

A Contrastive Analysis of the Transphrastic Scope of French Connectors

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Abstract: As for connectors, they play a connecting role in order to ensure cohesion, they gain an important place in the marking of text plans, thus contributing to the overall coherence of the text and the progression of information. This article studied adverse connectors in French in a contrasting way and at the textual level: systematically studying the EIC theory of Charolles, defining the conceptual field of connectors, analyzing the dialectic between the topic and the spoken chain, between the scope and the textual syntax of connectors, especially those of the french connector “mais”. Pragmatic connectors have a scope, that is, they modify the interpretation of a certain set of constituents. The frames determined by adverbs constitute informationally homogeneous blocks. Frame adverbs maintain privileged connections with the various forms of anaphore.

Keywords: Scope; Textual Structure; Connector Function; Introductory Expressions

1. Introduction

To better explain the transphrastic and textual scope of connectors in French, it is necessary to know the shapes and types of connectors. Adam gives such a definition of connectors: “connectors fall into a class of linguistic expressions which groups, in addition to certain coordination conjunctions (*mais, donc, or, car*), certain subordination conjunctions (*parce que, comme*), certain adverbs or adverbial locutions (*en effet, par conséquent, quoi qu’il en soit, ainsi*, etc.) and nominal or pre-position groups (*malgré cela*, etc.)”. [1]

Adam distinguishes three kinds of connection markers in the general class of connectors:

- The argumentative connectors themselves, which fall under both textual structuring, support and incremental orientation;
- Textual organizers and markers,

which fall within the texture level (propositions, statements and periods);

➤ And the markers of enunciative support, which mainly belong to the level of enunciation (support) and polyphony cohesion. At the semantic-semantic and textual levels, by observing the sentences introduced by connectors, this article examines the semantic connection between sentences and discourse structures beyond the sentence level.

2. Scope of Connectors

A text is not a simple chain of sentences, the sentences of a discourse are not linearly aligned, but the object of groupings of several natures. It is therefore necessary to theorize linguistically the factors of grouping proposals into textual sub-units.

In their classic work *Les mots du discours*, Ducrot *et al.* propose a detailed analysis of the uses of “mais” which shows that this connector is likely to focus on non-verbal, left and right. [2]

In this section, the article uses the concept of scope. The word *scope* is, as everyone knows, very ambiguous. H. Nølle summarizes the ambiguity that, in his eyes, reigns around the use of the word, pointing out that “*If everyone talks about scope[note: or ‘field’ -English terms-], it seems that few linguists care to provide a linguistic definition. More importantly, this concept is often confused with the concept of focus. Some people talk about the scope of negation, while others talk about his family, obviously referring to exactly the same thing.*” [3]

All linguistic analysis does not aim at the global interpretation of discourse, but at the atomization of language facts, that is, their breakdown into small units, and then their recomposition, “*It provides a more accurate overview than the impressionist text description, which is related to abstract rather than analysis.*” [4] “*It can be said that these two types of approach, integrative and textanalytic, are both necessary, insofar as they*

capture both sides of discursivity: the consistency of discourse is established through continuous work on various inconsistencies, and the boundaries of discourse are only crossed by dominant words."[5]

3. Introductory Expressions and Phrastic Scope

Michel Charolles proposes four concepts to study more specifically the organization of discourse, namely four textual organization plans: **period, chain, scope and sequence**. [6] The question of scope is one of the theories of these semantic, enunciative and macro-syntactic phenomena. According to him, in logic, the "scope" of an operator designates the fragment of a given formula to which it applies [7]. The issue of periodic structuring of texts is another. Adam defines: *"the periodic groupings of propositions as non-typed, the sequences (narrative, descriptive, explanatory, argumentative and dialogical) are typed principles of orderly groupings of proposition packages"*. [8]

Between low and high levels of text, the role of textual linguistics *"is to explore and theorize intermediate levels of structuring, with, in particular, the level of text plans, optional and more or less flexible depending on generic constraints."* [8]

Thus considered, Adam indicates that textual linguistics has yet another task as follows: *"theorize peritextual boundaries both integrated and located at the boundary of the text unit"* and must also *"theorize the relations between co-texts within a (macro)textual organization grouping a certain number of texts"*. [8]

Finally, the theory of the Textual Analysis of Discourse by Jean-Michel Adam is thought based on three preliminary observations: textual linguistics is one of the disciplines of discourse analysis, the text is its object of analysis, and there is a coexistence relationship between text and the effect of genericity. [9]

Pragmatic connectors have a scope, that is, they modify the interpretation of a certain set of constituents. These connectors have **two properties** [10]: they modify a semantic entity – like all adverbs, and they refer to other entities – like all anaphoric ones.

Discourse begins where the power of structural connections ends, and these structural connections essentially belong to the syntactic devices.

The starting point of the research on French adverse connectors was the argumentative theory of O. Ducrot and J.-C. Anscombre, notably for the description of the "mais" in French. Two functions of "mais" can be distinguished. The selected criteria are the position of the marker in the statement, and the type of the element with which *mais q* strings, either replica or non-verbal event, and for each type, properties that aim to determine the reference of the constructed opposition.

For phrases of the type "*p maisPA q*" or "*p*" and "*q*", the use of *maisPA* involves two simulated attitudes on the part of the speaker to describe what PA adds to *p* and *q*:

1) The speaker assumes that there is a certain determinate conclusion *r*, such that *p* is a possible argument in favor of *r*, and *q* is a possible argument in favor of non-*r*. [11]

2) The set "*p maisPA q*" constitutes, for the speaker, an argument in favor of non-*r*.

Non must be understood here as the symbol of negation, and not as a particular French morpheme. Take the example of Ducrot (example 1):

- A : *Est-ce que j'ai le temps d'aller à X ?*

- B : *C'est loin, mais tu peux prendre le métro.*

(example 1)

Here, for B, *p = C'est loin*.

r = Tu n'as pas le temps d'aller à X.

non-*r = Tu as le temps d'aller à X.*

Ducrot states, "mais" articulates two acts of argumentation, *p-->r* and *q-->r*, the second being stronger than the first. The first act of argumentation is subordinate to the second, which is the guiding act of the intervention: *p* leads to the conclusion *r*; the part of the sentence that follows *mais* is an argument for the opposite conclusion non-*r*. *"The argumentative operator is a morpheme that, when applied to a content, transforms the argumentative potentials of that content."* [12]

In some cases, *r* can be equivalent to non-*q*, giving the impression of a direct opposition between *p* and *q*. With regard to the semantic relationship marked by the "mais" of refutation between elements *p* and *q*, it is observed that there is a substitution relationship in which *q* must replace *p*. In this case, the *mais* can be paraphrased by concessive adverbs of the type of *pourtant*, *cependant*, whereas such a paraphrase is almost impossible when *q*, while being an argument for non-*r*, is different from non-*r*.

With PA, one opposes the argumentative

interpretation given by the recipient to the proposition p or to the one he could give. The “mais” of refutation prolongs a controversial negation, which rectifies an assertion that has been rejected.

The employment of the **maisSN** entity has three particularly characteristic conditions:

I) The proposition p must be negative, and therefore decompose into non- p' .

II) Furthermore, q must be presented as showing the illegitimateness of the denial p' in p .

III) One last condition concerns the semantic relationship between q and p' . The central idea is that q is supposed to replace p' .

From a functional point of view, the corrective “mais” serves to correct an earlier statement.

Ducrot speaks of an act of rectification, correction that should be part of the illocutionary acts to designate this type of relationship between p and q . [11]

For example: *Il parle français, mais il est Belge.* (example 2)

By using “mais”, the speaker somehow corrects an assertion that has been denied; he claims that p is inadequate and then replaces p with q . It is actually giving the right answer after denying a previous claim.

With **maisSN**, the speaker opposes the legitimacy of what the recipient has said, or might have said or thought. As Anscombe & Ducrot note, the **maisPA** is likely to be replaced by *cependant*, *pourtant*, *néanmoins*, *en revanche* and *par contre*, the **maisSN** is substitutable by *les deux points* (:), *au contraire*, *même que*. [13] Ducrot’s hypothesis is that what is marked, in both cases, is the opposition of the speaker to the recipient.

Adam distinguishes five functions of *mais*: **mais reinforcement-exaggeration**, **mais refutative**, **mais phatic and/or demarcation of textual segments**, **mais concessive**, and **mais argumentative**. [14] Piot (1993) did research on the use of “mais” and other adverse connectors of French such as *seulement* and *cependant*. [15] In addition, connectives are a necessary auxiliary means to strengthen or concretize the specific grammatical relationship and semantics, which is why the connection is central, the core of this function is to determine certain logical relations between the functional units of the language. Anscombe did a thorough study of the functioning and linguistic properties of the marker *Je me suis laissé dire* in terms of causality and reactivity. [16] In the article

Argumentative Connectors in Written Argumentation: Cases of Algerian Learners from 3as, the author pointed out that Algerian learners in the third year of secondary school (3AS) use argumentative connectors in a limited and often incorrect way, favoring enumerative and causative connectors while neglecting adverse, concessional and conditional connectors, among others, because of their grammatical complexity. [17] In the act of translation, the French connector “mais” retains its semantic meaning but often loses interpersonal and argumentative subtleties. Simplification and explication reduce its discursive impact, affecting reception. [18]

4. Transphrastic Scope

In the process of argumentation, different kinds of sentences used have the same purpose of reaching the same presupposed conclusion r . For example, the role of connection between existential sentences and their successors can be loaded by connectors.

Connections are made using marks that partially overlap morphological categories without destroying the consistency of the text.

Regarding the relationship between adverbs of form and index, Charolles considers that a vast set of antecedent adverbial constituents play an important role in the organization of discourse and function in a very different way. [19]

On the information level, frame adverbs can construct the content of the text by participating in the propositional content of their statements. “The use of this type of organization responds to an information subdivision strategy that imposes groupings and breakdowns, these subdivisions being added to the connections between statements expressed or expressible using connectors and/or anaphores.” [19]

In the text fragment (example 3) of Rousseau’s *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes*, as usual, connectors (*mais* and *pourtant*) and anaphores (the pronoun *le* that resumes *un tel spectacle*) were used:

[À Genève, on ne trouvera que des hommes,]E1 [mais pourtant un tel spectacle a bien son prix,]E2 [et ceux qui le rechercheront vaudront bien les admirateurs du reste.]E3 (p.12) (example 3)

In the example above, the prepositional syntax *À Genève*, detached from the beginning of the first sentence, is syntactically an addition; It is

neither ruled nor attached to the verb. Thus, the phrastic frontier was set as the theme progresses. All adverbs separated at the head of a sentence are frame in the sense that they are able to refer not only to the proposition at the head of that in which they appear but also to one or more others appearing in the sequence.

“Without talking about scope or remote connection, previous SPs highlight a semantic criterion (not necessarily referential) that can index a sequence of statements.” [19] This SP locates the fact denoted by statement E1 in which it appears. This is perfectly normal, except that the power of *À Genève* does not stop there: the entire passage is indeed understood, and is made to be understood, as meaning that the facts denoted by E2 and E3 also describe what is happening *à Genève*. The fact denoted by E1 once connected to a spatial reference (*À Genève*), this would be implicitly taken up later, via a null anaphore attached to each of the statements. This solution would in particular explain why the generic SNs (*un tel spectacle* and *les admirateurs du reste*) in E2 and E3 are attached to the reference of the spatial SP (as a kind of associative anaphore).

Once open, frames tend to incorporate incoming statements by default, regardless of whether or not they are connected by connectors and anaphores. The fact that the SP *À Genève* indexes not only the fact F1 denoted by E1 but also F2 and F3 denoted by E2 and E3 is not due to the fact that E1, E2 and E3 are already connected by connectors (*mais* and *pourtant*) and anaphores (the pronoun *le* in E3). With the previous example, the observation is made. The frames determined by adverbs constitute informationally homogeneous blocks. Frame adverbs maintain privileged connections with the various forms of anaphore. Obviously, the presence of these connections promotes the extension of the SP *À Genève* beyond its initial sentence.

5. Conclusions

Words are the foundation of discourse existence, and discourse is the extension and promotion of the inherent referential and coherent functions of words. Apart from anaphoric manners and introductory expressions of discourse frames (EIC), the connector is an important means of sentence cohesion. The sentences of a discourse are not linearly aligned, but the object of groupings of several natures. Adam

distinguishes three kinds of connection markers in the general class of connectors. Michel Charolles proposes four concepts to study more specifically the organization of discourse, namely four textual organization plans. Discourse begins where the power of structural connections ends, and these structural connections essentially belong to the syntactic devices.

The employment of the *maisSN* entity has three particularly characteristic conditions. With *maisSN*, the speaker opposes the legitimacy of what the recipient has said, or might have said or thought. In the process of argumentation, this article noticed that different kinds of sentences used have the same purpose of reaching the same presupposed conclusion *r*. The frames determined by adverbs constitute informationally homogeneous blocks. Frame adverbs maintain privileged connections with the various forms of anaphore.

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