencies, to the development of a convention that is fully determinate. By contrast, Chomsky's *Transformational-Generative* model embodies the formalist approach, which: (i) is *syntagmatic* in orientation; (ii) posits an arbitrary relation between form and meaning; (iii) rooted in logic and philosophy, focuses on universals and uses intuitions to elicit them; and (iv) stratifies linguistic description in terms of syntax, semantics, pragmatics and so on.

sponsible for this state of the art: (1) different elements of communication have been taken as criterial to Theme/Topic, that is, either the message or the interactants; and (2) the multiplex nature of the notion(s) at issue, which have been related to virtually all of the established components of linguistic description. In view of the resulting variety of approaches, the author has considered it necessary to propose a rough categorisation into the three following groups, according to their underlying rationale that:

- (1) Theme/Topic is realized by *clause initial position*, which is suggested by *syntactic interpretations*;
- (2) Theme/Topic conveys *Given/Known information*, as hypothesised by *informational approaches*;
- (3) Theme/Topic establishes a relationship of 'aboutness' in a message, which is supported by *semantic analyses*.

These three tenets were all implicit in Mathesius's (1929) characterisation of *základ* as 'that which is known or at least obvious in the given situation and from which the speaker proceeds', and have been subject of continuous controversy as they have gone through repeated stages of modification and reinterpretation. In the following, I will critically review the three above approaches, pointing out what are felt to be their major weaknesses. In the course of our discussion, I will have the opportunity to examine different aspects of the notions of 'Givenness' and 'aboutness', and I will also touch on some related issues as: (1) *discourse staging (Hyper-/Macro-Theme/Rheme, Thematic Progression)*, (2) *presupposition*, (3) *discourse saliency/relevance*, and (4) *thetic-categorical judgements*. As a conclusion I will suggest treating Theme, Topic and Givenness as three different categories, which may, but need not coincide in one wording. In general, the use of the first term will be restricted to the notion of 'syntactic Theme', or clause initial position; whereas Topic and Givenness will be related to 'aboutness' and to the coding of different types of 'given/known information', respectively.

2. SYNTACTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THEME/TOPIC

Echoing Aristotle's notion of *double judgement*, syntactic interpretations conceive the informational structure of the clause as a bipartite construct consisting of: a *point of departure*, or *syntactic Theme/Topic*, and the main issue, or *Rheme/Comment*. Further, relying solely on morpho-syntactic structure and linking the concept 'point of departure' with the *linear quality* of language (i.e. the constraint that words must be ordered into sentences and these into texts according to some organising principle), syntactic analyses equate Theme/Topic with the *leftmost*, or initial, constituent of the clause as a message (*prefield (Vorfeld)* position). But, for some advocates of the syntactic approach, not only the leftmost, but also the rightmost NP constituent of the sentence qualify for the category of syntactic Theme/Topic (e.g. *Die Frau da, sie kommt*

aus Berlin, ['The woman there she comes from Berlin'] vs. *He's shrewd, that one*. Gundel 1988: 224 [my emphasis] (cf. Dik 1978, 1990; Foley and Van Valin 1984, 1985; Van Oosten 1986: 32; Lambrecht 1994).

According to the supporters of the syntactic approach, syntactic Themes/Topics play a *frame-establishing* and/or *perspective-marking* function. Thus, Chafe (1976: 53) emblematically explains that Topic 'limit[s] the domain of applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain (...) set[ting] the spatial, temporal or individual framework within which the predication holds', while Lowe (1987: 6) suggests that this domain may expand over the *ensuing discourse span*, i.e. 'any unit, usually larger than the sentence, contributing to the topic continuity or discontinuity of texts' (cf. Chafe 1976; Magretta 1977: 132; Davison 1984, Lowe 1987; Halliday 1967, 1994; Fries 1987, 1995; Downing 1991; Vasconellos 1992).

As I see it, syntactic approaches pose five debatable issues (cf. Lyons 1977; Pasch 1982; Hudson 1986; Huddleston 1988). The first is that syntactic analyses embody a wide range of structurally and communicatively heterogeneous constructions across different languages, which, despite their common highlighting of the clause initial and final slots, makes a unitary treatment of such structures hard to justify. Witness to this (1) below (from Gundel 1988: 224 ff. [my emphasis], except for (viii) and (ix)) (cf. e.g. Altmann 1981: 46; Davison 1984; Gundel 1985, 1988):

- (1) (a) Die Frau da, sie kommt aus Berlin. (Left dislocation)
'The woman there she come from Berlin'.
- (b) My work, I'm going crazy. (Double-Subject construction. Chao 1968, Bland 1980)
- (c) al sratim ka ele rina mamaš meta. (Topicalization, Berman 1980: or fronting, Y-movement)
'Movies like that, Rina is really crazy about.'
- (d) (To) Što menja udivljaet, eto eš mudrost. (Cleft construction)
'What surprises me, it's her wisdom.'
- (e) i. Your battery seems to be dead vs. It seems that your battery is dead. (Subject to Subject raising)
ii. George is difficult to talk to vs. It is difficult to talk to George. (Object to Subject raising)
iii. My soup has a fly in it vs. There is a fly in my soup. (*Have*-constructions)
- (f) He's shrewd, that one. (right dislocation)
- (g) C'est pour ça qu'il a gagné le prix. (*it*-cleft)
'It's for that that he won the prize.'

- (h) i. I saw the man. (Subject in an active declarative clauses)
- ii. The man was seen. (Subject in a passive declarative clauses)
- (i) Paul, you can't do that. (Vocative).

Although numerous studies attest to the diverse communicative status of each or of some of the syntactic Theme/Topic constructions in (1), it would appear that no investigation has yet substantiated the contrast among the different thematic options within/across languages with enough quantitative and qualitative natural discourse evidence.

The second drawback of syntactic accounts lies in the fact that what constitutes the initial constituent of a clause as a message is far from being a well-settled issue. For one thing, in unplanned discourse, for example, such phenomena as repetition, hesitation, elliptical structures and so on, make it hard to identify syntactic units and hence the borderlines between their thematic (and rhematic) constituents. Further, the criteria used to identify syntactic Theme/Topics are heterogeneous and not necessarily concurrent. Indeed, scholars have invoked as markers of thematic status: (1) phonological criteria (initial tone group), (2) syntactic markers (initial syntactic constituent, either nuclear and peripheral), (3) semantic factors (first semantic role), and/or (4) metafunctional considerations (first constituent fulfilling an experiential, or referential, function). As a result, depending on the criteria cited, different scholars identify different types of constituents as Theme/Topic (and Rheme/Comment). By way of example, Halliday (1994: 56 [my emphasis]) claims that (*Multiple Theme* 'extends up to (and includes) the *Topical Theme*', that is to say, the first experiential element, preceded or not by other *Textual* and/or *Interpersonal Themes*, while Lautamatti (1978) and Downing (1991) dissociate Halliday's (*Multiple*) Theme from *Topic*, i.e. clausal topical participants (viz. Subject/Object), and Dik (1978, 1989) or Foley and Van Valin (1984, 1985) distinguish between the first *peripheral slot* (viz. a clause initial constituent that is not bound to the predicate) and the first *nuclear slot* (i.e. the initial constituent that is linked to the predicate). (cf. Enkvist 1974; Berry 1989; Vasconcellos 1992).

A third area for consideration is that while clause (internal or external) initial and final position always qualify for thematic status from a syntactic point of view, that is, they always fulfil a syntactic function, the constituents in such positions need not always have a semantic, or referential, correlate and therefore the communicative relevance of such thematic constituents is harder to justify (e.g. it in English impersonal structures such as *It is raining*, there in existential constructions like *There is a fallacy in your argument*, etc.).

A fourth shortcoming of the syntactic approach is that it seems to coalesce two qualitatively different approaches. For some of its advocates treat the Theme/Topic-Rheme/Comment pattern as a *structural*, or clausal, *relationship*, i.e. as a form of organisation that gives the clause the status of a communicative event, whereas others

take it to represent a *non-structural*, or textual, strategy of organisation. According to the former, Theme/Topic is realized by clause initial position, whereas the latter principle refers to the fact that information is presented, or *staged*, throughout discourse into *background*, or initial position, and *foreground*, or final position, surpassing any clear-cut structural, or grammatical, borderlines (cf. Grimes 1975; Halliday 1995). As a result, Themes/Topic-Rhemes/Comment patterns are also regarded to extend across clausal boundaries, over paragraphs or even over whole texts. Following this trend, Anderson *et al.* (1977) coin the term *Hypertheme* (in opposition to that of *Hyper-Rheme*) to refer to the introductory clause or group of clauses (headline(s), title(s), paragraph(s), etc.), which are established to predict a pattern of Theme/Topic selection over a whole text; whereas Martin (1992) uses the label *Macro-Theme* (in contrast with the *Macro-Rheme*) to embrace a clause or a combination of clauses predicting one or more Hyper-Theme(s) (e.g. the introductory paragraph of a text, its Table of Contents, etc.) (cf. the discussion on *Thematic Progression* by Daneš 1964; Adamec 1981; Du Bois 1987).

Embracing the previous four, the fifth and last debatable issue posed by the syntactic analyses is, as remarked by Taglicht (1984), whether or not the category of Rheme/Comment is profitable at all, as attention is centred almost exclusively on the syntactic coding of Theme/Topic.

3. INFORMATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THEME/TOPIC

Influenced by the belief that our ideas flow from given information towards new information, informational approaches assess the category of Theme/Topic as Given/Known information, that is, as the part(s) of a message known to the listener, or that the speaker/writer expects the listener to know, or that can be deduced from the co(n)text. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that, while the acolytes of the informational interpretation take Theme/Topic and Given information as one and the same category, the supporters of the syntactic approach regard Theme/Topic and Given information as two independent, though orthogonal, choices, which tend to coalesce, but may not do so. In Halliday's (1967:212) words:

while 'given' means 'what you were talking about' (or 'what I was talking about before'), 'theme' means 'what I am talking about' ('or what I am talking about now') and as any student of rhetoric knows the two do not necessarily coincide.

Leaving aside Halliday's argumentation, it seems to me that combining interpretations pose two major questions: (1) how reliably can message/clause elements be identified as Theme/Topic if the notion of 'Givenness' has been approached from many different perspectives and associated with several different notions that have often been indistinctly used in the literature?; (2) how is the chosen formulation of Theme/Topic linguistically relevant? Regarding the question in (1), I agree with

Chafe's (1976: 3) and Allerton's (1978: 133, 151 ff.) observation that *Givenness* should firstly be distinguished from *presupposition*. In my view, *Givenness* is a discourse notion referring to the informational status of the constituents of a message, which is determined by the speaker/writer's view of the situational and linguistic co(n)text (including the addressee's communicative needs), and which is indicated by attenuated morpho-syntactic and phonological forms (e.g. pronominalisation, definiteness, weaker stress, etc.). Conversely, *presupposition* is a logico-semantic notion realised by sentence form which involves a *proposition* (i.e. a potential sentence having the capacity of being true or false), whose assumability is required for the success of the message (see Jackendoff 1972: 276-8). It follows that a proposition may convey *Given* information, but need not be presupposed (e.g. *It can't be true*, as an answer to *I saw the man*, where *it* stands as *Given* information, but the proposition is not presupposed). Or, vice versa, informationally new items may occur within a presupposition (e.g. *What the duke gave to my aunt was that teapot*, where it is presupposed that the duke gave something to someone, but the identity of that someone is presented as news).

Now, focusing on *Givenness*, it seems to me that this term has been used in at least three distinct senses that render different analyses of Theme/Topic: (1) the *relational*, or reciprocal, interpretation; and (2) two types of *referential* accounts, i.e. (a) *contextual* and (b) *activated* (cf. Gundel 1988: 211-2).

Table 1: Trends in informational interpretations of Theme/Topic

clause level of analysis	discourse level of analysis	
relational interpretation	referential interpretations	
	contextual interpretation	activated interpretation
Given information in relation to New information	Recoverability (Giv _R) Predictability (Giv _P) Shared Knowledge (Giv _K) Assumed Familiarity (Giv _F)	entities participants are attending to at the time of the utterance

In what follows it will be shown that these three informational accounts of Theme/Topic rest upon different theoretical primitives that operate at two different levels of analysis, and therefore pursue different goals and yield different results.

To begin with, the relational, or reciprocal, approach works at individual clause/utterance/single speech act level, whereas contextual and activated approaches operate at the level of discourse. Indeed, in relational interpretations Theme/Topic is regarded as *Given* in relation to Rheme/Comment within the domain of *individual clauses/utterances* (cf. Gundel 1988; Firbas 1964). Alternatively, contextual referential approaches conceive Theme/Topic as the element that relates the clause/utterance to the discourse co(n)text in which it occurs, so that shared familiarity by the interactants becomes the necessary condition for felicitous thematicity/topichood. This pic-

ture is further complicated for, in my view, contextual accounts invoke four non-co-terminous readings of Givenness: Recoverability (Giv_R), Predictability (Giv_P), Shared Knowledge (Giv_K), and Assumed Familiarity (Giv_F).

Recoverability (Giv_R) is upheld, for example, by Halliday (1967, 1974, 1994) and his advocates in *Systemic Functional Grammar* (SFG), who believe Given 'express[es] what the speaker is presenting as information that is recoverable from some source or other in the environment -the situation or the preceding text' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 326). In contrast, supporting the notion of Predictability (Giv_P), de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) and Kuno (1972, 1978, 1980) argue that Given represents what the addressee expects the speaker/writer is likely to say/write, while New relates to expressions not following (or not predicted by) these expectations. In turn, Clark and Haviland (1977: 4) describe Shared Knowledge (Giv_K) as what the speaker 'believes the listener already knows and accepts as true' (but is not necessarily thinking about it)' (cf. Haviland and Clark 1974); whereas Allerton (1978: 147) and Prince (1981: 233-37) argue for Assumed Familiarity (Giv_F) as a scalar notion, the latter scholar distinguishing seven degrees of familiarity which are broken down into three groups:

- (1) *New*, or entities firstly introduced in discourse by the user, are classified into three types (viz. *Brand-New Unanchored*, *Brand New Anchored*, *Unused*);
- (2) *Inferable*, or entities that the speaker/writer assumes her/his addressee can infer through reasoning;
- (3) *Evoked*, or entities that are already present in discourse (viz. *situationally Evoked* or *textually Evoked*).

In their turn, in the last version of informational analyses, that is, in activated referential interpretations, Givenness (Giv_S) refers to entity (-ies) which the interactants are not only familiar with, but are actually attending to (thinking of) at the time of utterance. A case in point is Chafe's (1974, 1976: 30, 1987: 30 ff.) definition of the Given as 'that knowledge which the speaker assumes to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance', for which its referent must have been *explicitly introduced* in the discourse, i.e. be present in the physical context or be categorised in the same way as a referent previously introduced or physically present. By contrast, Givón (1988, 1992: 10) proposes an alternative description of Giv_S as a discrete process of *attention activation* within a cognitively based framework. Put succinctly, Givón establishes a correlation between two textual dimensions of topicality, *referential accessibility* (i.e. Givenness as derived from the cultural knowledge, the speech situation and/or the preceding discourse) and *thematic importance* (i.e. the text frequency of referents in subsequent discourse), on the one hand, and two cognitive domains, on the other, that is, *mental storage* (i.e. where a currently inactive node that is already in storage is identified) and *attentional activation* (whereby a referent Topic,

or *file*, is *open*, or activated, to receive incoming information) (cf. Copeland and Davis 1983; Lambrecht 1988, 1994).

Discrepancies arise within informational approaches because, on closer inspection, relational, referential and activated interpretations of Theme/Topic are not independent of each other, and because they use syntactic, contextual and activated criteria in a loose ambiguous manner. It seems, for example, that all types of Givenness qualify for Giv_K , although the reverse is not necessarily the case. Indeed, in order for information to be presented as recoverable, salient or predictable the speaker/writer must assume that the hearer 'knows' or can infer a particular thing. Moreover, if the speaker/writer assumes some information to be in the consciousness of the addressee, it is also likely to be recoverable and/or predictable from the linguistic or situational context. Likewise, it seems to me Giv_S definitions assume a knowledge of the workings of memory and attention/consciousness which is simply not available at the moment, so that there is no way of empirically validating whether an element is Given or not. Some vexing questions are: for how long can mental representations be active and eligible for thematic/topical status, if they quickly fade from consciousness unless refreshed by continual mention? How can the 'silent' mental shift from Given to Accessible be measured and regarded in terms of thematicity and/or topicality?

Behind all these questions lies the second problem posited by informational approaches, that is, whether or not they provide operational or empirically verifiable analyses of Theme/Topic. It is my impression that most of these accounts are somewhat elusive, because they do not identify the Theme/Topic of a message directly. Instead, this category is indirectly described:

- (1) in relation to the Comment/Rheme (New) at clause/utterance level (in relational accounts);
- (2) in relation to such slippery concepts as 'recoverability', 'predictability', 'shared knowledge' and 'saliency';
- (3) as a discrete value along a scale of topicality;
- (4) as a process of attention activation.

Neither is it clear to what extent the Given-New status is determined by: (1) *syntactic form* (viz. word order, specific Givenness/newness markers, etc.), (2) the *context* or (3) the *speaker*. The latter hypothesis is supported by Halliday (1967) and his followers in SFG, but, for Dik and the supporters of *Functional Grammar* (FG), as well as for many Prague School advocates, it is the co(n)text, while CD acolytes rely on intonational Givenness.

In addition, most informational accounts tend to restrict their explanatory power to NPs: thematic/topical items are identified with zero anaphora and with

(modified) definite NPs, whereas indefinite NPs receive rhematic/topical status. This identification leads to three additional debatable issues. One is, if it is true, as noted by Givón (1984; 1992: 42), Du Bois (1987) and Chafe (1987), among others, that clauses/utterances may contain more than one Given NP but only one is perceived as Theme/Topic, then it follows that additional criteria apart from that of Givenness, have to be invoked to select among the potential thematic/topical items. Secondly, the assumption that only (Given) NPs qualify for thematic/topical status is not totally accepted, but has been criticised by some scholars such as Allerton (1978: 157), Reinhart (1982: 72), Jordan (1985) and Lötscher (1985). The latter, in (1985: 207-208), states that 'topicalized elements can be either thematic [referential] [...] or rhematic [non-referential]' in languages such as German, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, French or English, although these languages seem to vary in the ease with which non-referential Topics are expressible.

My last concern about informational approaches regards the treatment of all-New messages (i.e. all New clauses, newspaper headlines, titles, etc.). For the equation of Givenness with Theme/Topic renders all such messages as devoid of Theme/Topic functions and therefore as being 'groundless' or informationally incomplete. To preclude this possibility, Chafe (1987) affirms that all constituents would be good candidates for thematic status, were we to calculate their 'activation state'. However, it seems to me that, if Chafe's procedure were to be adopted (difficult though it may appear to calculate the degree of activation of some word classes such as conjunctions, adverbs, prepositions etc.), then the category of Theme/Topic would embody such a vast and heterogeneous territory that the concept would be virtually useless for explaining the structure of individual messages/utterances/clauses and/or connected discourse.

4. SEMANTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THEME/TOPIC

According to semantic interpretations Topic (less frequently, Theme) expresses a relationship of 'aboutness': it indicates 'what the message is about'. This description echoes Grice's (1975) *maxim of relevance*: 'Make your contribution relevant in terms of the existing topic framework', that is, make your contribution fit closely to the most recent elements incorporated in discourse. However, this section will show that despite addressing the notion of 'aboutness' as criterial for topical/thematic status, many semantic approaches have ended up using positional or informational cues to identify the Theme/Topic of a message, a practice which, as shown, is the protocol of syntactic and informational analyses, respectively. Furthermore, it will be argued that 'aboutness' has been invoked in at least three non-coterminous readings, namely: (1) two *message-centred* interpretations, i.e. (a) *relational* and (b) *referential*, and (2) one *context-centred* interpretation, i.e. the *interactive*, or framework, interpretation, as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Trends in semantic interpretations of Theme/Topic

clause level of analysis		discourse level of analysis		
message centred interpretations				context-centred interpretation
relational interpretation		referential interpretation		interactive interpretation
		contextual	activated	
clause/utterance entity	proposition in a complex clause	discourse entity or proposition	discourse entity or proposition	propositional/problem framework saliency/relevance

The relational, or reciprocal, semantic interpretation conceives the informational structure of the clause as a bipartite construct entailing a relation of 'aboutness' between a Topic/Theme, or an entity (i.e. referent / participant / constituent / proposition) and a clausal predication, or Comment/Rheme (cf. Li and Thompson 1976: 463; Kieras 1981: 2; Reinhart 1982: 48; Lambrecht 1994: 127). From this perspective, Topic/Theme has been related to such *psycholinguistic* notions as *frames of reference*, *cognitive hooks*, *pegs*, *links*, *background information* and *perspective-taking* devices by, for example, Bühler (1934), Halliday (1967, 1994), Lutz (1981), Adamec (1981: 226), Kieras (1978), Fillmore (1968), Kuno (1976), Dik (1978), or Duranti and Ochs (1979).

Alternatively, the referential semantic interpretation describes Topic/Theme as the referent/participant/constituent/idea that establishes a relationship of 'aboutness' between individual clauses/utterances and the *overall discourse*:

- (1) either as determined by the co(n)text, in *contextual semantic interpretations*;
- (2) and/or as processed by the (decoder's/receiver's) mind, as proposed by *activated semantic* accounts;

(cf. Givón 1983b, 1984b, 1988, 1992; van Dijk 1973, 1977, 1984, 1988; Dressler 1972; Keenan and Schieffelin 1976; Kieras 1981; Beaugrande 1980). And lastly, for interactive semantic accounts, Topic/Theme expresses discourse saliency/relevance and therefore cannot be fixed beforehand, but must be negotiated as a problem frame in the process of conversing, or interacting (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986; Beaugrande and Dressler 1981; de Beaugrande 1992; Yule and Mathis 1992; Lötscher 1983, 1992).

As I see it, semantic accounts raise two debatable issues: (1) whether or not human judgement/statements are double, that is, whether or not they distinguish a Topic/Theme from a Comment/Rheme (either implicitly or explicitly); and (2) whether or not there exist systematic markers of 'aboutness'. The relational premise in (1) was challenged in the 19th century by Franz Brentano and Anton Marty, who ar-

gued for the existence of *thetic judgements*². (<thetikós 'positive', or *einfaches Urteil*, 'simple judgement'), as opposed to the double, or *categorical ones* (cf. Marty 1918; Paul 1909; Bally 1932) Thetic messages are characterised as single unstructured kind of judgements involving only the recognition or rejection of some judgement material independently of a recognised Subject, as in:

- (1) impersonal expressions (e.g. events, states, facts, etc. such as *It is raining*);
- (2) presentative constructions (e.g. *Byl jednou jeden král* 'Once upon a time there was a king', Mathesius 1961: 83);
- (3) any state of affairs presented as a compact whole representing nothing but new information (e.g. *A girl broke a vase*, *The sun is shining*).

The thetic-categorical distinction has been approached in linguistics from two different perspectives: the *logico-semantic* approach and the *informative-pragmatic* one. In the former view, the contrast represents two different points of view, or communicative perspectives, from which a given state of affairs can be shaped into a clausal predication: categorical clauses are logically complex, whereas thetic ones are logically simple and thereupon constitute a category of their own that cannot be captured with principles of information structure such as Theme/Topic-Rheme/Comment patterns (cf. Kuroda 1972, 1984, 1985; Dahl 1974, 1976; Sasse 1984, 1987; Ulrich 1985). On the other hand, the supporters of the informative-pragmatic approach share the premise that the contrast between the thetic and categorical judgements has to do with the activation and identifiability state of the Subject referent (cf. Mathesius 1929; Bolinger 1954; Firbas 1966; Halliday 1967; Chafe 1974; Schmerling 1976; Faber 1987; Kuno 1972; Horn 1989). Thus, Lambrecht (1987: 366; 1994: 137 ff.), for example, explains that thetic structures, his *sentence focus* (SF) constructions, introduce a referentially non-salient or non-individuated, and therefore non-topical (i.e. relatively inactivated or unidentifiable) NP or event into the universe of discourse, differing from categorical messages (his *predicate Focus* (PF) constructions) in the way the Subject NP is grammatically marked:

- (1) accented vs. non-accented Subject NP in English or German;
- (2) postverbal vs. preverbal Subject in Romance, Slavonic, German and Chinese;
- (3) clefted vs. detached NP in French, Welsh and Arabic;

² There is no established terminology concerning thetic structures. Among the labels applied to these statements stand: Bolinger's (1954) *presentational sentences*, Kuno's (1972) *neutral descriptions*, Schmerling's (1976) *news sentences*, Lambrecht's (1986) *event reporting sentences*, or Lambrecht's (1987, 1994) *sentence focus structures*.

- (4) special morphological marking, such as *ga*-marked vs. *wa*-marked NP in Japanese, or similar examples in Bantu.

However, Lambrecht emphasises that cognitivelythetic clauses may be either structurally coded as categorical, that is, endowed with a syntactic Topic/Theme-Comment/Rheme (Subject-Predicate) structure (i.e. clauses with pronominal or null Subjects, such as *Es regnet*, *Pluit*, or *It is raining*). Or they may not involve any grammatical Subject at all (e.g. *V zádech me bolí* vs. *Bolí me v zádech* in back-LOC me-ACC hurt-3 sg. 'My back HURTS' vs. 'MY BACK hurts'). This latter point connects directly with the second issue raised by semantic interpretations of Theme/Topic, that is to say, whether or not there exist systematic markers of 'aboutness'.

It is my impression that neither text linguists nor conversational analysts endorsing semantic interpretations of Theme/Topic as a discourse entity or proposition have yet provided an operational description of how to derive, represent, and relate the most important ideas in a text. To begin with, the postulated scales for entity Topic/Theme show three deficiencies:

- (1) they limit Theme/Topic to a particular syntactic/semantic function, fundamentally Subject/Agent;
- (2) they leave questions of referent resolution unaddressed since syntactic and semantic constraints on reference are ignored;
- (3) their validity is seriously flawed because the scales are:
 - (a) data dependent (they depict at best the coding of protagonists in narratives), and so skew expectations for other data types; and
 - (b) by and large based on quantitative analyses.

By the same token, propositional semantic interpretations do not offer a means of identifying '*the Theme/Topic*' of a piece of discourse, but propose an alternative method of producing a single sentence summary for the text, which can only to a certain extent be objective. This seems to be, as pointed out by Brown and Yule (1983: 110), 'a formula for determining, not *the Topic* of a discourse, but the *possible topics* of a discourse [my emphasis].'

Finally, it appears that most interactive approaches avoid, instead of providing answers to, the difficulties inherent in the notion of Theme/Topic. In the first place, they allow for so many types and treatments of Theme/Topic as to render this type of analysis both subjective and virtually useless in accounting for linguistic structure. For one thing, if Themes/Topics are viewed as problem frames to be treated in context-changing utterances, theoretically fewer restrictions have to be imposed on the possible candidates for Topics/Themes, to the point that, within a given proposition, any constituent (or the proposition itself) may appear as creating a frame of cogni-

tive/communicative discrepancies calling for treatment. For this reason, Schank (1977: 424) and Maynard (1980) explain that most discourse analysts, aware of the profusion of topical/thematic candidates, do not try to elicit Topics/Themes themselves, but find it more feasible to identify the formal markers of a Theme/Topic shift in discourse, such as:

- (1) *topic-shift markers* (cf. Duranti and Ochs 1979: 396 ff.; Maynard 1980: 266) or *continuatives* (cf. Halliday 1994: 53; Martin 1992: 164, 218),
- (2) *indentations* and *paragraphs*, the latter being either orthographic or semantic, that is, demarcated by the unity of participants and setting adverbials (cf. Hinds 1977: 83; Grimes 1975: 109; Longacre 1989: 116),
- (3) *genre-specific Topic shift markers* (e.g. changes of place and time in narratives, of the thread of argumentation, etc.) (cf. Grimes 1975: 102; van Oosten 1986),
- (4) in spoken discourse, *paratones*, or speech paragraphs, (cf. Brown 1977: 86), and *kinesics* (e.g. gaze, body movements, etc.) (cf. Kendon 1967).

Nevertheless, the problem remains that the enumerated Topic/Theme -shift markers represent optional tendencies only. In other words, the question needs to be addressed as to how the analyst can determine the occurrence of a shift in Topic/Theme systematically, as Theme/Topic shift markers may be absent from discourse, or they may not be used as expected.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the discussion presented so far it seems that a 'definition' of Topic/Theme that would cover all instances of the three aspects of the terms, syntactic, informational and semantic, is unobtainable. And, by the same token, it appears that none of the posited Topic markers in the so-called *Topic-prominent languages* (cf. Li and Thompson 1976), e.g. Japanese (-*wa*), Tagalog (-*ang*), Korean (-*nun*), etc., can be simply equated with any existing definition of Topic/Theme. As an illustration, behold (2) below (from Tsutsui (1981:164) and Kitagawa (1982:176)), where the Japanese suffix -*wa*, allegedly a Topic marker, is used to mark: contextually given information (2i), a constituent detached from the clause (2ii), and a focus of contrast (2iii), while Gundel (1988: 218) illustrates the existence of topical items lacking this particle in (2iv)³:

³ Schachter (1976, 1977) and Schachter and Otnes (1972: 81) raise similar points with respect to the -*ang* particle

- (2) (a) *Boku wa ima san-nen de senkoo wa keizai desu ga ...*
 I now junior am major economics is but ...
 'I am a junior now and my major is economics but ...'
- (b) *Taroo wa Hanako ga rede-si-ta.*
 Taro Hanako leave-home-do-past
 'As for Taro, Hanako ran away from home.'
- (c) *Tom wa ii kedo John wa dame da.*
 Tom good but John no good is
 'Tom is okay, but John is no good.'
- (d) *Hanashi ga hajimaru toki wa eeto mazu otona no hito*
 story subj start time top well first adult person
tachi ga ippai detekite... sono naka de hitor
 subj many appear that among one person
chuugokujin ga nanka no otokonoko ga... kare wa sosko e
 Chinese subj something boy subj he top there to
sono omise no toko e itte ... hajime wa tada miteiru ...
 that shop place to go first top only be looking
 'When the story starts [top], first a lot of adults appear... Among (them) one'

What solution is left then? In this paper I advocate the independent treatment of all linguistically relevant categories (at all levels) that have been factored out into the Topic/Theme equation, i.e. initial position, 'aboutness', and Givenness, which nonetheless may interact with each other (cf. Gómez-González 1994, 1996). Hence, *Theme* is here identified with the category pursued by syntactic approaches, that is, with *syntactic Theme*, or the starting point of the clause. This represents the source of the expressed event and is cognitively related to 'schemes of imagery', which imply semantic networks of the type 'source', 'goal', 'path', etc. (cf. Langacker 1987: 39 ff.; Lutzeier 1191). However, as noted in section 2 above, such syntactic analyses need to:

- (1) produce an operational criterion that identifies syntactic Themes;
- (2) demonstrate the discourse-functional relevance of clause initial (final) position, by embodying within the same paradigm the wide range of constructions that highlight thematic/topical position and by exploring such constructions in real texts, within and across languages;
- (3) determine whether the Theme-Rheme pattern is either a structural grammatical relationship or a non-structural principle of organisation of discourse.

On the other hand, *Topic* is regarded to entail a relationship of 'aboutness' with the rest of the message, as supported by semantic approaches. Nonetheless, in section

4, it has been shown that uncovering what is topical in a 'semantic' sense requires firstly a clarification of what type of 'aboutness' is at issue:

- (1) relational, established by an entity or a proposition with respect to a clausal predication;
- (2) referential, entailed by a referent with respect to the overall discourse;
- (3) interactive, evoking salient/relevant information in discourse.

In addition, relational semantic approaches need to demonstrate that individual messages/utterances/clauses are necessarily duplex, which demands the elicitation of Topic markers across/within languages. Similarly, in order to be more consistent, the scales for entity Topic postulated by the referential semantic interpretations need to substantiate with sufficient empirical evidence why the category of Topic should be limited to a particular syntactic/semantic function (e.g. Subject/Agent); whereas interactive interpretations must provide the means to objectively identify speakers' and/or discourse Themes/Topics.

Finally, though closely related to the other two, *Givenness* is here treated as a category of its own. For, I believe that Givenness is neither a sufficient nor the most elegant criterion to explain the phenomena of thematicity or topicality, because (1) it does not define the category of Topic or Theme independently of other categories, and (2) it restricts its explanatory power mainly to NPs. Furthermore, section 3 has demonstrated that Givenness evokes an elusive notion that can be approached from three different perspectives:

- (1) relational, as Given information in relation to what is presented as New in individual clauses/messages in isolation;
- (2) contextual, as information rendered as Given by the co(n)text, in terms of:
 - (a) recoverability (Giv_R), or information which is recoverable from the co(n)text;
 - (b) predictability (Giv_P), or information that is predictable from the co(n)text;
 - (c) shared knowledge (Giv_K), i.e. the knowledge shared by the interactants at the moment of the exchange;
 - (d) assumed familiarity (Giv_F), or a scalar notion of information which the speaker assumes her/his addressee can retrieve or infer from the co(n)text;
- (3) activated Givenness (Giv_S), referring to what interactants have in the mind.

Specifying the relevance conditions and the organisational structure of as well as the interactions amongst Theme, Topic and Givenness will keep us occupied for the next decade, at least, lest one deprives Theme of any functional relevance (cf. Huddleston 1988: 158, 1991: 97; Hudson 1986: 797, 798), or discards Givenness as an unprofitable category (cf. Reinhart 1982: 73; Lutz 1981: 25), or concludes that Topic represents an intuitive and therefore subjective concept (cf. Kintsch 1974: 124; Brown and Yule 1983: 73; Levinson 1983: x).

REFERENCES

- ADAMEC, P. (1981): "Theme-Rheme structure in polypropositional simple sentence in Present-day Russian", *Folia Linguistica* 15, 223-36.
- ALTMANN, H. (1981): *Formen der 'Herausstellung' im Deutschen: Rechtsversetzung, Linksversetzung, freies Thema und Verwandte Konstruktionen*, Tübingen. Niemeyer.
- ALLERTON, David J. (1978): "The notion of 'Givenness' and its relations to presupposition and to Theme", *Lingua* 44, 133-68.
- BERRY, Margaret. (1989): "Thematic options and success in writing", in C. S. Butler, R. A. Cardwell, and J. Channell (eds.), *Literature and Language: Theory and Practice*, Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 62-80.
- BOLINGER, Dwight L. (1954): "English prosodic stress and Spanish sentence order", *Hispania* 37, 152-6.
- BROWN, G. and YULE, G. (1983): *Discourse analysis*, Cambridge: University Press.
- BROWN, R. A. (1973): *A first language: The early stages*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- BÜHLER, Karl. (1934): *Sprachtheorie*, Jena: Gustav Fischer.
- CLARK, H. H. and HAVILAND, S. E. (1977): "Comprehension and the Given-New contract", in R. Freedle (ed.), *Discourse production and comprehension*, Hillsdale, N. J.: Erlbaum, 1-40.
- COPELAND, J. E. and DAVIS, P. W. (1983): "Discourse portmanteaus and the German Satzfeld", in F. B. Agaro *et al.* (eds.), *Essays in honor of Ch. F. Hockett*, Leiden: Brill, 4-45.
- CHAFE, W. L. (1974): "Language and consciousness", *Language* 50, 111-13.
- (1976): "Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, Subjects, Topics and point of view", in Ch. Li (ed.) 1976, 26-56.
- (1987): "Cognitive constraints on information flow", in R. S. Tomlin (ed.) *Coherence and grounding in discourse*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 21-51.

- DAHL, Ö. (1974): "Topic-Comment structure in a generative grammar with a semantic base", in F. Daneš (ed.), 75-80.
- (1976): "What is new information?", in N. E. Enkvist, and V. Kohonen (eds.), *Reports on text linguistics: approaches to word order*, Meddelanden från Stiftelsens för Åbo Akademi Forskningsinstitut no. 8. Åbo/Turku. 37-50.
- (1964): "A three level approach to syntax", *Travaux Linguistiques de Prague 1*, 225-40.
- DAVISON, A. (1984) "Syntactic markedness and the definition of sentence Topic", *Language* 60/4, 797-846.
- DE BEAUGRANDE, R. and DRESSLER, W. U. (1981): *Introduction to text linguistics*, London: Longman.
- (1980): *Text, discourse and process*, New Jersey: Ablex.
- (1992): "Topicality and emotion in the economy of discourse", *Linguistics* 30/1, 243-65.
- DIK, S. C. (1989): The theory of Functional Grammar. Part 1: The structure of the clause. *Functional grammar series* 9, Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- (1978): *Functional grammar*, Amsterdam: North Holland.
- DOWNING, A. (1991): "An alternative approach to Theme: A systemic-functional perspective", *Word* 40/2, 119-43.
- DRESSLER, W. U. (1972): *Einführung in die Textlinguistik*, Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- DURANTI, A. and Ochs, E. (1979): "Left dislocation in Italian conversation", in T. Givón (ed.), 337-416.
- ENKVIST, N. E. (1974): "Theme dynamics and style: An experiment", *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 5, 127-35.
- FABER, D. (1987): "The accentuation of intransitive sentences in English", *Journal of Linguistics* 23, 341-58.
- FILMORE, Ch. J. (1968): "The case for case". In E. Bach and R. J. Harms (eds.) *Universals in linguistic theory*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Wiston.
- FIRBAS, J. (1966): "Non-thematic Subjects in Contemporary English", *Travaux linguistiques de Prague 2*: 239-56.
- (1964): "On defining Theme in functional sentence analysis", *Travaux Linguistiques de Prague 1*: 267-80.
- FOLEY, W. A. and VAN VALIN, R. D. Jr. (1984): *Functional syntax and universal grammar*, Cambridge, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press.
- (1985): "Information packaging in the clause", in T. Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description, Vol 1: Clause structure*, Cambridge: University Press, 282-364.
- FRIES, P. H. (1983 [1981]): "On the status of Theme in English: Arguments from discourse", in J. S. Petöfi, and E. Sözer (eds.), *Micro and macro connexity of texts (Papiere zu Textlinguistik* 45, Hamburg: Buske Verlag., 116-52.

- FRIES, Peter H. (1987): "Towards a componential approach to text". Paper delivered at the International Congress of Applied Linguistics. August 17, 1987. Sydney, Australia.
- (1995): "A personal view of Theme", in M. Ghadessy (eds.), 1-19.
- FUCHS, A. (1980): "Accented Subjects in 'all-new' utterances", in G. Brettschneider and Chr. Lehmann (eds.), *Geburstag von Hansjakob Seiler Wege zur Universalienforschung: Sprachwissenschaftliche Beiträge zum 60*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 449-61.
- GIVÓN, T. (1992): "The grammar of referential coherence", *Linguistics* 30/1, 5-55.
- (1978): "Definiteness and referentiality", in J. H. Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of human language*, Stanford: University Press, 291-331.
- (1979) (ed.): *Syntax and semantics 12: Discourse and syntax*, New York: Academic Press.
- (1983a) (ed.): *Topic continuity in discourse: A quantitative cross-linguistic study. Typological studies in language* 3, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- (1983b): "Topic continuity in discourse: An introduction", in T. Givón (ed.), 5-41.
- (1984): "Direct Object and dative shifting: semantic and pragmatic case", in F. Plank (ed.), *Objects*, New York: Academic Press, 151-82.
- (1988): "The pragmatics of word order: predictability, importance and attention", in M. Hammond *et al.* (eds.), 243-84.
- GÓMEZ-GONZÁLEZ, María A. (1994): "The Relevance of Theme in the Textual Organisation of BBC News Reports", *Word* 45/3: 293-305.
- (1996): *A Corpus-Based Approach to Theme in Present-Day British English. Towards an Alternative Moderate Functionalist Interpretation*. Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation of the University of Santiago de Compostela.
- GRICE, H. P. (1975): "Logic and conversation", in P. Cole and J. L. Morgan (eds.), 41-58.
- GRIMES, J. E. (1975) (3rd ed): *The thread of discourse*. Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers.
- GÜLICH, E. and RAIBLE, W. (1977): *Linguistische Textmodelle*. München: Fink.
- GUNDEL, J. K. (1985): "Shared knowledge and topicality", *Journal of Pragmatics* 9/1: 3-107.
- (1988): "Universals of Topic-Comment structure", in M. Hammond *et al.* (eds.), 209-33.
- HALLIDAY, M. A. K. (1967): "Notes on transitivity and Theme in English, Part 2", *Journal of Linguistics* 3: 199-244.
- (1974): "The place of 'Functional Sentence Perspective' in the system of linguistic description", in F. Daneš (ed.), 43-53.
- (1994) (2nd. ed.): *An introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.

- HAMMOND, M., E. A. MORAVCSIK and J. R. WIRTH (1988) (eds.): *Studies in syntactic typology*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- HAVILAND, S. E. and H. H. CLARK (1974): "What's new? Acquiring new information as a process in comprehension", *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behaviour* 13, 512-21.
- HINDS, J. (1983): "Japanese", in T. Givón (ed.), 43-93.
- HORN, Lawrence R. (1989): *A natural history of negation*, The University of Chicago Press.
- HUDDLESTON, R. (1988): "Constituency, multi-functionality and grammaticalization in Halliday's Functional Grammar", *Journal of Linguistics* 24, 137-74.
- (1991): "Further remarks on Halliday's Functional Grammar: A reply to Mathiessen & Martin", *Occasional Papers in Systemic Linguistics* 5, 75-129.
- HUDSON, R. A. (1986), "Systemic Grammar [Review article]", *Linguistics* 24, 791-815.
- JACKENDOFF, R. S. (1972): *Semantic Interpretation in Generative Grammar*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- JORDAN, M. P. (1985), "Non-Thematic Re-Entry: An Introduction to and Extension of the System of Nominal Group Reference/Substitution in Everyday English Use", in J. D. Benson and N. S. Greaves (eds.), 322-32.
- KEENAN, E. O. and B. SCHIEFFELIN (1976): "Topic as a discourse notion", in C. N. Li (ed.), 335-84.
- KENDON, A. (1967): "Some functions of gaze-direction in social interaction", *Acta Psychologica* 26, 22-63.
- KIERAS, D. E. (1981), "The role of major referents and sentence Topics in the construction of passage macrostructure", *Discourse Processes* 4: 1-15.
- KINTSCH, W. (1974): *The representation of meaning in memory*, New York: Wiley.
- KITAGAWA, Ch. (1982): "Topic constructions in Japanese", *Lingua* 57, 175-214.
- KUNO, S. (1972): "Functional Sentence Perspective: A case study from Japanese and English", *Linguistic Inquiry* 3, 269-320.
- (1976): "Subject, Theme, and the speaker's empathy: A reexamination of relativization phenomena", in Ch. N. Li (ed.), 417-44.
- (1978), "Generative discourse analysis in America", in W. U. Dressler (ed.), 275-94.
- (1980): "Functional syntax", in A. Moravik, and J. R. Wirth (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 13: Current approaches to syntax*, New York: Academic Press, 117-35.
- KURODA, S.-Y. (1972): "The categorial and thetic judgement. Evidence from Japanese syntax", *Foundations of Language* 9: 153-85.
- (1984): "The categorial and the thetic judgment reconsidered". Paper presented at the *Colloquium on Anton Marty's 1988 Philosophy and Linguistic Theory*. Fribourg, Switzerland.

- KURODA, S.-Y. (1985): *Japanese grammar and judgement forms*, Ms. University of California. San Diego.
- LAMBRECHT, K. (1988): *When Subjects behave like Topics: A markedness analysis of sentence Focus constructions across languages*, Unpublished ms., Texas: University of Texas.
- (1994): *Information structure and sentence form*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (1978), "Observations on the development of the Topic in simplified discourse", in V. Kohonen and N. E. Enkvist (eds.), *Text linguistics, cognitive learning, and language teaching* 22, Åbo: Åbo Akademi.
- LEVINSON, S. C. (1983): *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: University Press.
- LI, Ch. N. and S. A. Thompson. (1981): *Mandarin Chinese. A functional reference grammar*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- LONGACRE, R. E. (1989): "Two hypothesis regarding text generation and analysis", *Discourse Processes* 12: 413-60.
- LÖTSCHER, A. (1985): "Syntaktische Bedingungen der Topikalisierung", *Deutsche Sprache* 12, 207-29.
- LOWE, I. (1987): "Sentence initial elements in English and their discourse function", *Occasional papers in Systemic Linguistics* 2, 5-34.
- LUTZ, L. (1981), *Zum Thema 'Thema'. Einführung in die Theme-Rheme-Theorie*, Hamburg: Hamburger Buchagentur.
- LUTZEIER, P. R. (1991). *Major Pillars of German Syntax. An Introduction to CRMS-Theory*, Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- LYONS, J. (1977): *Semantics*, Cambridge: University Press.
- MAGRETTA, W. R. (1977): *Topic-Comment structure in linguistic theory: A functional approach*. Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Michigan. Univ. Microf. Internat.
- MARTIN, J. R. (1992): *English text: System and structure*, Philadelphia/Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- MARTY, A. (1918), *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. II, part I, Abteilung, Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- MATHESIUS, V. (1939): "O Tak Zvaném Aktuálním clenění Větném" [On the So-called Functional Sentence Perspective], *Slovo a Slovesnost* 5, 171-4.
- (1961): *Obsahový Rozbor Současně Angličtiny na Základě Obečnej Lingvistiky*, Praha [Edited by J. Vachek; quoting from the English translation by Libuse Dušková (1975), *A Functional Analysis of Present Day English on a General Linguistic Basis*, Mouton: The Hague].
- MAYNARD, D. W. (1980): "Placement of Topic Changes in Conversation", *Semiotica* 30/3: 263-90.
- PASCH, R. (1982): "Kommunikative Dynamik. Zwei Arten der Aktuellen Gliederung von Sätzen", *Linguistische Studien* 99, 164-9.
- PAUL, H. (1975 [1880]): *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, Tübingen: Niemeyer.

- PRINCE, E. F. (1981): "Toward a taxonomy of Given-New Information", in P. Cole (ed.) 1981, 223-55.
- REINHART, T. (1982): "Pragmatics and linguistics: An analysis of sentence Topics", *Philosophica* 27/1: 53-94.
- SASSE, H.-J. (1987): "The pragmatics of noun incorporation in Eastern Cushitic languages", In P. Plank (ed.), *Objects: Toward a theory of grammatical relations*, New York: Academic Press.
- (1987): "The thematic/categorical distinction revisited", *Linguistics* 25/3: 511-80.
- SCHACHTER, P. (1976): "The Subject in Phillipine languages: Topic, Actor-Topic, or None of the Above?", in Ch. Li (ed.), 491-518.
- (1977): "Reference-related and role-related properties of Subjects", In P. Cole (ed.), 279-306.
- SCHACHTER, P. and F. E. OTANES. (1972), *Tagalog reference grammar*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- SCHANK, R. C. (1977): "Basic rules and Topics in conversation", *Cognitive Science* 1: 21-42.
- SCHMERLING, S. F. (1976): *Aspects of English sentence stress*, Austin: University of Texas Press.
- SPERBER, D. and D. WILSON. (1986): *Relevance*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- TSUTSUI, M. (1981): "Topic marker ellipsis in Japanese", *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 11/1: 163-79.
- ULRICH, M. (1985): *Thetisch und Kategorisch*, Tübingen: Narr Verlag.
- VAN OOSTEN, J. (1986): *The nature of Subjects, Topics and Agents: A cognitive explanation*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- VASCONCELLOS, M. (1992): "The Theme as message onset: its structure and characteristics", *Linguistics* 30/1, 147-63.
- YULE, G. and T. MATHIS (1992): "The role of staging and constructed dialogue in establishing speaker's Topic", *Linguistics* 30/1: 199-215.