AN ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS OF MULTIPLE THEMES IN PRESENT-DAY ENGLISH: ARGUMENTS FROM DISCOURSE

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This paper is devoted to exploring the formal features and discourse functions of *Multiple Themes* in Present-day English (PresE), i.e., clause initial ideational elements co-occurring with initial items realising a textual and/or an interpersonal function. This involves first suggesting an alternative interpretation of the category of Multiple Theme, and secondly, explaining the results reported by the application of three statistical tests to the tokens of Multiple Themes found in the *Lancaster Spoken English Corpus*, namely: the *Logistic Regression Technique*, the *Fisher's Exact Test* and the χ^2 *Test*. The findings unfold a list of textual patterns derived from the co-occurrence of Topical and/or Interpersonal and/or Logico-Conjunctive Themes, whereby the discourse motivations behind such patterns can be elicited. It is argued that the unmarked display of Multiple Theme in PresE abides by Dik's (1989, 342) *Principle of Centripetal Organisation*, which can be explicated according to the *layering hypotheses* posited in Functional Grammar and Role and Reference Grammar. [*]

1 INTRODUCTION: AN ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATION OF HALLIDAY'S MUTIPLE THEME

According to Halliday (1994, 55, 56) speakers choose a *Multiple Theme* when they place one or several *textual* and/or *interpersonal* items *before* a simple *Topical Theme*, i.e. the first *transitivity* constituent in the clause, namely a *participant*, an *attribute*, a *circumstance* or a *process*, as illustrated in Figure 1 below:

FIGURE 1. THE THEMATIC STRUCTURE OF A MULTIPLE THEME

well	but	then	Ann	surely	wouldn't	the best idea	be to join the group
continuative	structural	conjunctive	vocative	modal	finite	topical	
textual			interpersonal				
Theme							Rheme

Halliday observes that, on not fulfilling a representational, or transitivity function, the elements preceding a Topical Theme do not exhaust the thematic potential of a clause but do contribute something to its point of departure. Thus, as expounded in Table 1 below, Halliday (ibid., 48 ff.) and Martin (1992, 218 ff.) argue that *continuatives, structural* Themes and *conjunctive* Themes fulfil a textual function. All of them are said to refer to the preceding (or following) text and/or to the context of situation, punctuating an exchange or staging discourse turns (e.g. *Oh, well, now, all right, okay,* Halliday and Hasan 1976, 267-71). On the other hand, *Vocatives, Mood* and *Comment Adjuncts, Finites* and *WH-*interrogative elements are described as fulfilling an interpersonal function: they are used to exchange roles in rhetorical interactions with addressee(s) (statements, questions, offers, etc.) and to express the speaker's own angle on the matter, that is, accompanying degrees of *modalization* (i.e. probability and usually) or *modulation* (i.e. inclination and obligation) (cf. Lautamatti 1978; Young 1980; Berry 1989, 1995; Vasconcellos 1992; Martin 1995, 255 fn. 5).

For my part, I propose an analysis of the category of Multiple Theme that is alternative to Halliday's in four respects. First, while according to this scholar Multiple Themes occur only when one or several textual and/or interpersonal items occur *before* a Topical Theme, I broaden this category so as to embody also those cases in which a Topical element is *followed* by an Interpersonal and/or a Textual one, as in (1) below:

(1)   I ⌐*here for e/xample* I is the \then °President of the U_nited /States _ /Richard /Nixon I in an A⌐ddress to the /Nation I in No\vember °19°7ˇ3 I ⌐launching the /programme I /known I as _Project Inde\pendence I (SECCPT01: 265)

TABLE 1. COMPONENTS OF HALLIDAYAN MULTIPLE THEME

metafunction	component of Theme		Examples
textual	Continuative		*yes, no, well, oh, now*

	Structural
	    conjunction
	       co-ordinator
	       subordinator
	    WH-relative
	       definite
	       indefinite
			and, or, nor, neither, but, yet, so, then
			when, because, though, if, even if, given that
			
			which, who, that, whose, when, where, why, how
			whatever, whichever, whoever, whosoever, whenever

	Conjunctive Adjunct
	elaborating
	    appositive 'i.e. e.g.'
	    corrective 'rather'
	    dismissive 'in any case'
	    summative 'in short'
	    verifactive 'actually'
	extending
	    additive 'and'
	    adversative 'but'
	    variative 'instead'
	enhancing
	    temporal 'then'
	    comparative 'likewise'
	    causal 'so'
	    conditional '(if) ... then'
	    concessive 'yet'
	    respective 'as to that'
			that is, in other words, for instance
			or rather, at least, to be precise
			in any case, anyway, leaving that aside
			briefly, to sum up, in conclusion
			actually, in fact, as a matter of fact
			
			also, moreover, in addition, besides
			on the other hand, however, conversely
			instead, alternatively
			
			meanwhile, before that, later on, next, soon, finally
			likewise, in the same way
			therefore, for this reason, as a result, with this in mind
			in that case, under the circumstances
			nevertheless, despite that
			in this respect, as far as that's concerned

interpersonal	Vocative		*Oh, soldier, soldier, won't you marry me*

	Modal Adjunct
	Mood
	    probability 'how likely?'
	                              'how obvious?'
	    usually 'how often?'
	                              'how typical?'
	    opinion 'I think'
	Comment
	    admissive 'I admit'
	    assertive 'I assure you'
	    presumptive 'how presumptive
	    desiderative 'how desirable?'
	    tentative 'how constant?'
	    validative 'how valid?'
	    evaluative 'how sensible?'
	    predictive 'how expected?'
			probably, possibly, certainly
			perhaps, maybe, of course, surely, obviously
			usually, sometimes, always, never
			for the most part, seldom, often
			in my opinion, from my point of view, personally
			
			frankly, to be honest, to tell you the truth
			honestly, really, believe me, seriously
			evidently, apparently, no doubt, presumably
			(un)fortunately, to my delight, luckily
			initially, tentatively, looking back on it
			broadly speaking, in general terms, on the whole
			wisely, understandably, foolishly, by mistake
			to my surprise, as expected, amazingly

	Finite		*Oh, soldier, soldier, won't you marry me*
	WH-interrogative		*who killed Cock Robin?*
experiential	topical (Subj., Compl., circumst. Adj.)		*who killed Cock Robin?*

My assumption is that post topical interpersonal and/or textual elements may be regarded as metafunctional boundaries that separate off the Theme from the Rheme in a predication. Further evidence for this lies in the fact that this separation is often reinforced suprasegmentally by means of one or more of the following three devices:

(i) Tone sequence, i.e., two or more instances of the same tone marking paratactic or hypotactic elaboration, as in (2):

(2)   and he ⌐knew that \now\-*this* ⟍*moment*\ *when his* ⌐*nose had* °*only just* °*stopped* *ble-eding* \ *when his* ⌐*head was still* ⌐*sore and* *hrobbing* \ *his* \ was the ⌐moment when he would ⟍try \ (SECGPT01: 208-21) (Tone 1 sequence);

(ii) Tone concord, i.e., 1-1, 3-1 and 4-1, which are assumed to be unmarked realizations of Themes involving a relationship of cohesion, parataxis and hypotaxis respectively, as in (3):

(3)   ah that's \totally unlike Su\dan \ because °obviously Su\ᵛdan is \°by and large a ᵛMuslim country \ and of course ᵛthere you \ don't have ᵛvery many °holidays \ *but*\ *the month of* ᵛ*Ramadan* \ *when people are* ⌐*fasting* \ *from* *sunrise to sun*⌐*set* \ *every* °*day* \ *then* *very little work* \does get done \ (SECJPT06: 299-301) (4-1 Tone concord: hypotaxis)

(iii) a tone group boundary, as in (4):

(4)   \ ⟍*what for e*°*xample* \ is he ⌐doing to en°sure that \his grip on ⟍power \ is ᵛstrong e°nough \ to _make the °necessary ⟍changes \ (SECAPT11: 031)

The examples in (2), (3) above illustrate my second claim, namely: the fact that not only Topical, but also Textual and Interpersonal, Themes may be either simple or complex (i.e., involving different kinds of logico-semantic and tactic relationships), as also exemplified in (5) below:

(5)   \ *em* \ *and al*°*though I* have °ample ↑\time to get through the °work \ \want to get through \ have a\nother problem \ in that \ the °students just cannot ↑\concentrate for twenty °weeks \ _nor can the \teachers \ (SECJPT06: 261) (Complex Logico-Conjunctive Theme involving paratactic expansion)

Third, I describe Topical Themes as clause initial items fulfilling an *experiential/transitivity* function, rather than an *ideational* one, as often suggested by Halliday. The reason is that the ideational metafunction comprises both experiential and logico-conjunctive items, when only the former qualify for topical status. And fourth, I suggest the label *Textual Theme* be replaced by that of *Logico-Conjunctivel Theme* on the assumption that (i) the latter is a more appropriate term to designate an initial item fulfilling a logico-conjunctive and/or a conjunctive function (although logico-conjunctive and conjunctive elements may also occur within the Rheme), and (ii) all classes of Theme are textual in nature.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1 The data: the SEC corpus

The *Lancaster Spoken English Corpus* (hereafter LSEC) is a machine-readable corpus of natural spoken British English, compiled at the University of Lancaster in 1984. It com-

prises 49,285 words broken down into ten textual categories of spoken PresBE, as expounded in Table 2[2] below:

TABLE 2. LSEC CORPUS (49,285 WORDS)

TEXT	CATEGORY	DATE[3]	LENGTH min: sec.	# SPEAKER S	# WORDS	% WORDS
A01-A12	Commentary	11-24-84 06-22-85	64: 30	12	9,066	18,4
B01-B04	News Broadcasts	11-24-84 01-14-86	29: 12	15	5,235	10,6
C01	Lecture Type I general audience	11-20-85	30: 00	1	4,471	9,1
D01-D03	Lecture Type II Open University Audience	–	57: 00	3	7,451	15,1
E01-E02	Religious Broadcast	11-26-85 11-27-85	11: 18	2	1,503	3,1
F01-F04	Magazine style reporting	11-24-84 12- -86	25: 30	14	4,710	9,6
G01-G05	Fiction	06-25-85 01-28-87 01-26-86	46: 25	5	7,299	14,8
H01-H05	Poetry	11-26-86	9: 00	5	1,292	2,6
J01-J06	Dialogue	- -82 12- -86 03-11-87	37: 28	9	6,826	13,8
K01-K02	Propaganda	01-18-87 01-25-87	8: 41	2	1,432	2,9

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[2]   LSEC contains one more category, namely Miscellaneous ((M) 3352 words). This was discarded from this analysis because it did not refer to a specific text type, but comprised nine heterogeneous samples (viz. John Betjeman, Motoring News, two Weather Forecasts, two Programme News, Oratory, Travel Roundup), which in my view are already represented in the other ten types.

[3]   Unfortunately, some SEC texts have an incomplete date reference or no date at all.

LSEC has been chosen as the corpus for this investigation for two reasons. One is its relatively small size as compared to other tagged machine-readable corpora, which makes it suitable for a manual (clause by clause) analysis of Multiple Themes across different textual categories. The other reason is that, comprising spoken texts, LSEC provides the means to observe how segmental and suprasegmental factors work together to achieve the desired communicative effects. It should be noted, however, that despite the theoretical benefits of corpus-based approaches (e.g., total accountability, eclecticism, samples of natural written and/or spoken natural material representing a whole range of usage, objectivity, etc.), the present study has encountered three limitations. The first one is that the figures for Multiple Themes in some LSEC categories are often too small to be statistically representative. For this reason categories (C) and (D) (i.e., Lecture Types I and II) have been subsumed under the cover-term Lecture, and all the texts have been occasionally grouped in two, i.e. Fiction (viz., Poetry and Fiction) and non-Fiction (viz., Commentary, News Broadcast, Lecture, Religion, Magazine, Dialogue and Propaganda). The second shortcoming of LSEC lies in the fact that its compilers do not contemplate more detailed *tenor relationships* (i.e. socially meaningful participant relationships) than that contrasting formal and informal interactions between active, well-defined speakers and passive, undefined audience (see Table 3 below). At most Taylor and Knowles (1988, 5 ff.) explain in the manual of information accompanying LSEC that: (i) 'the style of the main newsreaders is more formal than that of the reporters', (ii) fiction texts are 'aimed at an adult audience', (iii) dialogues are 'of varying degrees of informality', (iv) speakers have an (RP) pronunciation and (v) they are mostly males (70%), especially in News and Commentary. The third and last weakness involves the mode of the corpus. LSEC does not offer a wide range of varieties of spoken English, but is restricted to the spoken language used on the radio to report information. As a result, the language of most broadcasts is not spontaneous, but planned and formal. Thus, in order to obtain more delicate information about mode in LSEC, this variable has been further typified according to Martin's (1984b, c) two kinds of physical distance: *addressee-proximity* and *content-proximity*, as illustrated in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3. REGISTERS IN LSEC

TEXT	FIELD	TENOR	MODE				
			mode of presentation: spoken language	channel radio	genre	rhetorical purpose	
A	Commentary commentaries	informal	reconstruction	-feedback +aural -visual	narrative (report)	to inform	
B	News news reports	formal	reconstruction	=	narrative (report)	to inform	
C	Lecture I lecture on economics	formal	construction	=	expositive	to teach	
D	Lecture II university lectures	formal	construction	=	expositive	to teach	
E	Religion religious services	formal	construction	=	instructive	to exhort	
F	Magazine financial reports	formal	construction	=	narrative (report)	to inform	
G	Fiction stories	informal	reconstruction	=	narrative (fiction)	to entertain	
H	Poetry poems	formal	reconstruction	=	narrative (poetry)	to entertain	
J	Dialogue dialogues	informal	language in action	= + feedback	argumentative	to discuss	
K	Propaganda charity appeals	formal	language in action	=	persuasive	to exhort	

Addressee-proximity comprises three variables: ±aural, ±visual and ±feedback, i.e. the presence/absence of addressee's response. In its turn, content-proximity concerns the values of: (i) *language in action*, i.e. language used as a means to interact in or act upon reality (as in Charity Appeals, etc.); (ii) *reconstruction*, i.e. language employed to monitor reality (as in e.g., reports or commentaries) or recreate it (e.g., in Poetry, Fiction stories); and (iii) *construction*, i.e. language that creates a 'new', usually highly specialised, reality (e.g., in Lectures on economics, etc.).

2.2 Statistical methods

In order to explore the statistical relevance as well as the formal and functional features of Multiple Themes in real (LSEC) texts (which has been done manually clause by

clause), a data-base has been devised containing twenty-seven variables that have been considered to affect the selection of this class of Themes. The variables are listed in (7) below. Pauses and tone group boundaries have also been taken into account since they have been regarded as significant formal features of Multiple Themes.

(7) *Data Base structure for Multiple Themes in PresBE*

1 Field No. 1: TEXT

1.1.1. A01-A12 Commentary

1.1.2 B01-B04 News Broadcasts

1.1.3 C01 Lecture Type I (general audience)

1.1.4 D01-D03 Lecture Type II (restricted audience)

1.1.5 E01-E02 Religious Broadcast

1.1.6 F01-F04 Magazine-style reporting

1.1.7 G01-G05 Fiction

1.1.8 H01-H05 Poetry

1.1.9 J01-J06 Dialogue

1.1.10 K01-K02 Propaganda

2 Field No. 2: MAJOR CLAUSE

Token

3 Field No. 3: TYPE OF MAJOR CLAUSE

3.1 simple

3.2 complex

3.3 paratactic (different types of expansion and projection)

3.4 hypotactic

3.5 rankshifted

3.6 dependent

4 Field No. 4: ELLIPSIS

4.1 no ellipsis

4.2 anaphoric ellipsis

4.2.1 cataphoric ellipsis

4.2.2 exophoric ellipsis

5 Field No 5: VERBLESS

5.1 without verb

5.2 elliptic verb

6 Field No. 6: MOOD

6.1 declarative

6.2 exclamative

6.3 interrogative

6.4 imperative

7. Field No. 7: PROCESS

7.1 verbless

7.2 behavioural

7.3 existential

7.4 material

7.5 mental

7.6 relational

7.7 verbal

8 Field No. 8: FINITE

8.1 finite

8.2 non finite

9 Field No. 9: VOICE

9.1 active

9.2 passive

10 Field No. 10: POLARITY

10.1 affirmative

10.2 negative

11 Field No. 11: THEME

Token

12 Field No. 12: CLASS OF THEME

12.1 Topical simple

12.2 Topical complex (tactic system)

12.3 Multiple simple

12.4 Multiple complex (tactic system)

13 Field No. 13: STRUCTURE OF TOPICAL THEME

13.1 nominal group

13.1.1 common noun

13.1.2 proper noun

13.1.3 pronoun

13.1.3.1 personal

13.1.3.1.1 first person

13.1.3.1.2 second person

13.1.3.1.3 third person

13.1.3.2 indefinite pronoun

13.1.3.3 demonstrative pronoun

13.1.3.4 numeral pronoun

13.1.3.5 relative pronoun

13.2 adjective group

13.3 adverbial group

13.4 prepositional phrase

14 Field No. 14: BETA TOPICAL THEME

14.1 temporal clause

16.12.2 comitation

16.13 role Adjunct

16.14 matter Adjunct

16.15 angle Adjunct

17 Field No. 17: SPECIAL TOPICAL THEME

17.1 *It*-cleft

17.2 *WH*-cleft

17.3 Right dislocation

17.4 Left dislocation

17.5 *There*-Existential constructions

17.6 *It*-Extraposed constructions

17. 7 Inversion

18 Field No. 18: MARKED TOPICAL THEME

18.1 unmarked

18.2 fronting

19 Field No. 20: POSITION TOPICAL THEME

20.1 initial

20.2 medial

20.3 final

21 Field No. 21:

EXTERNAL TOPICAL THEME

21.1 internal

21.2 external

22 Field No. 22: INTERPERSONAL THEME

Token

23 Field No. 23: TYPE INTERPERSONAL THEME

23.1 modal Adjunct

23.1.1 probability

23.1. 2 frequency

23.1.3 opinion

23.1.4 admissive

23.1.5 assertive

23.1.6 presumptive

23.1.7 desiderative

23.1.8 tentative

23.1.9 validative

23.1.10 evaluative

23.1.11 predictive

23.2 vocative

23.3 Interrogative pronoun

23.4 Finite
24. Field No. 24:
POSITION INTERPERSONAL THEME
24.1 Initial
24.2 Medial
24.3 Final
25 Field No. 21:
LOGICO-CONJUNCT.
Token
26. Field No. 26:
TYPE LOGICO-CONJUNCT.
26.1 Conjunctive Adjunct
26.1.1. appositive
26.1.2. corrective
26.1.3. dismissive
26.1.4. summative
26.1.5. verifactive
26.1.6. additive
26.1.7. adversative
26.1.8. variative
26.1.9. temporal
26.1.10. comparative
26.1.11. causal
26.1.12. conditional
26.1.13. concessive
26.1.14. respective
26.2 continuative
26.3 structural
27 Field No. 27:
POSITION OF LOGICO-CONJUNCT. THEME
27.1 initial
27.2 medial
27.3 final

The analysis of the variables above has been implemented by means of the statistical computer package *SPSS* (licence University of Santiago de Compostela (henceforth USC)), running the following three statistical tests: (i) the '*Chi Square*' *association test* (χ^2), (ii) the *Fisher's Exact test*, and (iii) the *Stepwise Logistic Regression procedure*. These methods are all appropriate to exploit the kind of data I have, that is to say, raw frequencies of *categorical*, or *nominal*, variables, which involve a process of classification of different tokens into categories based upon some definite characteristics that allocate them

to one and only one cell. As the details of the development of the three tests are somewhat complicated (see Agresti 1990) and, in any case, the resulting arithmetic may be performed by software packages such as SPSS, I will only offer a cursory explanation of what each test does, giving three examples from LSEC.

Both the χ^2 and the Fisher's Exact test assess the *association*, or meaningful relationship, between two categorical variables into what is usually referred to as a *contingency table*. The convention is that an association is statistically significant when the *significance level p < 0.05* (5%) and *non-significant* (n.s.) when $p \geq 0.05$ (5%), where *p* stands for the 'probability of error' of predicting that two (or more) categorical variables are *not* associated when in fact they *are* associated. Tables 4 and 5 below illustrate the type of results obtained by the χ^2 and the Fisher's Exact tests, respectively: the former is applied when the sample size is large, and the latter when it is small and can be displayed in 2 x 2 tables (i.e. tables having only two columns and two rows).

TABLE 4. INCIDENCE OF NON-MULTIPLE VS. MULTIPLE THEMES IN LSEC TEXT TYPES

SEC text types	non-Multiple Themes	Multiple Themes	Row Total
Commentary	374 15,6	262 15,8	636 15,7
News reports	287 12,0	107 6,4	394 9,7
Lecture	439 18,3	286 17,2	725 17,9
Religion	63 2,6	55 3,3	118 2,9
Magazine	147 6,1	154 9,3	301 7,4
Fiction	650 27,1	282 17,0	932 23,0
Poetry	48 2,0	39 2,3	87 2,1
Dialogue	327 13,6	412 24,8	739 18,2
Propaganda	63 2,6	63 3,8	126 3,1
Column Total	2398 59,1	1660 40,9	4058 100,0

Chi-Square Test	Significance	
Pearson	,0000	
Likelihood Ratio	,0000	
Linear-by-Linear Association	,0000	
Minimum Expected Frequency -		35,589
Number of Missing Observations:		39

The results of the Chi-Square test in Table 4 above report a significant association (p < 0.05) between LSEC text type and the choice of Multiple vs. non-Multiple Themes. Or put another way, they conclude that the type of text affects the choice of a Multiple vs. that of a Topical Theme. Alternatively, Table 5, a 2 x 2 table, contains the results of the Fisher's Exact test, which detects a significant association (p < 0.05) between the choice of a Multiple Theme over that of a non-Multiple Theme and the fictional nature of LSEC texts.

TABLE 5. INCIDENCE OF (FICTION IN THE CHOICE OF (MULTIPLE THEME

LSECT TEXT	NON-MULTIPLE THEME	MULTIPLE THEME	Row Total
fiction	698	321	1019
	29,1	19,3	25,1
non-fiction	1700	1339	3039
	70,9	80,7	74,9

Column Total	2398	1660	40,58
	59,1	40,9	100,0
Fisher's Exact Test Significance	,00000		
Missing Observations	39		

In its turn, the third statistical test mentioned above, namely the Stepwise Logistic Regression procedure, is used to detect variables that may affect a binary outcome variable, i.e. one involving a 'yes'/'no' response. This is made by estimating the *odds*, or higher probability of occurrence, of the *yes*-response over the *no*-response. In addition, as it involves a logistic regression procedure, this method distinguishes the subset of explanatory variables that affect the *'yes'/'no'* response from those having no effect on it. And, as a stepwise operation, it selects the explanatory variables 'step by step', that is, in decreasing degree of potential influence over the response variable. For example, I was interested in determining which variables (and in which degree of influence) affect the choice of a Multiple Theme. This, therefore, represents the *yes*-response, while the *no*-response implies the selection of a Topical, or non-Multiple, Theme. As illustrated in Table 6 below, the Stepwise Logistic Regression technique reported the following five variables as significant for the choice of a Multiple Theme in LSEC (in decreasing potential of influence): (i) Position of Topical Theme, (ii) Position of Logico-Conjunctive Theme, (iii) Position of Interpersonal Theme, (iv) LSEC text type, and (v) Beta Theme (i.e. thematic dependent clause). By contrast, the regression analysis discarded the following variables as comparatively non-significant for the selection of a Multiple Theme: (i) special Topical Theme, (ii) Marked Topical Theme, (iii) Structure of Topical Theme, (iv) External realisation of Topical Theme, (v) Transitivity function of Topical Theme, (vi) Syntactic function of Topical Theme, (vii) Type of clause, (viii) Type of process, (ix) Voice, (x) Polarity, (xi) Mood, (xii) Ellipsis of Topical Theme, (xiii) Type of Interpersonal Theme, (xiv) type of Logico-Conjunctive Theme. My explanations of the results of these three statistical tests are offered in turn.

Table 6. Choice of Multiple Themes (yes-response) over non-Multiple Themes (no-response) and related variables

VARIABLES	WALD STATISTIC	DEGREE OF FREEDOM	SIGNIFICANCE
Position of Topical Theme	369,9322	2	,0000
Position of Logico-Conjunctive Theme	267,1264	3	,0000
Position of Interpersonal Theme	84,7763	3	,0000
Type of Text	39,0980	9	,0000
Beta Theme	11,6904	5	,0393

3. Formal structure and frequency of Multiple Themes in LSEC

In LSEC Multiple Themes represent the *marked* option with respect to non-Multiple ones: 40.9% vs. 59.1%. Most Multiple Themes, 86.7%, involve the presence of a Logico-Conjunctive Theme, while only 13.7% result from the appearance of a thematic Interpersonal element. Within Logico-Conjunctive Themes, Structural items are the most frequent (77%), followed by Conjunctive Adjuncts (13.5%) and Continuatives (9.4%). In their turn, Modal Adjuncts are distinguished as the most frequent type of Interpersonal Themes (45.6%), as opposed to more scarce realisations of: interrogative/exclamative pronouns (22.3%), Finites (20.6%), and Vocatives (11.5%).

Table 7 below further corroborates the results of Table 6 above, that is to say, that the choice of a Multiple Theme implies a significant association of five variables (in decreasing order of effect): (i) position of Topical Theme, (ii) position of Logico-Conjunctive Theme, (iii) position of Interpersonal Theme, (iv) type of LSEC text and (v) the presence of a Beta Theme. Table 7 demonstrates that, considering only the values of the five significant variables selected by the regression analysis, 94.49% of cases of Multiple Themes are rightly predicted to be Multiple, while only 5.5% would be incorrectly regarded as non-Multiple. By the same token, 91.58% instances of non-Multiple Themes are correctly analysed as non-Multiple, whereas just 8.42% would be wrongly analysed as Multiple.

Table 7. Classification Table for choice of Multiple Themes (yes-response) over non-Multiple Themes (no-response)

OBSERVED VARIABLES	PREDICTED NON-MULTIPLE THEME	PREDICTED MULTIPLE THEME	PERCENT CORRECT
non-multiple theme	2247	131	94.49%
multiple theme	134	1458	91.58%
		Overall	93.32%

In the light of the consistency of these results, Multiple Themes are here characterised firstly in relation to the five variables that, according to the logistic regression technique, are responsible for their choice, namely: (i) position of Topical Theme, (ii) position of Logico-Conjunctive Theme, (iii) position of Interpersonal Theme, (iv) LSEC text type and (v) presence of Beta Theme. It seems that the first three variables,i.e. (i) position of Topical Theme, (ii) position of Logico-Conjunctive and (iii) position of Interpersonal Theme, have been selected as significant because in order to have a Multiple Theme there exists the precondition that a Topical Theme (variable (i) and therefore the most important one) has to co-occur with a Logico-Conjunctive and/or a Interpersonal Theme (variables (ii) and (iii)). Likewise, it is my impression that Logico-Conjunctive Themes have been reported as statistically 'more signicant' than Interpersonal ones because the former are more numerous in LSEC than the latter. However, the fact that it is the *position* of the three classes of Theme that has been selected as most significant for the choice of a Multiple Theme is, in my view, a relevant finding. As I see it, it supports the hypothesis that Multiple Themes display Dik's (1989, 342) *centripetal organisation*: unmarked hierarchical relations between y (Logico-Conjunctive Themes) and x (Interpersonal Themes) with respect to H (Topical Themes, or Head of Multiple Theme), as illustrated in (8) below:

(8)

$$2 \qquad 1 \qquad H \qquad 1 \qquad 2$$

(Logico-Conjunctive)^(Interpersonal)^Topical^(Interpersonal)^(Logico-Conjunctive)
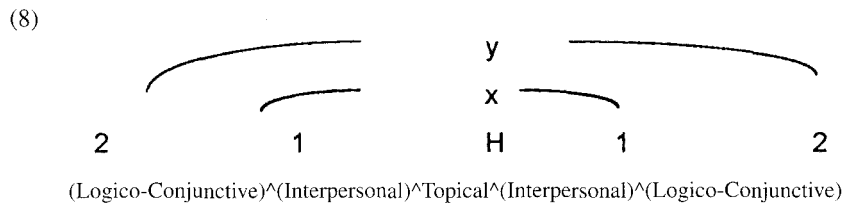
(8) represents y and x as arranged in relation to their scope of influence, suggesting that x tends to occupy position 1 and y position 2 because the former is in the scope of the latter. This organisation is described as 'centripetal' on the assumption that both y and x pivot on H, which represents the pivotal, or obligatory, element of the construct, lying within the scope of the other two elements. Topical Themes (H) are thought to be the pivots of Multiple Themes because:

(i)   they tend to appear in medial position, i.e. either before or after a Logico-Conjunctive and/or an Interpersonal Theme, which indicates that Topical Themes attract the other two classes of Themes towards themselves;

(ii)   Interpersonal Themes (x) tend to occupy position 1, which implies their outer scope with respect to Topical Themes and their inner scope in relation to Logico-Conjunctive ones;

(iii)   most Logico-Conjunctive Themes (y) occur in position 2, which suggests the outer scope of this class as compared to both Interpersonal and Topical Themes.

This claim is based on my corpus-based findings. I have observed that Logico-Conjunctive Themes in LSEC have the highest ratio of position 1 realisations (96.2%), while the Topical element of Multiple Themes displays the lowest of the three classes (10.1%), but a very high rate of second places, i.e. after a Logico-Conjunctive or an Interpersonal Theme (84.7%), and a minority of third slot realisations, i.e. after both a Logico-Conjunctive and an Interpersonal Theme (5.2%). In their turn, although they also have a high ratio of initial realisations (56.7%), Interpersonal Themes are second more rarely than Topical Themes, but more frequently so than Logico-Conjunctive Themes (36.5%), and they come third, i.e. after a Logico-Conjunctive and a Topical Theme, in more cases than the

other two classes (6.4%). As a result of these positional tendencies, Multiple Themes in LSEC show an unmarked centripetal display, where Logico-Conjunctive Themes appear either in either pretopical or postopical position 2, depending on whether they precede or follow the Topical Theme; whereas, with the same provisos, Interpersonal Themes occupy either pre- or post-topical position 1. As witness to this, consider the six unmarked patterns of Multiple Themes listed in (9) and (10) below, which amount to 94.9%, as opposed to the only type of marked organisation exemplified in (11), which represents 5.1%:

(9) Unmarked patterns: Logico-Conjunctive and/or Interpersonal Themes preceding Topical ones (66.6%):

1. **Logico-Conjunctive^Topical**, as in:

(i) | *for ex_ample* | Ɣ had ⌐two Japanese ᵇcooks ∧ whom I ᵃused to ᵃteach |
(SECDPT03: 223)

(ii) |*after* ᵇall| ᵃwho needs tele^{V}vision ᵃdrama |⌐when you can _see the ᵃreal ᵇthing |(SECAPT03: 062)

2. **Interpersonal^Topical**, as in:

(i) |^V*Father*|⌐*help* us to ᵥwalk | in your ↓_son's _footsteps | re⌐membering |⌐his _self-for_getting | huᵥmility | his ᵇlove for ᵃall ᵥpeople | his comᵇpassion for the ᵥfallen | his for↓ᵇbearance with the misᵥtaken | and his ↓ᵇpatience with the ᵥslow | and his for⌐giveness | of ⌐all ᵇthose | who ᵇhurt him |(SECEPT01: 059)

(ii) | ᵃ*heavenly Father*| *whose* ᵇ*will is* ᵇ*good and _perfect* | *we* beᵢieve and _trust | that ⌐ you _will |⌐only what is for the ⌐true _happiness | of ⌐your ᵥpeople | (SECEPT01: 060-62)

(iii) |*of* ᵥ*course* | ᵃ*why* ᵃ*God should have* ᵃ*chosen to cre*^{V}*ate such an im*ᵃ*perfect* ᵃ*world* | was a ᵇmystery ᵇ(SECDPT02: 154)

3. **Logico-Conjunctive^Interpersonal^Topical**, as in:

(i) |*because of course* ᵇ*ravelling in the Su*ᵇ*dan* is extremely ᵇdifficult | for ⌐one thing |there are no ⌐roads | and for a_nother the | public ᵇtransport system is ᵃvery very | ᵃpoor | (SECPTJ06: 304)

(ii) |*and of* ⌐*course this* ᵥmeant that there was | no ᵨlcohol | (SECJPT06: 377-9)

(10) Unmarked patterns: Logico-Conjunctive and/or Interpersonal Themes following Topical ones (28.3%):

4. **Topical^Logico-Conjunctive**, as in:

(i) | ᵨ*what for e*ᵃ*xample* | is he ⌐doing to enᵃsure that ᵇhis grip on ᵥpower | is ^{V}strong eᵃnough | to _make the ᵃnecessary ᵥchanges |(SECAPT11: 031)

(ii) |*-here for e*ᵨ*ample* | is the ᵇthen ᵃPresident of the U_nited ᵨStates |ᶠRichard ᵨNixon | in an A⌐ddress to the ᵨNation | in Noᵇvember ᵃ19ᵃ7^{V}3 |⌐launching the ᵨprogramme | ᵨknown | as _Project Indeᵇpendence | (SECCPT01: 265)

5. **Topical^Interpersonal**, as in:

(i) | ↑ᵇ*his of* ᵃ*course* was ᵇnot because the ᵇgovernment ᵇfailed in its suᵃpposed ᵇduty as pro^{V}vider | ↑but ᵨargely | because _energy prices rose con^{V}siderably | in reᵨation to ᵇother prices | (SECAPT01: 199)

6. Logico-Conjunctive^Topical^Interpersonal, as in:

(i) | ↑ *and in* ⁻*Maradona* | *without* ˅*doubt* | they ˤhad the ˅star of the ∧ °compeˤtition ∧|
(SECJPT01: 065)

(11) Marked pattern: Interpersonal^Logico-Conjunctive^Topical (5.1%), as in:

(i) | *more* ˅*typically* *how°ever* | *it's* ⁻*not* ₋*governments* | *but* ˤ*business* ˅*enterprises* ∧
which °ship the ˤimports | (SECCPT01: 473)

Multiple Themes consisting only of a Topical element that also acts as an Interpersonal or as a Logico-Conjunctive Theme (viz., interrogative, exclamative or relative pronouns) have not been considered in the analysis above. Two examples of these are included in (12) below:

(12)   (i) | ˅Doster shot his ˅mother | forty-˅four year °old | ˅Carol ˤDoster | *who* _worked as a ˅secretary | and _then ˤturned the _gun on himself | (SECBPT02: 013-014) (Logico-Conjunctive/Topical Theme)

(ii) |→*who* can for°get being ˤbowled out for ˤfifty-ˈthree by Pakiˈstan | I mean it's ˈjust been quite an incredible ˈyear | [change of speaker: Chris Florence] (SECFPT04: 083) (Topical/Interpersonal Theme)

In sum, the above patterns prove, I think, that Multiple Themes have the centripetal organisation (Logico-onjunctive) ^ (Interpersonal) ^ Topical ^ (Interpersonal) ^ (Logico-Conjunctive). Furthermore, I have detected the tendency that if Logico-Conjunctive and/or Interpersonal Themes occur before the Topical element, they do not re-appear after it, and vice versa, that if they follow this item, they are not found before it. By the same token, instances of complex Multiple Themes, though scarce, confirm my intuition that they are usually linked segmentally, by means of logico-semantic tactic relationship, and/or suprasegmentally, by tone sequence, tone concord or by a tone group boundary. Some examples are included in (13) below:

(13)   (i) | *yet* ⁻*she for her ₋reasure* will en⁻dure | and ᵥtremble | and ⁻so find ₋peace | that ˈpasseth our underˈstanding | (SECHPT04: 033) (Complex Topical Themes)

(ii) | *em* | *and al*ˤ*though I* have °ample ↑ˈtime to get through the °work I ˈwant to get through I have aˈnother problem | in that ∖ the °students just cannot ↑ˈconcentrate for twenty °weeks | _nor can the ˈteachers | (SECJPT06: 261) (Complex Logico-Conjunctive Theme)

Turning now the fourth significant association, i.e. the one existing between the choice of a Multiple Theme and the register of the LSEC texts, Figure 2 and the results reported by the Fisher's Exact Test and the (² Test in Tables 8, 9, and 10 below demonstrate that Multiple Themes are prone to occur in non-fictional and/or in constructive texts, that is to say, in Lecture, Religious Broadcasts and Magazine, and also in active texts, namely Dialogues and Propaganda. By contrast, non-Multiple Themes are more likely to appear in fictional and/or reconstructive texts, that is to say, in Fiction stories, Commentaries, News reports and Poetry.

TABLE 8. INCIDENCE OF ± FICTION IN THE CHOICE OF ± MULTIPLE THEME

LSECT TEXT	NON-MULTIPLE THEME	MULTIPLE THEME	Row Total
fiction	698 29,1	321 19,3	1019 25,1
non-fiction	1700 70,9	1339 80,7	3039 74,9
Column Total	2398 59,1	1660 40,9	40,58 100,0

Fisher's Exact Test Significance ,00000
Missing Observations 39

TABLE 9. INCIDENCE OF TEXT'S RHETORICAL PURPOSE IN THE CHOICE OF MULTIPLE THEME

LSECT TEXT	NON-MULTIPLE THEME	MULTIPLE THEME	Row Total
reconstruction	1359 56,7	690 41,6	2049 50,5
construction	649 27,1	495 29,8	1144 28,2
language in action	390 16,3	475 28,6	865 21,3

χ^2 Test significance: ,00000   4058
Missing Observations: 39   100,0

FIGURE 2. OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF NON-MULTIPLE (TOPICAL) VS. MULTIPLE THEMES IN LSEC
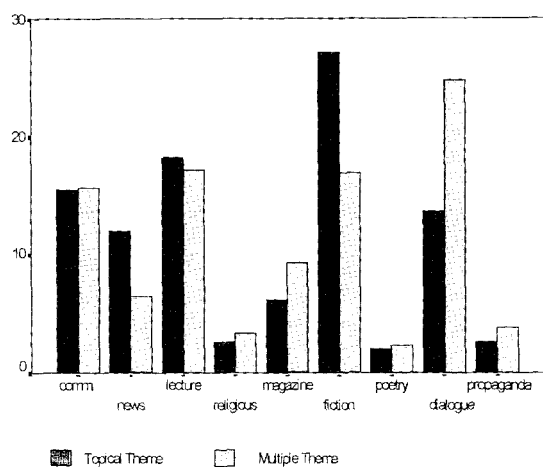
TABLE 10. INCIDENCE OF MULTIPLE THEMES IN LSEC TEXTS

LSEC TEXT	NON-MULTIPLE THEME	MULTIPLE THEME	χ^2 Row Total
Commentaries	374 15,6	262 15,8	636 15,7
News	287 12,0	107 6,4	394 9,7
Lecture	439 18,3	286 17,2	725 17,9
Religious Broadcasts	63 2,6	55 3,3	118 2,9
Magazine	147 6,1	154 9,3	301 7,4
Fiction	650 27,1	282 17,0	932 23,0
Poetry	48 2,0	39 2,3	87 2,1
Dialogue	327 13,6	412 24,8	739 18,2
Propaganda	63 2,6	63 3,8	126 3,1
Column Total	2398 59,1	1660 40,9	4058 100,0

χ^2 Test significance: ,00000
Missing Observations: 39

The fourth and last significant association reported by the logistic regression test is the one established between Multiple Themes and Beta Themes, i.e, initial dependent clause in a hypotactic clause complex. Table 11 below shows that, speaking in absolute terms, Multiple Themes tend to lack Beta Topical Themes, mainly because of the tendency of reported Locutions/Ideas to appear in non-Multiple Themes. Curiously enough, however, the percentage of the remaining types of Beta Themes (especially of conditional Circumstances) is relatively higher in Multiple than in non-Multiple Themes.

TABLE 1. INCIDENCE OF BETA THEMES IN THE CHOICE OF MULTIPLE THEMES

LSEC TEXT	NON-MULTIPLE THEME	MULTIPLE THEME	Row Total
Spatial/Temporal Circumstance	44 24,9	24 27,6	68 25,8
Manner Circumstance	17 9,6	11 12,6	28 10,6
Cause Circumstance	8 4,5	6 6,9	14 5,3
Medium (projections)	74 41,8	5 5,7	79 29,9
Conditional Circumstance	34 19,2	41 47,1	264 100,0
Column Total	177 87 76,0 33,0		264 100,0

χ^2 Test significance: ,00000
Missing Observations: 3833

In addition, by running the χ^2 Test I have detected the following four secondary significant associations: (i) structure and transitivity/semantic function of Topical Theme; (ii) type of clause; (iii) Mood of the clause; and (iv) type of process. Considering (i), both Multiple and non-Multiple Themes, especially the former, tend to have simple, rather than complex, Topical Themes: 93.6% vs. 6.4% in Multiple Themes and 88.2% vs. 11.8% in non-Multiple ones. Likewise, both classes tend to involve pronominal topical realisations, but these are even more common in Multiple Themes (54.3% vs. 48%). The same occurs with adverbial realisations (1.7% vs. 1.3%), and with rankshifted clausal Themes (1.5% vs. 1.2%). However, non-Multiple Topical Themes display more instances of the remaining realisations, namely: common nouns (30.8% vs. 28.9%), PPs (7.3% vs. 5%), proper nouns (6.6% vs. 6.3%), verbal groups (4.2% vs. 2.1%), particles and adjective phrases (0.3% vs. 0.1%), and Beta Themes. Similarly, non-Multiple Themes have a higher proportion of Agents, Mediums and Circumstances, with this order of frequency in both: 77.1% vs. 76%, 11.2% vs. 10.8%, and 10.1% vs. 7.5, respectively. In their turn, Multiple Themes involve more instances of Processes (5.7% vs. 1.6%). Syntactically, Subjects, Adjuncts and Complements have a slightly higher tendency to occur by themselves than to be accompanied by textual and/or interpersonal thematic elements. But in both non-Multiple and Multiple Themes these syntactic roles are first, second and third in terms of frequency, respectively (84.2% vs. 83%, 10.1% vs. 7.8%, and 4% vs. 3.4%). Finites/Predicators, in turn, are more often found in Multiple Themes (5.8% vs. 1.6%).

Studying now how the type of clause can affect the choice of a Multiple Theme, I have observed that the latter predominate over non-Multiple ones in dependent clauses (26.6% vs. 10.5%) and in paratactically related clauses (26.8% vs. 12.6%), while the opposite is the case in simple, in hypotactically complex and in rankshifted clauses (43% vs. 21.8%, 23.7% vs. 18.1%, 10.3% vs. 6.6%, respectively). Regarding the choice of Mood, my findings show that Non-Multiple Themes have a preference for declaratives (93.7% vs. 87.3%), whereas in questions Multiple Themes are more frequent (9.3% vs. 2.5%). The

latter class is also more frequent with material processes (41.1% vs. 38.2%), while verbal processes favour non-Multiple Themes (12.1% vs. 7.7%).

4. DISCOURSE FUNCTION

In section 3 I have suggested that the typical display of Multiple Themes, (Logico-Conjunctive)^(Interpersonal)^Topical^(Interpersonal)^(Logico-Conjunctive), obeys a centripetal organisation. This, in turn, is now said to substantiate the *layering hypothesis*, postulated in FG and RRG to explicate the different positional tendencies within the clause of elements with different metafunctions (cf. Hengeveld 1989; Van Valin 1993). This hypothesis, it should be stressed, argues for a *scopal* metafunctional organisation, as suggested in FG, rather than for a *parallel* one, as hypothesised in SFG.

Halliday (1967, 214) does accept the existence of thematic scopes, but his discussion is centred on the difference in scope between Themes spoken on a separate intonation unit and those embodied in the same information unit as the Rheme. The domain of the former is said to extend over the next information unit, whereas the scope of influence of the latter is restricted to the information unit in which they themselves occur (cf. Chafe 1976; Magretta 1977; Backlund 1989; Thompson 1985; Lowe 1987; Fries 1987, 1983; Downing 1991). Likewise, in (1994, 84) Halliday seems to be hinting at a scopal metafunctional organisation when admitting that elements fulfilling a specific metafunction may fall outside the patterns of organisation imposed by that particular metafunction, in the same way that items not fulfilling a specific metafunction may be inside or outside the structural patterns that metafunction imposes (e.g. comment and conjunctive Adjuncts fall outside the Mood-Residue, although they are interpersonal and textual in function, respectively). However, despite the recognition of scopal contructs, in the current version of SFG metafunctional organisation remains a parallel one, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2. MULTILAYERED CLAUSE STRUCTURE IN SFG [FROM HALLIDAY 1994, 385]
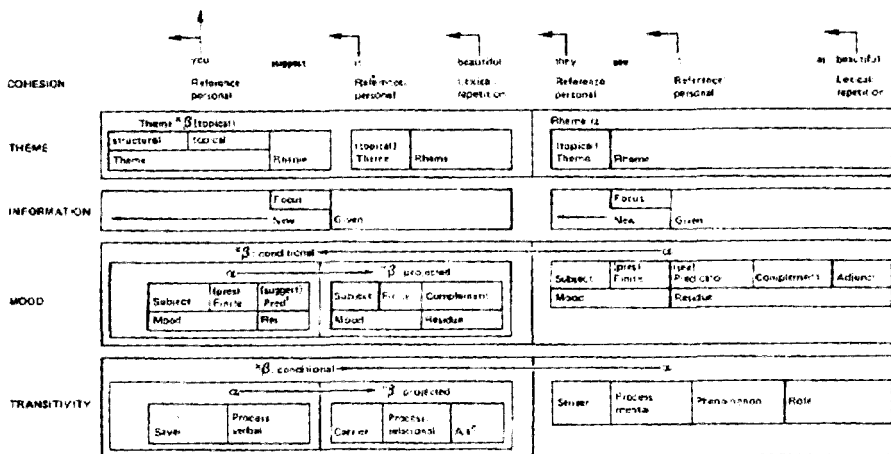
Indeed, systemicists describe linguistic structures as multilayered structural composi-
tions consisting of complex functional roles resulting from choices from the logico-expe-
riential, interpersonal and textual grammatical components. These grammatical choices
are viewed as simultaneously mapped onto each other by a process of instantiation, with
lexico-grammar acting as a non-arbitrary integrative system. The point at issue is that, ac-
cording to Halliday (1968, 207; 1979, 61), options from different systems are parallel, or
'comparatively independent', while the advocates of both RRG and FG, and others such
as Butler (1985, 77-93), Berry (1982, 75-6) and myself (see Gómez-González 1994,
1996a, b, c), for example, question the validity of this assertion.

Halliday (1979, 61; 1995, 169) hypothesises a correlation between the experiential, lo-
gical, interpersonal and textual metafunctions, on the one hand, and the part-whole (*cons-
tituency*), part-part (*dependency*), whole-whole (*prosodic*) and a-structural (*wave-like*) ty-
pes of syntagmatic relations, on the other. But if it is admitted that different metafunctions
have different patterns of realisation, then, with regard to Theme, it follows that Topical,
Interpersonal and Logico-Conjunctive Themes should also be seen as imposing different
patterns and/or as varying with respect to their scope of influence. In this connection, as
illustrated in (14) below, I here claim that the arrangement of Multiple Themes reveals the
existence of downward scopal and centripetal layering relations among classes of Themes
with respect to their Nucleus, or obligatory element, i.e. the Topical Theme, which tends
to be preceded or followed by Logico-Conjunctive and/or Interpersonal Themes, the for-
mer typically anteceding the latter.
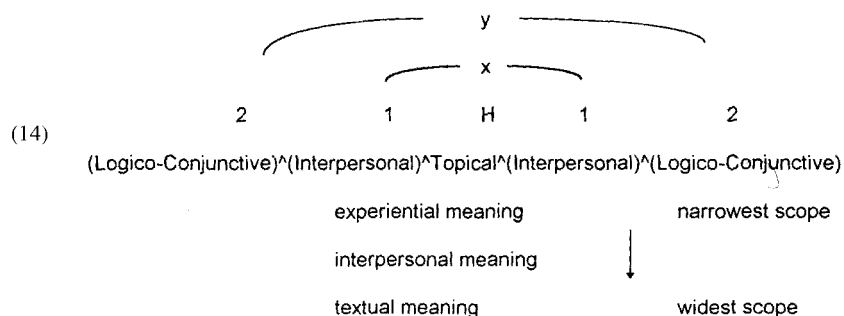
Thus, it could be said that Topical Themes tend to occur in medial position becau-
se their experiential meaning is both affected by and affects the Mood of the message
and the logico-conjunctive development of discourse, the functions fulfilled by inter-
personal and logico-conjunctive elements, respectively. Accordingly, Topical Themes
attract the other two classes of Themes towards themselves, lying within the scope of
both of them. Interpersonal Themes, in turn, occupy position 1, a layer external to that
of Topical Themes, because they exclusively affect the illocutionary force of the pro-
position or of the proposal, but not its logico-conjunctive development. This function
is accomplished by Logico-Conjunctive Themes, which tend to occur in either preto-
pical or postopical position 2, a layer external to those of Interpersonal and Topical
Themes, as a result of their widest scope. The scope of Logico-Conjunctive Themes
can be said to extend over the other two classes because it establishes different types
of logico-semantic and tactic relationships between the message they introduce, with
its experiential and interpersonal component, and the preceding and subsequent
co(n)text.

5. CONCLUSION

I conclude that Multiple Themes in LSEC are mainly obtained by the presence of lo-gico-conjunctive elements, such as Structural Themes, linking hypotactic or paratactic clause complexes, or Continuatives, punctuating an exchange or staging discourse turns. Less frequent are those Multiple Themes triggered by interpersonal elements, mainly Modal Adjuncts, with which speakers express their point of view, or *wh-* words and Finites/Processes, which are required by exclamatives and interrogatives. The frequency of these types of Multiple Themes explicate their distribution across LSEC texts. Multiple Themes are more likely to occur in either constructive texts, which often require the help of logico-conjunctive signposts to develop their specialised contents, or in active texts, where speakers can freely express their points of view and have to gain or maintain the discorse floor. Besides, both constructive and dialogic texts tend to concern the type of process preferred by Multiple Themes, i.e. material processes, which for their informative and objective nature readily accept logico-conjunctive connectors and interpersonal hedging. By contrast, non-Multiple Themes tend to appear in reconstructive texts, which, mainly devoted to just monitoring reality through verbal processes, disfavour interpersonal reverberations and keep logico-conjunctive complexity to a minimum. In sum, it seems that in Multiple Themes topical, interpersonal and logico-conjunctive elements compete for the thematic floor. As a result, topical information per se is less of an issue and therefore is often weakened into pronominal or auxiliary verbal realisations. These are embedded within textual and/or interpersonal flavours in order to ensure the continuity of the thread of discourse and foreground the speaker's perspective on it.

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