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Introduction

Adverbials: from predicative to discourse functions

Laure Sarda¹, Shirley Carter-Thomas^{1,2}, Benjamin Fagard¹, Michel Charolles^{1,3}

¹ LATTICE, UMR 8094 CNRS & ENS, Paris, France

² Institut Télécom, Télécom et Management SudParis (TMSP), France

³ Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France

This book deals with adverbials and their relationships to discourse structure. In this volume, the term *adverbial* refers to an extremely heterogeneous category which does not coincide with the word class of adverbs. Adverbials are generally defined in the literature through their syntactic function. Formally, the notion of *adverbials* encompasses different grammatical categories: prepositional phrases (PPs), noun phrases (NPs), adverbs, and clauses. Functionally, these categories can appear at different levels of the sentence (either the intra-clausal level or extra-clausal level). They are commonly distributed into three main types: *adjuncts*, *disjuncts* and *conjuncts* (Quirk *et al.* 1985), also termed *circumstance*, *stance* and *linking adverbials* in Biber *et al.* (1999) or *circumstantial*, *modal* and *conjunctive adjuncts* in Halliday (2004). As Downing & Locke (1992: 58) note: they “are optional elements which can be added or omitted without producing an ungrammatical clause”. Referential meaning is basically the main property of adjuncts. Disjuncts have an evaluative function: they add a comment by the speaker/writer on the content of the clause as a whole; whereas the main property of conjuncts is connective: they express how the speaker/writer establishes the semantic connection between two utterances (*cf.* Downing & Locke 1992: 62-63; Hasselgård 2010: 19 *ff.*).

One of the main issues is to address the relationship between functions and positions of adverbials. As the above definitions clearly suggest, there is no straightforward correspondence between the two. For instance, initial position can host different types of adverbials, either adjuncts, disjuncts or conjuncts. It is therefore important to clarify how these different terms interrelate at the syntactic and functional level. It is also important to clarify to what extent these categories have also somewhat confusingly been encompassed under the umbrella term of Discourse Markers (DM). We propose to address the issue of the function/position correspondence from a syntactic point of view. We shall try to characterize these functions on a scale of integratedness: the more an adverbial is integrated to the predicate (intra-clausal status), the more it tends to function locally (in this case the boundary between argument and adjunct can be problematic), and conversely, the less it is integrated to the predicate (extra-clausal status), the more it tends to function globally, to acquire discourse-related functions, to have a wide scope, and to set up links with the foregoing and/or the subsequent text.

In the following, we propose an overview of discourse-structuring devices: besides classical cohesion devices such as anaphora and connectives (or conjuncts), the role of various adjuncts in initial position is crucial in organizing text in blocks of information. This will be developed

in section 1. In section 2, we report on definitions of Discourse Markers trying to establish correspondences with the various categories of adverbials previously ascribed. We suggest making a distinction between Discourse Structure Markers (DSMs) and Intersubjective Discourse Markers (IDMs). DSMs establish links either backward (conjunct) or forward (adjunct). They set up connections with the preceding text or indexation on the subsequent text. IDMs, in contrast, do not link with linguistic elements before or after their host sentence. They help in conversation management or stance expression. They mainly include disjuncts and various particles, small words or interjections which do not straightforwardly participate in discourse structuring. After these theoretical adjustments, we will present the different chapters organized according to the degree of integratedness of the adverbials under study.

1. Discourse structuring devices: connection and indexation

Amongst the well-known cohesion tools which help turn a series of sentences into a text or a discourse, two main types of links (besides lexical cohesion) are usually taken into account: connectives and anaphora. They both encode interpretative instructions indicating the links to be established between their host sentence and the preceding text. Understandably, therefore, their use has been the main focus of research in the literature. They are indeed sometimes considered as the only two possible types of cohesive link, as in Reinhart (1980: 168):

The various devices for linking adjacent sentences in a discourse can be reduced to two types of links: the one is referential links (...). The other type of cohesive link is a semantic link between the propositions expressed by the two sentences (...). Any of these two types of link is sufficient to produce a cohesive discourse, and it is necessary that at least one of them will hold.

This line of argument is also followed by Sanders & Spooren (2001: 7):

Generally speaking, there are two respects in which texts can cohere: 1) Referential coherence: units are connected by repeated reference to the same object; 2) Relational coherence: text segments are connected by establishing coherence relations like CAUSE-CONSEQUENCE between them.

Connectives and anaphora complement each other in building a coherent representation of what is said. The example below illustrates how connectives (in bold case) and anaphora (in italics) work together. Both reinforce the cohesion of the excerpt:

- (1) *An ex-con sets out to avenge his brother's death (...). During his campaign, **however**, he's tracked by a veteran cop and an egocentric hit man. (<http://www.imdb.com/genre/action>).*

Despite this complementary quality, there are some fundamental differences between these two types of cohesion markers. Anaphoric expressions contribute to the propositional content of the statements in which they occur and are syntactically integrated. Connectives, on the other hand, signal links between the propositional content and/or illocutionary value of successive statements. They are not syntactically integrated into their host sentence and do not contribute to the truth-conditional interpretation of its propositional contents.

However, anaphora and connectives both establish relationships with the foregoing text. To this extent, they are considered here to belong to the same family of tools, in that they are both able to set up *connection* links. Another less well-known family of tools which provide a structure for the incoming text are *indexation* links (Charolles 1997, 2005). As illustrated in the second section of the book (see in particular the chapters by Bestgen & Piérard and Virtanen), *indexation* links are typically expressed by adverbials found at the beginning of sentences. Amongst these, we frequently find prepositional phrases, especially temporal and spatial adverbials such as *by the second half of the fourteenth century*, *in England* and *in France*, as in the following example:

- (2) ***By the second half of the fourteenth century***, few in France could claim not to be involved in it in one way or another. The effects on domestic politics were considerably and predictably different. ***In England***, the needs of war (in terms of money and provisions) provoked a considerable crisis in the years 1338-41. Thereafter Edward III, having learned some valuable political lessons, was able to develop a far greater degree of co-operation with his people, in particular with the fighting nobility, a spirit fostered by the two outstanding victories won at Crécy and Poitiers. ***In France***, by contrast, in spite of what seemed like early successes, the personal fortunes of both Philip VI and John II sank very low. Both met defeat and one suffered capture, thus becoming, in a very real sense, a national liability. The lack of strong leadership served to exacerbate these disasters, and the nobility of France was obliged to endure strong criticism for its failure to protect the kingdom and its people in their hour of need. (British National Corpus (BNC), *The Hundred Years War*. Allmand, 1991)

The prepositional phrases (PP), in bold in this excerpt, refer to a specific place or time period within which the different situations reported take place. *By the second half of the fourteenth century* thus indexes all the situations taking place within the time range denoted by the PP. It opens a temporal frame (TF₁) whose scope extends beyond the host sentence to the whole paragraph. In the same way, *In England* opens a first spatial frame (SF₁) which is closed by the advent of the second spatial frame (SF₂), *In France*, which in turn indexes the remainder of the excerpt. This emerging structure can be schematized as follows:

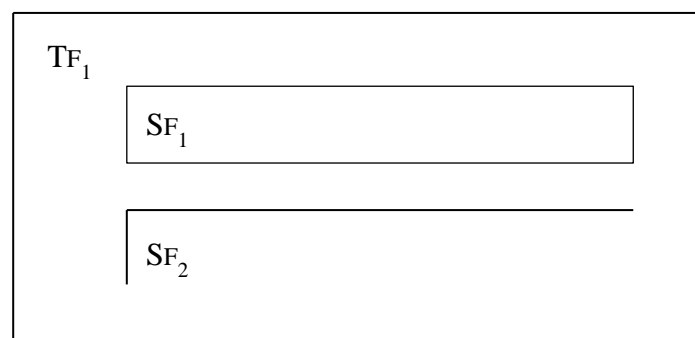


Figure 1. Emerging discourse structure with temporal and spatial frames

In this type of structuring strategy, the writer organizes the text according to the semantic criteria specified by the content of the three initial adverbials. He selects, from the propositional content of the upcoming text, a specific dimension, in this case first a temporal

dimension and then a spatial one, to organize what he is going to say. This way of organizing textual content is hierarchical and restrictive to the extent that once a dimension of a situation has been introduced by an adverbial, it tends to remain in place. For instance, any new statement occurring at the end of the extract will be understood as occurring under the scope of SF₂ (*In France*) and thus of TF₁ (*By the second half of the 14th century*). Linking it to SF₁ (*In England*) under TF₁ would be impossible, unless *In England* is reintroduced, either in sentence-initial position which would then lead to the closing of SF₂ (*In France*) and the opening of new frame SF₃ referring to the same place as SF₁ (*In England*), or in another position, in which case its contents would be simply indexed by the temporal frame TF₁.

This forward-oriented structuring device, which is frequent mostly in planned written texts, was first described by Thompson (1985) and more systematically detailed in Charolles (1997, 2005) as Discourse Frames. This notion of *frame* is based on the hypothesis that only initially occurring adverbials have this ‘framing’ capacity. They are termed *framing adverbials* when they play this forward structuring role, extending their scope over several sentences following their host-sentence. Although perhaps debatable on some accounts (*cf.* Crompton 2006 and this volume), this hypothesis is supported by a series of corpus-based studies¹ showing that prepositional adverbials are often used strategically on account of their framing potential (Enkvist 1985; Virtanen 1992a, 1992b, this volume). This is particularly true when they occur at the beginning of a paragraph, when they are used as a series and when they are announced by a trigger sentence. Chapter 6, by Bestgen & Piérard (this volume) provides additional experimental evidence showing that spatial prepositional phrases are not processed the same way in sentence-initial as in sentence-final position.

To sum up, we draw a major distinction between cohesion markers which a) establish *connection* links with the foregoing context (connectives and anaphora), and markers which b) establish *indexation* links with the ongoing text (framing adverbials)². All these devices operate in a concerted way, facilitating access to a coherent interpretation of the discourse, as hearers/readers progressively become aware of it. Given the importance of piloting the processing of incoming utterances, the beginning of the sentence is clearly a strategic location to indicate in advance how the situations and the participants in these situations are connected with those previously mentioned, and what connects them with the incoming information.

In terms of integratedness, if we focus on this initial position, it appears that within this outlying zone there is also a continuum, to the extent that not all constituents are equally integrated, even though all are extra-clausal adverbials. On the very left of the continuum, there are full connectives (conjuncts), such as (for French) *mais* (‘but’), *car* (causative ‘since’), and on the very right (less detached than connectives because they carry ideational content) we find spatial and temporal framing adverbials (adjuncts). Between these two

¹ For English, see Quirk *et al.* 1985; Lowe 1987; Downing 1991; Prideaux & Hogan 1993); for French, see Le Draoulec & Péry-Woodley 2001, 2003; Charolles & Prévost 2003; Vigier 2004; Vigier & Terran 2005; Charolles 2005; Charolles & Péry-Woodley 2005; Sarda 2005; Schrepfer-André 2006; Ho-Dac 2007; Ho-Dac & Péry-Woodley 2009; Sarda & Charolles 2009, and in a contrastive perspective, see Sarda & Carter-Thomas 2009.

² This opposition suggests a theoretical framework to point to different functions: linking backwards or linking forwards. The linking backwards function is mostly realized by markers establishing logical relations with the preceding text (conjuncts) whereas linking forwards functions are realized by markers establishing semantic relations (adjuncts). It is nevertheless important to keep in mind that many markers undergo changes in a grammaticalization process and can behave in between these two extremes. It is also important to consider that forwards linking markers can semantically set up an anaphoric link as for instance the expression *dans un premier temps* studied in chapter 7 by Bras & Schnedecker.

extremes, there are different types of framing adverbials, ranging from the more concrete and ideational to the more abstract and textual. Lamiroy & Charolles (forthcoming) have suggested the following classification:

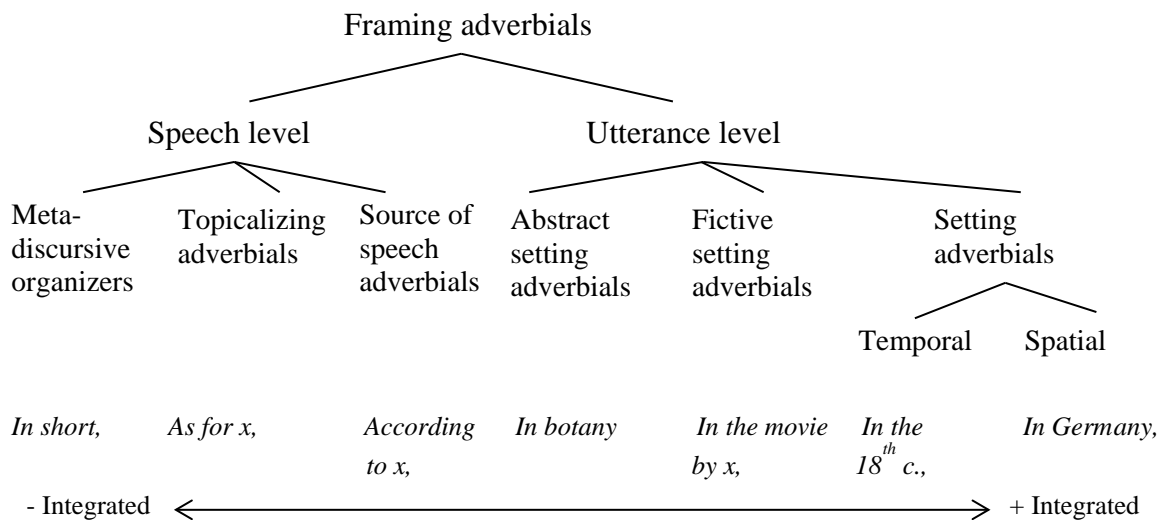


Figure 2: Classification of Framing Adverbials on a scale of integratedness (from Lamiroy & Charolles (Forthcoming)).

The main common property of these markers is that their indexing function is strictly dependent on their initial positioning. If they are placed at the end of the sentence, they have a local scope which does not exceed the host clause. For instance, if we reformulate excerpt (2), placing the three underlined prepositional phrases in sentence-final position, instead of their original initial position, the reader's processing of the sentence will be affected.

(2') *Few in France could claim not to be involved in it in one way or another, by the second half of the fourteenth century. The effects on domestic politics were considerably and predictably different. The needs of war (in terms of money and provisions) provoked a considerable crisis in the years 1338-41, in England. Thereafter Edward III, having learned some valuable political lessons, was able to develop a far greater degree of co-operation with his people, in particular with the fighting nobility, a spirit fostered by the two outstanding victories won at Crécy and Poitiers. By contrast, in spite of what seemed like early successes, the personal fortunes of both Philip VI and John II sank very low, in France. Both met defeat and one suffered capture, thus becoming, in a very real sense, a national liability. The lack of strong leadership served to exacerbate these disasters, and the nobility of France was obliged to endure strong criticism for its failure to protect the kingdom and its people in their hour of need.*

The different framing adverbials in Figure 2 range from textual adverbials, which no longer express any propositional content and act only at the textual level (*In short, ...*)³, to ideational adverbials, which express a real propositional content (*In Germany, ...*). The loss of propositional content is often associated with grammaticalization phenomena (in a broad sense including lexicalization or pragmatization). As adverbials become more

³ They are thus closer to Disjunct than to Adjunct adverbials but still participate in discourse structuring as they act as Framing adverbials.

grammaticalized, they are less bound to the initial position of the sentence. From a diachronic perspective, one interpretation could be that once the discourse function has become strongly associated with the use of an adverbial in initial position (*i.e.* once the adverbial has been grammaticalized with this function), it can be used as such in other positions, keeping its newly acquired discourse function. This is illustrated in the third section of this book, with chapters 8 (Fagard & Sarda) and 9 (Lewis): both present diachronic studies addressing different cases of shift from ideational to textual or interpersonal uses.

2. Discourse Markers revisited in the light of discourse structuring functions

We have tried to show that languages provide speakers with a vast array of tools that can be used to build up text or discourse cohesion, including anaphora, connectives and framing adverbials. To clarify the functions of adverbials, it is important not to bundle together those which serve to structure text (either conjunct or framing adverbials) and those which only express speaker attitude or modality. Speakers also have at their disposal various other kinds of expressions, which contribute to discourse meaning without being specifically dedicated to the setting up of links between successive utterances. Such expressions, which can be grammaticalized to various degrees, abound in discourse, both written and spoken⁴, and are often referred to as *discourse markers*. This is Lakoff's (1973) term (Müller 2005: 2-3), and also arguably the most popular term – along with *e.g. discourse particles* (Schourup 1983; Hansen 1998; Aijmer 2002; Fischer 2006b) and *pragmatic markers* (Fraser 1996).⁵ The existence of various competing denominations for these elements, which has been reported already on various occasions (Schourup 1999; Müller 2005; Fritz 2009: 3, *etc.*), is in fact indicative of different views on what a DM is and does.⁶ Indeed, DMs (or discourse particles, *etc.*) are not only given different names: they also receive various definitions – among (many) others, see Schiffrin (1987: 31, 323, 328), Hansen (1998), Fischer (2006a), Traugott (2007: 144), Waltereit & Detges (2007: 63), Fagard (2012); actually, defining DMs proves so complex that Jucker & Ziv (1998) see it as a prototypical category. As pointed out by Lewis (2011: 419-420):

There is little consensus on whether [Discourse Markers] are a syntactic or a pragmatic category, on which types of expressions the category includes, on the relationship of discourse markers to other posited categories such as connectives, interjections, modal particles, speaker-oriented sentence adverbials, and on the term 'discourse marker' as opposed to alternatives such as 'discourse connective' or 'pragmatic marker' or 'pragmatic particle'.

We propose below a working definition of DMs. The question of which elements should be included in the 'category' of DMs is essential, and depends of course on the definition given to this category (one can also wonder whether DMs pertain to a single class, *cf.* Schiffrin

⁴ It is hard to say whether they are more frequent in spoken or written language, although it is usually considered that they are especially common in spoken language (see for example Lenk 1998: 3).

⁵ This is confirmed not only by Schourup (1999: 224), but also by Google's spin-off Culturomics, as the reader can verify on the website <<http://www.culturomics.org/>> with a search on all the denominations listed in the following footnote.

⁶ Other common terms include *discourse organizers* (Pons Bordería 1998), *discourse particles* (Schourup 1983; Fischer 2006b), *discourse signals* (Lamiroy & Swiggers 1991), *discourse connectives* (Erman & Kotsinas 1993), and *pragmatic markers* (Fraser 1996).

1994: 40; Müller 2005: 3-4). We suggest including in the DM category only those elements that contribute to discourse management in some way, or elements which express the attitude of the speaker. Both have to do with the interpersonal sphere (*cf.* Halliday 2004) and, though they do not have exactly the same function, share a number of distributional features, such as the capacity to be inserted in any position. Both are also likely to be intersubjective. On the other hand, elements which contribute to discourse structure by linking discourse segments should be termed differently because their main function is to connect propositional contents and structure text in blocks of information. They are less linked to the interpersonal/intersubjective sphere and more to the ideational and textual spheres. Even though many expressions are polyfunctional, most of them specialize in either discourse management and expressing stance, or in linking different textual segments logically or semantically.

Definitions of DMs usually amalgamate both linking and interaction functions. They mention the following features:

- (a) Syntactically, (i) they are extra-sentential and, as a result, (ii) they have a relatively free distribution (*i.e.* syntactic position; Schiffrin 1987: 31 *ff.*) although common clause-initially (Schiffrin 1987: 328; Aijmer 2002: 29), with specific prosodic contours, (iii) they have variable scope and/or attachment points.
- (b) Distributionally, they tend to cluster with other DMs or marks of subjectivity.
- (c) Semantically, they have a non-propositional meaning (Lenk 1997: 4): they do not contribute directly to the meaning and structuring of text and discourse, or not to the same degree as connectives.⁷
- (d) Pragmatically, DMs operate at the discourse level: (i) they are used for discourse signaling and negotiation of ongoing discourse-related interaction such as stance expression and conversational management. DMs initiate discourse, mark a boundary (topic shift), are used as fillers, floor-holding devices, to mark fore- or backgrounded information... (see Müller 2005: 9 for a more exhaustive list). (ii) They also have text / discourse-structuring functions (*e.g.* linking functions, *cf.* Fraser 1996): “Discourse marking refers to the explicit expression of the coherence relations (sometimes called discourse relations or rhetorical relations) that can hold between two ideas or groups of ideas” (Lewis 2011: 420); they indicate “the structural organization of the discourse” (Fritz 2009: 4), acting either on a local level, between adjacent utterances, or on a global level, between discourse segments further apart (Lenk 1997: 7).

The question is whether interactive uses (d/i) and linking uses (d/ii) point to different categories of markers, some specialized in spoken discourse and interaction (*oh, well, I mean, y’know, etc.*) and others in (spoken or written) discourse structure (*but, and, or, so, because...*), or simply to two different functions (see Schiffrin 1994: 31, who counts all these elements as DMs). This distinction has been seen as representing two ends of a continuum. According to Lenk, a global DM:

refers back to discourse that has occurred somewhat earlier, not immediately adjacent. Future research should investigate how far the scope of discourse markers that mark local coherence relations can reach, and whether discourse markers that are functional on a clearly local level of discourse and those that are functional on a clearly global level of discourse must be considered the extreme ends on a continuous scale of

⁷ See Schiffrin (1994: 9): “Cohesive devices do not themselves create meaning; they are clues used by speakers and hearers to find the meanings which underlie surface utterances”.

discourse structure markers. If this should be the case, *local discourse markers* probably represent one end of the continuum where *utterance relations* are marked, whereas *global discourse markers* represent the other end of the continuum where *topic relations* are marked. (Lenk 1998: 211; author's emphasis)

This distinction partly overlaps with another distinction between *turn-taking* and *textual* functions, to which Fritz (2009: 10) adds a *modal component*:

- a) textual function: “topic- and content-related issues such as changing or introducing topics, introducing direct speech, *etc.*”;
- b) turn-taking function: “concerned with the sequence of turns”, including floor-holding;
- c) modal component: “whenever attitudes and evaluations, or modifications of the illocutionary force of an utterance are concerned”; “for English, it is debatable whether it applies to discourse markers, depending on how they are defined”.

It is in fact hard to distinguish clearly between these functions in single occurrences of DMs: the question, then, becomes “which of the functions is more dominant”? (Fritz 2009: 11; see also Aijmer 2002: 39). In our view, each candidate form specializes in one function or the other, and the markers with *modal* and conversation managing functions are clearly less oriented towards text or discourse cohesion.

Therefore, we suggest maintaining a clear functional distinction between markers which contribute to discourse structure by linking different segments, and markers that do not specialize in this structuring function but rather contribute to conversation management or provide information about speaker attitude. In Figure 3 below, we illustrate this distinction, placing horizontally, along the initial zone, the *discourse structuring markers* (DSMs) dedicated to signaling discourse links with the foregoing and the ongoing text; and orthogonally all other *(Inter)subjective discourse markers* (DMs), which do not directly contribute to this linking function. These distinctions partly map onto the classical classification of adverbials as conjuncts (connective DSMs), adjuncts (framing adverbials, DSMs) and disjuncts (IDMs).

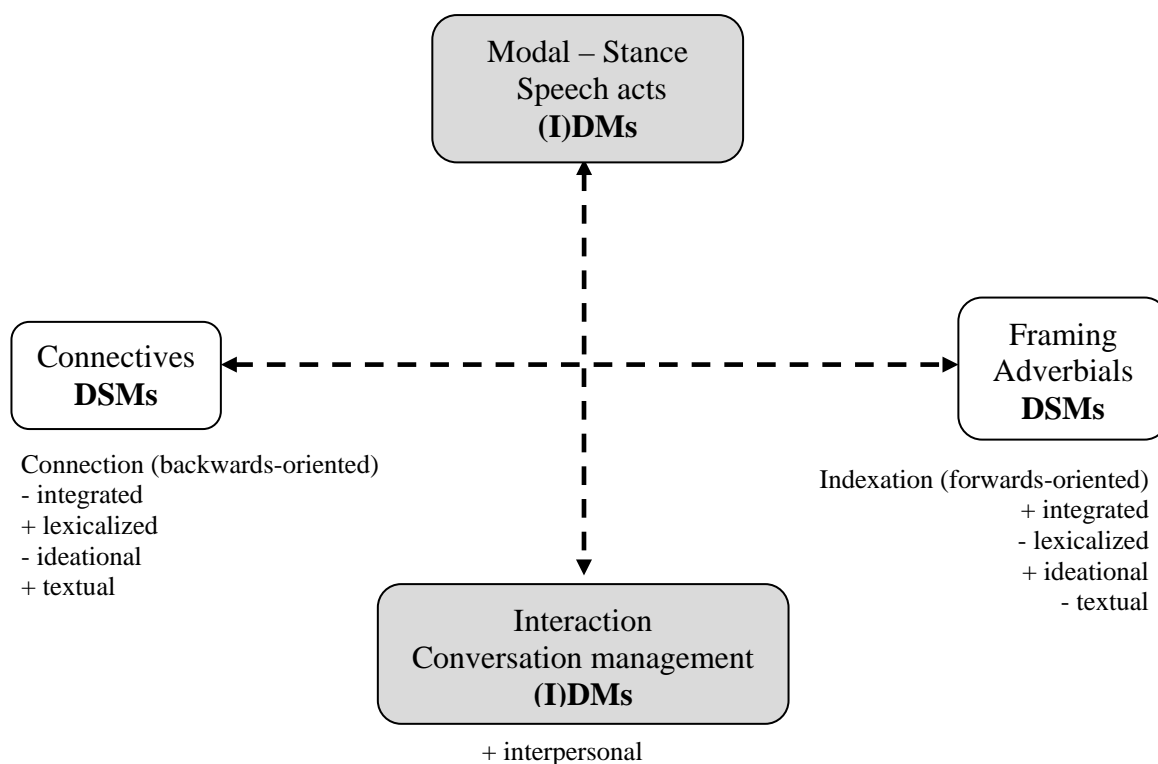


Figure 3: Distinguishing Discourse Structuring Markers (DSMs) from (Inter)subjective Discourse Markers ((I)DMs)

Discourse Structuring Markers thus range from connectives to framing adverbials. They contribute to discourse structure by organizing text segments and connecting/indexing them, and are therefore extremely sensitive to positioning: they must be in initial position in order to fulfill these connecting or indexing functions. This is especially true for the two ends of the continuum, namely for full connectives on the one hand, and for temporal and spatial framing adverbials on the other. By contrast, markers involved in conversation management, and more generally adverbials expressing stance, usually have a local scope and can be inserted in almost any position in the sentence, even though they are frequently found in a clause-initial position. This is the reason why we suggest calling them *(Inter)subjective Discourse Markers*, and conceptually represent them on an orthogonal axis.

The advantage of distinguishing between these two axes is that it facilitates the conceptualization of a polyfunctional occurrence as a vector in a three dimensional space. For instance, the expression *au fond* (literally ‘at the bottom’; close to ‘basically’, ‘ultimately’ or ‘in fact’), studied by Fagard & Sarda in this volume could be placed close to the function of stance but it also expresses to a certain extent a connection with the foregoing text or context, especially when it contrasts with a previous occurrence of markers such as *apparemment* (‘apparently’), or *à première vue* (‘at first sight’). It is thus oriented towards the function of connection. This vector is represented in Figure 4 below:

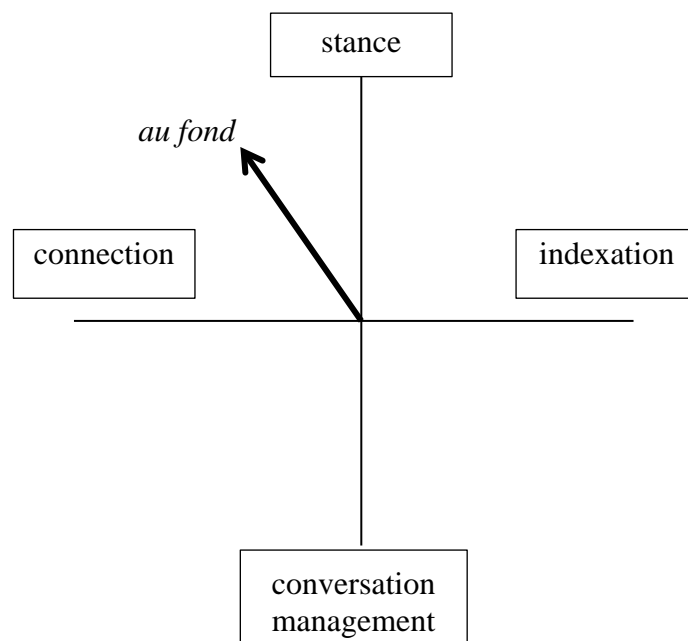


Figure 4: Three-dimensional conceptualization of a polyfunctional expression

This representation also shows that any (I)DM (more or less on the vertical axis) which can impact to a certain extent on the discourse structure (horizontal axis), generally tends to be oriented either towards the connection pole or towards the indexation pole.

An adverbial in initial position, if it has to do with discourse structuring, will probably specialize in one of the linking functions (connection *vs.* indexation) depending on its syntactic and semantic properties (*cf.* chapters 8 and 9). It will either look backwards or forwards, but it rarely does both at the same time.

The chapters in this volume mainly focus on *Discourse Structuring Markers* rather than on *(Inter)subjective Discourse Markers*. They offer an overview of how adverbials originate in the predicate zone and can acquire new discourse functions when used clause-initially.

The volume is organized according to the functions played by the adverbials: from the more integrated to the less integrated. We have seen that when their syntactic integration in the sentence is loose, these adverbials are more likely to appear in the periphery and consequently to fulfill discourse functions. There are basically two attractor zones for adverbials, the verb on the one hand and initial position on the other.

3. Presentation of chapters and degrees of integration of adverbials

This volume is divided into four sections. The ordering of these sections reflects the general movement we have described from more integrated to more detached adverbials. The chapters use different theoretical frameworks: experimental and formal approaches such as Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT), and cognitive-functional approaches including diachronic perspectives, Grammaticalization, Constructional Grammar and Cognitive Grammar.

The first section deals with adverbials in the predicate zone and focuses on lexicalization or subjectification. It begins with a chapter by Catherine Fuchs, “A paradoxical case of locative inversion in French”, in which the author investigates a specific type of sentence-initial adverbial in Modern French – a case of locative inversion with unexpected typographical markings. In these structures, the VS word order is preceded by a comma, whereas canonical locative inversions exclude the use of a comma. The author’s hypothesis is that the presence of a comma indicates a specific type of text structuring phenomenon. In order to test this hypothesis, she analyzes in detail attested examples of locative inversions and points out the specificities of paradoxical locative inversions. She shows, for instance, that different kinds of restrictions have a bearing on the initial adverbial, the verb and the subject. Paradoxical locative inversion obeys a distinct text-structuring strategy, which the author terms “text priming” and which consists in the progressive constitution of a scene from a subjective point of view. The observed increase in the use of this strategy seems to reveal a phenomenon of subjectification in contemporary French writing.

This phenomenon of subjectification of initial spatial adverbials may not be restricted to French, since Tuomas Huomo, in his chapter entitled “Path Settings: How dynamic conceptualization permits the use of path expressions as setting adverbials” describes a similar tendency in Finnish. In a Cognitive Grammar framework, he investigates setting adverbials, focusing on path expressions. He first explains why path expressions, despite their dynamicity, can be used as setting adverbials in initial position. He then goes on to show that there are different types of path expressions; from the point of view of path construal, he explains why expressions of fictive motion are more subjective and have a greater autonomy with respect to the clause nucleus than canonical path expressions. He discusses three factors bearing on the conceptualization of the path as a setting and the autonomy of the path expression: the nature of the trajectory, the nature of the verb and the nature of the path expression itself.

The second section, “Initial positioning and text organization: A focus on indexing strategies”, presents different viewpoints and different methodologies for evaluating the role of adverbial initial positioning in text structuring. It discusses whether the long distance scope of adverbials hinges on their initial positioning. An important issue is whether the initial position encodes in itself some instructions to process the subsequent information (and/or to connect them to what has been previously mentioned), and also whether it can be claimed that any adverbial occurring in this initial slot is specifically used to guide the reader/hearer.

Chapter 4, by Tuija Virtanen, is entitled “Sentence-initial adverbials in written texts: On discourse functions and cognitive motivations”. The author investigates the text-structuring functions of sentence-initial adverbials in written English and French. In contradistinction to Peter Crompton in the following chapter, the author believes the initial slot has in itself cognitive potential for discourse organization, but stresses the fact that there is a complex interplay between this potential and various other motivations. Virtanen first studies the text-structuring functions of sentence-initial adverbials and their textual scope. She then investigates specifically the textual potential of the initial slot itself and shows (this time agreeing with Crompton’s findings) that discourse boundaries have an impact on this textual potential, along with other signals of closure. Finally, she focuses on the interaction between the position of adverbials and text/discourse type or genre. She shows that these do indeed have an impact on adverbial position, and identifies potential genre markers among sentence-initial adverbials.

Chapter 5, by Peter Crompton, is entitled “The positioning of adverbials: Discourse function reconsidered”. The author investigates the role of sentence-initial position for adverbials in English, challenging the widely accepted view that initial position confers extended discourse scope. This study builds on earlier work (Crompton 2006) where the author argued that there was no necessary relation between initial position and discourse scope, or final position and local scope. In his chapter, Crompton describes a new corpus-based study from the BNC (British National Corpus), investigating more closely two variables: the relation of adverbial position in the clause to paragraph-internal positioning and textual reference. The study shows that the most important factor for the extension of an adverbial’s scope is not clause-initial but paragraph-initial position. Besides, the link to prior discourse seems to be only one of the motivations for initial positioning: the author shows that adverbial clauses can have backward scope irrespective of their position. The author concludes that positioning options of adverbials do not obey a single discourse motivation and suggests that discourse motivations compete with other discourse-independent factors.

Chapter 6, by Yves Bestgen & Sophie Piérard, is entitled “Sentence-initial adverbials and text comprehension”. The authors investigate the impact of the position of adverbials on text comprehension with various experiments. They explain that, while linguists have long believed that the position of adverbials has an important role in text structuring, psycholinguists have until now mostly focused on mental representations of texts. They choose to combine these two lines of research, with a series of experiments designed to verify the existence of a link between the sentence position of temporal or spatial adverbials and text comprehension. In the first series of four experiments, the authors manipulate the position of an adverbial and the presence or absence of situational breaks in a narrative. The results confirm the predictions made by the authors: the reading time is longer for a new discourse unit, but the presence of a sentence-initial adverbial can cancel this effect. In a second series of experiments, the authors confirm that the sentence-initial position is indeed responsible for the segmenting function of adverbials, and also provide experimental evidence of their framing function.

The third section “From adverbials to discourse (structure) markers: which grammaticalization path?” presents case studies of various expressions at different stages of grammaticalization. Chapter 7 provides a synchronic study of a recent marker, highlighting two different uses that may represent the first step of a grammaticalization path. The following two chapters (8 and 9) are diachronic studies fully illustrating a grammaticalization path into (inter)subjective discourse markers or discourse structuring markers. They all address issues related to the polysemy and polyfunctionality of the studied expressions.

This section begins with a chapter by Myriam Bras & Catherine Schnedecker, entitled “The French adverbial *dans un premier temps* and Discourse Relations: From Elaboration to Contrast”. Among ordinal adverbials such as *premièrement* (‘firstly’), *en premier lieu* (‘in the first place’) and *dans un premier temps* (‘in a first time’) – which are usually described as markers that can order textual matter and that can be used to mark up texts – the authors investigate the use of the adverbial *dans un premier temps*. Drawing on a synchronic corpus study, they distinguish several uses of the adverbial on the basis of formal and semantic criteria. They show that this adverbial is an anaphoric expression that keeps its compositional semantics, ordering events rather than textual matter. They show that *dans un premier temps* is both retroactive and prospective, establishing backward links (based on a part-of relation between events) and forward links in discourse (based on a simple temporal succession or on

an additional contrastive value). These links are analyzed within the SDRT framework, which reveals two major discourse configurations: either a purely temporal interpretation where the Elaboration of an explicit topic plays a central role; or an argumentative interpretation where a Contrast relation between the coordinated elaborating elements is associated with the relation of temporal succession present in the first configuration.

Chapter 8, by Benjamin Fagard and Laure Sarda, is entitled “From locative adverbial to discourse marker: Three case studies in the diachrony of French”. The authors investigate the evolution of three adverbials into discourse markers: *parallèlement* (‘parallel to’), *au fond* (‘at the bottom’) and *d’un côté* (‘to one side’). These adverbials, which initially had locative uses, have evolved into discourse markers, with frequent sentence-initial use. The authors analyze their evolution within the framework of grammaticalization theory. The main theoretical question at stake in this chapter is whether the grammaticalization of discourse markers is driven by semantics or syntax. In order to answer this question, the authors present a corpus study of these markers. They show that the dichotomy between framing adverbials and discourse markers is partly linked to the referential properties of their components.

Chapter 9, by Diana Lewis, is entitled “Word order and the development of connective markers in English”. The author investigates the formation of two discourse connectives, *at least* and *instead*, which both, like many other discourse connectives, originated as prepositional phrases. She describes the changes undergone from the original constructions to the modern discourse connectives, within a grammaticalization framework including Construction Grammar analyses. The aim of the study is to analyze in detail these changes, and evaluate the claim that they present a gradual evolution involving scope increase. On the basis of a corpus study on both historical and present-day English corpora, the author argues that both claims are valid, and goes on to show that Construction Grammar can be useful for describing the semantic changes involved. The author concludes that constructional meaning as well as information structure design have to be considered in order to account for word order change and scope change.

The fourth section, “Translation perspectives on adverbial clause positioning”, brings an interesting and complementary insight to the debate on the function/position correlations. The two chapters in this last section contribute arguments that tend to relativize the claim that the initial position is cognitively set aside for fulfilling particular discourse functions. It is shown through aligned and parallel corpus studies that syntax and information structure interact and impact on the word order choice that can vary from one language to another. Competing motivations have to be taken into account in order to explain word order discrepancies across languages.

Chapter 10, by Bergljot Behrens & Kåre Solfjeld, is entitled “Discourse role guiding clause type and relative position in translation”. The authors investigate the interplay between syntax and discourse structure, and in particular the weighting of the different information units. They compare English, German and Norwegian, languages which are rather alike in structure, but nevertheless display discrepancies in the way the hierarchical structure at the intrasentential level interacts with text-structuring discourse relations. Focusing on Background, a discourse relation in SDRT, the authors discuss the equivalence between alternative intrasentential combinations. In order to do so, they distinguish between the semantic contribution and discourse function of different clause types, and go on to discuss the discourse-functional contribution of intrasentential clause combinations. With the help of

a parallel corpus study, they analyze a series of constraints on discourse relations and show that these can be overruled by syntactic downgrading and information structural principles.

Chapter 11, by Wiebke Ramm, is entitled “Discourse-coordinating or discourse-subordinating? The discourse function of clause-related relative clauses in a translation perspective”. The author investigates the role of clause-related relative clauses in German. These hybrid structures, such as those introduced by the clause-initial relative adverb *wobei*, partake of subordinate and main clauses. They have specific propositional status and information structure, and their discourse properties are traditionally described as being ‘continuative’. The author shows, on the basis of a corpus study, that the relation established by *wobei* clauses can actually be described, in SDRT, as an Elaboration relation. The corpus is a sentence-aligned collection of fictional and non-fictional German original texts and their Norwegian translations. This study leads the author to distinguish between different types of *wobei*-clauses, which depend on the temporal properties of the predicates, correlate to some degree with text type and are also influenced by the context, in particular the sentence following the relative clause.

The different chapters presented above provide a broad overview of the question of adverbials at the syntax/discourse interface, covering a variety of different languages: French, English, German, Norwegian and Finnish and using different frameworks such as Cognitive Grammar, Constructional Grammar, Grammaticalization Theory, experimental approaches and the more formal approach developed in Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT). They offer a rich insight into the functions linked to adverbial positioning. On the basis of these studies, we would like to defend the working hypothesis that the initial position itself plays a specific role in discourse cohesion, regardless of the components instantiated in that slot. Because of its particular cognitive status, the initial position codes instructions which (are there to) guide the interpretation of the reader. This could be described in terms of grammaticalization of the position, and may explain why the initial position tends to be a privileged locus for categorical changes and for the emergence of both (Inter)subjective Discourse Markers and Discourse Structuring Markers (connectives and framing adverbials). We hope that the distinctions we have made will help better understand the complex interplay of competing motivations bearing on adverbial use in discourse.

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