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Discourse markers in the Framework of the Theory of Enunciative and Predicative Operations: limits and perspectives

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Discourse markers in the framework of the Theory of Enunciative and Predicative Operations: limits and perspectives.

Discourse Markers Theories and Methods.
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0. Introduction

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1. Discourse markers in the TEPO: previous studies

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Bourdier, Camus, Celle, Culioli, Dufaye, Filippi-Deswelle, Franckel, Gournay, Kaboré, Lansari, Osu, Paillard, Pennec, Vi Thi Ngan, Vigneron...

1. Discourse markers in the TEPO: previous studies

“[...] discourse words are not words which can only be described from the perspective of their discursive function ‘outside the linguistic system’ [*langue*], a more or less explicit postulate in pragmatic approaches: a discourse word is a word as much as any other word.”

(Paillard 1998: 11 my translation)

1. Discourse markers in the TEPO: previous studies

“[...] The discourse word category is based on the notion of the **enunciative scenario** (Paillard 2009): enunciation is not the act of a subject who produces an utterance but a process which can be reconstituted from the organisation of the forms (including prosodic form) that go to make up the utterance.”

(Paillard 2015: 98-99 my translation)

1. Discourse markers in the TEPO: previous studies

The **enunciative scenario** (assertion)

“a speaker expresses a wish to speak and to make public a thought / belief / knowledge that p is the case.”

(Culioli 1999:96 [1997] and elsewhere.)

1. Discourse markers in the TEPO: previous studies

“We will define a discourse word as a word or an expression that introduces a specific determination bearing on some element of the enunciative scenario.”

(Paillard 2015: 98-99 my translation)

2. Discourse marking: towards a definition

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“The grammatical category of discourse marking refers to an operation of utterance regulation which indexically targets some operation or operations constitutive of the event of utterance itself.”

(Ranger 2018: 66)

2. Discourse marking: towards a definition

Representation

Reference assignment

Regulation

(Culioli 1990: 179-181.)

2. Discourse marking: towards a definition

Regulation of representation targets operations of categorisation (typicality, limits, exemplification)

Regulation of reference assignment might relate to surrounding text (sequence, relevance), to (inter)subjective positioning in terms of commitment, valuation, etc.

2. Discourse marking: towards a definition

In each case, an **operation** constitutive of the utterance event is recast as an **operand** in a new, metadiscursive operation.

3. Three case studies: principles

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Aims

Elaboration of a **schematic form** using a limited set of operations and operands and allowing certain latitudes of configuration that generate contextually situated values.

3. Three case studies: principles

Methods

- Data collection and classification (situated values)
- Description including distribution and collocations (factors of variation)
- Theorisation and verification

[The corpus: a thematic press corpus, including Brexit-related material, compiled from The Guardian in the last three months of 2020.]

3.1 Yet

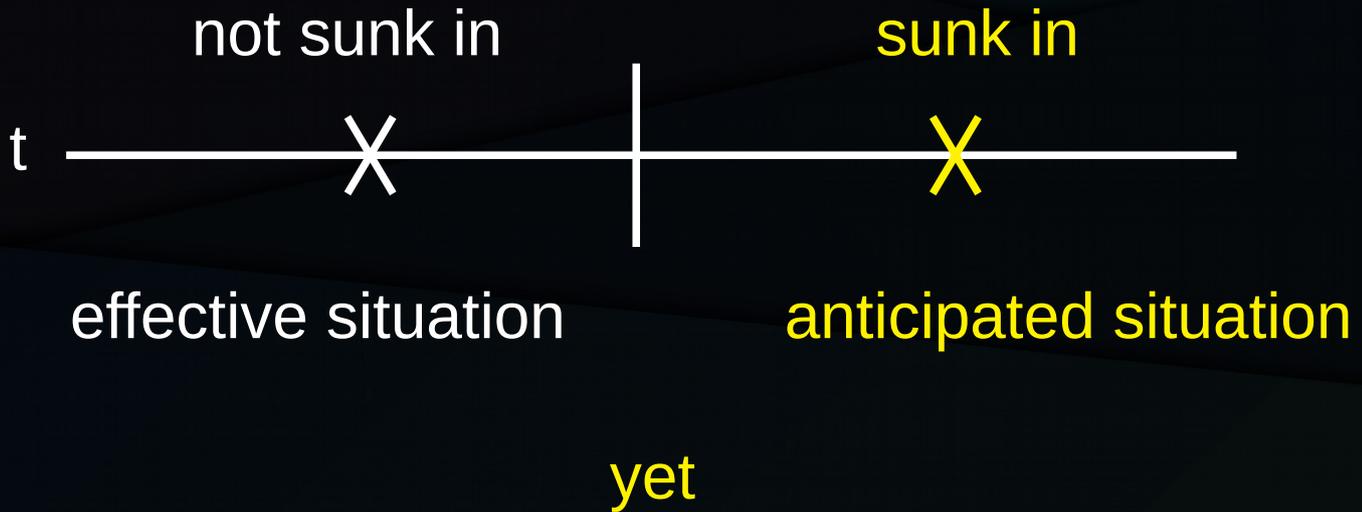
- Aspectual
- Quantifying
- Aspectuo-modal
- Argumentative

(not an exhaustive list of values!)

Not yet

(1) Still, perhaps the most egregious behaviour, which has **not yet** quite sunk in, is in the realm of what itches to be called corruption. 20/11/20

A linear, aspectual model.



Schematic form: first approach

Yet marks a discontinuity between a preconstructed situation and an effective situation.

Yet another

(2) All the ludicrous tough guy posturing is designed to do is to allow Johnson to claim after the event that the EU surrendered in the face of his patriotic stance, just like last time.

But the consequence will be **yet another** Pyrrhic victory. 25/10/20

May yet

(3) Although Tuchel insists he is "calm" about his future, the pressure **may yet** intensify. 05/10/20

Branching path model



Branching path model

The initial, linear representation works well enough with sequential spaces such as the class of instants or a class of events (Pyrrhic victory).

But the branching path representation is more general: aspectual values become a special case of a more abstract schema.

Branching path model

Yet marks a return to an offline position from which two, discontinuous and therefore incompatible positions are potentially accessible.

Branching path model

incompatible
alternative

preconstructed
position

yet

Argumentative yet

(4) There was, for example, a time when breaking the ministerial code triggered automatic resignation or sacking – **yet** Priti Patel remains in post. 20/11/20

Combining aspectual considerations (remains) and a more generic argumentative perspective.

Argumentative yet

(5) The Conservative party should recognise that winning this race requires credible voices and an equally credible plan.

Yet the suspicions of many voters are that the Conservative party remains dominated by the voices of privilege and chumocracy, more than by those representing the party of effort and reward; that it protects vested interests which bankroll the party ahead of the interests of the public; that too often government roles seem handed out based on who knows whom, rather than who knows what. 04/10/20

Diagram: branching path model

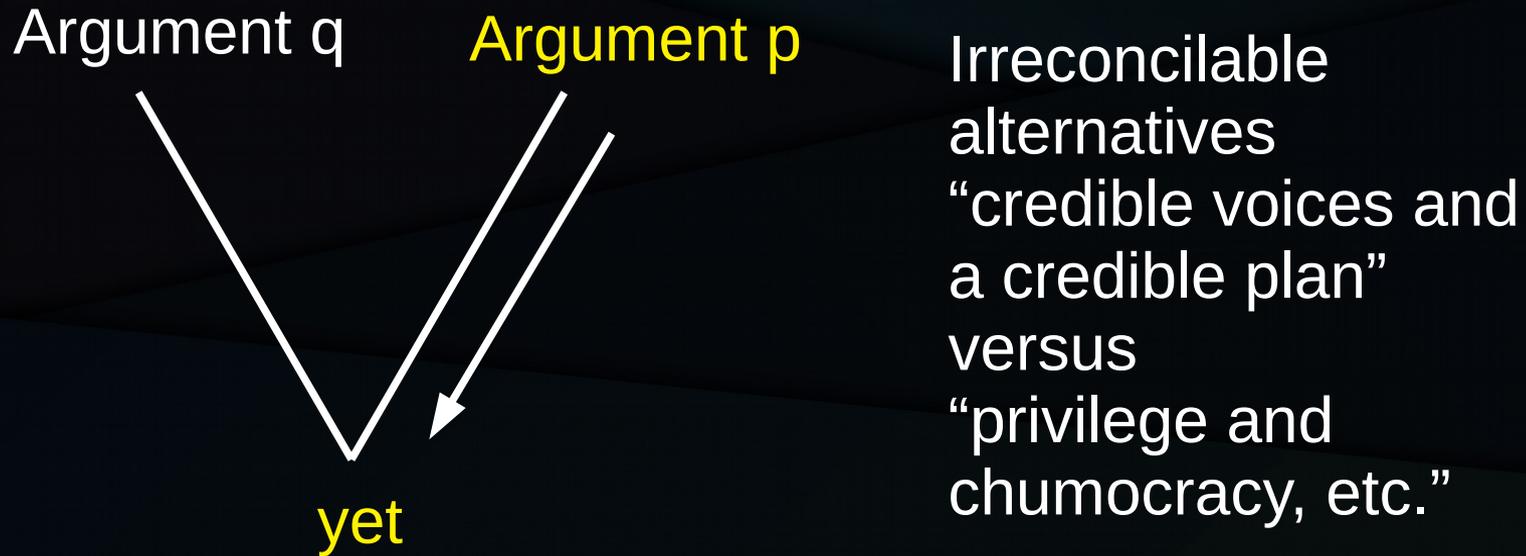
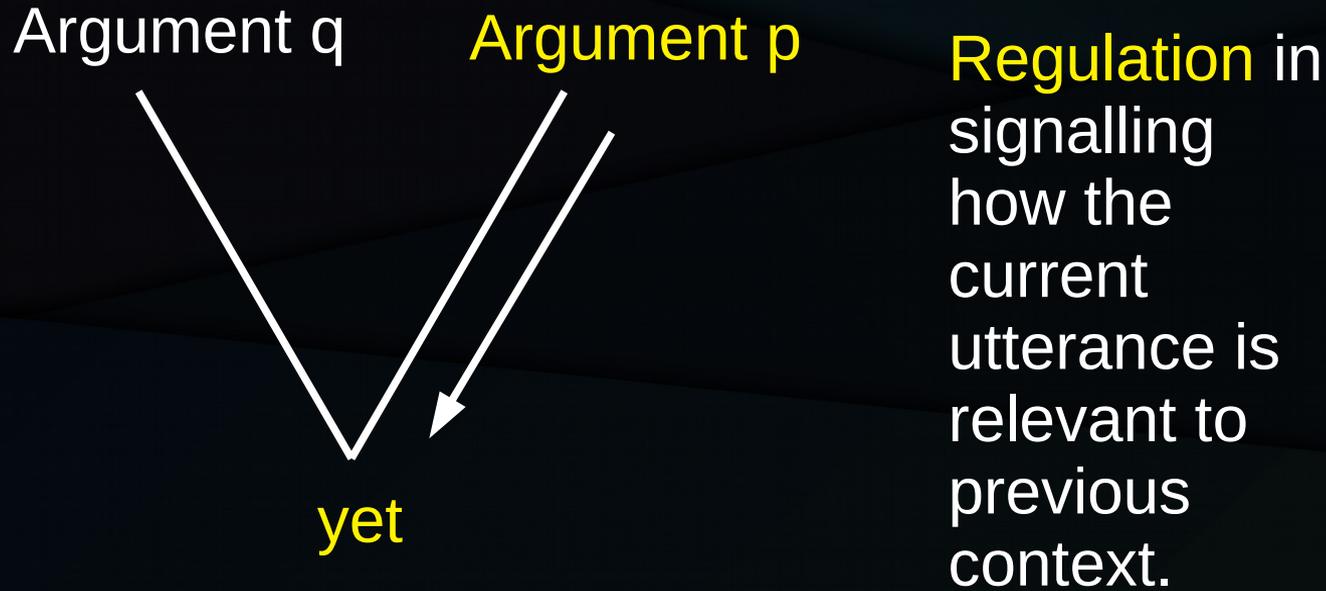


Diagram: branching path model



3.2 anyway

Anyway

- Concessive
- Additive
- Corrective
- Resumptive
- Conclusive
(non-exhaustive)

Concessive

(6) "We must abstain and explain that this is the rational course when faced with a damaging 'yes' and a disastrous 'no'. Johnson will get his 'deal' through the Commons **anyway** and he must OWN the outcome [...]" 06/12/20

Schematic form

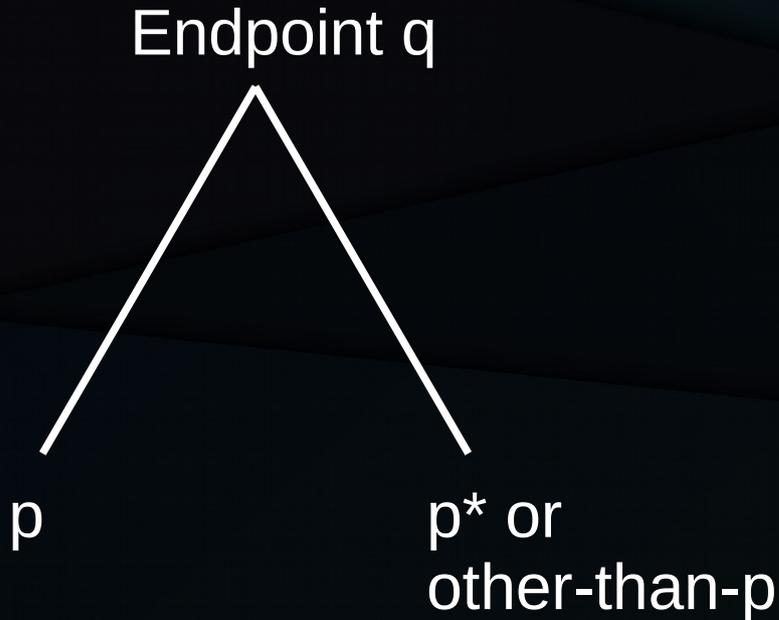


The same
endpoint is
reached
indifferently via p
or non- p .

Schematic form

Anyway marks the determination of an endpoint q relative to more than one possible path of access, p or *other-than- p* , p^* .

Schematic form



Anyway marks the determination of an endpoint q relative to more than one possible path of access, p or *other-than- p* , p^* .

Additive

(7) In years gone by William Cash had been prepared to defend the British fishing industry and the integrity of Northern Ireland within the the UK. Now he was happily prepared to sacrifice both. Northern Ireland could become a colony of the EU and who gave a shit about fish **anyway**? 30/12/20

Additive

This is the right Brexit deal



N. I. could become a colony

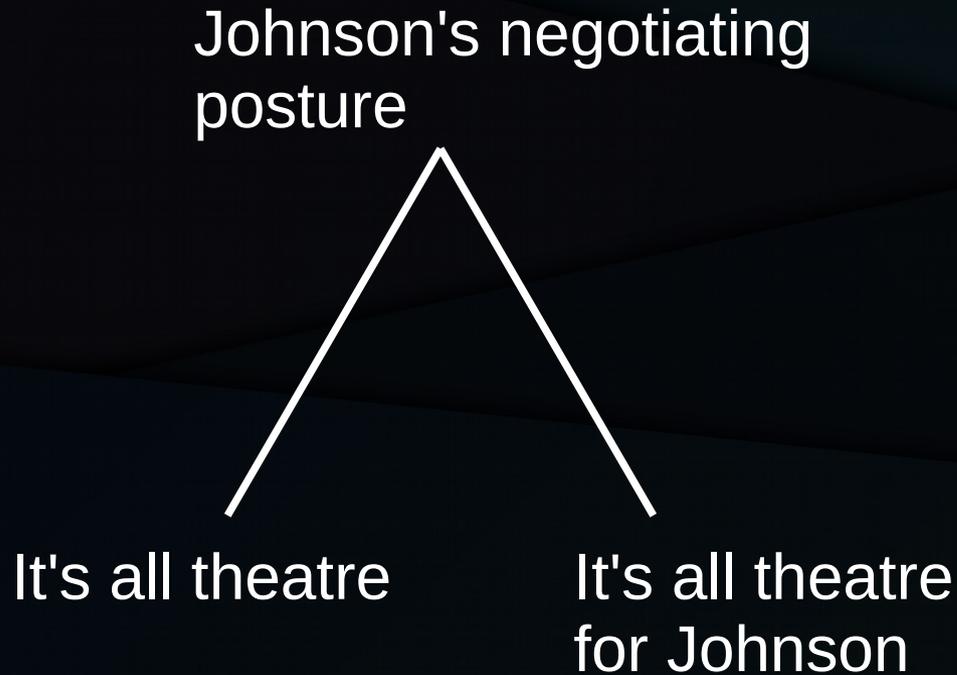
who gave a shit about fish?

Two co-oriented arguments, p and p^+ , are presented as equally valid arguments, i.e. as possible paths to a common endpoint q .

Corrective

“Actually, I don't even know whether it will do that,” said a tall Dane working for “a part of the EU” so unwilling to be further identified. “It's all theatre, isn't it? Or it is for Johnson, **anyway**. He has to show he's taken the fight to the enemy, that he's battled for Britain to the bitter end. That's who he is.” 09/12/20

Corrective

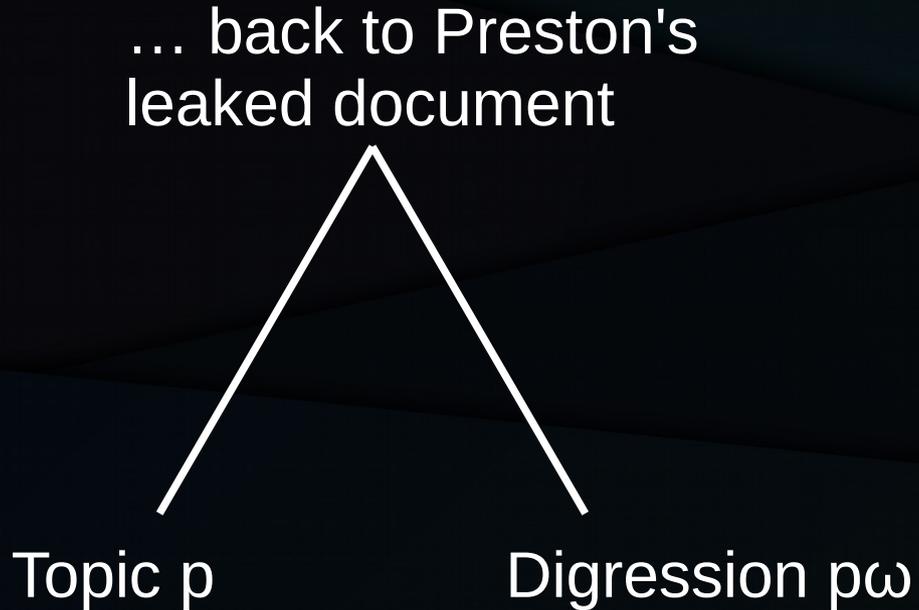


An initial argument p is downtoned to something more defensible, $p-$, in order to maintain the conclusion.

Resumptive

(9) **Anyway**, back to Preston's leaked document: we should brace for shortages in medical supplies, food and the chemicals used in the supply of essential services such as water and energy; civil unrest; job losses [...] 07/12/20

Resumptive



Anyway indicates a return to a previous topic after a digression, $p\omega$: both paths in the larger utterance event lead to the same endpoint. Regulation again in terms of relevance to previous larger context.

3.2 anyway

Conclusive

(10) At the moment I can vote remotely – as a crossbencher. For people who live far from London you are on the train for hours in a mask and it's not too healthy – though I eventually discovered that Kath and I got Covid back in January while in Cardiff. Thankfully it didn't affect my palate, which is now my lifeline. **Anyway** I'm enjoying it and will be at Westminster more often when we get back to normal, especially when they are debating something I know about – like sport or the countryside. 24/11/20

Like

- Similarity
- Exemplification
- Focus
- Quotative
(non-exhaustive)

Preposition: values of similarity

(11) “If you think, as I do, that civilised life is **like** a spider's web, easy to destroy, but hard to construct, then what I write is perhaps a caution, a warning. I'm anti-hubris.” 25/10/20

Schematic form

Like locates some occurrence x relative to a shared property instantiated in an occurrence y . The property is not generally made explicit.

The relationship between the property and y is presented as shared knowledge or transsubjective.

Variations depend on the nature of x , y and the relationship between the two.

Preposition

(12) Blaming remainers for the dire Brexit situation we are now in is **like** blaming the Resistance for causing the Vichy government's hardline policies.

09/12/20

In values of similarity x and y are different.

Preposition: values of exemplification

(13) "We should have been using the lockdown to arm ourselves better against transmission. We should have taken more proactive measures to control contagion, such as disinfecting indoor spaces **like** malls, restaurants, hairdressers and super-crowded schools especially at this time of the year. 06/12/20

3.3 like

Preposition: values of exemplification

In values of exemplarity, y is a subset of x .

x : indoor spaces

like

y : malls, restaurants, hairdressers and super-crowded schools 06/12/20

Focus

(14) Even Holder, who spends a lot of her time talking about money, says she has had a wake-up call. "You look at how you were spending before and it seems ridiculous. **Like**, why did I think I needed a new top for a meeting? Was I really spending that much on my hair each month?"

15/11/20

3.3 like

Focus

Focussing values of this type can be assimilated to exemplarity

x: it seems ridiculous.

Like,

y: why did I think I needed a new top for a meeting?
Was I really spending that much on my hair each month? 15/11/20

Quotative (generic)

(15) But gradually, his friends started settling. "I was always **like**: "Come on, let's do the music. The music's the thing." And they would be **like**: "No, I want to get a mortgage. I'm going to get a job. And I want to work my way up." 23/11/20

Quotative (generic)

In quotatives, situations x and y share a common property often induced from some typical or emblematic expression.

"I was always **like**: "Come on, let's do the music. The music's the thing." And they would be **like**: "No, I want to get a mortgage. I'm going to get a job. And I want to work my way up." 23/11/20

Quotative (specific)

(16) His 2018 work *My Northern Irish Passport* showed a travel document bearing the words: "United Kingdom of Great Britain and ... eh ... Is there supposed to be another bit?" He says: "That was part of a show I had in London after the Brexit vote. A review in an art magazine at the time didn't even get it. I was, **like**, that just proves the point." 15/10/20

Quotative (specific)

Like may also introduce plausible direct speech, with the subjective disengagement (and associated hedging) that **like** enables.

I was, **like**, that just proves the point." 15/10/20

Regulation

Like regulates operations of representation, allowing a speaker to qualify or characterise a linguistic object, indicating a common property that is recoverable in context.

4. Discussion, limits and perspectives

Summary

One of the strengths of the TEPO is an abstract representation with a limited number of operations, operands and subroutines.

Relationships are established between words and the world, between linguistic forms and cognitive representations with a limited number of operations of localisation (repérage).

No *a priori* marginalisation of pragmatic phenomena which form on the contrary part and parcel of language activity.

4. Discussion, limits and perspectives

Limits of the principle of the schematic form?

The decision to attempt to describe the invariant operations behind contextually situated variations might lead to accusations of excessive abstraction (e.g. **yet**), and a difficulty in accounting for phenomena of language change and variation (e.g. **like**).

4. Discussion, limits and perspectives

Representation of macrotextual phenomena.

There is no reason to exclude macrotextual phenomena, but accounting for these requires us to recognise that notions are constructed, reconstructed and negotiated permanently, and may extend over whole sequences of utterances, with concomitant tweaking of the model (cf. **yet** or **anyway**).

4. Discussion, limits and perspectives

Representation of sociolinguistic or stylistic phenomena.

The focus on the utterance-product as the only palpable evidence of language activity makes it difficult to go beyond this to consider how utterances and utterance sequences reflect sociolinguistic roles, and the construction of positions within speech communities (**yet, anyway, like**).

4. Discussion, limits and perspectives

Representation of frequency-related phenomena.

These might also find an echo in distributional or collocational frequencies. In any case, if the TEPO aims to open a window on cognitive activity, then it also needs to account not only for variation but also for the greater cognitive availability of certain values over others.

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