

PROCEDURAL MEANING: PROBLEMS & PERSPECTIVES. MADRID, 15-17TH, OCTOBER

Procedural Meaning Explicatures in the Development of New Subordination Strategies in Romance

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1. Introduction

The sociocultural changes that led to the genesis of Romance languages widened the gap between oral and written patterns, which display different discursive and linguistic devices. In early documents, discursive implicatures connecting propositions were not generally codified, so that the reader should furnish the correct interpretation according to his own perception of real facts; which can still be attested in current oral utterances. Once Romance languages had undergone several levelling processes which concluded in the first standardizations, implicatures became explicatures and were syntactically codified by means of univocal new complex conjunctions. As a consequence of the emergence of these new subordination strategies, a freer distribution of the information conveyed by the utterances is allowed.

The success of complex structural patterns ran alongside of the genesis of new narrative genres and the generalization of a learned rhetoric. Both facts are a spontaneous effect of new approaches to the act of reading. Ancient texts were written to be read to a wide audience, whereas those printed by the end of the XVth century were conceived to be read quietly, in a low voice, by a private reader.

The goal of this paper is twofold, since we will show that:

- a) The development of new complex conjunctions through the history of Romance languages accommodates to four structural patterns that range from parataxis to hypotaxis.
- b) This development is a reflex of the well known grammaticalization path from discourse to syntax that implies the codification of discursive strategies (Givón

1979, Sperber and Wilson 1986, Carston 1988, Grice 1989, Bach 1994, Blackemore 2002, among others]

Basic assumptions:

a) The research on the distinction between conceptual and non-conceptual encoding has led to two classes of information:

- conceptual representations
- procedures for manipulating them

b) Along this line of investigation, there have been several works that focus on the information that is explicitly communicated and the one which is implicitly communicated.

- “Explicatures are assumptions which are recovered via a combination of decoding and inference (Sperber and Wilson 1986:182)
- “Implicatures are derived purely inferentially” (Sperber and Wilson 1986:182)

c) We should also consider implicatures:

“In implicature one says and communicates one thing and thereby communicates something else in addition. Implicature, however, is a matter of saying something but communicating something else instead, something closely related to what is said [...].(Bach 1994: 126).

d) A speaker can communicate something without making it fully explicit in two different ways:

- Completion: when an utterance is semantically underdeterminate. (Bach 1994).
- Expansion: when the utterance expresses a complete proposition but it does not coincide with the proposition meant by the speaker. (Bach 1994).

2. Procedural meaning and the creation of new subordination strategies.

As for procedural or computational meaning, we have attested the above mentioned ways of conveying information in the development of new subordination strategies in Romance languages.

- In some cases the hearer must infer the logical relation between clauses (i.e.: parataxis),
- whereas in other occasions there is decoding and inference because there has been a linguistic codification due to the grammaticalization process (i.e.: hypotaxis).
- Sometimes, we also have implicitures and, in particular, expansions in Bach's terms (i.e.: parataxis with discourse connectives; hypotaxis with *que*).

The following section points out to the four types of propositions used to convey the subordinating information by means of the previously mentioned strategies.

2.1. Parataxis and polysemic hypotaxis with *que*

Concerning cause and purpose, the simplest pattern from a structural perspective is parataxis (see (1)), according to which the intervening clauses are freely placed without the use of connecting words to point to the logical relation of implication between the events. In this case, the logical meaning is inferred pragmatically.

(1) Li empereres se fair e balz e liez, Cordes a prise e o les murs peceiez [*Roland*: 96-7; Buridant (2000:614)] *Old French*

“The emperor seems quite happy; he has conquered Cordes and has smashed the walls into pieces”

Paratactic patterns (and their semantic and pragmatic decoding by the speaker/hearer) parallel a type of polysemic hypotactic structure in which the conjunction is a polysemic *que* and the logical interpretation must also be inferred pragmatically (see (2))

(2) E dixeren los cavallers: “Lo rey vos mana que vingats, *que* ell ha apparaylat de menjar, e *que* mils e pus alegrament menjarets là ab ell que no faríets aquí”. [*Jaume I, Crònica*: cap. 248, 212] *Old Catalan*

“And the knights said: “The king orders you to come, because he has prepared food and because you will eat better and more happily there with him than you would do here.”

2.2. Parataxis with anaphoric items

Further on into the *continuum* towards explicatures that codify procedural meaning, we find a prototypical structure which is still paratactic but displays discourse connectives (such as *por esso* in Old Spanish, *per ço* in Old Catalan or *por ce/ço* in Old French, for instance) that provide the speaker/hearer with the appropriate cue to infer the logical relation existing within the clauses (i.e.: the explicature to decode the sentence), see (3).

- (3) a. Non vos veo colpe nin lançada [...], *por esso* non vos creo que muerto sodes, don Roldáne [Anónimo, *Roncesvalles*, 1250, CORDE] *Old Spanish*
“I don’t see any bump or spear cut [...] so that I don’t believe that you are dead, Don Roldane”
- b. Thetica quiere dezir deidad ssobre todas las deidades, *e por esso* la llaman en latín Deus Deorum [Alfonso X, *Setenario*, CORDE] *Old Spanish*
“Thetica means deity upon all deities, and therefore they call her Deus Deorum in Latin”
- c. moltes vegades trobe hom que aquest do se fa amagadament; per açò los damunt dits prínceps a aytal do donaren [*Usatges de Barcelona*: 157, 12] *Old Catalan*
“Many times one finds that this is kept a secret, therefore the above mentioned princes had offered such a gift ...”
- d. Et li pains alis de fourment est durs ..., *et por ce*, e tel pain se fait boin garder [Aldebrandin de Sienne, *Le Régime du corps*, s. XIII, cap. III/1] *Old French*
“And the bread with yeast is hard to digest..., and therefore it must be eaten carefully”

2.3. Hypotaxis with anaphoric items

Afterwards we find emergent hypotactic constructions in which discursive markers show certain degree of gramaticalization with a subordinating conjunction – usually *que* (*por esto que* OSp, *per ço que*, OCat; *por ço que*, OFr), see (4).

- (4) a. *por esso* es luenga *que* a deliçio fue criada [*Çid*: v. 3282] *Old Spanish*
“For this reason (the beard) is long, because it has been grown carefully”
- b. El auia ansia *por esto que* non vidia el senyal de Cassio [*Conqueridores* II, 56r; Elvira (2002)] *Old Spanish*
“He was anxious because he could not see Cassius signal”

2.4. Complex hypotactic conjunctions

The last pattern attested corresponds to the structure in which the PP and the conjunction *que* are completely grammaticalized and function as an indivisible single lexical item, see (5).

- (5) a. Curial moria *perquè* no podia parlar ab la Güelfa, [*Curial e Güelfa* (ed. Ramon Aramon) I: 159] *Old Catalan*
“Curial felt sick because he could not talk with Güelfa”
- b. Ne l’aimerai a trestut mun vivant... *por ço qu’*il est si cumpainz [*Roland*: 323-26; Buridant (2000:512)] *Old French*
“I will not love him in my life, because he is his friend”

Consecutive complex conjunctions developed from intensified manner adjuncts display a similar continuum that goes from the examples in which we have an elliptic quantifier, see (6a), to the ones that have an explicit quantifier (6b).

- (6) a. aquexaron lo *de guisa quel* fizieron foyr et tornar contra su tierra [*General Estoria*; Narbona (1978:225)] *Old Spanish*
“They attacked him in such a way that they made him go home”
- b. digues lurs semblançes *en tal guisa que* u pusque entendre [Llull, *Virtuts e Pecats*: 127] *Old Catalan*
“tell me their resemblances in such a way that I can understand it”

3. Analysis

Our analysis integrates the advantages of a Relevance Theory approach with those of the syntactic theory of grammaticalization posed by Roberts and Roussou (2003) and also the one postulated by van Gelderen (2004). The former can express the relation between clauses, the functional and the procedural meaning of the new conjunctions clearly, and the latter capture the structural changes within constituents.

3.1. Parataxis and polysemic hypotaxis with *que*

In paratactic utterances the order of the clauses either follows a natural sequence of events (as they happen in real life) or the cause, for instance, is dislocated due to

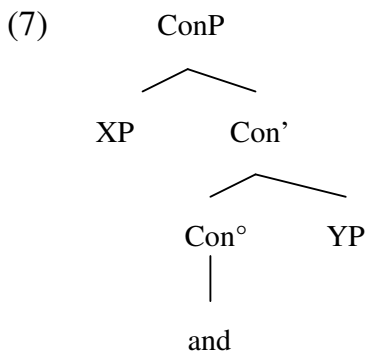
discursive requirements, as can be seen in (1) above. In this case the hearer must infer the logical meaning pragmatically.

In relation to polysemic hypotaxis, see (2) above, the hearer infers the causal, final, concessive, consecutive or conditional meaning of the embedded clause pragmatically, because the polysemic hypotactic conjunction cannot convey it. In both cases, the intonation and the use of verbal mood are some of the cues that lead the hearer when processing the meaning of the utterance. [cf. Batllori-Suñer (2005, 2006, 2009)]

3.2. Parataxis with anaphoric items

In examples such as (3), the procedural subordinating information is conveyed by a discourse connective (*por esso* in Old Spanish) which is not a conjunction and acts as a topic or known information introduced in the other proposition. Actually, the only element that plays the role of a conjunction is *e* (< ET). In our opinion, parataxis with anaphoric items is a connection strategy that conveys an implicature in Bach's terms because what is being communicated is an expanded version of the proposition expressed.

In order to formalize syntactically this structural pattern we adopt the analysis that Poletto (2005:232) suggested for **apodictic** *et* in Old Italian. She extends Kayne's antisymmetric representation for coordinating constructions, see (7), to a more complex structure where the conjunction *et* is a Topic head that introduces a Topic Phrase (*por esso*) as its complement see (8).



(8) [Clause₁], [Clause₂ [TOPICP [TOPIC *e* [TOPIC *por esso* [FINP [FIN] [la llaman en latín Deus Deorum]]]]], cf. (3b)

3.3. Hypotaxis with anaphoric items

Emergent hypotactic constructions such as the ones illustrated in (3) include a formal subordination marker *que* and a discursive element *por esso* that explicates the inference so as to avoid ambiguity.

(10) a. [TOPICP [TOPIC [TOPICP *por esto* [FINP [FIN *que*] [non vidia el senyal de Cassio]]]] cf. (3b)
b. [TOPICP [TOPIC [TOPICP [FINP *por esto* [FIN *que*] [non vidia el senyal de Cassio]]]]

Somehow, this type of examples could be considered implicatures (i.e.: expansions) because despite having cues that point to the correct inference, the hearer must work out that the implicate meaning is equivalent to that of a complex subordinating conjunction.

According to our data, these connecting words have not reached total grammaticalization yet, because the insertion of other lexical items between the PP and the conjunction *que* is still allowed. As can be seen in (10b) the Topic PP is reanalyzed as the Spec of FinP.

3.4. Complex hypotactic conjunctions

Many complex hypotactic conjunctions documented diachronically are the result of a process of grammaticalization, which is due to an upward reanalysis and the loss of movement in such a way that the conjunction *por esto que* merges in C° – see Roberts and Roussou (2003).

(11) [TOPICP [TOPIC [TOPICP [FINP [FIN *por esto que*] [non vidia el senyal de Cassio]]]]

In addition, it is worth noticing that this grammaticalization process is favoured by several Economy Principles, above all the *Head Preference Principle* or *Head-over-Spec Principle* posed by van Gelderen (2004) that reads as follows: “Be a head, rather than a Phrase”.

4. Conclusion

This work provides us with empirical evidence concerning four structural patterns within the parataxis-hypotaxis continuum. Parataxis, which is closer to oral speech and, at the same time, is less cohesive contrasts with hypotaxis with complex conjunctions, the creation of which parallels the codification of written speech (the Medieval Scripta). They follow a grammaticalization path in which discursive inferences are codified syntactically and are constrained to a series of mechanisms imposed upon linguistic change, such as upward reanalysis, loss of movement and the Head-over-Spec Principle.

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