

**Second Vasconian Meeting
on Semantics and Pragmatics
VMSP-04**

**Sara/Sare
1-2 October 2004**

Semantika eta Pragmatikari buruzko
Baskoniar Jardunaldiak
Rencontres Vasconnes de Sémantique et Pragmatique
Encontres Vascons de Semantica e Pragmatica
Encuentros Vascones de Semántica y Pragmática



From Discourse to Dialogue: Connectors, Reference and Information Partition

Place of the meeting
“Omordia” Holiday Village
64310 Sara/Sare
(next to the church and the village square)

ERSS
Equipe de Recherche en Syntaxe et Sémantique
(UMR 5610 – CNRS)
Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail

IKER
Centre de Recherche sur la Langue et les Textes Basques
(UMR 5478 – CNRS)
Université de Bordeaux III
Université de Pau et des Pays de l’Adour
Baiona/Bayonne

ILCLI
Institute for Logic, Cognition, Language and Information
(UPV–EHU)
Donostia/San Sebastián

IRIT
Institut de Recherche en Informatique de Toulouse
(UMR 5505 – CNRS)
Université Paul Sabatier

Laboratoire Jacques Lordat
(EA 1941; invited research group)
Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail

Participation in the meeting is reserved to the members of the organizing research groups.

Contents

<i>Andrée Borillo</i> Discourse Function of Locative Inversion Sentences in French	2
<i>Francis Cornish & Marion Fossard</i> Indirect Anaphora via Pronouns in English and French: Linguistic Hypotheses and Psycholinguistic Evidence	2
<i>Ricardo Etxepare</i> Reported Discourse at the Root: Comp-initial Clauses in Spanish	3
<i>Koldo Garai</i> Background Recovery by Viewpoint Shift: Indexicals in Gabriel Aresti's Poetry	4
<i>Kepa Korta</i> Whatever we say: Varieties of Propositional <i>Input</i> for Pragmatic Inference	5
<i>Jesus Mari Larrazabal</i> Philosophy of Communication: How to do it	5
<i>Anne Le Draoulec & Myriam Bras</i> <i>Alors</i> as a (possible) Temporal Connective in Discourse Structuration	6
<i>Marie-Paule Péry-Woodley & Anne Le Draoulec</i> Temporal Organization of Text: The Interplay between Framing and the Relation of Narration	6
<i>Laurent Prévot & Philippe Muller</i> Acknowledgment Markers in Dialogue	6
<i>Laure Vieu, Myriam Bras, Nicholas Asher & Michel Aurnague</i> Locating Adverbials in Discourse	7
<i>Laure Vieu, Laurent Prévot & Philippe Muller</i> Conversational Gameboard and Dialogue Rhetorical Structure	7

Discourse Function of Locative Inversion Sentences in French

Andrée Borillo (ERSS)

aborillo@univ-tlse2.fr

In descriptive presentations within narrative texts, as in more specialized texts (travel guides), there is a specific type of assertive sentence, rarely found elsewhere in written texts. It opens with an initial locative adverbial followed by the inversion of the verb and the subject: [Advloc V S]

- (1) *Under the Mirabeau bridge flows the Seine ...Above the houses rises a ruined castle tower*

Moreover, we find quite a large number of sentences without any verb:

- (2) *In the choir, a silver lamp*

1. Sentence structure

We will mention constraints on the verb –on its argumental structure but also on its semantic nature, on its tense etc.– and as a consequence on the semantic role of the subject (non agentive). As for the adverbial itself, it can act as an intrapredicative or an extrapredicative complement, but this doesn't make much difference for the information structure of the sentence: it assumes a thematic role whereas the rhematic role is played by the postposed subject (differences between a postposed and non-postposed subject).

2. Discourse structure

IL sentences are presentational sentences. The subject postposed to the verb is to be taken as the focus of the sentence. The predicate is only there to manifest the existence or the coming to existence of the entity in S. The verb is “informationally light”: when it is not reduced to a mere copula (or *to be found*), it is more or less inferable from the sentential context (*a river flows, roses bloom, a light glows*, etc.). Generally, IL sentences do not have a cadrative function. They don't open a new discourse fragment unless a) the location in the adverbial is specifically known (identified by a proper name): cf (1) above; b) the location's existence is conventionally presupposed. When an IL sentence occurs as the first sentence of a discourse, presenting something as a location brings it into existence –and along with it, the entity it contains (“To exist, a thing has to be somewhere” (Bolinger 1977)):

- (3) *In the mountain, lived an old hermit*

Indirect Anaphora via Pronouns in English and French: Linguistic Hypotheses and Psycholinguistic Evidence

Francis Cornish (ERSS) & Marion Fossard (Jacques Lordat)

cornish@univ-tlse2.fr, fossard@univ-tlse2.fr

There is disagreement within both linguistics and psycholinguistics concerning the use of unaccented third person pronouns to refer to implicit referents. Some researchers (e.g. Erku & Gundel 1987) argue that it is impossible or highly marked, while others (e.g. Yule 1982) maintain that it is not only acceptable but commonly used in normal discourse. However, both sides in the debate may be correct: while peripheral implicit referents (which evoke the means or the instrument by which a given state of affairs is established) are not easily referred to using pronouns, central or “nuclear” implicit referents are. We tested this hypothesis in two

experiments, involving different languages (English and French). The results of both experiments show that pronominal reference to implicit referents caused slower reading times compared to explicit referents only for peripheral referents. We discuss these results with respect to Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski's (1993, 2000) *Givenness Hierarchy*.

Reported Discourse at the Root: Comp-initial Clauses in Spanish

Ricardo Etxepare (IKER)

etxepare@euskalnet.net

In colloquial speech, main clauses in peninsular Spanish can be headed by an overt complementizer (Spitzer 1942; Porroche Ballesteros 1995; Etxepare 2002):

- (1) *Oye (que) el Madrid ha ganado la Champions*

hey, that the Real Madrid has won the Champions

The apparent optionality of the complementizer masks an important semantic difference, however: whereas (1) w/o the complementizer constitutes an assertion whose propositional content is just that Real Madrid won the Champions, (1) with the complementizer contributes the additional meaning that someone else, who is not the speaker, said that Real Madrid won the Champions. In other words, *que* introduces reported speech in matrix contexts. This is not otherwise an inherent function of *que*, which is associated to different types of dependencies in Spanish (see e.g. Lopez García 1999). Now consider (2):

- (2) a. *Si viene tu madre, el tabaco es tuyo*

if comes your mother, the tobacco is yours

- b. *Si viene tu madre, que el tabaco es tuyo*

if comes your mother, that the tobacco is yours

Imagine the following situation: two teenagers are secretly smoking in a room. Fearing that his mother could show up and find out, one of them says (2a). By saying that, the speaker asks the other person to act as if the tobacco was his or hers. By saying (2b) the speaker asks more than just pretense: he/she asks the other person to say that the tobacco is his /hers. This is not, strictly speaking, reported speech. Both (1) with *que*, and (2b) can be accounted for together under the hypothesis that matrix complementizers are associated to an underlying speech eventuality. This speech eventuality can be referred to (Asher 1993; Stirling 1993) and modified and quantified over (Parsons 1990). Consider in this regard the contrasts in (3a-b), (4a-b), and (5):

- (3) a. *Si viene mi madre, el tabaco es tuyo, y *educadamente*

if comes my mother, the tobacco is yours, and politely

- b. *Si viene mi madre, que el tabaco es tuyo, y educadamente*

if comes my mother, that the tobacco is yours, and politely

- (4) a. *Siempre que el Madrid es el mejor, qué pelma*

always that the Madrid is the best, how boring

“Always (saying) that Real Madrid is the best, how boring”

This paper presents an analysis of syntactic and semantic aspects of quotative constructions in Spanish. It argues that quotative constructions come in two types: one of them incorporates a full VP, with an underlying verb of communication (à la Ross 1970), and supports overt thematic arguments:

- (5) *Tu padre que cuándo vienes*

Your father that when you-come

“Your father saying “when are you coming””

The other is a nominal structure, with the semantic import of an indefinite description, which contributes an existential quantification over variables referring to utterances (as in Lahiri 2002). The analysis defended here has as a consequence a radical revision of so called “double complementizer” structures in Spanish (Lahiri 1991, 2002; Plann 1982; Rivero 1995; Suñer 1991, 1994; Uriagereka 1988).

Background Recovery by Viewpoint Shift: Indexicals in Gabriel Aresti’s Poetry

Koldo Garai (IKER)

Koldo.Garai@u-bordeaux3.fr

At the time of poetic generation displacement, one of the main criticisms political or Social Poetry suffered was based on its supposed lack of “poeticity”; this criticism was favored through the recovery of the old *literaturnost* concept by late Structuralisms and Stylistics of the 70’s; literariness was based on the allotted purpose direction of the text: what it is said (non-literary) vs. how it is said (literary); for a text to be literary it had to be self conscious or directed to itself; and a way to measure this was the number of “poetic means” (i.e. “figures”) it contained. By contrast, Social Poetry had a “communicative” goal, a “message” to spread; thus, it needed to follow a (Sartrean) political agenda, and this was identified by the new generations as propaganda of pamphlet literature. The supposed referentiality was achieved by social poetry through *demonstratio ad oculos* but, we argue, for the most part, not in a naïve propagandistic way, as stated *a posteriori* by literary critics, especially in the case study at hand: Gabriel Aresti, poetry prize in 1968. Despite the quick erase of the social poets from the poetic scene by belletristic critics, there is no substantial work analyzing one of the most evident linguistic and cognitive strategies social poets used, namely the deixis. We may define literary critics’ work as a contextualizing must; the text has to be set in its appropriate background to account for the most probable meaning building process. Contextualizing can also be defined as trying to state the relationship between background ideologies (in its broader Bakhtinian sense), against which the text might be read, and the textual ergonomic directing saliency prompts. The complexity of the deictic elements is a clear path to solve this problem, as explained by Grundy and Yiang (2001). To elucidate the text in this way (Gabriel Aresti’s poetic work), we will use Fauconnier (1997) powerful machinery, in trying to describe the Viewpoint space, that is, the perspective from which meaning is being built at the focus space. We argue that deictic elements act not only as sentential anaphoric or discursive cataphoric elements, but, most importantly, specially in an environment of tied Francoist Spanish censorship, as scene callers and backward projectors (Turner 2000) of the relevant pragmatic contexts.

**Whatever we say:
Varieties of Propositional *Input* for Pragmatic Inference**

Kepa Korta (ILCLI)
ylpkocak@sf.ehu.es

On the basis of Grice's distinction between what is said and what is implicated by an utterance (or maybe better, by a speaker in making an utterance), it is commonplace to consider the former –what is said– as the *input* (the starting point, point of departure, premise, ground...) for the identification of the latter –the implicature. The intense debate between literalists and contextualists on the respective delimitation of these concepts and their mutual relationship has not questioned the assumption that the determination of what is said is a necessary step for the correct identification of implicatures. Borrowing ideas originally developed by Korta and Perry (forthcoming), I'll argue that the previous picture is basically wrong. Independently of what concept of what is said we adopt (either *semantic-minimal*, *completed* or *expanded* what is said), for arriving to a correct interpretation of the implicatures it is not necessary for the hearer –and sometimes it is even counterproductive– to fully know what the speaker has said. In any utterance, the speaker expresses –but does not say– several propositions, any of which can be the adequate (intended) *input* for the identification of implicatures on the part of the hearer. From this discussion, I'll try to draw some conclusions for a correct characterization of the concept of what is said and the post-Gricean debate on the so-called interface between semantics and pragmatics.

Philosophy of Communication: How to do it

Jesus Mari Larrazabal (ILCLI)
ylplaanj@sf.ehu.es

General literature about communication is in fashion. Specialized literature in the social sciences is massively increasing every day. Among other fields, sociology, anthropology, social psychology, and political science must be mentioned. What about philosophy? Leaving aside the old tradition of reflection on the idea of *communicare* and the hermeneutically-rooted *communication theory*, I am interested in the analytic approach taken by the philosophically oriented pragmatics and by the neo-Aristotelian rhetoric. In fact, I consider *communication* in discourse (production and analysis), especially in micro- and meso-discourses, which are used by all of us in everyday life in our interpersonal relations. Three basic levels must be taken into account when building a philosophy of communication: (a) ontology; (b) epistemology –knowledge of what essentially happens in communication, in connection with philosophy of action and philosophy of language; (c) ethics.

I am going to speak about (b), with some final remarks about (c), in terms of an ethic of action, centred on the notion of *responsibility*. I will present my own view on *pragmarhetoric* for discourse production and analysis, giving its main components (philosophical, methodological, theoretical and empirical components) on the ground of a mentalist approach to communicative intention and persuasive (convincing) intention. I will show with some examples the way of applications of that double-level intentional theory.

***Alors* as a (possible) Temporal Connective in Discourse Structuration**

Anne Le Draoulec (ERSS) & Myriam Bras (ERSS)

draoulec@univ-tlse2.fr, bras@univ-tlse2.fr

We study the role of the French adverb *alors* in discourse, regarding whether and when it may be given the status of temporal connective, i.e., when it is able to establish, in addition to a temporal relation between the eventualities described by two utterances, a steady relation at the discourse level. We focus on the temporal uses of *alors* (then, at that time), leaving the purely consequential uses aside. We show that the syntactic position of *alors* is to be taken into account in order to examine its connective role. Only initial *alors* proves to necessarily establish a discourse relation, that we will describe as a dependency relation. When *alors* is in internal or final position, it establishes a temporal relation, that may go, in some cases only, with a dependency relation.

Temporal Organization of Text: The Interplay between Framing and the Relation of Narration

Marie-Paule Péry-Woodley (ERSS) & Anne Le Draoulec (ERSS)

pery@univ-tlse2.fr, draoulec@univ-tlse2.fr

We present a corpus-based study of how texts guide readers through time. Our focus is on sentence-initial temporal expressions which, beyond locating an event in time, take on a discourse dimension *via* the process of “forward-labelling”: contrary to connection, which looks backward towards previous text, forward-labelling, also referred to as “discourse framing”, looks forward and provides instructions for the interpretation of forthcoming text. As a first step towards an investigation of the impact of genre on temporal framing, our French language corpus is constructed according to the most crucial distinction regarding temporality: narrative/non-narrative. The non-narrative sub-corpus provides archetypal examples of text organisation through temporal framing. Narrative texts on the other hand, because of the interaction between framing and another major mode of temporal organisation –through the Narration relation– resist the indexing model and therefore force us to refine the notions.

Acknowledgment Markers in Dialogue

Laurent Prévot (IRIT/LOA) & Philippe Muller (IRIT)

prevot@loa-cnr.it, muller@irit.fr

This talk will start with a clarification of the main notions involved in “responses in dialogue” or feedback processes. We are specially interested in positive feedbacks such as acknowledgments. Thus we will present a corpus analysis of route explanation dialogues in French.

We focus on lexical markers of positive feedbacks such as “oui, ouais, d’accord, okay, voilà, bon, mm”. We will pay special attention to the question of which context (producer, target...) and for which purposes (reception receipt, acceptance, endorsement...) a particular marker is

selected from this list. Prosodic (especially intonation and timing) clues will be taken into account for this task. Thus we compare our findings with works on related phenomena (back-channel) on other languages. We will end by proposing a preliminary generalization of these observations.

Locating Adverbials in Discourse

***Laure Vieu (IRIT/LOA), Myriam Bras (ERSS),
Nicholas Asher (Un. of Texas/IRIT) & Michel Aurnague (IKER)***
vieu@irit.fr, bras@univ-tlse2.fr,
nasher@mail.la.utexas.edu, aurnague@univ-pau.fr

We aim at proposing an analysis of the discursive role of Locating Adverbials, (LA) i.e. Prepositional Phrases that locate the eventualities in time and/or in space, such as *un peu plus tard, ce matin, deux kilomètres plus loin, près de l'arbre* (a little later, this morning, two kilometers further, near the tree). In (Aurnague et al. 2001), we gave the compositional semantics of these adverbials together with their syntactic analysis. We assumed that, when they are Verb Phrase modifiers, i.e. in VP Adjunct position, these adverbials mainly contribute to the semantic content of the sentence.

In this talk, we focus on the cases when these adverbials are IP Adjuncts, i.e. sentential adverbials. We limit this study to cases where they are dislocated to the left of the main IP structure of the sentence, for which we assume that they are all IP Adjuncts cases. In such a position, LA seem to play an important part in structuring discourse, although they are not considered as discourse connectives. It is precisely the contribution of LA to discourse that we want to tackle here, providing both a descriptive and formal account of this contribution. In particular, we will deal with the frame introducer role of the LA, considering “frames” along the lines of (Charolles 1997). The formal description will be done in the framework of Segmented Discourse Representation Theory, a logical theory of the semantics-pragmatics interface (Asher 1993; Asher and Lascarides 2003). In a previous work (Asher et. al. 1995), we showed that the temporal and spatial LA can receive a spatio-temporal interpretation, provided they appear in a trajectory description. We will account for these particular interpretations within the general framework that will have been set up for the IP adjunct LAs.

Conversational Gameboard and Dialogue Rhetorical Structure

Laure Vieu (IRIT/LOA), Laurent Prévot (IRIT/LOA) & Philippe Muller (IRIT)
vieu@irit.fr, prevot@loa-cnr.it, muller@irit.fr

This talk will try to bring closer two kinds of approaches to dialogue through the use of “conversational scoreboards”: on the one hand, conventional or dialectical approaches and more particularly Hamblin’s theory of dialogue (Hamblin 1970, 1987); on the other hand, discourse semantics which operated a shift from static truth-value semantics to an update semantics.

Speakers obey to the discourse coherence principles (such as the right-frontier constraint) within extended dialogue turns. Current dialectical approaches fall short of being able to

account for these aspects, as they are simply not equipped with notions allowing to deal with this level of analysis.

On the other side, interactive aspects of dialogue introduce several problems for discourse semantic approaches. Phenomena like corrections or rejections require a revision operation which appears to be a quite complex mechanism. Also the potential misunderstandings and other communication problems are impossible to deal with only a discourse structure. Where SDRT chooses a weakened-BDI approach, we prefer here to use Hamblin's notion of public commitment.

Our "conversational scoreboard" consists of the discourse structure and the commitment stores of speakers over certain elements of this structure. Elements of commitment stores are SDRS contents (i.e. either simple DRS or complex constituents). We consider here how commitments evolve, and how this can be seen as an interpretation of coherence relations in a dialogue.

The rules can thus be seen as update rules of the board for each recognized act for which a relation with the context can be inferred.

Organizing Committee

Michel Aurnague (IKER, coordinator)

Myriam Bras (ERSS)

Joana Garmendia (ILCLI)

Laure Vieu (IRIT)

The “Vasconian Meeting on Semantics and Pragmatics” is organized by four research groups of the Pyrenees: ERSS (Equipe de Recherche en Syntaxe et Sémantique, UMR 5610 – CNRS, Tolosa/Toulouse), IKER (Centre de Recherche sur la Langue et les Textes Basques, UMR 5478 – CNRS, Baiona/Bayonne), ILCLI (Institute for Logic, Cognition, Language and Information, UPV–EHU, Donostia/San Sebastián) and IRIT (Institut de Recherche en Informatique de Toulouse, UMR 5505 – CNRS). This meeting is intended to gather – regularly and in a user-friendly way– members from the four groups above-mentioned, in order to present ongoing works and reflections about one or several topics in the field of semantics and pragmatics. Although talks will be made in English, other languages from the Vasconian and Pyrenean areas (Basque, French, Occitan, Spanish...) will be also welcome during the discussions.



Cover: façade of the 17th-century farmhouse “Ortillopitz”; Back: “Pottok” pony, emblem of the woodland “Xareta” (Sara/Zugarramurdi/Urdazubi/Ainhoa).