On the Clauses in a Scenario of Flaminio Scala

In a very inspiring contribution to the study of the commedia dell’arte, Tim Fitzpatrick (TF) (1989) bases his propositions on the assumption that Flaminio Scala’s scenarios should be viewed as strongly related to the scenic, or theatrical, performance:

1) Scala’s scenarios manifest what might be termed schematic pragmatism, a constant strategy which, I suggest, was directly related to performance (…) this pragmatism manifests itself primarily through techniques of segmentation of the scenario, or, more precisely, of the performance to which the scenario relates (…) the segmentation I am referring to is not necessarily and directly a segmentation of the published text (though at some levels this is so); I am suggesting rather that there are textual indications from which we can infer segmentation of the performance (178).

Thus, TF’s analysis aims at revealing “the force of the scenario’s own function as notation of, and hence determining element in, the performance-process” (178).

Despite the strong accent on this particular relation between the text and the performance, I think that TF’s propositions remain extremely fruitful also in a slightly different perspective, i.e. without taking into account this relation: the scenarios of Flaminio Scala could also be considered simply as a text which one can read without thinking directly or explicitly of a possible performance (but still to be read in a specific way different from the way one reads a novel or a poem; this point, however, should be the topic of another discussion, cf. Jansen [1984]), and therefore be subject to a reading— and understanding— process submitted, at least to some extent, to certain regularities characteristic of this sort of text.

This text-understanding process, with specific regard to Flaminio Scala’s texts, constitutes the main problem in the work from which this note arises. In this work, some of TF’s basic propositions have proved very useful, but nevertheless they need to be discussed in more detail, in order to give a precise and explicit description of the relations between, on the one hand, the elements enabling us to talk about understanding a given text and, on the other hand, the elements that we can identify and point out in the same text.

TF distinguishes between two sorts of segmentation of the “Text / Performance”: the diachronic and the synchronic. In this note, I will concentrate on the former, i.e. the “manner in which the various elements of the performance (here: the text) succeed each other in time from one moment (i.e. in
the understanding process) to the next" (178), and only occasionally discuss the latter ("the manner in which the various elements of the performance are combined at any one moment," ibid).

The diachronic segmentation proposed by TF develops in two stages.

The first stage consists in identifying the scene-units which are "small, manageable units each involving only a small number of characters" (178). TF shows that it is necessary to go beyond the evident typographical distinctions of the scenarios and take into account the numerous entrances and exits of the characters as markers of the basic scene-units. (TF considers this a purely functional subdivision depending on the performance, and in this sense distinct from a division based on thematic or plot units (178); in my opinion, this scene-unit, which I would rather call the 'dramatic unit,' is just as much a textual unit characteristic of the dramatic text (as opposed to other types of text, such as narrative, lyric etc.); cf. Jansen 1988.

The second step involves a further subdivision of this scene-unit in what TF calls sub-units:

2) I have posited a scene-unit marked by entrances and exits as the basic organisational unit of plot and dramatic action; but these scene-units are composed of even smaller segments or sub-units, each of which answers the question "Who does/says what, to whom, next?" and so can be distinguished as constituted by a single act or speech-act combined with a change in deictic orientation. (182).

The examples in which TF demonstrates the use of this principle, or technique, are very convincing, as I see them, in two ways: as a description of some of Scala's scenarios, which really enhances our comprehension of, or insight into these texts, and as an outline for a formalized description of the dramatic text, a text-type of which these scenarios can, in my opinion, be considered examples.

According to TF this formal, or formalized, character of the scenario constitutes a specific feature of these texts (cf., among others, 185); by way of conclusion, he can, therefore, insist on the difference between the Scala collection of scenarios and the later European dramatic literature (Molière, Goldoni) and "posit the scenario as the most direct and simple notation of what are essentially performance-units" (185), and further affirm that "while such performance-units seem easily deducible from this particular form of notation, the same cannot be said in regard to the full playtext" (ibid.).

To some extent, this last observation is undoubtedly correct, but nevertheless it is not as easy as TF seems to think, to deduce from, or to identify in the scenario we are reading, the "system" (or structure) of scene-units and sub-units which are the basic elements of the scenario, or at least of our understanding of it.

In other words, the crucial problem here is the relationship between the text or, more precisely, its "linguistic form" and the "text universe," which is what constitutes the text as a text (and not only as a sequence of more or
less related clauses). If one wants to make a serious attempt at a precise, explicit, and operative, that is a formalized description of the text, the text-universe, and the relationship between them (and I think that this is also, at least partially, the scope of the project mentioned by TF), one way would be to try to work out, or at least to imagine, a computer-program, which takes as input one of Scala’s scenarios, and, as output, gives a description which to an average reader would seem to be an acceptable, and perhaps convincing, representation of the dramatic text-universe presented by this scenario.

It should be emphasized that in this context the programming task does not represent an interest in itself; I only consider it a useful instrument which could make clear whether a given proposition about how a certain scenario (or more probably: some aspects of it) is “constructed,” given as a formal(ized) description, really does “work” or not.

Returning to the most important proposition made by TF, that of the basic sub-unit, it must first of all be pointed out that we have to make a clear distinction between the sub-unit as a unit in (the representation of) the text-universe and the sub-unit as a unit of the text.

Only then can we formulate the first question: how should a sub-unit of the text-universe look, in a formalized way, in order to be an acceptable representation of what we are “seeing” when we read the text? And, what is perhaps more important, only when we have an answer, possibly partial, to this question, can we move on to an analysis of the text, trying to identify the textual sub-units, because the textual sub-unit exists, and exists only, as a manifestation of a sub-unit in the text-universe.

In fact, this is exactly what TF does (in an implicit way), when he bases the definition, or identification, of the sub-unit on the question “Who does/says what, to whom, next?”

The assumption underlying this question is that the sub-unit involves an action (does/says), two persons (who, whom) and a sort of object (what) for the action; in a more formalized manner this could be written as a formula in first-order predicate logic:

\[
\text{action} (P_1, P_2, \text{Obj});
\]

In the examples given by TF, Scala’s text is in fact “translated,” or rewritten, into a sequence of such propositions, as, for example, the beginning of *La fortunata Isabella* (TF uses the English translation of the scenario; but that is not of any importance here; I quote from Marotti’s edition):

3) PANTALONE (ORAZIO) (FLAVIO) intende dahlì due fratelli come Graziano, lor padre essendo vecchio, vive innamorato di Franceschina, e che non piglia partito d’accompagnarli e dar loro moglie come si conviene. Pantalone cerca placarli, provando loro come amore stia meglio in un vecchio che in un giovane. Flavio si lascia intendere a Orazio, sapendo esser suo rivale, che il padre l’ha mantenuto allo stu-
die perché s’addottori, e non perché prenda moglie. Finalmente pregano Pantalone, come amico del padre, a distorlo da quella folle impresa, e partono. Pantalone rimane, dicendo essere innamorato ancor lui di Franceschina;

1) The characters enter;
2) The young men beg Pantalone’s help;
3) Pantalone tries to pacify them;
4) Flavio reminds Orazio of his personal priorities;
5) They both repeat their appeal to Pantalone;
6) The young men exit;
7) Pantalone confesses that he too loves Franceschina;

Even if, at first, this seems to be an acceptable representation of the understanding produced, or the information received, during the reading process of the text, it quickly raises some difficult questions such as: what is the relationship between the second and the fourth propositions? and between the second, the third and the seventh propositions? and, on another level, how has the first clause of the text been “translated,” or formalized, into the second proposition?

In fact, the examples given by TF, though convincing as a first step, involve a great deal of intuition and implicit pre-understanding. This becomes very clear when one tries to turn the “translation”-, or rewriting-process into a computer program.

I will try to illustrate these problems in more detail with another example from the Scala collection (in order to avoid the risk of being “misled” by TF’s convincing examples).

This example is the beginning of Le burle d’Isabella (Day 4); (in the first instance I will leave out the very beginning, i.e. the argument, the list of the characters and so on, though important in the reading process, because I think this part is read in a different way from the “proper” dramatic text, i.e. the part of the text which presents the text-universe to the reader, that is which begins right after the indication “atto primo”).

The text, I have chosen, goes as follows:

4) CAP. SPAVENTO
(FLAVIO)
narra a Flavio, suo amico, l’amor d’Isabella, vedova sorella d’Orazio, suo amico, pregandola che voglia con Orazio parlare a favor suo, in fargliela aver per moglie. Flavio promette di farlo, e poi gli scopre essere innamorato anch’egli, e d’averli scritto una lettera; in quello

FLAMINIA
alla finestra, dice al Capitano suo fratello che vada in casa, essendo venute lettere di suo, avend’ella un libro in mano; poi si ritira. Flavio dice al Capitano che sua sorella debbe attendere a studiare. Capitano: che ella non fa mai altro che
On the Clauses in a Scenario of Flaminio Scala

179

leggere cose di cavalleria et amoreose. Flavio prega il Capitano a correggere la sua lettera amorosa, per mandarla all’innamorata sua. Capitano la piglia, dicendo che sua sorella sarà più di lui a proposito, et entra, ricordandogli il suo negozio con Orazio. Flavio si rallegra della buona fortuna che corre la lettera sua, e via.

PANTALONE (PEDROLINO)

racconta a Pedrolino come vive innamorato d’Isabella, e come la vorrebbe per moglie; dapoi li racconta come, dopo l’avuta la verginità di Franceschina, sua serva, la maritò in Burattino, con dote di cinquecento scudi, e d’averli fatta una promessione rogata: al primo maschio che ella farà, li dona (in vita sua di lui) mille ducati. Pedrolino loda quell’opera di carità e, promettendo d’aiutarlo nel suo amore, vanno per strada.

The very first clause of the text already conveys a great deal of information about the text-universe to the reader, and demonstrates the insufficiency of the proposition in the simple form given above; one could say that it creates in the mind of the reader, an “image” of two persons (Spavento/Capitano, Flavio), about whom the reader learns that they are friends (“Flavio, suo amico”), that the first loves (“l’amor di”) a (young?) woman, whose brother is a friend of the second (“Orazio suo amico”) and that he wants to marry her; to succeed in this purpose he needs the latter’s help. In terms of sub-units (speech-acts or acts), the reader would probably indentify two: inform (“narra”) and demand (“pregandola”), because the second does not seem to be subordinated to the first (as are “parlare” and “fargliela avere” to the second). The information about the (young) woman (“vedova, sorella d’Orazio”) has already been given in the initial part of the text, i.e. in the list of the characters. The second clause manifests two sub-units, promise (“promette”) and inform (“scopre”); the persons involved are the same, but they have changed roles (from agent to patient, and vice versa); the object of the first of these speech-acts, i.e. in the third sub-unit of the text, (the promise) is to do what has been asked for in the second sub-unit; the object of the second speech-act is two-fold: that the other person (Flavio) is also in love with someone and that he has written a letter (it isn’t clear at this moment for whom it is intended: the beloved person or Spavento).

The next sub-unit introduces a third person (Flaminia) who is Spavento’s sister (and this is already known from the list of the characters), and she demands (or orders) (“dice”) him to come into the house; besides, the clause gives what is probably her justification of the ordering (“essendo venute lettere di suo”), and a more detailed description of her (“avend’ella un libro in mano”).

The fourth clause only states the exit of this person (Flaminia).

This sort of analysis, or rewriting, could continue, but it is already evident that a sufficient representation of the text-universe needs a much more complex formalization technique than the one TF seems to envisage (in, it is true, a slightly different project).
Hence, it seems necessary to envisage several different, yet interconnected, (semantic) networks to handle the information about the text-universe conveyed by the text: one for the sequence of sub-units, or better the speech-acts or acts, and another which permits to establish the links between these (speech-)acts; on the other hand, there must be one or more networks in which the different relationships between the characters, apart from those directly resulting from the (speech-)acts, can be registered in a systematic way; these relationships can be expressed explicitly by the text (such as the friendship between Spavento and Flavio mentioned above, or as the belonging to different ‘case,’ and the ensuing family relations, fixed in the list of the characters) or they can be part of an implicit (world-)knowledge (including knowledge about the specific type or genre of text), which exists prior to the text, or to the reading process; in the commedia dell’arte such knowledge would regard for instance the distinction between various roles such as the serious (Flavio, Flaminia) versus the comic characters (Pantalone).

How should these networks be organized? Without going into a more detailed study here (in any case there will surely be a need for further and important developments), some basic aspects could be outlined.

In the first instance, one could envisage a rather simplified set of relational frames to handle the relations between the characters and the distinctive features of each of them. One part of these frames should be “fixed”: to the character named Pantalone should always be attached the feature ‘comic’; this part could, for instance, be modelled according to the well known scheme proposed among others by Tessari (1984:82). Another part should be “open,” that is it should be able to “receive” the particular traits or qualities attached to the different characters in a given scenario; thus, in the above example, we would have a setting of frames like rel(Spavento, Flavio, friends), rel(Flavio, Orazio, friends), rel(Spavento, Flaminia, brother-sister) etc.; probably there will also be a need for two-place frames to register the qualities of one single character, such as qua(Flaminia, assiduous reader of sentimental novels), or to register the location of the character speaking or acting. Usually this will be the street (eg., loc(Flavio, in the street), unless otherwise stated (eg., in the fourth sub-unit, loc(Flaminia, at the window)). Only a more detailed and more comprehensive study of all the scenarios of the Scala collection can give us a more precise idea of how we ought to elaborate the basis of such a set of relational frames. And there will certainly also, here and in what follows, be a question of “economy,” that is of searching and finding the simplest possible answer in order to avoid too many ad hoc solutions and to obtain the greatest possible coherence in this somewhat theoretical area.

The other type of relations concerns the sub-units, or (speech-)acts. Here TF makes an important observation about the “limited lexicon”:

4) So schematic and homogeneous is the lexicon that it provides a very strong restraint on the characters in terms of the range of possible options available to them at any
one moment. ( . . . ) it pre-programmes the possible channels of interaction between
given character, providing a restricted range of possible topics and types of action.
The key words in this regard are the verbs, which denote the acts and speech-acts
which carry forward the dramatic action. (188)

TF goes on, giving on the one hand a list of some twelve categories of
the verbs used in the scenarios (where the absence of certain categories of
speech-acts, such as the promise, is a little astonishing; and so is the absence
of a category for giving, or transferring objects or the like from one person
to another; but it is a tentative list, as TF says in a note), and on the other
hand, a conclusion about the relations between these verbs, where it is said
that:

5) The manner in which these general categories interact, and verbs from different
categories set themselves in standard syntactical chains is a vast and unexplored
field of enquiry. (ibid.)

Concerning the lexicon of the verbs in the scenario of Le burle d’Isabella,
a brief examination gives the following result (with some lack of precision;
the list presented here is extracted from an alphabetic list produced by a very
limited and simple program which does not take into account all variations:
thus, it lists fourteen occurrences of ‘da’ without saying if a preposition or a
finite verb; furthermore it is difficult to see, in the list, if a word is an adjective
or a past participle, etc.). The text has a total of 619 different words spread
over 2238 tokens; the verbs (68 in all, according to my account) are the
following (in descending order of frequency):

6) avere (42);
    fare (40);
    dire (35);
    essere (21), volere;
    andare (17);
    pigliare (16);
    domandare (13), (ri)vedere;
    mettere (11);
    burlare (10), ridere;
    partire (9);
    dare (8) (+ donare (1)?), pregare;
    rimanere (7), venire;
    parlare (6), pentirsi, promettere, stare;
    arrivare (5), chiamare, condurre, mangiare;
    finire (4), fuggire, impregnare, lavorare, mandare, risolvere, ritirarsi, salutare, trovare;
    bravare (3), cercare, dovere, intendere, (ri)maritarsi, perdere, piangere, porre, raccontare,
    ringraziare, ritornare, sdruccire, udire;
    accarezzare (2), attendere, ballare, cominciare, comprare, confermare, contrarre, discaccia-
    ciare, meravigliare, narrare, ordinare, portare, potere, ragionare, rispondere, sapere, scoprire,
    scusare, sentire, suolare, uscire, vivere;
    adoperare (1), aiutare, assicurare, amare (but amore and derivatives: 16 occurrences), avvedere,
    cantare, chiarire, chiedere, concedere, consigliare, consolare, contendere, contrastare, correre,
    correggere, credere, deporre, dimostrare, discomodare, discorrere, ferire, fingere, gridare,
dolersi, ingravidare, inviare, invitere, lamentare, lasciare, lavare, leggere, lodare, minacciare, odiare(?), orinare, pensare, raccomandare, rallegrarsi, ricordare, riprendere, sanare, scrivere, sedere, sgridare, sonare, sorridere, spartire, spendere, sperare, studiare, tacere, trattare, trattenere, vendere.

One could surely ask oneself if this really is such a “schematic and homogeneous lexicon” as TF claims; but is more important to try, even if it will, of course, be rather problematic, to divide these verbs (and others) into a limited number of categories, as proposed by TF; without doing this, it will be impossible to represent the dramatic action that takes place in the text-universe.

However, one could say that perhaps not all the verbs necessarily need to be categorized; fundamentally, it should suffice to involve those verbs which contribute to form the sub-units; that would in principle be the main verbs, in finite form, of the clauses, and these verbs will form only a part of those listed above.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions to this principle, as has already been seen: in the first clause of the example from Le burle d’Isabella, it seems to me that the reader will have to consider ‘narra’ and ‘pregandolo’ as two verbs each one forming the “centre” of a sub-unit; the same should be said about ‘Capitano la piglia, dicendo che...‘, but not, on the other hand, about the clause ‘Flaminia... dice... essendo... avend’ella...’: here the infinite verbs essendo and avendo do not form independent sub-units.

Another observation, yet less problematic, should be made about the fact that some verbs, especially ‘fare,’ are often part of compound expressions (such as ‘far quistione,’ ‘far cenno,’ ‘far torto,’ etc); this holds also for ‘andare’ which usually is part of the expression ‘va(nno) via/per strada,’ and thus signifies the exit of one or more characters; in these cases, the compound expression, and not the verb, should be registered and categorized. In almost the same way ‘avere’ and ‘essere’ + the past participle and ‘fare,’ ‘lasciare’ and modal verbs + the infinitive are usually parts of complex expressions where the “real” main-verb is the infinite verbform.

Thus, a fruitful discussion of the proper categorization of the verbs of the Scala scenarios presupposes a further examination of the linguistic form of these texts, and must therefore partly be postponed until then.

But even with a reduced number of verbs, there will naturally remain serious problems about which predicates would be needed to given an acceptable representation of the various sub-units and of the relationships between them (such as the INFORM-, PROMISE-, REQUEST-, FIGHT-, PLAN-, TRANS-, SOC.ACT-, SEX.ACT-, ...-predicates, or categories, in part proposed by TF), and how to assemble the remaining verbs into groups characterized by these predicates.

The INFORM-predicate will be expressed/manifested by (or be the conceptual content of) verbs like dire, discorrere(?), narrare, parlare(?), raccon-
tare, scoprire etc.; in the same way, FIGHT will be the content of bravare, burlare, contendere, contrastare, (s)gridare, riprendere etc.; verbs such as andare, via, arrivare, entrare, ritirarsi, ritornare signify the ENTRANCES and the EXITS of the characters; and so on.

But here, as well, some problems immediately arise. In the example used above, I have interpreted the main verb in "Flaminia . . . dice al Capitano . . . che vada . . ." as the expression of an order or a demand; thus, the verb dire in some contexts is more likely to express another prediate than that of INFORM; the same holds for dare: often its content is a TRANS-predicate, but if the indirect object is a person ('Franceschina con un bastone per dar a Pedrolino'), more often it expresses a FIGHT-predicate.

These categories, or predicates must be established, in one way or another, because the base of the "standard syntactical chains," mentioned by TF, must primarily be seen as standard sets, or standard schemes, of relationships between predicates of this type; if a reader of the above example can establish a relationship between Spavento's demand for help and Flavio's promise to do what he asks for, it must be because of a knowledge of a general or basic scheme of the possible or normal relations between REQUEST and PROMISE (and of course some knowledge of what can be the consequence of friendship, for instance).

As TF says, no one has yet presented the basic schemes which enable the reader to establish such relationships between the different speech-acts or acts of a given scenario, relationships underlying and forming his or her understanding of this scenario.

Thus, a study must be made to see to what extent models developed in other fields, for slightly different purposes, can be used and seen as instruments in the formation of acceptable representations of the text-universes presented by Scala’s scenarios. It could be models from the "story-understanding theories" (Rumelhardt 1975), or better, in my opinion, the concepts of Scripts, Plans, Goals, Mops etc. (Schank and Abelson 1977) or perhaps the more probabilistic model proposed by Pietropaolo (1989) to grasp the actor's part and place, his possibilities in the commedia dell'arte-performance. A more detailed examination of these questions here would take us too far (but cf. Jansen 1988).

Until now, I have only discussed one set of the problems related to the reading—and understanding—process of the Scala scenario, those concerning the representation of the text-universe. Another, and just as important set of problems regards the relationships that must be established between the text itself, its "linguistic form," and the more or less complex units of the text-universe: how does the reader "come from" the first clauses in the example above "to" the sub-units presented by these clauses? and how can we represent this part of the understanding-process?

More precisely, we should try to find an adequate format to guide the formalization of the clause in the text, and by an adequate format I mean
a format which makes it possible to construct, from a given clause, such a representation of the sub-unit(s) manifested or expressed by that clause, that it could be used in further analysis of the scenario.

It must be made clear at this point (even if it should perhaps be a truism), that the task here will be to formulate a hypothetical model of this format, i.e. a hypothesis about the elements and the structure of the sub-unit, about the elements and the structure of the clause and about the relationship between these two parts of the model. Having advanced such an hypothesis, it should be tested on concrete tokens (i.e. first on some clauses of given text, and next on other texts), in order to detect the short-comings of the model in its initial form, to correct it and to submit it, in its new form, to further testings, and so on. This paper represents only the first step in such a double research project (of constructing and testing hypothetical models), in which I have tried to use the computer as an instrument; this fact evidently will have an impact on the final model presented here, but without making it for this reason, I think, less valuable as (a part of) a model of the text-understanding process (in a certain sense, one could think of many of the computer terms, which may occur in the following, as a sort of metaphor for different aspects in the human understanding process). Needless to add that fairly many problems still remain unresolved here, and are open to further investigations.

Now, the first problem is to find a well defined criterion for the segmentation of the text in clauses representing one or more sub-units to the reader, i.e. what is or are the signs or elements in the text which mark the boundary between two clauses? In a broader perspective, this is a basic problem (called by Elam, quoting Pagnini, "the punctum dolens of every research of a semiological nature" (1980:47)). In Scala's texts, however, there seems to be a rather simple solution: as far as I can see, the use of the period ("."), and of the semicolon (";"), as "clause-markers" gives an acceptable outcome when applied to these texts; one could say that these two elements contribute with other elements to indicate changes in the deictic orientation and the illocutionary force (cf. TF 184). This criterion in fact has been used in the above analysis of the short example from Le burle d'Isabella (and so, I think, also in the examples given by TF).

The clause so delimited is, in its turn, a sequence of signs (or sign-tokens) presumably organized in a certain way, for the basis of which we should propose a model.

For the moments, I propose to consider only the words of the clause (i.e. leaving out all the punctuation marks, the abbreviations such as "cap." and the accents; this is, especially for the accents, an oversimplification which should be corrected in a further elaboration), and to assume 1) that the words will be read one after another in the order given by the clause, and 2) that the centre of the clause is the main verb. This permits us to propose a first outline of a model in which the clause is said to consist of three parts: a preverbal part, a verbal part, which is formed by the first finite form encountered in the clause
plus its proclitic pronouns, if any, and a postverbal part (this corresponds
to a partition one often finds in a linguistic approach to the clause: focus,
predicate and arguments (cf. Prebensen (1988), from whom I have borrowed
many of the ideas used in the present analysis). Applied to our text-example
from Le burle d'Isabella, this criterion gives the following result (which is a
slightly revised form of the output from a computer program):

7) preverbal("spavento," "flavio"),
    verbal("narra"),
    "favor," "suo," "in," "fargliela," "aver," "per," "moglie");

8) preverbal("flavio"),
    verbal("promette"),
    "e," "d," "averli," "scritto," "una," "lettera");

9) preverbal("in," "quello," "flaminia," "alla," "fenestra"),
    verbal("dice"),

10) preverbal("poi"),
    verbal("si," "ritira"),
    postverbal(0);

11) preverbal("flavio"),
    verbal("dice"),

12) preverbal("capitano"),
    verbal(";"),
    leria," "et," "amorose");

13) preverbal("flavio"),
    verbal("prega"),
    postverbal("il," "capitano," "a," "corregere," "la," "sua," "lettera," "amorosa," "per," "man-
    darla," "all," "innamorata," "sua");

14) preverbal("capitano"),
    verbal("la," "piglia"),

15) preverbal("flavio"),
    verbal("si," "rallegra"),

16) preverbal("pantalone," "pedrolino"),
    verbal("racconta"),
    "la," "vorrebbe," "per," "moglie");
17) preverbal("dapoi"),
   verbal("li," "racconta"),

18) preverbal("pedrolino"),
   verbal("lода"),

This form of the text makes a certain number of regularities appear more distinctly, from one clause to another.

As a rule, the subject, or agent, of the (speech-)act presented by the clause is mentioned in the preverbal part by a word categorized in the lexicon as a "person name"; if this is not the case ((10) and (17)), it could be inferred that the subject is that of the preceding clause.

The location of the agent will also be found in this part of the clause, if this location is not the normal place of the action, i.e. the street between the houses; this is the case in (9), with "fenestra," which in the lexicon will be listed as a "location word."

There is on the other hand a small group of words (or "idiomatic" expressions), already mentioned by Perrucci (1699), such as "in quello" (9), "ritira" (10), "entra" (14), "via" (15) and "vanno per strada" (18), which expresses the entrances or exits of the characters.

Combining the knowledge about the agent of a given (speech-)act with the presence or the absence of an item from this group, in any part of the clause, it can next be inferred from the clauses of the text which characters are present, and thus be possible to organize the sub-units, i.e. the (speech-)acts, in scene-units, or situations, and place them in the right order in the sequence which contributes to build up the text-universe; in the formalized representation this order will be given as numbers attached to the situations and to the sub-units; these numbers can later on be given a sort of time-counting function in the text-universe.

Information about the type of (speech-)act expressed by the sub-unit is extracted from the verbal part of the clause; this naturally presupposes that the lexicon contains indications of the categorization discussed above; the information about the type of (speech-)act will play an important role later, when the sequence of acts should be reorganized in a network of interrelated actions.

The last part of the clause, the postverbal part, is certainly the most complicated part to analyse, as it clearly results from the examples above. I will only give some initial propositions here, and occasionally point out particular problems to be resolved later.
Examining the examples, it appears possible in the first place to divide the postverbal part in two sections: one in which the character to whom the subject (or agent) addressed his (speech-)act, i.e. the patient is mentioned, possibly accompanied by an indication of the relation between the patient and another character (amico, sorella, etc.: 7, 9, 13, 16). Such a mention of character plus an indication of his or her relation to another, occurs also in other parts of the clause (7 (‘orazio, suo amico’), 17 (‘franceschina sua serva’)); in all the cases, it will be a problem to determine this other character, mainly through the possesive pronoun; it is a problem of anaphoric resolution which will not be discussed here.

The first section can be empty (12, 14, 15).

As a rule, the second section will contain an indication of the “object” of the (speech-)act (11, 12); it can, as the first section, sometimes be empty (10).

But in most cases this second section contains much more information, especially it can introduce one or more new (speech-)acts, that is acts which are not subordinated to the act manifested by the main verb of the clause (7 (‘pregandolo’), 8 (‘scopre’), 14 (‘dicendo,’ ‘entra’ and ‘ricordandogli’), 18 (‘promettendo’ and ‘vanno’)). On the other hand, such finite forms as ‘voglia’ (7), ‘vada’ (9), ‘deebb’ (11), etc. do not manifest independent (speech-)acts; hence there must be elements in the clause which show when a given finite form must be understood as the manifestation of a (speech-)act and when not.

The last mentioned three verbs are all verbs in subordinated propositions, and as a general rule, we can say that the subordinating conjunction (in our examples ‘che’ and ‘come’) is an element which prevents understanding a following finite form as an expression of a (speech-)act.

This prevention is removed however by a coordinating conjunction (‘e’ or ‘et’) as in (14): ‘et entra’; moreover it can be seen that this conjunction in general, if followed by a finite form (i.e. without a subordinating conjunction between the two), indicates the beginning of the expression of a new sub-unit, as in (14) and (8) (but not in (16)).

The participle forms are, in this respect, less complicated: they should simply be transformed into, or understood as, verbal parts, that is ‘pregandolo’ as ‘lo prega,’ ‘dicendo’ as ‘dice,’ ‘ricordandogli’ as ‘gli ricorda’; naturally there must be, in a future investigation, a more elaborate morphological analysis of such forms.

A particular problem is presented by (14); this clause contains four sub-units (‘piglia,’ ‘dice,’ ‘entra’ and ‘ricorda’), but the order in which they are presented in the text is not the order in which they follow one another in the text-universe: ‘entra’ does not precede, but follows ‘ricorda.’ This means that when a sub-unit expresses an EXIT-act it shall always be moved to the end of the clause.

These remarks can be summed up in the following general rules (at least valuable for the postverbal part of the examples above):
when a coordinating conjunction is encountered, a “co-ord-mark” should be set up, and a “sub-ord-mark,” if present, should be removed; besides, the preceding part of the section (i.e. of the second section of the postverbal part) should be memorized, and the conjunction plus the following items should be listed apart as they are encountered;

2) whenever a subordinating conjunction is encountered, a “sub-ord-mark” should be set up, and a “co-ord-mark,” if present, should be removed;

3) whenever a participle forms is encountered, and there is no “sub-ord-mark,” the preceding part of the clause should be registered as the expression of a sub-unit, the participle should be transformed to a finite form, possibly with some proclitic pronouns, and this new verbal part plus the rest of the clause should be considered a new clause, expressing one or more new sub-units, the situation (or scene-unit) and the subject (or agent) remaining unaltered;

4) whenever a finite form is encountered, and there is no “sub-ord-mark,” the preceding part of the clause from the beginning until a coordinating conjunction, if there has been one, or else until the finite form, should be registered as the expression of a sub-unit, and the rest of the clause from a coordination conjunction or from the finite form should be considered as a new clause;

5) if the finite form, also when resulting from the transformation of a participle, expresses and EXIT-act, it should be removed to the end of the clause.

The application of these rules, and of rules resulting from the preceding remarks on the example from *Le burle d’Isabella* gives the following output:

sit(1,1,("capitano," "flavio"),
  (pred(("INFORM","subj(("capitano")),loc(("in the street"))),
  (prev("spavento," "flavio")),
  verb("narra"),
  postv("PERS-OBJ;," "flavio," "rel-art;" "friendship;"
  "REMAINDER;" "amor," "d," "isabella," "vedova;"
  "sorella," "d," "orazio;" "suo," "amico")))

sit(1,2,("capitano," "flavio"),
  (pred(("REQUEST")),subj(("capitano")),loc(("in the street"))),
  (prev()),
  verb("lo;" "prega"),
  postv("REMAINDER;" "che;" "voglia;" "con;" "orazio"
  "parlare;" "a;" "favor;" "suo;" "in;" "fargliela;"
  "aver;" "per;" "moglie")))

sit(1,3,("capitano," "flavio"),
  (pred(("PROMISE")),subj(("flavio")),loc(("in the street"))),
  (prev("flavio")),
  verb("promette"),
  postv("REMAINDER;" "di;" "farlo")))
On the Clauses in a Scenario of Flaminio Scala

sit(1,4,("capitano," "flavio" ),
(pred("INFORM")),subj("flavio"),loc("
in the street")),
(prev("e," "poi")),
verb("gli," "scopre"),
postv("REMAINDE:
" "essere," "innamorato," "anch,"
"egli," "e," "d," "averli," "scritto," "una,
"lettera")"))

sit(2,1,("capitano," "flavio," "flaminia" ),
(pred("INFORM")),subj("flaminia"),loc("
at the window")),
(prev("in," "quello," "flaminia." "alla," "fenestra"),
verb("dice"),
postv("PERS-OBJ," "capitano," "rel-art," "brother-sister,"
"REMAINDE:," "che," "di," "avend," "ella,"
"un," "libro," "in," "mano")
)

sit(2,2,("capitano," "flavio," "flaminia" ),
(pred("EXIT")),subj("flaminia"),loc("
at the window")),
(prev("poi"),
verb("si," "ritira"),
postv(():))

sit(3,1,("capitano," "flavio" ),
(pred("INFORM")),subj("flavio"),loc("
in the street")),
(prev("flavio"),
verb("dice"),
postv("PERS-OBJ," "capitano,
"REMAINDE:," "che," "sua," "sorella," "debbe,
"attendere," "a," "studiare")
)

sit(3,2,("capitano," "flavio" ),
(pred("INFORM")),subj("capitano"),loc("
in the street")),
(prev("capitano"),
verb(():),
postv("REMAINDE:=" "che," "ella," "non," "fa," "mai,
"altro," "che," "leggere," "cose," "di," "cavalleria,
"et," "amorose")
)

sit(3,3, ("capitano," "flavio" ),
(pred("REQUEST")),subj("flavio"),loc("
in the street")),
(prev("flavio"),
verb("prega"),
postv("PERS-OBJ," "capitano,
"REMAINDE:," "a," "correggere," "la," "sua,
"lettera," "amorosa," "per," "mandarla," "all," "innamorata,
"sua")
)

sit(3,4,("capitano," "flavio" ),
(pred("TRANS")),subj("capitano"),loc("
in the street")),
(prev("capitano"),
verb("la," "piglia"),
postv("REMAINDE:")))
Steen Jansen

sit(3,5("capitano," "flavio")),
(pred("INFORM"),subj("capitano"),loc("in the street")),
(prev()),
verb("dice"),
postv("REMAINDER:," "che," "sua," "sorella," "sara," 
"piu," "di," "lui," "a," "proposito"))
sit(3,6("capitano," "flavio"),
(pred("Xricorda"),subj("capitano"),loc("in the street")),
(prev()),
verb("gli," "ricorda"),
postv("REMAINDER:" "il," "suo," "negozio," "con," 
"orazio"))
sit(3,7("capitano," "flavio"),
(pred("EXIT"),subj("capitano"),loc("in the street")),
(prev("et")),
verb("entra"),
postv())
sit(4,1("flavio"),
(pred("Xrallegra"),subj("flavio"),loc("in the street")),
(prev("flavio"),
verb("si," "rallegra"),
postv("REMAINDER:" "della," "buona," "fortuna," "che," 
"corre," "la," "lettera," "sua," "e," "via,"))
sit(5,1("pantalone," "pedrolino"),
(pred("INFORM"),subj("pantalone"),loc("in the street")),
(prev("pantalone," "pedrolino"),
verb("racconta"),
postv("PERS-OBJ:" "pedrolino," 
"REMAINDER:" "come," "vive," "innamorato," "d," 
"isabella," "e," "come," "la," "vorrrebbe," "per," 
"moglie"))
sit(5,2("pantalone," "pedrolino"),
(pred("INFORM"),subj("pantalone"),loc("in the street")),
(prev("dopo"),
verb("li," "racconta"),
postv("REMAINDER:" "come," "dopo," "l," "aver," 
"avuta," "la," "verginita," "di," "franceshina," 
"d," "averli," "fatta," "una," "promessione," 
"rogata," "al," "primo," "maschio," "che," 
"di," "lui," "mille," "ducati"))
sit(5,3("pantalone," "pedrolino"),
(pred("Xloda"),subj("pedrolino"),loc("in the street")),
(prev("pedrolino"),
verb("loda"),
postv("REMAINDER:" "quell," "opera," "di,"
Scala's text has here been transformed into a list of formulae, all of the same, schematic, uniform pattern (or format), and each one representing a sub-unit about each of which is given the following information:

- in the first line, the ordering number of the situation (or scene-unit) to which the sub-unit belongs, the ordering number of the sub-unit within this situation and the characters present in the situation;
- in the second line, the typified (speech-)act, its subject (or agent) and his or her location;
- the last three lines repeat the clause almost as we see it in Scala's text (sometimes with some small modifications: in 1.1 "suo amico" → 'rel-art: friendship'; in 1.2, 3.5 and 3.6: participles → finite forms; in 5.5: "vanno per strada" → "vanno via" (considered as equivalent expressions), etc.); a real formalization has not yet taken place in these lines. Later on, when fully elaborated, the formula should not contain these "copies" of the text, but for the moment they serve to point out in a more precise way what has been analysed up till now, and what has not.

The list is a paraphrase, certainly still insufficient, of Scala's text; that means a new text in which no relevant information (in a "dramatic point of view") contained in the original clauses has been lost in the transformation, but is now given in a more schematic, uniform and explicit format—adequate and necessary for further analysis of (the dramatic structure of) the scenario. In this respect, the list presented here, in itself and confronted with the text, is insufficient in many ways, some of which have been mentioned already: to be fully explicit, all the pronouns (such as 'suo' (1.1), 'lo' (1.2, 1.3), 'gli' (1.4), 'ella' (3.2), 'quell' (5.3), etc.) should be replaced by the persons, objects or actions referenced by these pronouns; this is a problem of anaphoric resolution (i.e. primarily the subject of a more specific, linguistic analysis (cf. Prebensen), the results of which should be used in a strictly "literary" text-analysis). Furthermore, the proper categories for verbs such as 'ricordare,'
‘rallegrarsi,’ ‘lodare’ (and many others, when new texts are taken in account) must be established; this point has been mentioned above in connection with the analysis of the relations between the different sub-units of the scenario, to be undertaken once the adequate format of each sub-unit has been found. But the verbs, and their categorization, are evidently important for the internal analysis of the single clause, and its sub-unit, as well, and especially for the analysis of the post-verbal part, which undoubtedly presents the most intricate of the problems still to be resolved.

For the moment the question about this postverbal part could be formulated as follows: how do we understand the part labelled as the REMAINDER in the formulae, and how can we best envisage the analysis of this part? It contains information about what we can call the ‘object’ (or ‘topic’) of the (speech-)act, and (the relevant parts of) this information must be grasped and given an explicit representation in the formula in such a way that it becomes an adequate paraphrase of the clause manifesting the sub-unit. Should this part be submitted to a more or less elaborated, syntactic analysis, or will a search for certain, expected, keywords be sufficient? Without being able to give a definitive answer here, a basis for the more detailed analysis of the clause must be adopted and tested to see how far it permits us to go. Given the fact that this part of the clause will certainly turn out to be syntactically the most variable (as can easily be seen already in the list of the formulae), the second solution seems for the moment to be the most accessible (and perhaps also the most reliable representation of the modern reader’s understanding-process?). If this is accepted, the next question will be to find out how the expectations on which the choice of relevant keywords in a given clause is based, are determined. A possible answer would be that these expectations are related to the main-verb of the clause: to each verb there should then, in the lexicon, be attached a set of “specifications” of the possible ‘topics’ for this verb (probably based on a primary specification of this verb’s “case-frame” (cf. Prebensen), which will be useful to the analysis of the clause in other respects as well). Evidently, this vague proposition is not a proper answer, in this form, and must be far more detailed, discussed and tested before it can be considered acceptable.

These are only a few of the many problems arising from an analysis of a Scala scenario, and many of them will appear only when other texts are analysed. To show some of these other problems, the computer-program, that is the principles and rules formulated above, can be applied to the text from *La fortunata Isabella*, analysed by TF and quoted at the beginning of the present paper; besides, this offers the opportunity to confront the results of the two analyses. The application of the program presupposes that a lexicon for this new text is established; it has been done in the same way as for the text from *Le burle d’Isabella*; there are some minor differences (apart from the different words): “perche” is labelled here as a subordinating conjunction (it was not necessary in the first text, but without that the proposition “e
non perche prenda moglie" will be registered as an independent sub-unit), "parte" and "partono" have been added to the group of ENTRANCE- and EXIT-markers, etc.; in future the two lexica should naturally be fused into a single one. The result then is:

sit(1,1,("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("Xintende")),subj("pantalone"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev("pantalone,""flavio," "orazio")),
verb("intende"),
postv(\"REMAINDER:," "dalli," "due," "fratelli," "come,"
"graziano," "lor," "padre," "essendo," "vecchio,"
"non," "pigilia," "partito," "d," "accompagnarli," "e,"
"dar," "loro," "moglie," "come," "si," "conviene"))

sit(1,2("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("Xcerca")),subj("pantalone"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev("pantalone"),
verb("cerca"),
postv("REMAINDER:,""placarli"))

sit(1,3("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("Xprova")),subj("pantalone"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev()),
verb("prova"),
postv("REMAINDER:," "loro," "come," "amore," "stia,"
"giovane"))

sit(1,4("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("Xlascia")),subj("flavio"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev("flavio"),
verb("si," "lascia"),
postv("REMAINDER:," "intendere," "a," "orazio,"
"sapendo," "esser," "suo," "rivale," "che," "il,"
"s," "addotters," "e," "non," "perche," "prenda," "moglie"))

sit(1,5("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("REQUEST")),subj("flavio"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev("finalmente"),
verb("pregano"),
postv("PERS-OBJ:," "pantalone,"
"REMAINDER:," "come," "amico," "del," "padre," "a,"
"distorlo," "da," "quella," "folle," "impresa"))

sit(1,6("pantalone," "flavio," "orazio"),
(pred("EXIT")),subj("flavio"),loc(\"in the street\")),
(prev("e"),
verb("partono"),
postv())

In the present list the first sub-unit given by TF (‘The characters enter’) does not appear: in fact the text does not say if they do, or if they are in the middle of the dialogue when the curtain goes up (or when the text-universe is “opened” to the reader); instead, there is here a sub-unit (2.1: “Pantalone rimane”) not counted as such by TF: it could be asked if such a sub-unit, and more generally the sub-units which mention only the ENTRANCE or the EXIT of characters, should be submitted to a special treatment (possibly be neglected as proper sub-units).

More difficult to resolve is the disagreement between what here is seen as two different sub-units, 1.2 and 1.3, and what to TF appears to be only one (“3) Pantalone tries to pacify them”); here the text itself, more than principles of the analysis, must be discussed, i.e. if the words “cerca placarli, provando loro . . .” express one or two speech-acts; even if this example is less clear than those in Le burle d’Isabella, I am most inclined to interpret it as an expression of two different speech-acts (“placare” and “provare”), also because the ‘topic’ of ‘provare’ is one of the recurrent themes in the scenarios. The following observations concern the analysis of the single clauses of the text, and will, wether or not in comparison with TF’s analysis, first of all draw attention to the shortcomings of the principles and rules formulated up till now. Already the first sub-unit in my paraphrase of TF’s example reveals some new and intricate problems: In its present form, the analysis is not, but should be able to produce in a formalized way, a formula in which the meaning is an INFORM-speech-act, with the two brothers as the subject (or agent), and Pantalone as the PERS-OBJ (or patient). This makes rather important changes necessary in the basic format of the clause which has been adopted above: It must be possible to establish a provisional subject when reading the preverbal part, and to modify it, when reading the verbal part (or later), if so indicated by the specification of the “case-frame” of the verb; furthermore it should be possible to have a subject consisting of one or more characters (in accordance with TF’s observations about the “grouping of characters” (185), a technique often used by Scala, whereby two
or more individuals are presented together as one single unit (or “actant”) in the sub-unit); finally it should be possible to analyse the first section of the postverbal part, not only as has been done in the preceding examples but also in order to interpret it as an expression of the subject (or agent, because of the verb “intende” and the presence of “da”), and, in this specific case, to determine the characters referenced by the noun “fratelli,” i.e. Flavio and Orazio. The same problem of the “group subject” becomes actual in the analysis of 1.5, 1.6 and 2.1, but must be resolved in another way: here it is the verb form that tells us that Flavio and Orazio leave, and that there is only one character present in 2.1; a more elaborate morphological analysis of the verb (distinguishing the singular from the plural) will be necessary in order to extract this information. Another, and final, observation should be made about the verbal part of the clause(-format): it appears that to obtain a correct analysis of 1.4, it will be necessary to extend this part of the clause to comprehend the possible presence of an infinitive, probably necessary only in definite cases, i.e. when the main verb belongs to a certain group (such as “lasciare,” “cercare” (valuable then for 1.2 as well), modal verbs, etc.); the function as the clause’s main-verb should in these cases be attached to the infinitive instead of the finite form.

The initial purpose of this paper was to illustrate an analysis of the clauses in a single, short example from one of Scala’s scenarios. The result, although it remains still extremely provisional, it seems to me, allows at least two conclusions: on the one hand, it demonstrates the possibility of an analysis of the clauses in a commedia dell’arte scenario based on the suggestions proposed by Tim Fitzpatrick and to carry out such an analysis, using the computer, in a perfectly verifiable manner; on the other hand, it shows that it is possible to point out in a very precise way the many and different problems encountered during the analysis, and to envisage testable solutions to every particular problem, as it appears, in order to try to resolve them one by one: this is the only reasonable way to get through such a complex matter as is indeed the comprehension of the text-understanding process.

University of Copenhagen

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my colleague Torben Thrane and my friend Paul Wittekind who have kindly revised the English of this paper.

REFERENCES

Marotti, F., see Scala;