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EVIDENTIALITY AND MIRATIVITY IN THE LANGUAGE OF ROMAN COMEDY

Summary: The paper deals with the ways of expressing evidential and mirative semantics in the language of Roman comedy. The author claims that the phenomena under consideration belong to the grammar rather than to the lexicon of the Latin language, and shows that various evidential and mirative values can be expressed by the use of verbal tenses, voices, moods and syntactic construction. It is stressed that evidential and mirative functions in such units result only from the interaction of different linguistic parameters within a certain context and does not reside in the units taken in isolation. The main focus of the study is on the linguistic techniques which were preferred by Plautus and Terence. The comparative analysis of the linguistic strategies found in the author's present and the previous research demonstrates that the choice of a particular strategy depends on a given genre. Thus, some strategies (e.g., impersonal passive, inferential perfect and future, imperfect of a truth just recognized, mirative use of the subjunctive and infinitive) are preferred by comic poets while other techniques (e.g., deductive use of *debere*, gnomic future as a reportative strategy, *cum inversum* as a mirative device) which may be used in historic or epic narrative, never occur in the language of Roman comedy.

Keywords: Latin, mirativity, evidentiality, Roman comedy, the interaction of linguistic parameters

1. INTRODUCTION. EVIDENTIALITY AND MIRATIVITY: SOME PRELIMINARY REMARKS¹

The aim of this paper is to reveal the linguistic strategies to express evidentiality and mirativity in the language of Plautus and Terence and, thus, to reinterpret some Latin grammatical phenomena, the meaning of which has so far been restricted only to certain morphological and syntactic categories in traditional Latin grammars. I will try to show that these phenomena may have evidential and mirative extensions. I also claim that the choice of such tools depends on the genre of a literary work.

¹ Hereby I express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their valuable suggestions, and to Vitaly Varayun for the proofreading of this paper.

Evidentiality is a linguistic category whose primary function is to show the source of information. According to the basic classification of the ways knowledge can be obtained, evidentials are divided into three groups, i. e. direct (perceptual, visual, firsthand), indirect inferential (obtained by means of inferring or induction based on the state of affairs or traces resulting from a previous actions) and indirect reported (or hearsay) evidentials.²

There is no doubt that the linguistic devices encoding the source of information do exist in every language but differ significantly in their grammatical status. Latin, to my mind, belongs to the languages where evidential meanings are not conveyed via specific forms, but occasionally expressed through forms whose central meaning is something else.³ For such forms, Aikhenvald suggested a very apt definition “evidential strategies”.⁴ She claimed that a grammatical technique is an evidential strategy if, in addition to its primary meaning, it can acquire one or more semantic features characteristic of evidentiality proper. This definition corresponds well to the evidential techniques we can single out in Latin.

As regards mirativity, it is a grammatical category which covers speaker’s unprepared mind, unexpected new information, and concomitant surprise.⁵ Some languages can express surprise by lexical means while other ones have special verbal markers to convey such meanings.⁶

One can hardly find special markers of mirative values in Latin, but the semantics of unexpectedness, abruptness, and surprise may be expressed with the use of not only lexical – such a possibility does exist in all languages – but also grammatical means. Since such grammatical tools usually have primary meanings that differ from the mirative ones, they should be called mirative strategies or mirative extensions of other categories.⁷

It is worth stressing that evidential and mirative functions in such units result only from the *interaction* with the context and do not reside in the units taken in isolation.

The strategies under consideration, in my opinion, are part of the Latin grammatical rather than the lexical system.⁸ Therefore, the lexical expressions of eviden-

² PLUNGIAN, V. A.: The Place of Evidentiality within the Universal Grammatical Space. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33/3 (2001) 349–357, here 353; PLUNGIAN, V. A.: Types of Verbal Evidentiality Marking: An Overview. In DIEWALD, G. – SMIRNOVA, E. (eds): *Linguistic Realization of Evidentiality in European Languages* [Empirical Approaches to Language Typology (EALT) 49]. Berlin – New York 2010, 15–58, here 37.

³ LAZARD, G.: On the Grammaticalization of Evidentiality. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33.3 (2001) 359–367, here 360.

⁴ AIKHENVALD, A. Y.: *Evidentiality*. Oxford 2004, 105.

⁵ AIKHENVALD (n. 4) 195.

⁶ LAZARD (n. 3) 361.

⁷ AIKHENVALD (n. 4) 195–216; AIKHENVALD, A. Y.: The Essence of Mirativity. *Linguistic Typology* 16 (2012) 435–485, here 462–465.

⁸ See ANDERSON, L. B.: Evidentials, Paths of Change, and Mental Maps: Typologically Regular Asymmetries. In CHAFE, W. – NICHOLS, J. (eds): *Evidentiality: The Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*. Norwood (NJ) 1986, 273–312, here 275.

tiality and mirativity, such as verbs *video*, *audio*, (*ad*)*miror* and so on, will remain beyond the scope of this paper.

Since the eighties, the question concerning the interrelation between evidentiality and mirativity has been a highly discussible issue in linguistics. Aikhenvald⁹ summed up the discussion and convincingly demonstrated that evidentiality and mirativity are separate categories in their own rights, and the denial of the independent status of mirativity seems to be a step backward rather than forward.¹⁰ The independent status of mirativity as a linguistic category, however, does not exclude the possibility of considering mirative strategies along with evidential ones, when speaking about the means that convey evidential and mirative values in different languages. For Latin, this seems particularly appropriate, since the ways of expressing both categories partly overlap in this language.

In my previous studies,¹¹ I tried to give an overview of evidential and mirative strategies in Latin without taking in consideration literary genres. However, in this particular work my aim is to select strategies which occur in the language of Roman comedy. I will demonstrate how Plautus and Terence use evidential and mirative extensions of traditional linguistic categories and what strategies they prefer compared to the authors whose works belong to other literary genres. Since evidentiality and mirativity are closely related notions and sometimes can be expressed by the same or similar grammatical means, emphasis will be given to the contextual conditions which determine either evidential or mirative reading of each grammatical phenomenon under consideration.

2. EVIDENTIAL AND MIRATIVE CONNOTATIONS OF VERBAL TENSES

Some Latin tenses may have evidential or mirative connotations in addition to their temporal value. These connotations normally result from the *interaction* of a verbal tense with some other morphosyntactic parameters in a certain context. In what follows, I will analyze verbal forms in present, imperfect, perfect and future tenses which admit either evidential or mirative interpretations.

2.1. *Historic present as a direct firsthand evidential*

The historic present is a stylistic device which gives an impression of a particular nearness. Roman scholars defined it as *demonstratio* or *evidentia*, and its definition surprisingly resembles that of the direct firsthand evidential, see ex. (1):

⁹ AIKHENVALD: The Essence (n. 7).

¹⁰ AIKHENVALD: The Essence (n. 7) 476.

¹¹ ZHELTOVA, E.: Evidential Strategies in Latin. *Hyperboreus* 23.2 (2017) 313–337; ZHELTOVA, E.: How to Express Surprise without Saying “I’m Surprised” in Latin. *Philologia Classica* 13.2 (2018) 228–240.

- (1) *Demonstratio est, cum ita verbis res exprimitur ut geri negotium et res ante oculos esse videatur.* (*Rhet. Her.* 4. 68)

‘*Demonstratio* is a way to express something in words so that it seemed as though events and things were taking place before our eyes.’

The historic present creates an impression of the eyewitness report and is especially appropriate to texts characterized by a lot of detail,¹² such as, for instance, historical narrative. Nevertheless, comic authors do not avoid it either, cf. ex. (2):

- (2) *Interea dum **sedemus illi, intervenit** adulescens quidam lacrumans. Nos **mirarier. Rogamus** quid sit.* (*Ter. Ph.* 91–93).

‘While we are sitting there, there comes in a young man in tears. We are surprised. We inquire what the matter is.’¹³

All the verbs marked in semi-bold are the historic present and historic infinitive forms which describe the events of a past as if the author had observed them personally.

2.2. Perfect tense as a strategy of indirect inferential evidentiality

The primary meaning of perfect tenses is focusing on the results of an action that took place in the past. An inference may be based on the traces or results of a previous action, hence, perfect tenses in a number of languages acquire inferential meaning.

Historically, the Latin perfect inherited markers and values of two different tenses: a perfect tense proper and an aorist. Therefore, there are two meanings of classical Latin perfect: the historic perfect which denotes an action or process finished in the past (this is a heritage of the aorist) and the present perfect with a resultative meaning.

My claim is that the latter may have an inferential value in some contexts. Let us see ex. (3–5):

- (3) *Nunc pol ego **perii**, Plesidippus eccum adest.* (*Pl. Rud.* 844)

‘I am dead now, Plesidippus is here’.

- (4) ***Occisi sumus.*** (*Pl. Bac.* 681).

‘We’re dead.’

- (5) ***Deceptus sum,** Autolyco hospiti aurum credidi.* (*Pl. Bac.* 275)

‘I’ve been deceived. I’ve entrusted my gold to an Autolycus for my host!’

The conclusions drawn by the characters of the Plautus’ plays are made on the basis of assessing the results of previous actions and thus can be compared with inferring

¹² PINKSTER, H.: *Oxford Latin Syntax*. Oxford 2015, 402.

¹³ The examples from Plautus’ and Terence’s plays are given in translation by H. Th. Riley.

evidential. It should be stressed that this evidential strategy is used frequently in the Roman comedy, but the occurrences of the active perfect forms are restricted to the verbs of unintentional action or state.

2.3. Latin future tenses with inferential overtones

Interestingly, inferential evidence may be expressed by future tenses as well. Future indicative forms can develop extensions related to inference and speculation because they have overtones of uncertainty and prediction.¹⁴ To compare, in some languages the grammaticalized evidentials go back to the future markers.¹⁵ Let us see ex. (6–8).¹⁶

- (6) *Haec erit bono genere nata. Nil scit nisi verum loqui.* (Pl. *Per.* 645)
 ‘She’ll be from a good family; she knows how to speak nothing but the truth.’
- (7) *Sed profecto hoc sic erit:*
centum doctum hominum consilia sola haec devincit dea, Fortuna. (Pl. *Ps.* 677–679)
 ‘But, no doubt, thus will it come to pass: this Goddess Fortune, unaided, prevails over the designs of a hundred armed men.’
- (8) *Facile adservabis, dum eo vinclo vincies. ita istaec nimis lenta vincla sunt escaria.* (Pl. *Men.* 93–94)
 ‘He whom you wish to keep securely that he may not run away, with meat and with drink ought he to be chained. So very supple are these chains of food.’

It is clear that in all these examples, the future tense deals with the modal meaning of supposition or prediction rather than with the future action as such.

Interestingly, such a use of the future occurs more frequently in the Roman comedy than in the classical Latin prose and, therefore, may be regarded as characteristic of the genre.

Latin Perfect and Future can demonstrate inferential overtones in the affirmative/negative sentences but not in the interrogative ones, where perfect and future acquire mirative reading. Such cases will be analyzed in section 4.2.

2.4. Imperfect tense as a strategy of deferred realization

Deferred realization is part of a mirative domain and may be expressed by means of special affixes in the languages where this category is grammaticalized.¹⁷ As regards Latin, the meaning of deferred realization seems to be conveyed by the imperfect

¹⁴ PINKSTER (n. 12) 427.

¹⁵ AIKHENVALD: Evidentiality (n. 4) 111.

¹⁶ Examples 6–7 are taken from PINKSTER (n. 12) 447, 426.

¹⁷ AIKHENVALD: The Essence (n. 7) 468.

tense. So far, I had not found any special remark concerning this function of the imperfect in Latin grammars, but in the Greek grammars and in the comments on Greek authors, it is called the “imperfect of truth just recognized” or “imparfait de découverte”. In Ancient Greek, such a use of the imperfect tense is very common and occurs in the works by Hesiod, Sophocles, and many other authors, but in Latin, it is not so frequent. I found only 7 examples: 3 occurrences in the Plautus’ plays and 4 in the Gospels.

Let us look at the passage from the Plautus’ *Bacchides* (ex. 9): Chrysalus, the Nicobulus’ slave, tells him a fictional story; the narrative is conducted in historic present, but the moment of discovering the treacherous character of the imaginary friend is described in the imperfect tense, as unexpected and surprising, ex. (9).

(9) CHRYS. *forte ut adsedi in stega,
dum circumspecto, atque ego lembum conspikor
longum, strigorem maleficum exornarier.*

NIC. *Perii hercle, lembus ille mihi laedit latus.*

CHRYS. *Is erat communis cum hospite et praedonibus.* (Pl. *Bac.* 279–282)

CHRYS. ‘By chance, as I was sitting on the deck, while I was looking about me, at that moment I beheld a long bark being fitted out by this cheating knave.

NIC. Troth, I’m undone; that bark breaks my heart.

CHRYS. This was held in partnership by your host and some pirates.’

This strategy, as one can see from the statistics given above, is characteristic of popular literary genres.

To compare, past tenses (e. g., aorist, pluperfect) may express surprise of the speaker in a number of languages. As Aikhenvald points out,¹⁸ this meaning is mainly attested in “oral interaction”, and mostly with a “quasi-exclamative” intonation pattern.

3. IMPERSONAL PASSIVE AS AN EVIDENTIAL STRATEGY

A prototypical passive focuses on the original object and state it is in, as a result of an action. As a consequence, it often has resultative connotations. Not unexpectedly, passive forms, and especially impersonal passives, in many languages can be used as evidential strategies with inferential value.¹⁹ In Latin, the impersonal passive forms seem to express not only inferential, but also direct evidential values, as in (10):

(10) *Itur ad te, Pseudole. Orationem tibi para advorsum senem.* (Pl. *Ps.* 453–454)
‘You’re being approached, Pseudolus. Prepare your speech against the old man.’

¹⁸ AIKHENVALD: *The Essence* (n. 7) 463.

¹⁹ AIKHENVALD: *Evidentiality* (n. 4) 116–117.

Eliminating the subject allows the speaker to focus on the action as such and to represent a situation as directly attested.

There are also contexts where one can hardly distinguish between direct evidential and indirect inferential overtones of the impersonal passive, as in (11):

- (11) *Sed crepuit ostium. Exitur foras.* (Pl. *Cas.* 813)
 ‘But the door has creaked. They are coming out.’

The impersonal passive *exitur* can be treated either as a representation of a situation perceived directly (i.e. direct evidence) or as a conclusion drawn from the previously described action (i.e. inference).

Interestingly, all the instances of the impersonal passive with evidential meaning are contextually determined and occur only in the language of Roman comedy. They are also restricted to the clauses with impersonal passives implying uncertain or plural agent or 1-st person agent. To sum up, this is a convenient grammatical device to witness an action but avoid reference to its agent.

4. NON-INDICATIVE MOODS AS EVIDENTIAL AND MIRATIVE TOOLS

In this section, I will analyze Latin subjunctives and infinitives which may have both evidential and mirative extensions in different contexts. When speaking about infinitives, one faces a methodological problem of whether this phenomenon should be described in terms of mood or syntactic construction, given it occurs mostly in the combination with accusative or nominative. Since some evidential strategies may be realized only in the combination of these two moods, such cases will be part of this section while the other ones will be analyzed in section 5.

4.1. Potential subjunctive as an indirect inferential strategy

The inferring evidential value can be conveyed by the potential subjunctive, ex. (12):

- (12) ACAN. *Apage istiusmodi salutem, (cum) cruciatu quae advenit.*
 CHAR. *Dic mihi, an boni quid usquamst, quod quisquam uti possiet sine malo omni.* (Pl. *Mer.* 144–145)
 ACAN. ‘Down with the treatment that comes with anguish.
 CHAR. Tell me, is there any good somewhere that anyone could use without suffering?’

In this example, the hypothetical use of the present subjunctive *possiet* is determined by the preceding context, that is by the reasoning of Acanthio about salvation accompanied by torture.

This means of expressing inferential value belongs to the zone of the evidential category that overlaps with epistemic modality. The fact that a question of probability arises, indicates that the speaker has no direct knowledge of the situation,²⁰ and this relates to indirect evidentiality.

It is worth stressing that the inferential value of a potential subjunctive seems to be restricted to the 2nd and 3rd persons and to only certain types of clauses. It is seen best of all in the relative clauses with the consecutive meaning (ex. 12), in the conditional periods of a potential type, and in some independent uses of the potential subjunctive, in which overtones of uncertainty may be discerned, see ex. (13):

- (13) *sed quid agam? adeo ad eum et cum eo iniuriam hanc expostulem? ingeram mala multa? atque aliqui' dicat "nil promoveris"*. (Ter. An. 639–640).
 'But what am I to do? Ought I not to go to him, and reason with him upon this outrage, and heap many an invective upon him? Yet someone may say, "you will avail nothing".'

4.2. Potential subjunctive and future in polemical or repudiating questions as a mirative strategy

Potential subjunctive may acquire mirative reading in polemical or repudiating questions.²¹ In the questions of such a type, the speaker emotionally repeats someone's words whose meaning is in conflict with his ideas and thus demonstrates his unprepared mind. Consequently, we deal with one of the typical mirative values – unpreparedness to accept information, ex. (14).

- (14) PL. *Meamne ille amicam leno vi, violentia de ara deripere Veneris voluit?* TR. *Admodum.*
 PL. *Quin occidisti extemplo?* TR. *Gladius non erat.*
 PL. *Caperes aut fustem aut lapidem.* TR. *Quid? ego quasi canem hominem insectarer lapidibus nequissimum?* (Pl. Rud. 839–843)
 PL. 'And did the Procurer attempt by force and violence to drag my mistress away from the altar of Venus? TR. Even so.
 PL. Why didn't you kill him on the instant? TR. I hadn't a sword.
 PL. You should have taken either a stick or a stone.
 TR. What! ought I to have pelted this most villanous fellow with stones like a dog?'

Mirative connotation may be also expressed through independent *ut*-clauses which function as indignant questions as well. Interestingly, *ut*-clauses may alternate with

²⁰ PLUNGIAN: The Place (n. 2) 354.

²¹ Similar function of the subjunctive clauses were underlined by LINDSAY, W. M.: *Syntax of Plautus*. New York 1936, 75.

the repudiating questions in the subjunctive without *ut*, which allows considering them as synonymic ones, see ex. (15):

- (15) *Oh, tibi ego ut credam, furcifer?*
Tu rem inpeditam et perditam restituas? (Ter. An. 618–619).
 ‘What, am I to believe you, you scoundrel?’
 You, indeed, make good a matter that’s all embarrassment and ruin!’

Interestingly, the same meaning can also be expressed by polemical questions with the verb in the future (ex. 16) or present indicative (ex. 17):

- (16) PEN. *Salta sic cum palla postea.* MEN. I. *Ego saltabo? Sanus hercle non es.* (Pl. Men. 197–198).
 PEN. ‘Do dance afterwards with the mantle on in this way. MEN. I. – dance? I believe, you’re not in your senses’.
- (17) *Tun tibi hanc surruptam dicere audes, quam mihi dedit alia mulier, ut concinandam darem?* (Pl. Men. 732–733).
 ‘Do you dare to say – pointing at the mantle – that this was stolen from you which another woman gave me, for me to get it trimmed?’

Such sentences may contain the enclitic particle *-ne* attached to the most salient constituent, ex. (17).

As it is clear from the examples above, both strategies under consideration are typical for the emotional scenes in Plautus’ and Terence’s plays, and also occur frequently in the letters and speeches by Cicero, that is, in the genres where common language (*sermo vulgaris* or *sermo cotidianus*) is represented. It is also worth noting that this strategy is limited to the verbs in the 1st and 2nd persons, i.e. to the situation of a live dialogue. To sum up, mirative value of the verbal categories under consideration cannot be brought about if taken in isolation, but results from their cooperation with some other language parameters, such as deictic status (locutor, or speech act participant), mode of discourse (dialogue), and type of a sentence (interrogative).

4.3. Subjunctive and infinitive as strategies of indirect reported evidentiality

4.3.1. Accusative/nominative and infinitive construction and subjunctive mood

In Latin, the Accusative/Nominative and Infinitive construction governed by the verbs of saying or thinking along with the subjunctive mood are always used in passages which contain the reported speech. They cannot be regarded as pure grammaticalized evidentials because they depend on the verbs of speaking as lexical elements, but they can be definitely called evidential strategies. Since comedy characters interact with each other in the dialogues, this genre normally lacks long passages in the reported speech, but some instances of this sort can yet be found, ex. (18, 19):

- (18) *Non ego te novi Menaechmum, Moscho prognatum patre, qui Syracusis perhibere natus esse in Sicilia?* (Pl. *Men.* 407–408).
‘Don’t I know you, Menaechmus, the son of your father Moschus, who are said to have been born in Sicily, at Syracuse?’
- (19) *Novi ego te. Non mihi censebas esse, qui te ulciscerer.* (Pl. *Men.* 636).
‘I understand you. You didn’t think it was in my power to take vengeance upon you.’

4.3.2. Logophoric use of the reflexive pronoun in the reported speech

In addition to the infinitive constructions and subjunctive mood, Latin provides one more device for encoding evidentiality. This is the logophoric use of the reflexive pronoun.²² One of the important functions of logophoric pronouns is to indicate whether the speaker and the subject or the object of a dependent predication is the same person or not, hence, logophoric markers help to reduce ambiguity in indicating the source of information.

- (19) *Ait hanc dedisse me sibi, atque eam meae uxori surrupuisse.* (Pl. *Men.* 480–481)
‘**She** says that I secretly gave **her** this, and that I stole it away from my wife.’

In (19) which exemplifies the reported speech, the reflexive pronoun *sibi* in the dependent predication is coreferential with Erotium – the omitted subject of the main predication, – and thus represents her as a source of information.

4.3.3. Reason clauses in subjunctive as a reportative evidential strategy

The reason clauses introduced by the conjunctions *quod/quia/quoniam* can be used with predicates either in the indicative or in the subjunctive mood. In case of the indicative mood, the reason is represented as reliable and objective, without any additional connotation. On the contrary, the subjunctive mood adds overtones of uncertainty, subjectivity, distance, that is of unreliable information the speaker does not vouch for,²³ as in ex. (20):

- (20) *Nunc mea mater irata est mihi, quia non redierim domum ad se ...* (Pl. *Cist.* 101–102)
‘Now my mother’s angry with me, on the grounds that I didn’t return home to her ...’

In this example, the subjunctive is used because the speaker does not commit himself to the content of the reason clause and represents this reason as somebody else’s opinion that allows considering such strategy as reportative one.

²² About logophoric pronouns in detail, see HAGÈGE, C.: Les pronoms logophoriques. *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* 69 (1974) 287–310.

²³ MAGNI, E.: Mood and Modality. In BALDI, P. – CUZZOLIN, P. (eds): *New Perspectives on Historical Latin Syntax*. Berlin – New York 2010, 193–278, here 258.

5. EVIDENTIAL AND MIRATIVE VALUE OF SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTIONS

5.1. *Accusative and participle/ infinitive construction as a strategy of direct access to information*

The evidential value of the Accusative and Participle construction governed by the verbs of perception, (*videre* ‘to see’, *audire* ‘to hear’ etc.) has already been investigated on a large body of texts by Paolo Greco,²⁴ therefore, I will restrict myself to the example from Plautus (ex. 21).

- (21) *atque ego illi aspicio osculantem Philocomasium cum altero nescio quo adulescente.* (Pl. *Mil.* 288–289)
 ‘And there I see Philocomasium kissing with some other young man.’

In Latin, the verbs of perception can also govern the Accusative and Infinitive construction, and given it contains the Present Infinitive, which implies simultaneity of actions expressed by the governing verb and the infinitive, the AcI also acquires the meaning of direct sensory evidential,²⁵ as in ex. (22):

- (22) *Non ego te indutum foras exire vidi pallam?* (Pl. *Men.* 511–512)
 ‘Did I not see you coming out of doors clad in a mantle?’

The status of AcP/AcI-constructions as grammaticalized sensory direct evidentials rests on the fact that neither the governing verb nor the participle/infinitive *per se* cannot be regarded as evidentials: it is in these particular constructions, that they receive the evidential value.

To prove this, let us compare ex. (21–22) with the famous sentence by Caesar (ex. 23) where the verb *vidi* is included in the military report without any evidential meaning:

- (23) *Veni, vidi, vici.* (Caes. ap. Sen. *Suas.* 2. 22)
 ‘I came, I saw, I conquered.’

5.2. *Nominative and infinitive construction as indirect inferring evidential*

Nominative and Infinitive construction governed by the verb *videri* ‘to seem’ sounds in an inferential manner, as in ex. (24):

²⁴ GRECO, P.: Latin *Accusativus cum Participio*: syntactic description, evidential values, and diachronic development. *Journal of Latin Linguistics* 12.2 (2013) 173–198.

²⁵ GRECO (n. 24) 181. About the semantic distinction between these two syntactic constructions, see RIEMANN, O.: *Syntaxe latine. D’après les principes de la grammaire historique*. Paris 1890, 470, n. 1; GRECO (n. 24) 178, n. 15.

- (24) *socer et medicus me insanire aiebant. quid sit, mira sunt. haec nihilo esse mihi videntur setius quam somnia.* (Pl. *Men.* 1046–1047)
 ‘My father-in-law and the Doctor were saying that I am mad. Whatever it is, it is a wonderful affair. These things appear to me not at all otherwise than dreams.’

The inferential value of the construction governed by *videntur* is determined by the state of affairs that is described in the previous context.

5.3. Exclamatory constructions with mirative semantics

Exclamatory sentences may express a whole array of emotions, such as unbelief, surprise, relief, indignation, misery, or disgust. Pinkster²⁶ singles out two types of exclamatory sentences with the subject in the Accusative, but only one of them, in my opinion, can express surprise. This is the second subtype of the *non-evaluative* type, according to Pinkster’s classification, or exclamatory accusative and infinitive clause. Such clauses may contain the enclitic particle *-ne*, attached to the first and most salient word of the sentence, ex. (25–26):

- (25) *Magistron’ quemquam discipulum minitarier?* (Pl. *Bac.* 152)
 ‘That I should have been duped in this fashion today!’
- (26) *Perii, hoc servom meum non nauci facere esse ausum.* (Pl. *Bac.* 1102)
 ‘Undone am I, inasmuch as this slave of mine has dared in this way to set not the value of a nutshell upon me!’

In both analyzed passages, the exclamatory accusative and infinitive clauses bear mirative meaning. To prove this, let us first turn to the question of how to explain the use of the accusative case in exclamations. The traditional explanation is that the AccI depends on the omitted verb which can be easily supplied from the context. The question then arises what kind of semantic relations between the verb to be supplied and its sentential complement there is. As Pinkster convincingly argues, these semantic relations could be expressed explicitly by a verb like *miror* ‘I am surprised’,²⁷ therefore, this type of exclamations can be treated as a mirative strategy. As far as I know, Cuzzolin²⁸ was the first who noticed that *Infinitivus indignantis/admirantis* “expresses what in other languages, currently spoken, corresponds to the category of mirativity”. Importantly, the definition *Infinitivus admirantis*, as one can see, refers to the semantics of surprise or admiration, and it was intuitively realized by scholars who gave

²⁶ PINKSTER (n. 12) 361–368.

²⁷ PINKSTER (n. 12) 366.

²⁸ CUZZOLIN, P.: Some remarks on the *Infinitivus indignantis*. Is this label necessary? In *19th International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics. Munich, 24th–28th April 2017. Book of Abstracts*. Munich 2017, 30–31.

this label to the infinitive.²⁹ This mirative strategy was preferred by comic authors,³⁰ especially by Plautus, and may be treated as a characteristic of vivid comic dialogues.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I attempted to show the importance of evidentiality and mirativity for analyzing the language of Roman comedy. The study focused on the morphological forms and syntactic constructions which, in terms of traditional Latin grammars, pertain to the grammatical categories of tense, voice, mood and so forth, but in fact, have many more values.

The comparative analysis of my current findings with those from the previous research shows that the choice of a particular evidential or mirative strategy depends on a genre. Thus, some strategies (e.g., impersonal passive, inferential perfect and future, imperfect of the deferred realization, mirative use of the subjunctive and infinitive) are preferred by Plautus and Terence while other techniques (e.g., the deductive use of *debere*, the gnomic future as a reportative strategy, *cum inversum* as a mirative device) which may be used in historic, epic or epistolary genres, never occur in the language of Roman comedy. This allows us to conclude that the linguistic strategies under consideration – in addition to their epistemic, modal or pragmatic functions – perform a stylistic one.

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²⁹ Blatt also emphasizes that the infinitive clause without governing verb may express surprise or regret, and this value may be supplied from the context (BLATT, F.: *Précis de syntaxe latine*. Lyon 1952, 259).

³⁰ BLATT (n. 29) 259; HOFMANN, J. B. – SZANTYR, A.: *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*. Teil 2. Bd. 2. München 1972, 366.