Veronica Cristina Nedelcu[1]

THE ADVERBS AS CONECTORS IN THE DISCOURSIVE FUNCTION

Abstract: *This article reviews from a declarative and functional perspective the role that the adverbs of time and space have in the discourse, adverbs, which, together with personal and demonstrative pronouns and grammatical category of time, are - in the system-language deictic component involving referentially and directly the situation of communication.*

Key words: *reference, act of reference, relational adverbs, adverbs dating*

As it is known, these adverbs associate in the communication process the objective place and space significance to subjective, punctual and concret circumstances of the act of speech. In speech, these adverbs can update specific meanings occurrence from a given situation. In most cases, the temporal significance and value is added to the different contextual meanings.

The diversity of the hypostases in which they appear and operation that involve determined us to propose a only a pragmatic-discursive classification of the adverbs of time, which we will develop further studies.

Reference and the act of reference

In the theory of enunciation, E. Benveniste supports the idea that "the reference is part of enunciation." "Within the enunciation, the language expresses a certain relation to the world. The condition of this mobilization itself and the characteristics of the language is, from the speaker´s point of view, the need to refer through the speech from the point of view of the other (the alocutor), the opportunity to do the same co-reference.

C. Kerbrat- Orecchioni (in *L' énonciation. De la subjectivité dans le langage*, 1980, 2002) defines the reference as "the release of the statement in relation to the referent, thus the set of mechanisms that make correspond some elements from the extra linguistic to linguistic units".[2].

That one who, by his statement, provides to his speaking partner the necessary tools and rules for identifying the target referents in a statement/ text is the speaker. Reference is therefore an activity involving the principle of cooperation between more collocutors that can fail if the receiver is not able to identify the referent. An act of reference is considered successful if the reference semantics (lexical) and reference speaker (the speaker intended) coincide, thus are the same. This distinction makes a connection between the object that the speaker wants to nominate and the object that the interlocutor arrives at by means of the used linguistic expression.

The act of reference is defined by using linguistic forms - such word, phrase, sentence - in order to evoke entities (objects, people, events, properties, processes) belonging to real or fictional universes, external or internal. Natural languages have the opportunity "to build the covered universe and can create imaginary universe of discourse." The reference can be analyzed as a phenomenon both pragmatic and linguistic. Thus, linguistic reference is based on the relationship between lexical meanings and their expressions (pontential virtual reference which is independent of any use), while pragmatic reference is generated by the use of referential expressions in a particular act of speech, the speech (the current

[1] Ovidius University Constanța.
[2] Kerbrat-Orecchioni, C., 1980/2002, p. 39.

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

reference). There can be identified a successful reference process only when the receiver identifies the reference object as the same object designated by the sender through the linguistic expression.

In the perspective of G.Kleiber (*Anaphore et pronoms*, 1994) all operations are aimed to build the act of reference frame, which leads to the need of taking into account not only the context of enunciation, but "circumstances of evaluation" of the antecedent (for the anaphoric). The referees may be, the truth of their existence in the real world, real or imaginary (fictitious) and by Location, endophoric (intertextual) and exophoric (extratextual). If in the process of identifying the referent we refer to the text (cotext) mention the existence of a referent endophoric; if the process of identifying the referent we refer to the situation of communication (context), then we have an exophoric referent.

In contrast to the anaphora, the deixis involves "searching within the physical entourage the direct referent 'either through the indicative gesture (referent -demonstration) or through the linguistic instructions attached to the deictic term (*Come here, near me!, I am coming right now, in two minutes*.).

The adverbs of time involves considering a temporal reference point. Less numerous are adverbs that appear and operate independently of PR (whet her it is the T_0 or another moment currently enrolled in another speech and to which they relate). Negative adverb never, even if at first sight seem unrelated to the situation of enunciation, it is not independent of it, meaning that $T_0$is involved in a negative manner (never- "nor T_0"). In the same situation, but rather the opposite pole there is the adverb ever, which includes T_0 (*anytime* -"even in T_0") and thus joins a suite oftimesT_1, T_2...Tn designated by the adverb.

As it concerns the meaning, there are adverbs that refer to a particular semantic area: the past (*yesterday, last night, last night*), the future (*tomorrow, day after tomorrow, tonight, soon*) or present (*now, today, in a moment*) .A number of adverbs can be associated with different past tenses for both the specification and the reference to a posterior stage towards the act of enunciation: *then, sometime later*, etc.. Linguistic elements designating the period fixed "calendar" are generally nouns: *Monday, Tuesday, summer, winter, morning, evening, etc*.., nouns which (contextually) become adverbs and designate virtually no past, no future unless they are made in relation to a reference point belonging to these temporal areas.

- *Întinse mâna, i-o puse pe braţ şi îl mângâie: „Du-te chiar* ***duminica*** *viitoare* ***şi luni*** *întoarce-te”.* (Preda, 1984, I, p. 133) (*He rose his hand, put it on his arm and caressed him: Go the very next Sunday and come back on Monday.)*

The adverbs of time (actual or derived from nouns) denoting periods of the day or other time segments are compatible with any point on the time axis (*morning, afternoon, noon, evening, night, spring,* etc..) and only their combination with tense or other temporal determinations (*Came / A coming months last Sunday / next week comes*, etc..) make them lie on the time axis. A special situation is today. Today can occur with both forms of the past (*Today I have received your letter*.) and those of the future (*Today I am watching a movie*.) Designating the date range (for 24 hours) which is included when enunciating (***Azi*** *pot să spun cu certitudine că nu mulţi ani după întâmplarea din acea noapte s-a petrecut cu mine o schimbare. - Today I can certainly say that not many years after the story of that night something was changed about me.* - Preda, 1984, I, p.47) or a wider interval" contemporaneously "(*This cup there is/ still exists, I think, today, although my mother died* ... Preda, 1984, I, p.42).

The adverbs of time participate the in discourse organization both as connectors and as important elements in setting the time frame. The initial position that the temporal adverbs often occupy within the sentence (or text) determines the designation of the referential field within which the sentence finds its own validity.

This position detached in the beginning of the sentence is not only specific to temporal adverbs or adverbial groups (and there is nothing exceptional in their ability to occupy it); it concerns all types of adverbs used with slightly different features, and is characteristic especially to adverbs, which, by definition, have a exophrasal function, grouped under the sentence adverbs that behave like exterior elements of the statement, not participating directly in the organization of the content the propositional phrase, but which belong to the act of enunciation/ speech.

Having an initial positions is one of the properties that characterize adverbs which are called 'framing' (A. Borillo, 2005: 143) or the speech input and whose role is to delineate a field of reference,

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

notional or space-time, for the content of the sentence in which it operates and, possibly, to the following. These temporal adverbs that outline the temporal plan (*cadrative*) can be grouped into several categories based on the type of restriction that is brought in a semantic plan to validate the statement that they accompany.

The adverbs of time (and the place) as in put or frame proponents are able to clarify the circumstances of time (and space) in which the sentence can be stated/spoken: *Monday, the 17th of June, Friday, Saturday, now* etc.

Placed to the beginning of the phrase, the temporal adverbs specify the truth conditions of the discourse are in, that is they fix, marking the time, the circumstantial about the propositional content that can be evaluated as true or false: *Tomorrow (morning) will be the strongest rain on the coast.* They can appear in a negative, imperative and / or interrogative sentence as an answer to an interrogative adverbial of time, which may be: an interrogative timing (*when*?), a duration (*how long*?) or frequency (how often?):

- *-When will it rain?*
  -Tomorrow morning.
- *-How longwill it take?*
  -By noon.
- *-How often does it rain?*
  - Weekly.

Although the majority of temporal adverbs can appear at the beginning of the statement, not all are able to open themselves a framework for the following phrases and to forma universe of discourse. For example, the question can be connected with temporal *quantifying* adverbs , a category which includes duration expressions (*for months, all night, for years, weekly, daily,* etc..), Adverbs or adverbial phrases frequentative/iterative (*Sundays; every year, year after year, hour by hour, three times per day*).

These adverbs/ adverbial phrases can either fulfill a *cadrative* function cropping interval so be used to calculate a temporal references provided by other linguistic elements.

- *I wasn´t going to college for weeks. I was spending my days in my room.*
- *On Monday I wasn´t going shopping.*

More difficult is to express ourselves about the ability to perform a *cadrative*/ "frame function" in case of durative or iterative adverbs such as: *always, all the time, or adverbs of frequency (sometimes, often*).

In the fictional text, when the narrator wants to set the time or the event-phase which the whole text refers to, he will use a phrase that refers to a time period more or less accurate, depending on the communicative intentions that is a common way of building or representation of temporality in literary texts:

• ***Cu un an în urmă*** *fusesem numit asistent la catedra de litere şi filozofie, întâi la catedra marelui poet şi filozof..., de filozofia culturii, creată* ***mai demult*** *special pentru el (el mă numi),* ***apoi*** *la istoria filozofiei, fiindcă adepţii marelui poet şi filozof mă izolară curând de el şi înţelesei fără să mi se spună că era mai bine să trec la altă catedră.* (Preda, 1984, I, p. 205) (*One year ago I was assistant at the Philosophy and Letters Department, first within the department of the great poet and philosopher…,for cultural philosophy, created some time ago special for him (he is the one who can name me), then for history philosophy, because those who liked the great poet and philosopher soon isolated me and I unders to on whithout them telling me that is better to move to another department*.)

• *Am mai avut de a face cu anchetele şi justiţia şi am mai fost condamnat, dar nu pe viaţă şi nu fără speranţa de a ieşi* ***curând. Nu fusese chiar curând****, dar nici* ***prea târziu*** *ca să nu pot uita* (...) *Apropierea mea de cei pe care îi* ***dispreţuisem mai înainte*** *se făcu, aş putea zice, prin telepatie...*(Preda, 1984, I, p.34) *(I had to do with investigations and justice and I was convict before, but not for life and not without hoping to come out* ***soon****. It was not so soon, but it was not*

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

late ehough so I could forget (...) The closeness to those who I ***had used to hate before*** *was made through telepathy, I could say.)*

In the category of adverbs of time can be divided into two subclasses that can operate "cadratively": defined temporal location adverbs (adverbs dating or date) and temporal location adverbs of indefinite (co-relational).

The *adverbs dating* help establish a point or time interval on the time axis, in relation to a PR (which coincides usually with T_0) or putting to get her different lexical unit time yesterday, the day before, last Tuesday, this evening or by using the same units as fixing elements allowing the calculation: *from that day, within a week, three days ago, etc..*

These adverbs are characterized by the fact that they provide a temporal anchor event to which they apply, relating it directly or indirectly to the mark on the time axis that is new or which reference has already been identified in the previous context. The adverbs dating or designate a "space" in relation to the temporal proposition in which they appear can be assessed and thus can have truth value.

Although syntactically they correlate with the question *when*? (and not "*how long*?" specific for duratives), they can still be placed in phrases which the action verb can occur: *arrive, he (is) going on, to be held*:

•*The accident happened* ***yesterday/ this morning /three weeks ago /some months ago****. (Accidentul s-a produs* ***ieri/ în dimineaţa asta/ acum trei săptămâni/ acum câteva luni****.)*

Dating is done frequently (especially in written communication) by nominal phrases that indicate time in a chronological manner (which may be called absolute), although the magnitude was situated chronologically from one day to a century, millennium (temporal phrases as: August 2007, December the 24th, the twentieth century, in these years and / or adverbs as today designating periods of time and not points). If there are phrases consisting of an o un "time" and a demonstration, it is necessary to add some additional clarifications made propositional:

• ***În cei doi ani cât*** *durase divorţul, soluţia mea fusese simplă... Ne vedeam la mine şi totdeauna seara şi totdeauna spre sfîrşitul întâlnirii şi pe nesimţite cuvintele o împingeau spre mine şi se ciocneau cu ale mele scoţînd nu scîntei, ca acuma, ci adesea fulgere,* (M. Preda, p. 217) (*In the two years that the divorce had been lasting, my solution was simple... We could see each other at my place and only during the and always by the end of the meeting and imperceptibly the words were pushing her towards me and collided with mine taking out not sparks, as now, but often flashes of lightning* - M. Preda, p. 217).

The adverbs dating can be simple adverbs like: *yesterday, today, tomorrow*, adverbialized nominal: *Tuesday, last year, calendar names: January, February*, etc.., causing a point on the time axis, units of time or portion of time which directly locates the event. The identifcation of the point or the time interval in which lies the event is done in two different ways: either directly with the referential land mark the utterance time (T_0): *now, today, yesterday* (deictic adverbs) or sent to a reference (I) already identified by a fragment of the previous speech (adverbs referential anaphora):

There are either adverbs/deictic groups: *one month ago, in three days, at the beginning of the century, and so on*, or are groups anaphora (starting) that day.
... ***Acum trei zile****,* (dating to T_0– „răsalaltăieri" - *the day before yesterday*) *continuă el, cobor în pivniţă să tai lemne..Când mă uit... ştiam că în pivniţă abia aveai loc să pui lemnul pe butuc...* ***acuma****, loc berechet... Când* ***spre seară*** (dating to T_e) *am ieşit şi eu din bibliotecă şi m-am aşezat la masă, la masă nimic...* ***Dimineaţa*** (dating to T_e) *însă m-a invitat la ceai, mi-a dres cravata, avea aerul că nu s-a întîmplat nimic.* (M. Preda, 1984, I, p.122). (*...Three days ago* (dating toT_0-"the day before") *he continued, I climb down to the basement to chop wood. When I looked in the basement...I knew there was place only for putting wood on the block...now, plenty of space... When the evening arrived (dating to you). I came out from library and I sat down at the table, there was nothing ...in the morning (dating to you), she invited me to tea, she arranged my tie, she looked like that nothing had happened.* - M. Preda, 1984, I, p.122).

The adverbs and temporal groups (above) are dating back to the time the events to the enunciation or other event. All these temporal location adverbs are placed in initial position and can assume the role of

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

"framework indicators" (marking both the present and the stages of their sequence), as in the sentence: *Three weeks ago, I was passing slowly over* ...today any *anguish has disappeared*.

The relational adverbs have the property of being directly referential, but express an ordering relation between the event expressed in the sentence which includes the following or preceding events. In their operation, they do not refer to a particular bench mark and thus do not designate themselves a point or time that can serve as a new landmark. When they do occur, they provide more likely a calculation of the period of time providing thus a temporal position relative to a previously described speech: *At noon on the terrace of the hotel I received a letter...Before that I had replied the board president´s message.*

The relational adverbs express relations of simultaneity or posteriority between two events - different enunciation that the event is automatically entered into by producing the discourse - specifying the type of relationship (*before, simultaneously, later*) often accompanied by a relatively vague assessment (*long before, much later*), contributing quite accurate (*three days before, a few weeks later, many months before* etc.) in defining the temporal discourse. They can be divided into sequential adverbs (*occasionally, sometimes, from time to time*) and chronological ones (*before leaving after income* etc.). To be understood, they require consideration of a prior statement. What distinguishes them is that specificity of temporal relationship is often being done by comparing the previous discourse; relational adverbs indicate a chronological calculation of reference which may be submitted sometimes in an indirect way, by indicating a time interval setting allowing more or less accurate distance: *three days after, a few days before and others* .:

- *Soţia mea (căci ne căsătorisem **cu trei zile înainte**) continuă, **în timp ce** aceeaşi fată **de-acum doi ani** ne servea.* (M. Preda, vol. I, p. 215) (*My wife (because we got married three days before) was continuing, while the same girl as two years ago was serving us.)*
- *Serile, adesea, aveau loc bătăi. Se crease neliniştitoarea senzaţie că ocupaseră oraşul. Un lider din guvern, comunist din ilegalitate, veni **atunci** de la Bucureşti şi ţinu aici un discurs dur, în care declară că **înainte de a fi comunist** el era român, declaraţie care fu considerată eretică, i se puse în sarcină şi fu curăţat aproape îndată ce se întoarse în capitală.* (M. Preda, vol I, p. 233) (*Often in the evenings there were fights. There was created a stressfull sensation that they were owing the city. A guvernamental leader, an illegal communist, came then to Bucharest and had a tough speech during which he said that before being a communist he had been a Romanian; due to this confession which was considered heretic he was put out of service immediately after he coming back in the capital city.)*
- *După care să urmeze, peste inima mea care bătea să-mi spargă pieptul (în realitate îmi bătea atunci, când gândeam, **înainte** s-o văd), explicaţiile pe care nu le-aş fi auzit şi nu le-aş fi înţeles şi nici nu m-ar mai fi interesat.* (M. Preda, vol. I, p. 241) *(After that to follow, over my heart which was beating strong enough to break my chest (it was beating then, when I was thinking, before seeing her), some explanations which I didn´t want to hear because neither I could understand them or they could interest me.)*

This particularity makes possible another distinction: that between pure relational adverbs and the relational elements of the range. The distinction is important for the ability of these adverbs to assume the position of frame work indicators.

Pure relational elements do nothing but express a temporal relation between events without evaluating the interval between the considered events (*before later then*) allowing a possible vague assessment: *shortly after, long before much later and so on*; their role is, above all, to mark a chronological order according to the three possible temporal relations: anteriority, simultaneity, posteriority.

- *Cu această seninătate am rămas **apoi totdeauna** în faţa rupturilor, dar numai atunci**,** în clipele când primeam lovitura, dezastrul începea **mult mai târziu**.* (M. Preda, vol. I, p. 68-69) (*I was always facing after that the breakings off calmly, but this was available only then during the moments I was receving the hit, the disaster was beginning later on.)*

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

The relational elements expressing the period which also refer to the period of time which separates the two temporally correlated events: three days after, a month before the beginning of the year, a few weeks later etc.. The role of these adverbs is rather the determination to bring a relative time interval and allow calculation rather than to introduce a temporal referent:

- *Dar ea nici măcar nu tresări şi nimic nu mai recunoscui în privirea ei din ceea ce ştiam că exista nu **mai departedecât cu câteva zile în urmă**: neclintirea surprizei, strania bucurie a revederii...**Acum** expresia şi privirea ei nu mai arătau nimic...* (Preda, 1984, I, p. 237) (*But she didn´t even shudder and I could recognize nothing eventhough I knew that not later than few days ago there was something in her eyes: the surprise, the strange happiness of meeting me…now her face expression and her eyes were showing nothing anymore.)*

It is true that in terms of interpreting the result can sometimes be quite close. In the statements: *He is leaving a day later.* and *He leaves the next day*., the temporal location is the same. Through the referential character of adverbs of time is being done the temporal specification needed by the anchoring within the speech utterance.

- *...explicaţiile pe care nu le-aş fi auzit şi nu le-aş fi înţeles şi nici nu m-ar mai fi interesat. **În seara aceea, în ziua următoare. A treia zi însă, cu câteva ore înainte de** a o revedea, sufletul meu se golea insesizabil,.* (Preda, 1984, I, p. 241) (*…the explanations that I have not heard and which I did not understand and which would not interested me. That evening, the next day. The third day, however, a few hours before seeing her again, my soul was becoming empty without noticing it...*Preda, 1984,I, p241)

Those two factors: tenses and adverbs of time are far from being independent. The adverbs work usually *cadratively* as temporal grouping operating within the same piece of text and provides a common temporal space; each creates a dependency which, operating as a cohesion factor contributes to their integration in speech

A temporal adverb placed at the beginning of the sentence may not be limited to work only as an introductive element for the framework: ensuring continuity, it can serve to establish relations with the previous context.

The adverbs may have a deictic or anaphoric relational operation. The anaforics relational have an already established temporal land mark in the discourse different from the one provided by the court enumeration (*the same year, next day*, etc.) that is allowed to be registered by a relational deictic dependent enunciation/ speech situation. With characteristic properties of temporal location adverbs, sentence anaphoric may occupy different positions. They have an endophrasal function (*We ate quickly, then we broke up tired and we agreed to meet the next day in the morning*.) or exophrasal function and in this case, they serve as an input adverb frame /cadrative, and anaphoric operation:

- *Data conferinţei de presă fusese fixată pe 8 martie. **A doua zi** nu ne-am vorbit. **Poimâine** am schimbat idei, am cântat, am băut nişte vin...seara fusese antrenantă. La **două zile după** (acea seară) am primit un telefon matinal.* (*The date of the press conference was set on the 8th of March. The next day we didn´t talk. The day after tomorrow we exchanged ideas, we sang, we drank some wine...the night was exhilarating. Two days later (that night) I received a call morning*.)

In the example above, the next day can be interpreted using the deictic *the 8th of March*, which in this interpretation, serves as a frame/reference for subsequent statements. In turn, "two days after" takes over and expand the information in the sentence that follows.

As relational adverbs anaphor a relational deictic adverbs can occur within the sentence or can be placed in initial position (if we exclude then).
Used as relational deictic the adverbs do not introduce a proper temporal location, but to the extent that they can provide an indirect calculation of temporal anchoring, some of them can even provide in a vague manner the validity of the statement.

These two types of adverbs (dating and relationship), while at the beginning of the statement, are able to operate in dual plan: on one hand they will ensure the continuity of discourse and, on the other hand, will have the possibility of introducing a new framework for the speech: *În 1989, în acelaşi an,*

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)

până atunci/ în 1989...din acel moment/ din clipa aceea. (*In 1989, in .the same year...until then/ in 1989...at that time/ from that moment*).
The examination of the relationship with temporal adverb has revealed the combinatorial possibilities and the diversity of temporal or aspectual values expressed by them (the combination verb-adverb of time). The grammatical category of time and its interpretation cannot be limited to verbal description and observation forms, but they must be considered in its complexity, with all the contextual implications (situational context).

Reference :

Benveniste, E. *Problèmes de lingiustique générale*. Paris: Gallimard, 2000. *Probleme de lingvistică generală*. Vol. I, II. Bucureşti: Editura Teora Universitas, 1974.
Borillo, A. „Quelques marquers de la deixis spatiale". *La Deixis*. Paris: PUF, 1992.
Borillo, A. *L´espace et son expression en français*. Paris: Ophrys,1998.
Kerbrat-Orecchioni, C. *L´Énonciation. De la subjectivité dans le langage.* Paris: Armand Colin, 1980.
Kleiber, G. *Anaphores et pronoms*. Paris: Duculot, 1994.

BDD-A3746 © 2013 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 23:00:11 UTC)