Title: A diachronic-functional approach to discourse markers

Running head: A diachronic-functional approach

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0. Introduction

0.1. Problem statement

Research on discourse markers (DMs) in various languages faces the following recurrent analytical problems:

- the semantic polyvalence of syntagmas and word forms used in a discourse-organizing function,

- the broad functional range that DMs cover, and consequently,

- the difficulty of defining "discourse markers" as members of a semantically, formally and pragmatically coherent and homogeneous word class.

The present paper suggests that in order to resolve these problems, it is necessary to take into account the dynamism inherent in the diachronic development and synchronic functioning of DMs.

0.2. Approach

This paper focuses on both the diachronic processes that lead to the use of certain linguistic items as DMS (thereby assigning a polysemic status to them) and the mechanisms of discourse processing that underlie the synchronic functioning of DMs (and are responsible for their multifunctionality).

DMs evolve out of processes of "pragmaticalization". At the beginning of such a process, we find lexical items (nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbal syntagms) with propositional meanings which are used in a metacommunicative way. Through processes of habitualization and automatization, metacommunicative use creates a variant of the original item. At the end of the pragmaticalization process we find specialised DMs whose main function is interactional (see section 2 below). Meanwhile, in their synchronic functioning DMs fulfil important tasks for the discourse processing activities of the participants. It is because discourse processing works simultaneously at different levels that DMs are multifunctional (see section 3 below).

My approach to DMs can therefore be considered as "polysemic" (see Moosegard-Hansen section 0.4.1., in this volume) in two different ways: first, we are dealing with a diachronic polysemy whereby additional metacommunicative meanings appear. Second, we are dealing with a synchronic polysemy that consists of several pragmatic meanings working simultaneously on different levels of discourse processing.

Given its twofold orientation, this paper has recourse to different research traditions: The diachronic part deals with research on grammaticalization (Hopper / Traugott 1993, Lehmann 1995, Hagège 2001). The synchronic part is based on conversation analysis (Schegloff 1972; Sacks/Schegloff/Jefferson 1974; Bergmann

1981; Gülich 1991 and 1999, Gülich / Mondada 2001; Mondada 2001) and on text/discourse processing research (van Dijk 1980; van Dijk / Kintsch 1978 and 1983).

0.3. Pragmatic meaning and the study of DMs

In real-life conversation we can distinguish three co-existing types of meaning: a lexical or referential meaning relating to non-linguistic entities, a grammatical meaning relating to the syntagmatic functions of linguistic entities,[1] and a pragmatic meaning revealing the relation between persons participating in a conversation as well as their intended and actual behavior.

Whereas lexical and grammatical meaning can be described without respect to actual communication, pragmatic meaning is essentially tied to the context in which utterances are produced:

> Semantics is primarily concerned with meanings that are relatively stable out of context, typically arbitrary, and analyzable in terms of the logical conditions under which they would be true. Pragmatics, by contrast, is primarily concerned with the beliefs and inferences about the nature of the assumptions made by participants and the purposes for which utterances are used in the context of communicative language use. It concerns both speakers' indirect meaning, beyond what is said, and also hearers' interpretations, which tend to enrich what is said in order to interpret it as relevant to the context of discourse. (Hopper / Traugott 1993: 69).

The study of pragmatic meaning belongs therefore to the study of discourse, whereas the study of lexical and grammatical meaning belongs to the study of language as "historical techniques" (Coseriu 1981a; Coseriu 1981b: 7[2]).

This is fundamental for the linguistic status of DMs as object of research. DMs only function in real communicative contexts. Within these contexts the actual function and meaning of a given DM are not ambiguous, hearers are usually able to choose its correct meaning. It is only when the necessary context information is lacking that a hearer can misunderstand the meaning of a DM. That is why, in the analysis of DMs, the use of constructed data should be excluded and illustrating examples should be taken from real verbal interactions.

0.4. The data

Most of the data presented in my paper are taken from the Italian spoken language corpus *LIP*[3]. Additionally, some examples of real conversation in Italian, French, Spanish, German and English are taken from conversational analysis research (Schiffrin 1980 and 1987; Bazzanella 1990; Chodorowska 1997).

1. Definition

DMs constitute a formally heterogeneous, open class of linguistic items (particles, adverbs, substantives, verbal syntagms, etc.) that have undergone a linguistic change by ways of regular metacommunicative use and the regular fulfilment of discourse-interactional functions.[4] This process can be described as pragmaticalization.

Pragmaticalization is regarded as the process by which a syntagma or word form, in a given context, changes its lexical meaning in favor of an essentially pragmatic, discourse interactional meaning. In this regard, pragmaticalization functions like grammaticalization as described by Hagège (2001):

> En d'autres termes, si un sens est perdu, un autre est acquis. Il n'est pas vrai que, comme on aime à le répéter, la grammaticalisation aboutisse à des unités figées ou sans contenu. Il serait plus vrai de dire qu'elle aboutit à des unités spécialisées. (Hagège 2001: 1612)[5]

The same is true for the words and phrases that undergo the process of pragmaticalization.

In the synchrony of a historical language, this process leads to polysemy between the pragmaticalized word form and its propositional origin[6].

As I do not consider DMs to be a formally distinct word category but rather a linguistic function that can be fulfilled by many forms of linguistic items such as single words, verbal syntagmas and speech formulas I prefer to use the term discourse marker instead of discourse particle.[7] According to this terminology, discourse particles form a special class of discourse markers characterized by a particularly high degree of frequency, routinization and, therefore, automatization. Discourse particles constitute the very end of the pragmaticalization scale (see section 2. below).

2. Diachronic approach

2.1. The pragmaticalization process[8]

The starting point in the development of DMs are linguistic units (words and expressions) which refer to the physical referential environment of conversation (the "Zeigfeld" of Bühler 1934), and among them especially reception and action devices ("Rezeptionssignale" and "Aktionssignale" in Bühler's terminology[9]) – expressions that symbolize the physically perceptible entities belonging to the direct speech context: the persons involved in a conversation and their physical behaviour (Eng. *listen, look*, It. *senti, guarda*, Fr. *écoute, regarde,* Ger. *hör, schau,* etc.), local (Eng. *here,*It. *ecco, qui*, Fr. *voilà, -ci*, Ger. *hier*) and temporal (Eng. *now,* It. *adesso,* Fr. *maintenant, Ger. nun*) features of the speech-situation.

In order to fulfil his communicative needs, the speaker uses these signal words in a metacommunicative way, no longer referring to the features of the situation but to the very linguistic act.

Thus, the temporal deictic "now" (ger. *nun*, it. *adesso*) referring originally to the actual moment of conversation refers to the following utterance. In the following example, *adesso* prepares the next utterance ("ci pensa un attimo e vede un pochino") and guides the attention of the participant towards it:

(1) A: […] comunque se vuole far la terapia magari

  B: mh

  A: eh chiama_ insomma **adesso** ci pensa un attimo e vede un pochino

  B: si'

  A: […] well, if you want to make the therapy perhaps

  B: mh

  A: eh call_ okay, **now**, think about it for a moment and look it over a little bit

B: yes

(LIP RB 13)

The main function of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization processes is to facilitate communication. Recurrent communicative problems both on the level of message structuring ('grammar') and on the level of discourse structuring ('discourse pragmatics') tend to be resolved by speech communities in a durable way, i.e. in routinized techniques which can be used in an merely automatic manner[10].

In the case of pragmaticalization, the routinization and functional specialization affects the discourse organizing function of words.

In the following example, the reference point of It. *invece* (engl. "on the other hand") shifts metacommunicatively from the proposition to the hearer as the holder of the next turn:

(2) B: questo anzi e' uno simpatico

A: vabbe' eh

B: e tu come stai **invece**?

A: niente io sto_ sto molto bene

sono un po'_ cosi' un po'_ # ...

B: he's a nice guy, as well

A: okay

B: and you, **for your part**, how are you?

A: nothing, I feel_feel very good   I'm a little_ ah a little_ # ...

(LIP RA1)

Examples (1) and (2) show that the process of pragmaticalization is brought about by a conceptual shift into metacommunication.

In a long term perspective, pragmaticalization may lead to semantic change and thereby to functional change: this is the case with fr. *alors* which in medieval French had an exclusively temporal meaning (mFr. *lors* "then" from lat. *illa hora* "at that time, then") and which in modern French is used as a DM[11] with the function of initiating a turn and/or starting a new thematic sequence:

(3)   A: .. (respire) + bon, . alors c'est dans l'armoire de Marteau

   M: ah oui, mais oui, c'est lui qui a tout ça' parce que ça été rangé juste avant les vacances

   A: .. **alors** euh justement moi je lui ai téléphoné ce matin à Marteau ...

   A: .. (breathing) + okay, . now, its in the cupboard of Marteau

   M: ah yes, of course, its him who has all that because that has been removed just before vacation

   A:.. **Now**, ah, exactly, I, I gave him a call this morning, Marteau ...

   (Dausendschön-Gay / Krafft 1991: 132)

In a way which is similar to the processes of lexicalization and grammaticalization, pragmaticalization functions by means of routinization and frequency. This leads to some formally detectable features of DMs.

2.2. Clues to pragmaticalization processes

The formal (phonetic, morphologic, syntactic and textual) features that accompany the pragmaticalization of a lexical item or an expression into a DM and which point to the fact that pragmaticalization processes have occurred are the following:

- frequency

- phonic reduction

- syntactic isolation

- co-occurence in contiguity

- deletion test

2.2.1. Frequency

In real-life conversations DMs appear strikingly often. Thus, in English everyday conversation the particle *well* is used every 150 words on average (Svartvik 1980: 169). In the LIP-Corpus there is evidence of a regular, frequent use of DMs throughout all types of conversation. During a radio call-in quiz (LIP FB14) nearly one word in ten was a DM[12].

Another interesting aspect in this context is the frequent co-occurence of several DMs. The LIP-Corpus gives many examples of this phenomenon. In the following case, each pair of DMs fulfils one single communicative function:

(4)   B: **okay_ va be**ˈ

      A: **allora diciamo** che_ cominciamo da queste pagine qui perche'_ sono quelle che ho preparato

      B: **okay_ okay**

      A: **then, let's say** that_ we start with these pages there because_ these

are the ones that I have prepared

(LIP MA27)

In other examples, co-occurring DMs fulfil different communicative functions which complement one another. In the following example both types of combination appear in a sequence of five DMs. This indicates an important transitional point within the conversation:

(5)   P: a me serve un altro giorno io studio filosofia

N: ah **ho capito va be' allora senti** (incomprensibile) **comunque** cerchi # (incomprensibile) nel [catalogo] ...

P:serve me another day, I am studying philosophy

N: ah, I see, okay, so listen (incomprehensible) anyway, look # (incomprehensible) it up in [the catalogue] …

(LIP MA21)

Whereas the first two DMs confirm and close the preceding turn, the next three initiate a new turn and simultaneously signal the end of a thematic sequence in conversation.

As Gülich (1999) argues, there is a clear correlation between the amount of DMs combined and the structural importance of their place in a given discourse:

> Une étude systématique de ces combinations peut montrer que plus il y a de marqueurs, plus le changement thématique est important. Pour signaler la discontinuité le locuteur fait plus d'efforts que pour signaler la continuité, et ces efforts laissent des traces plus explicites que quand il s'agit de continuité.
>
> (Gülich 1999: 34)

2.2.2. Phonetic reduction

The more often DMs are used in actual speech, the more reduced tends to be their phonetic material:

> There is a link between frequency of use and phonetic bulk such that more frequently used material, whether grammatical or lexical, tends to be shorter (phonetically reduced) relative to less often used material. (Bybee e.a. 1994: 20)

Consequently, with many DMs we find phonetically reduced variants as It. *va be'* instead of *va bene* (see (5)), It. *di'* instead of *dimmi* (see (11)) or Fr. *ben* instead of *bien*[13].

Further studies may investigate whether or not the use of the reduced variant differs from that of the complete expression, as one could assume upon examining (6). In this example, the same participant uses both the long and the reduced variant of *va bene* in one and the same context:

(6)   F:la voce l l'unica cosa che non va in offerta e' la voce m

    E: okay **va be**' quindi tutto tranne_

    F: ... tutto abbiamo preso tutto siamo stati molto buoni

    E: **va bene va bene** <?> senti ...

    F: lot l. The only one that will not be put on sale is lot l

    E: okay, **okay**, so, all but_

    F: ...all, we have gone through all, we have been very good

    E: **okay**, okay <?> listen ...

    (LIP NB5)

The first instance (reduced form) is used by E. in order to conclude the preceding turn and to take over. Since this goal is not achieved, E repeats the term, this time in

its full form. This may lead to the assumption that the "complete" form functions simply as a reinforced variant of the reduced form.

During the process of pragmaticalization, expressions also tend to amalgamate into fixed units. This development is closely linked to the reduction of phonetic material as we can observe in the Italian expression *va be'* forming a unit in which no other word can be inserted.

The fusing of elements within the DM can be seen in the long term development of languages. The French and Italian DMs that developed from the Latin temporal expression *ad illa(m) hora(m)* ('at that time') have merged into one single word: fr. (*a)lors*, it. *allora* as they became DMs.[14]

2.2.3. Syntactic isolation

DMs are syntactically isolated. In (7), for instance, *guarda* is accompanied by an accusative complement ("guarda questo") while in (8) it is not:

(7) B: **guarda** questo e' il eh quello che m'ha ril<asciato> rilasciato

     l'architetto

     B: **Look** this is the one which the architect issued to me

     (LIP FA10)

(8) A: no poi soprattutto io_ dico_ **guarda** quando sono stato in Croazia_

     per esempio # io son andato a far una storia par<ziale> specifica cioe'

     bambini_ ammazzati eccetera ...

A: No, then, above all, I_ say_ **look** when I was in Croatia_ for

example # I was making a special story like killed_ children etc. ...

(LIP MB8):

In (9) *entiendes* governs a subordinate (conditional) clause ("me entiendes

cuando..."), while in (10) it is syntactically isolated:

(9) ¿**Me entiendes** cuando te hablo muy rápidamente?

    'Do you understand me when I speak very quickly?'

    (Chodorowska 1997: 356)

(10) Si yo, a mí eso me da igual **¿me entiendes?** ... Era más o menos para saberlo

    tú.

    'Well me, it doesn't matter to me, **you know**, ... I just wanted yuo to know it.'

    (Chodorowska 1997: 356)

2.2.4. Co-occurence in contiguity

As DMs lose their original lexical meaning, it becomes possible for other items in

the direct linguistic context to express that original lexical meaning, as can be seen

in the following example:

(11) B: poi il pisello invece e' tondo invece poi s'allunga_

     C: ahah **vedi** [RIDE] **vedi**? ahah **guarda** e' proprio giusto giusto

     B: then again, the pea is round, though, and then grows in length_

     C: ahah you **see** [LAUGHING] **see**? ahah **look** its really true

(LIP MB1)

2.2.5. Deletion test

Finally, there is a deletion test that works with DMs.

As Bazzanella (1990) points out, the content of an utterance is not altered if the DM
is removed:

(12)   La via dove abito, sai, è cosi rumorosa.

   "The street where I live, *you know*, is so noisy."

   (Bazzanella 1990: 632).

3. Synchronic approach: the multifunctionality of DMs

3.1. Levels of discourse processing

Consider the following telephone conversation:

(13) 1	A:	pronto?	Hello?
2	B:	<?> c'e' Paolo?	<?> Is Paolo there?
3	A:	eh no Paolo e' uscito ha	Ah, no, Paolo's gone. He said that
		detto che tornava verso le sei	he would be back around six o'clock
4	B:	**va bene** grazie	**Okay**, thank you
5	A:	cosa devo dire_?	Do you want to leave a message?
6	B:	sono Tiziana magari	I'm Tiziana, perhaps
		richiamo_verso_ le sei e mezzo	I'll call again later, at about half past six
7	A:	ah **va bene**	Ah, **okay**
8	B:	grazie	Thank you

9   A: niente arrivederci   You're welcome, good bye

(LIP FB2)

The core part of this short conversation consists of two lines only (ll. 5-7). It is embedded in opening and closing routines. Opening, core and closing part of the conversation together form the global structure of a conversation, each of them being organized by pairs of speech acts or turns. In longer conversations, moreover, the core can be organized by different conversational subjects.

As has been shown in van Dijk (1980) and van Dijk / Kintsch (1978 and 1983) these organizational levels of conversation correspond to levels of discourse processing. Persons involved in a dialog perceive and produce the conversational interaction on these three levels of conversation structuring:
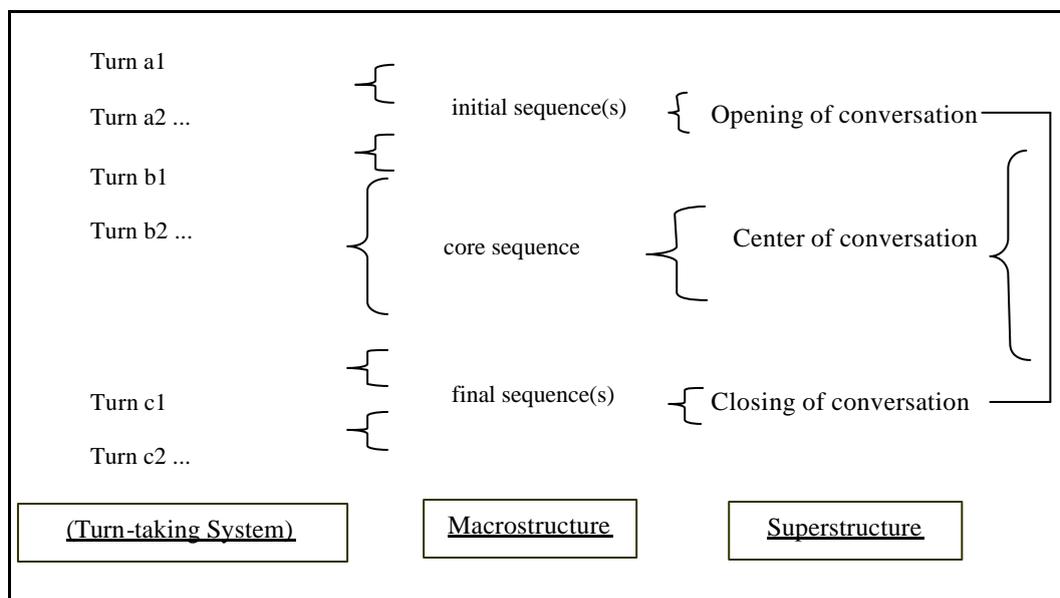

Fig. 1 Levels of conversation structuring[15]

As research in conversational analysis has shown, the first and basic structural instance of real life conversation is the organization of turn taking. In order to guarantee correct functioning of a conversation, the participants have to deal

with the two basic interactive problems of turn taking organization: they have to identify the moments in conversation when a change in turn is possible and they have to manage the changes of the turn.

In order to minimize organizational problems, participants constantly and systematically look for possible moments of transition of the turn (Mondada 2001; Gülich/Mondada 2001). On this basic level of conversational interaction we find the first and fundamental functions of DMs: they indicate the moments where a change in turn is possible.

Since participants methodically use DMs in a first instance to manage turn-taking-problems, the process of pragmaticalization of a given item starts out at this basic level.

It is then up to the participants in the dynamics of the verbal interaction whether the DMs are used (and interpreted) to refer to the "higher" levels of discourse processing.

Analytically, the distinction of different levels of conversation enables us to classify the different functions of DMs according to the conversational level on which they operate. Thus, we can easily categorize the different functions of the Italian particle *va bene* in (9).

Va bene ("okay") is an example of positive backchannel behavior. Here, it metacommunicatively refers to the preceding speech-act of the dialog partner. In making explicit that the message has been correctly understood and that there are no objections to it, *va bene* also serves as a closing signal to the turn. As such, it can easily serve as a signal to close the conversation as a whole, which indeed it does in line 7. The example of *va bene* shows that the multifunctionality of DMs is systematic. There is a principle behind the use of *va bene* which the dialog partners

actually follow. The necessary condition for this broad functional use of *va bene* is given by its primary function on the simplest level of conversation. This initial function remains an inherent feature in all the secondary functions that the particle takes on. [16]

3.2. Types of DMs and their function at different levels of conversation

The role of the turn-taking system as the basic level of conversation becomes particularly clear when considering the fact that in many languages metacommunicative expressions are frequently used as DMs. As can be seen in (10), such expressions verbalize the basic communicative problems to be handled in turn taking:

(14) A: si'_

    B: pronto_ sono <?>

    A: ah **dimmi** ciao

    B: **di'** un po'

    A: **dimmi**

    B: c'e' questa storia che a Kuwait city stanno spegnendo l'ultimo

    pozzo...

    A: Yes_

    B: Hallo_ its me <?>

    A: ah **tell me**, hi

    B: **tell me** a little...

A: **tell me**

B: there is that story that in Kuwait City they are about to extinguish
the last bore-hole ...

(LIP MB6)

(14) is the beginning of a phone conversation. The DM *di/dimmi* functions on all
three levels of discourse structuring: On the level of turn taking it is used by both
participants in order for them to yield the turn to the partner. In the fifth line, *dimmi*
is placed at the end of the initial sequence and thus leads directly to the following
first thematic sequence. In this instance *dimmi* also initiates the center of the
conversation.

As they appear very frequently, these metacommunicative expressions are used in
an automaticized way:

(15) A: quando le mandi le lettere a Mario?

B: quando tu non ci rompi le palle

A: **senti** eh

B: ah **dimmi**

A: eh # Claudio non c'e' Gianni Oletta c'e'?

A: when will you send them, the letters, to Mario

B: when you've finished getting on my nerves

A: **Listen'**

B: **Yes**?

A: Ah # Claudio, is Gianni Oletta, isn't he there?

(LIP NB2)

Fig. 2 shows examples for this type of DMs in several languages:

	verbalized speech act	verbalized act of reception
X wants to take (keep) the turn	*voglio dire...* (LIP MA4) *let me tell you – I'll tell you something ...* (Schiffrin 1980: 207) *je voulais seulement dire que ... je voudrais simplement dire ...* (Meyer-Hermann 1978: 131/139) *ich wollte sagen, ... darf ich hier mal einhaken* (Schwitalla 1976: 83)	*senta una cosa* (LIP FA 12) *yeah but listen to me ...* (Schegloff 1972: 353) *écoutez mon cher ...* (Meyer-Hermann 1978: 134)
X wants to quit (stay out of) the turn	*Patrizia dimmi una cosa* (LIP FB 5) *say, can you lend me a dime?* (Schiffrin 1987: 328) *alors, dites euh c'est pas loin ... ?* (Koch/Oesterreicher 1990: 57)	*fammi sentire* (LIP FB5) *fatemi sentire* (LIP NA3) *fammi sapere* (LIP MB3)

Fig. 2: Basic communicative needs on the turn-taking level and their metacommunicative equivalents[17]

Another type of DMs makes a metacommunicative comment on the preceeding turn. As we have seen in (13), expressions like It. *va bene* function on the first level of discourse structuring as signals for the turn-holder that the reception process has been successful and, therefore, that he can stay on the turn. In making explicit that the turn is closed, they can then be used as cues for those points in the conversation, where a change of turn becomes possible. All types of back channel expressions

can be used in this way, i.e. to mark the end of a turn. In fact, they very often serve

the hearer to prepare his taking over of the turn:

(16) C: il discorso di fondo e' diverso

A: **si' va bene** ma voglio dire

...

C: no non e'riprovevole e' che fa schifo

A: **va be'** per<r> per me voleva dire ...

C: the basic discourse is different

A: yes, okay, but I want to say

...

C: No, its not something to disapprove of, its simply disgusting

A: okay, for, for me I wanted to say...

(LIP RA4)

(17) N: ah **ho capito va be' allora senti** ...

N: Ah, I see, okay, now listen ...

(LIP MA21)

A third type of DMs comments on the structure of the conversation itself. These

expressions present the discourse as temporal or local movement and mark salient

points in it (Eng. *now*, It. *allora*, Fr. *alors*, ger. *nun* – Eng. *then*, It. *poi*, Fr. *puis* - It.

ecco, quindi, Fr. *voilà*), they present the discourse as the development of an

argumentative chain (Eng. *but*, It. *ma*, Fr. *mais*, Ger. *aber* – Eng. *however*, It.

invece, Fr. *par contre*, Ger. *dagegen*) or they sum up the communication (It. *insomma*, Fr. *enfin*, Ger. *also*).

On the simplest level of conversation these DMs are used to guide the attention of the participants towards the following speech act and, in doing so, eventually to the following turn, thus preparing its beginning.

On the macrostructural level, they can be used to introduce a new thematic sequence:

(18) B: questo anzi e' uno simpatico

A: vabbe' eh

B: e tu come stai **invece**?

A: niente io sto_ sto molto bene

   sono un po'_ cosi' un po'_ # ...

B: he's a nice guy, as well

A: okay

B: and you, **for your part**, how are you?

A: nothing, I feel_feel very good   I'm a little_ ah a little_ # ...

(LIP RA1)

On the level of superstructure, they can function as initial signal for the center part of the conversation (see fr. **alors** in ex. (3), it. **allora** in ex. (4)) or the closing of the conversation:

(19) B: ahah Giovanna **insomma** ci si sente

A: va bene

B: va bene

A: okay

B: ciao ciao

A: ciao

B: ahah Giovanna, **so,** we will speak again

A: okay

B: okay

A: okay

B: bye, bye

A: bye

(LIP FB1)

3.3. How do the participants handle the multifunctionality of DMs?

The question remains as to how the participants understand the correct meaning of

DMs and react adequately to it in conversation. We have seen that the first and

basic function of DMs lies on the level of the succession of turns. This very fact

shows that it is up to the participant in the *ad hoc* situation to decide upon the value

of a given DM. From the perspective of the hearer, a DM that closes a turn, for

example, presents a choice. He is free to take the turn and continue the thematic

sequence, he can start a new theme or he can start the routines to end the conversation.

Of course, the range of possible and adequate reactions is not completely open. It is determined on the one side by the basic function of the DM – to close, to open, to prepare – and on the other side by the three levels of conversation processing – a turn, a thematic sequence, the conversation.

Thus, the multifunctionality of DMs evolves in response to the dynamics of free spoken conversation where each turn, each new theme, and each start or end of conversation as a whole has to be negotiated spontaneously. The processes whereby mutual metacommunication indicates possible moments of turn change are necessarily open ones, to be determined by the negotiations of the participants.

4. Perspectives

Seen from this angle, the analytical problem of defining and classifying DMs refers us to the more fundamental problem of the adequate analytical description of member activities and member methods. The mechanisms and orders found in the development and multifunctionality of DMs correspond to those found in other domains of social interaction. Their analysis should therefore benefit from the analytical framework of ethnomethodology.

The detailed study of the diachronic and interactional dynamics of DMs can thus illuminate domains of language function which are poorly accounted for by traditional semantic and grammatical approaches.

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[1]   Cf. Croft 2000 for the definition of lexical vs. grammatical meaning.

[2]   For Coseriu, discourse or "text" represents an autonomous linguistic level.

[3]   *Lessico di frequenza dell'italiano parlato a cura di* Tullio de Mauro, Federico Mancini, Massimo Vedovelli, Miriam Voghera, Etaslibri, Fondazione IBM Italia (Milano) 1993 (LIP).

[4]   This definition excludes modal particles from the class of DM.

[5]   As a result of this process however, grammaticalization and pragmaticalization differ considerably. Thus, grammaticalization results in the formation of new grammatical items: "(grammaticalization is) le processus par lequel une unité lexicale d'une langue se développe, au cours du temps, en unité grammaticale, ou une unité grammaticale en unité plus grammaticale encore. (...) ce qui est en cause, c'est l'évolution morphogénétique par laquelle les langues spécifient leur grammaire" (Hagège 2001: 1608-9) – The relations between grammaticalization and pragmaticalization, though, will not form the center of my attention. In my eyes, the main difference

between the two processes consists in the linguistic status of the domain in which the new (pragmatic) meaning functions. In the case of grammaticalization, the domain to which the new meanings belong is that of the grammar of a historical *language*. In the case of DM, the domain is that of *discourse* (Coseriu 1981b – cf. above, note 3). With this distinction in mind I also refer to Oesterreicher (1997) and to Koch (forthcoming). In addition to Coseriu, Koch and Oesterreicher distinguish on the historical level between *Einzelsprache* ("historical language") on the one hand, and *Diskurstradition* ("discourse traditions") on the other. The turn-taking rules that fulfil DM in spoken conversations belong to the second level whereas the grammatical norms and rules belong to the first one.

6   It is characteristic for all long term processes in language change that for a relatively long period of time new meanings and functions coexist with older meanings and functions.

7   For the discussion on terminology see section 2. of Kerstin Fischer's Introduction to this volume.

8   Another view on the same processes is given by Waltereit (1999 and in this volume). For the parallel processes of grammaticalization of German modal particles see Diewald (in this volume). – For studies on diachronic aspects of DM see Stein (1985), Brinton (1996), Onodera (1995), Manoliu (2000), Schwenter / Traugott (2000). – Only a few studies exist on spoken discourse in past stages of romance languages, cf. Spitzer (1922); Schlieben-Lange (1983); Koch (1995 and forthcoming).

9   "Das sprachtheoretische Axiom, daß alle Sprachzeichen *Symbole* derselben Art sein müssen, ist zu eng; denn einige darunter wie die Zeigwörter erweisen sich als *Signale*. Und von einem Signal darf man nicht dasselbe verlangen wie von einem (reinen) Symbol, weil zwischen beiden ein sematologischer Unterschied besteht. Die Zeigwörter sind eine eigene Klasse von Signalen, nämlich Rezeptionssignale (verschieden von den Aktionssignalen, zu denen der Imperativ gehört). Ein *dér* oder *ich* löst eine bestimmt e Blickwendung u. dgl. und in ihrem Gefolge eine Rezeption aus." (Bühler 1934: 52-57)

10   For the problem-solving and routinization aspect of grammar see Lüdtke (1988) and Hagège (2001).

[11] Fr. *alors* also demonstrates the long term processes that can accompany pragmaticalization like loss of phonetic material and coalescence: lat. illa hora ? anc. fr. *lors* ? moyen fr. *à lors ?* fr. *alors*. It. *allora* from lat. ad illa(m) hora(m) appears already in Dante.

[12] The occurring DM are the following (in the order of their frequency): *ma* (176 occurrences)*, ciao* (122)*, ecco* (97)*, pronto* (77)*, va bene* (68, among them 22 *va be'*), *senti* (55)*, allora* (44), *dimmi* (23), *sentiamo* (13), *ho capito* (12), *vedi* (12), *guarda* (9), *insomma* (9), *niente* (7), *volevo dire* (2); the total number of words is 7739.

[13] Cf. Moeschler (1996: 191): "bon **ben** oui – mais là c'en était pis voilà".

[14] For the analysis of typical prosodic features belonging to DM see Bazzanella (in this volume, section 1.2.3).

[15] See Bergmann (1981), van Dijk (1980), Fritz (1994), Henne / Rehbock ([2]1982), Mondada (2001: 6), Gülich / Mondada (2002: 206ss.).

[16] In most of the cases, this basic discourse marking meaning conserves central features of the propositional meaning of the same word or expression. See Bazzanella (in this volume, section 1.2.2); Fischer (2000 and in this volume) for the concept of a "core" meaning which the DM and its propositional origin have in common.

[17] See also Schwitalla (1976: 82-83) and Bazzanella (1990: 640). – In many languages, DM have been pragmaticalized out of these direct verbalizations of turn-taking-devices