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Redundancy and Analogy: a Cognitive Discourse Analysis look at as in spoken data

Charlotte Danino

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Introduction

Context: online description of a live event. Necessity to describe and explain events as perceived and understood *on the go*.

Research Question: why did speakers clearly prefer *AS*, and not *while*, *when*, *because*, *since*?

As= polysemous and rather vague. Importance of cotext

Objective: criticism of approach in terms of identification.

- costly cognitive operation (plausibility?)
- not consider the value of *as* but the value of the links between informational content 1 and informational content 2;
- information cannot be identical to be compared or assimilated

Research framework

Theoretical framework

- Cognitive Linguistics (Langacker 1987, Talmy 2000): link between linguistic and conceptual structures
- Cognitive Discourse Analysis** (Tenbrink 2015): language activity reflects current state of thought. Speakers verbalize from a set of options they choose from

Key concepts

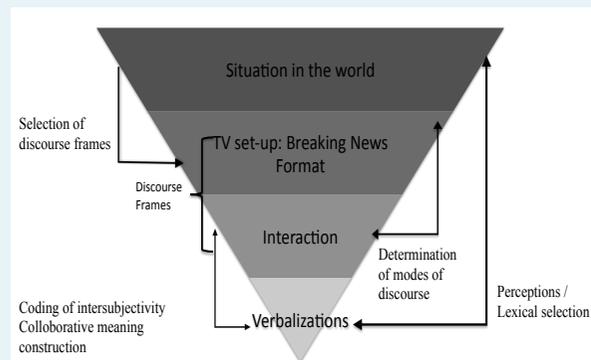
Meaning= instructional dynamic construction (Col et al 2012)

Analogy= cognitive process (Hofstadter/Sanders 2013)

Redundancy= same information coded several times

Corpus

- First 4 hours of CNN's **live broadcast** on 9/11 (70 speakers)
- Highly constrained speech situation = "**natural**" control parameters



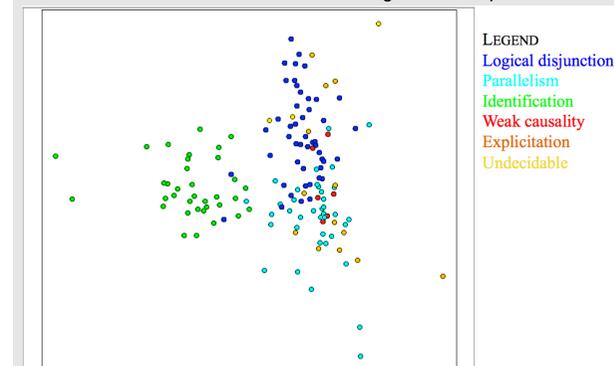
Hypothesis

as preferred by speakers because it allows for a complexified representation of events without being decisive about the exact nature of this *articulation*: *as* signals co-incident information.

=> Co-occurrence and redundancy can be identified and measured to account for the different uses of *as*

Results

- Corpus study:** annotation of 146 conjunctive uses
- Analec software: Semantic annotation + geometric representation



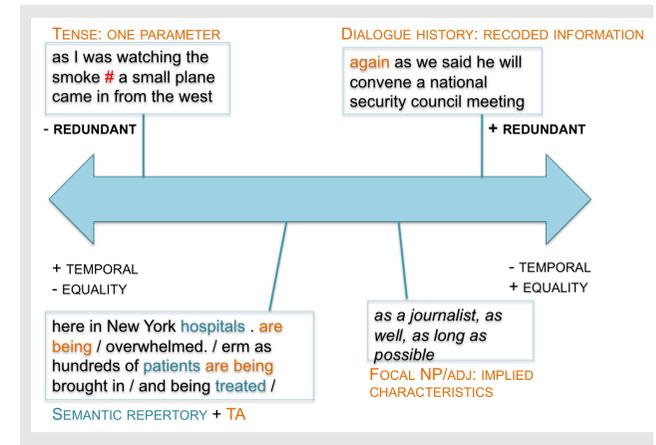
Conjunctive *as*: Types of uses in the corpus (all parameters)

Types of uses	Final Position	Initial position	Medial position	Undec.	Total
Weak causality	100%	-	-	-	6
Logical disjunction	47%	37%	12%	4%	49
Explication	77%	23%	-	-	13
Parallelism	82,5%	15%	2,5%	-	40
Identification	20%	46%	34%	-	35
Undecidable	33%	66%	-	-	3
Total	80	45	19	2	146

Types of uses / position correlation

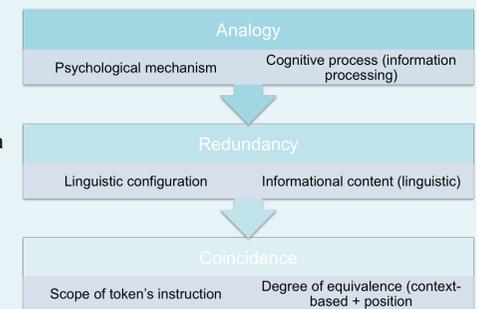
Limitations

- Case study: must be tested on other data
- Based on conjunctive uses: must be applied in greater detail to comparative and prepositional uses (*as a journalist, as tall as he is*, etc.)



Conclusion

- Sentence initial position= wider scope
- Final position preferred** (contra lit.)
- Analogical mechanism triggers levelling of information
- Redundancy helps information processing**



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