

Connectives and Discourse Relations

Illustrated with examples from a rich range of languages and genres, this book provides a state-of-the-art introduction to the meanings and functions of connectives, and the discourse relations they communicate. It begins with theoretical chapters that illustrate the many interfaces present in the study of connectives and discourse relations, using diachronic data to illustrate how connectives incorporate such a wide range of functions in synchronic language use. The second half of the book presents the rapidly growing body of studies that have used empirical data to assess theories of connectives and discourse relations, spanning fields as diverse as discourse processing, first and second language acquisition, and cross-linguistic studies. End-of-chapter discussion questions and lists of further reading are included, along with a comprehensive glossary of key terms. This title is part of the Flip it Open programme and may also be available open access. Check our website Cambridge Core for details.

SANDRINE ZUFFEREY is a professor at the Institute of French Language and Literature, University of Bern, Switzerland. She is the author of two research monographs on the topic of language acquisition and pragmatics, and the co-author of four textbooks. She has also published extensively on the topic of discourse connectives.

LIESBETH DEGAND is a professor at the Institute for Language and Communication, UCLouvain, Belgium. She is an experienced project leader of international research networks in the area of discourse markers. She has published extensively on the categorization of discourse markers as linguistic expressions at the discourse–grammar interface.

KEY TOPICS IN SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS

'Key Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics' focuses on the main topics of study in semantics and pragmatics today. It consists of accessible yet challenging accounts of the most important issues, concepts and phenomena to consider when examining meaning in language. Some topics have been the subject of semantic and pragmatic study for many years, and are re-examined in this series in light of new developments in the field; others are issues of growing importance that have not so far been given a sustained treatment. Written by leading experts and designed to bridge the gap between textbooks and primary literature, the books in this series can either be used on courses and seminars, or as one-stop, succinct guides to a particular topic for individual students and researchers. Each book includes useful suggestions for further reading, discussion questions, and a helpful glossary.

Already published in the series:

Meaning and Humour by Andrew Goatly

Metaphor by L. David Ritchie

Imperatives by Mark Jary and Mikhail Kissine

Modification by Marcin Morzycki

Semantics for Counting and Measuring by Susan Rothstein

Irony by Joana Garmendia

Implicatures by Sandrine Zufferey, Jacques Moeschler and Anne Reboul

The Semantics of Case by Olga Kagan

Attitude Reports by Thomas Grano

Indirect Speech Acts by Nicolas Ruytenbeek

Naming and Indexicality by Gregory Bochner

Forthcoming titles:

Semantics and Pragmatics in Sign Languages by Kathryn Davidson Zaremba

Modalities by Anastasia Giannikidou and Alda Mari

Connectives and Discourse Relations

SANDRINE ZUFFEREY
University of Bern, Switzerland

LIESBETH DEGAND
UCLouvain, Belgium



Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-108-83299-1 — Connectives and Discourse Relations
Sandrine Zufferey, Liesbeth Degand
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108832991

DOI: 10.1017/9781108966573

© Sandrine Zufferey and Liesbeth Degand 2024

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN 978-1-108-83299-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

List of Figures page viii

List of Tables ix

- 1 Defining Connectives and Discourse Relations 1
 - 1.1 Introduction 1
 - 1.2 Defining the Main Constructs 2
 - 1.3 Key Considerations for the Study of Discourse Relations and Connectives 17
 - 1.4 Summary 20

- 2 Theoretical Models of Discourse Relations 23
 - 2.1 Introduction 23
 - 2.2 Rhetorical Structure Theory 24
 - 2.3 Segmented Discourse Representation Theory 28
 - 2.4 The Penn Discourse Treebank Framework 33
 - 2.5 A Cognitive Approach to Coherence Relations 38
 - 2.6 Can Different Frameworks Communicate? 43
 - 2.7 Summary 45

- 3 Connectives: Meanings and Functions 48
 - 3.1 Introduction 48
 - 3.2 Discourse Connectives as a Subcategory of Discourse Markers 49
 - 3.3 Polysemy and Polyfunctionality of Discourse Connectives 56
 - 3.4 Semasiological and Onomasiological Approaches to Discourse Connectives 60
 - 3.5 Summary 70

- 4 Connectives between Syntax and Discourse 72
 - 4.1 Introduction 72
 - 4.2 Morphosyntactic Distribution of Discourse Connectives 73

- 4.3 Using Syntactic Features to Disambiguate Discourse Connectives 78
- 4.4 The Impact of the Syntagmatic Position of Connectives on Their Meaning 87
- 4.5 Summary 90

- 5 The Evolution of Connectives' Meanings 92
 - 5.1 Introduction 92
 - 5.2 How Did Connectives Emerge in the Languages' Grammar? 94
 - 5.3 From Clause-Combining to Discourse Connectives 97
 - 5.4 The Emergence of Discourse Connectives: Some Illustrative Case Studies 107
 - 5.5 Summary 113

- 6 Processing and Understanding Discourse Relations and Connectives 116
 - 6.1 Introduction 116
 - 6.2 Processing Discourse Relations 119
 - 6.3 The Role of Connectives for Discourse Processing 124
 - 6.4 The Role of Connectives for Recall and Comprehension 132
 - 6.5 Individual Differences between Readers 135
 - 6.6 Similarities and Differences of Processing across Languages 137
 - 6.7 Summary 140

- 7 Discourse Relations and Connectives across Languages and Genres 142
 - 7.1 Introduction 142
 - 7.2 Variations across Languages 143
 - 7.3 Variations across Genres 152
 - 7.4 Studies Combining Variations across Languages in Genres 157
 - 7.5 Connectives in Translations 159
 - 7.6 Summary 161

- 8 Acquiring Connectives in a First Language 163
 - 8.1 Introduction 163
 - 8.2 Early Spontaneous Productions 164
 - 8.3 Acquiring Complex Form–Function Mappings between Relations and Connectives 168

CONTENTS

vii

- 8.4 The Comprehension of Connectives during Primary School Years 173
- 8.5 Mastering More Diverse Connectives during the Teenage Years 179
- 8.6 Connectives in Children with Language and Cognitive Impairments 183
- 8.7 Summary 186

- 9 Mastering Connectives in a Second Language 188
 - 9.1 Introduction 188
 - 9.2 Learners' Uses of Connectives 189
 - 9.3 Learners' Comprehension of Connectives 193
 - 9.4 Individual Differences in Learners' Mastery of Connectives 200
 - 9.5 What Could Cause Learners' Difficulties with Connectives? 202
 - 9.6 Suggestions of Teaching Techniques 205
 - 9.7 Summary 207

- Conclusion 209

- Glossary 214
- References 218
- Index 252

Figures

- 4.1 Cross-linguistic morphosyntactic distribution of discourse connectives *page 75*
- 5.1 Cline of grammaticality (based on Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 7) 95
- 6.1 Illustration of a self-paced reading task 117
- 7.1 Scale of subjectivity across languages (adapted from Pit, 2007) 150
- 9.1 Percentage of correct answers for Japanese learners of English across both tasks 194

Tables

- 2.1 List of relations in Mann and Thompson (1988) *page* 25
- 2.2 Discourse relations from SDRT (Reese et al., 2007: 8) 30
- 2.3 List of relations from the PDTB-3 (Webber et al., 2019) 36
- 2.4 Taxonomy of relations from Sanders, Spooren and Noordman (1992: 11) 41
- 2.5 Comparison between frameworks using the CCR dimensions (Sanders et al., 2021) 44
- 3.1 Two-dimensional domains-functions model of discourse markers (based on Crible & Degand, 2019a) 69
- 4.1 Morphosyntactic categories in the multilingual connective-lex 74
- 4.2 Verstraete's (2007) clause combining typology and the categorization of connectives 84