An enunciative approach to discourse markers: *yet* and *still*

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Abstract: The present study aims to provide a general model for the analysis of discourse markers, formulated within the Theory of Enunciative and Predicative Operations (TEPO) (cf. Culioli 1990, 1999a, 1999b). Discourse marking is seen as a complex activity of regulation, involving metalinguistic comment on operations of representation and / or reference assignment. In illustration of the model, a single schematic form for the markers *yet* and *still* is shown to give rise to contextually situated values of both micro- and macro-syntactic scope as a function of various linguistically observable factors. All examples are taken from the spoken part of the British National Corpus.

Key words: enunciation, discourse markers, schematic form, aspect, modality, concession, argumentation.

1. Introduction

Discourse markers form a notoriously heterogeneous set, in terms of linguistic categories, involving both micro- and macro-syntactic considerations, and including, in English (and according to one's theoretical perspective), adverbs (*consequently*, *honestly*), prepositional phrases (*in fact*, *on the contrary*), particles (*even*, *only*), subordinating conjunctions (*because*, *though*), coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*), predications (*you know*, *mind you*) etc. Furthermore, neither the term "discourse marker", nor the functional properties of the class form any real basis for consensus among researchers[2].

While the Theory of Enunciative and Predicative Operations (TEPO)[3] has served as the framework for a number of stimulating studies of individual markers[4], there has been little explicit theorisation

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[2] As the discussions contained in Fischer (2006), for example, confirm.
[3] The foundation texts are anthologised in Culioli (1990, 1999a and 1999b).
[4] Cf. for example work by Culioli (1990) on French *donc* or *bien*, Paillard & Vũ Thi (2012), De Vogüé (1986) or Franckel (1987).

of the phenomenon of discourse marking[5]. The present study aims to provide a general model for this, building on previous studies in which I have focussed on individual discourse markers in English.

Section 2 will consider the question of how to account for the meaning of discourse markers. To this end, I will make a short critical presentation of the monosemy or polysemy-based approaches to lexical meaning which underpin much of the literature. The TEPO refuses this dichotomy, arguing for a dynamic approach to the construction of contextually situated meaning expressed via the *schematic form*. This can be understood as an axiomatically underdetermined *potential for meaning*, described in terms of a limited number of operations and operands, which takes on a specific contextual shape (cf. Culioli 1990) under clearly identifiable contextual pressures (position, prosody, context). Section 3 will present a brief enunciative blueprint for the grammatical category of "discourse marking". Section 4 will illustrate the theoretical framework with a study of *yet* and *still*, two markers which, in addition to their *argumentative values* – and the *macrosyntactic articulations* these involve –, also possess quantifying or aspectuo-modal values – on a microsyntactic level. Situated values for each marker will be shown to derive from the configuration of an invariant schematic form in dynamic interaction with contextual parameters.

Unless otherwise indicated, all examples are taken from the spoken part of the British National Corpus, accessed via the BNCweb interface which also provides the statistical information quoted in Section 4 (Hoffmann & Evert 2005).

2. Accounting for the meanings of discourse markers

The term "discourse marker" is rivalled by more than twenty other terms to denote variously overlapping sets of markers (cf. discussions in Brinton 1996: 29, Schourup 1999: 228-230, Fraser 2009: 2). Even when researchers do use the same term, it does not necessarily cover the same extension, however, notably because the term "discourse" is employed in two different ways which are often left implicit. Some approaches consider "discourse" as language "above the sentence or above the clause"[6]. This gives rise to studies in which discourse markers relate segments of text across sentence boundaries. In other approaches, "discourse" is understood to involve interactional functions, "expressing social relations and personal attitudes" (Brown & Yule 1983: 1). In this perspective, considerations such as turn taking or face management in conversation will typically take precedence.

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[5] Paillard is the exception to this, with a series of articles that aim to characterise the category of discourse markers in French (Paillard 1998, 2000, 2002 or Paillard and Vu Thi 2012, for example).
[6] A classic definition from Stubbs (1983: 1), although Stubbs in fact goes on to qualify this to include social contexts and interaction.

These potential ambiguities are minimised in the TEPO, which rarely employs the term "discourse" or its French cognate "discours" (Culioli & Normand 2005: 88-89 or 139). Culioli's programmatic definition of the object of linguistic enquiry: "the diversity of natural languages and registers [spoken and written]" (Culioli 1990: 179) is as ecumenical as possible, including both "discourses": the surrounding linguistic context and subjective and intersubjective configurations.

In her excellent introduction to *Approaches to Discourse Particles*, Fischer (2006: 13) distinguishes between *monosemy*, *polysemy* and *homonymy* in dealing with the inherently polyfunctional nature of discourse markers. Let us take, by way of illustration, the following utterances featuring YET with both *micro-* and *macro-syntactic scope*:

(1)   So we haven't actually met *yet*. F7J 580

(2)   Jamie's father is helping to organise a protest group, which may *yet* take Thames Water to court for damages over the cryptosporidia contamination. KRM 954

(3)   They're probably away on *yet* another holiday. KBF 4802

(4)   and I was better qualified than a lot of <pause> guys in my class and *yet* they left college and got a job right away! FLK 132[7]

Let us call the values of YET in examples (1)-(4) *aspectual*, *modal*, *quantifying* and *concessive*, respectively[8]. In keeping with Bolinger's maxim of *one form one meaning* (Bolinger 1983: ix-x) a monosemy-based approach would typically assign to YET a single core meaning, proposing to generate the different values (1)-(4) through pragmatic enrichments or derivations. Homonymy would on the contrary consider that (1)-(4) illustrate not four different values of one word, but four different words that happen to share the same form. Few linguists would defend such a radical option. More common is a polysemy-based approach, which would claim that (1)-(4) represent different senses of the same word "related in an often non-predictable, but nevertheless motivated way, either in a chain-like fashion, through family resemblances, or as extensions from a prototype" (Mosegaard-Hansen 1998: 241).

2.1. Objections to monosemy-based approaches

Monosemy-based approaches are often criticised on the grounds that meanings may drift apart and so to force them

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[7] The marker under discussion is italicised in examples. Pauses and overlaps are noted as in the BNCweb interface.

[8] These labels are used pretheoretically for the sake of convenience only.

together with a core meaning requires an unrealistic degree of abstraction for the average language user (cf. Landheer 1991: 215 for example). Additionally, the passage from an excessively general core meaning to a specific realisation may involve over reliance on vaguely formulated pragmatic principles[9]. Polysemists would argue that it is implausible to imagine speakers recalculating meanings from abstract cores in each discourse situation, preferring to consider that speakers dispose of a finite number of polysemies for a given form. Ockham's razor cuts both ways, however, and one might equally well argue that it is simpler for speakers to appeal to reusable procedures for mapping forms to meanings rather than for them to maintain a vast inventory of unrelated meanings for each form. Monosemy-based approaches are also criticised for an excessively static vision of meaning, which is considered ill-equipped to account for diachronic development. Meanings can drift a long way, and at some point one has to decide whether a meaning is still psychologically related to some abstract core, or whether it has drifted beyond a point of no return.

2.2. Objections to polysemy-based approaches

Those who defend polysemy-based approaches to meaning adopt a common-sense perspective that aims to recognise the relatedness of senses under a headword, while avoiding what they consider to be an excessive degree of abstraction in getting from core meanings to realisations. Such an approach is not without its difficulties, however. To begin with, the identification of a limited number of polysemies for a marker necessarily involves *some* degree of abstraction since *any* categorisation procedure will require us to seek out similarities and to ignore differences between occurrences. Secondly, the various senses of a term are said to be related, but this relatedness is rarely formalised. The question of how one gets from one sense to the next (in a chain) or from a central prototype to a peripheral instance (in a radial category) is again left to pragmatics or to appeals to metonymic or metaphoric derivations which are subject to the same criticism as for monosemy-based approaches. Thirdly, one might ask whether it is appropriate to transfer to linguistics categorial approaches developed in cognitive psychology with respect to the categories of the natural world. Put differently, can one transpose without loss the periphery-prototype relationship between a penguin and a sparrow to, for example, concessive YET and aspectual YET? [10]

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[9] Cf. for example criticism targeting relevance theory in Giora (1997) and the ensuing debate in Giora (1998) and Wilson (1998).
[10] I refer here to Lakoff's (1987) reading of Rosch (1978), for example. The arguments in this first theoretical section are developed in greater detail in Ranger (forthcoming).

2.3. The schematic form

From the perspective of the TEPO, both monosemy-based and polysemy-based approaches fail to theorise the relationship between meaning and context. The term "context" here is to be understood in the sense of the strictly linguistic environment of a given marker, *i.e.* the markers surrounding it, its positional and prosodic features. The pragmatic derivations of monosemy-based approaches invariably appeal not to context but to the extralinguistic situation, all too frequently on the basis of invented examples[11]. The refusal to take the context into account leads polysemy-based approaches to treat the different values of a marker not as functions of context but as inalienable properties of the marker itself.

In the present approach the contextually situated values of a marker are the result of a complex operation whereby an abstract schematic form is configured into a specific shape under clearly identifiable contextual pressures[12]. This theorisation of the meaning / context relationship obviates in many cases the recourse to pragmatics since "pragmatic adjustments are […] built into the formal system as potentialities" (Culioli 1990: 197).

Consider, by way of illustration, how the values of the marker MAY vary between *you may…, he may…, it may…* Even with the very minimal context of a mere subject pronoun, most speakers would tend intuitively to construe *you may…* as deontic – i.e. *you are authorised to* – *it may…* as epistemic – i.e. *it is possible that* – and *he may…* as ambiguous between the two readings. These latitudes are nothing more than the reflection of the way in which the schematic form of MAY is parametered by the properties of the surrounding markers *you, he* and *it.* Naturally it is possible to override these suggested interpretations with further context, but again, such effects can be accounted for in formal terms.[13]

The schematic form is expressed in the ontologically parsimonious metalanguage of the TEPO. Certain recurrent templates – the notional domain, the branching path model or the QNT / QLT opposition – function as scripts, built up from a limited number of primitive operations and operands.[14]

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[11] The criticism might be addressed to Blakemore (2004) for example, although Andersen (2014), working in the same relevance-theoretic approach, shows that relevance theory *can* integrate corpus data.

[12] The concept of the schematic form is presented in the pages of this publication in Ashino (2013).

[13] Such considerations are not unique to the TEPO. The Construction Grammar approach of Fried & Östman (2005), or the meaning potentials of Norén & Linell (2007) share similar concerns.

[14] I refer the interested reader to the foundational texts for these concepts, which cannot be developed here.

3. Discourse markers and discourse marking

The distinction between *discourse markers* and *discourse marking* suggested in the title of the present section is analogous to the distinction between linguistic categories and grammatical categories. The *grammatical* category of discourse marking is expressed in the *linguistic* category of discourse markers[15]. As observed in the introduction, the discourse markers of English do not form a homogeneous set but are for the most part drawn from other linguistic categories. YET and STILL are no exception to this, since the aspectual values are attested diachronically well before the discourse marking values for each. Despite a certain categorial confusion we can nonetheless hypothesise that the grammatical category of *discourse marking* exists independently of its expression in a particular language and can be characterised in terms of operational regularities.

The grammatical category of discourse marking is defined as an operation of utterance regulation which indexically targets some operation or operations constitutive of the event of utterance itself.

This definition is intended to account for the intrinsically metalinguistic nature of discourse markers which serve not to refer to some extralinguistic reality but rather to mediate the complex relationship between linguistic forms and underlying cognitive representations. Let us explain this further.

Any utterance event mobilises a "threefold relationship between mental representation, referential processes and regulation" (Culioli 1990: 179). *Representation* can be considered – somewhat caricaturally – as a matching operation between infralinguistic cognitive representations and linguistic occurrences or, informally, as the fit between what a subject wants to express and the forms mobilised to express it. *Referential processes* situate propositional content relative to the spatio-temporal, subjective and discursive parameters of the situation of utterance[16]. *Regulation*, lastly, operates to adjust, fine-tune, orient and stabilise relationships between form and meaning. In this way, operations of regulation entail a certain exteriority relative to the processes of representation and reference assignment, since it is some aspect or aspects of these processes that form(s) the target of regulatory determinations.

The above definition postulates that *discourse marking* entails the overtly linguistic expression of operations of *regulation.*

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[15] Cf. Culioli & Desclés (1981) for a discussion on these distinctions in particular (1981: 75-80).
[16] Such a succinct presentation is inevitably caricatural. Cf. Culioli (1990: 177-214) in particular.

Correspondingly, the calculation of values in context for a given discourse marker must involve the recasting of an *operation* (of representation or of reference assignment) as an *operand* in a new *operation of regulation.*

Examples of regulation of operations of representation in English might include, non-exhaustively:

- relations of typicality expressed by 'hedges' (*pace,* Lakoff 1972) (e.g. *kind of, sort of, like, as it were…*);
- limits on the class of occurrences expressed by focal particles (e.g. *even, only, just, quite…*);
- other class / occurrence relationships expressed by markers of exemplification (e.g. *for example, in particular, say, like, such as…*), extrapolation (e.g. *in general, after all, all in all, or something, and so on…*), reformulation (e.g. *or, in other words, that is…*).

The operations of reference assignment involve situating a propositional content relative to a situation of reference, itself located relative to the situation of utterance or source situation. The situation of utterance comprises three parameters, or coordinates: the subjective source of utterance, the space and time of utterance, and the event of utterance itself (*i.e.* person, place / time and surrounding text).

Examples of regulation of operations of reference assignment in English might target[17]:

- location relative to the spatio-temporal parameter in textual or discourse deixis – as it is sometimes termed (e.g. *now, then, here, there, firstly, finally, at last…*);
- location relative to the subjective parameter in subjective positioning. This can be quantitative (QNT) or qualitative (QLT):
- quantitative subjective positioning concerns the endorsement or otherwise of a lexis[18] (e.g. *in fact, indeed, certainly, allegedly…*);
- qualitative subjective positioning concerns the subjective valuation of a lexis in qualitative terms of good / bad, desirable / undesirable, etc. (e.g. (*un-*)*fortunately, hopefully, disturbingly, tragically…*);
- location relative to the utterance parameter in inter- and intratextual relations as individual predications, etc. are re-organised into complex utterance events (e.g. *and, or, but, however, so, consequently…*).

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[17] Note that many markers involve more than one type of operation.
[18] The term *lexis* in the TEPO corresponds approximately to propositional content, that which is *sayable* – the *lekton* of the Stoics.

In short, discourse marking involves the regulation of some aspect of the utterance event relative to considerations of categorisation, spatio-temporal deixis, subjective positioning or relationships with the surrounding text.

We might suppose that the factor allowing us to group together the members of a class of discourse markers in English is that the schematic form must in each case tolerate some operation involved in the situation of utterance as an operand in a new operation. It is important to note that this is not, in English, part of the schematic form of the marker, but simply an affordance authorised by the schematic form, enabling a discourse-marking value.

4. Case study: *yet* and *still*

We are now in a position to move on to an application of the model presented above to the markers YET and STILL. In the framework adopted, it makes no sense to attempt to characterise YET and STILL as discourse markers. Rather, the schematic form proposed for each must allow us to account for all attested values, including discourse marking values.

YET and STILL share a number of common features. Diachronically, they appear to have followed a parallel development, each extending its range of values from aspect, to modality, quantification or interpropositional relationships. They are frequently compared on the basis of paraphrastic reformulations associating *I haven't seen it yet* with *I still haven't seen it*, *yet more* with *still more* etc. This functional proximity has given rise to a multitude of studies in various theoretical frameworks. For reasons of space I do not propose to make a full review of the literature in the present context but simply to mention a limited number of especially significant contributions.

An early paper by Traugott & Waterhouse (1969) suggests, in keeping with generative work on negation (Klima 1964), that YET functions as a suppletive form of ALREADY in non-assertive contexts. This thesis – and the supporting data – are criticised from a Guillaumean perspective in Hirtle (1977) who proposes a "hidden potential meaning", intended to account for the full range of uses of ALREADY, STILL and YET. König & Traugott (1982) reply to some of Hirtle's remarks in a fuller account which integrates intervening research on presuppositional logic, explaining the present day distribution of ALREADY, STILL and YET on diachronic grounds. More recently, Crupi (2006) or Bell (2010), working in different theoretical frameworks, have aimed to differentiate between concessive uses of YET and STILL with close analysis of authentic corpora. We might in parallel mention the numerous studies of German NOCH and SCHON devoted to similar issues[19]. The link between aspectual and argumentative values is frequently acknowledged in other studies but is formulated only in

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[19] König 1977, Abraham 1980, Van der Auwera 1993 for example.

pretheoretical terms (*e.g.* König & Traugott 1982: 175). One exception to this is Hirtle (1977), but his approach regrettably remains essentially intuitive and insufficiently formalised to be amenable to verification.

In what follows, I shall begin by positing a schematic form for YET and for STILL which I will illustrate, looking successively at aspectuo-modal values, quantifying values and argumentative values.

4.1. Schematic forms for *yet* and *still*

- YET locates an occurrence on the offline position (I**E**) on a notional domain, *discontinuous* with a preconstructed position (I or E) on the same domain.
- STILL locates an occurrence on a notional domain, *continuous* with a preconstructed position on the same domain.

The notional domain in question is invariably a sequential space. The values in context for each marker depend on the type of sequentiality engaged.

The concepts evoked in these characterisations are well known within the TEPO. It is impossible to provide full definitions for each in the scope of the current article, but it is hoped that the application provided below will prove sufficiently transparent for their theoretical interest to be clear[20].

Since the most familiar sequential space involved in discussions of YET and STILL is that of the class of instants, we will take this class, and hence aspectual values, as a starting point for the discussion.

4.2. Aspectuo-modal values

The construction of aspectual values involves the articulation of two notional domains: on the one hand, the domain associated with a speaker's endorsement of a given predicative relation, and on the other, the domain corresponding to the ordered class of instants, enabling the spatio-temporal localisation of the predicative relation[21]. Consider the following utterance in the perfective aspect HAVE -EN:

(5)   Yes, well I have met him, yeah. F8B 172

The use of the perfect here marks the determination of a resulting situation relative to a preceding event. If one uses a rightward

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[20] Cf. for example, Culioli 1990: 67-82 on the concept of the notional domain or Culioli 1999a: 83-94 on the branching path model.
[21] For the distinction between the subjective and spatio-temporal parameters of a situation cf. Culioli 1999a: 130-132.

oriented arrow to represent the ordered class of instants and a bounded interval for the event < I meet him > then one obtains:
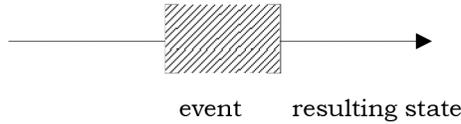

event   resulting state

Figure 1

Since (5) represents speaker endorsement, or the subjective validation of a certain state of affairs, the area to the right of the event can be represented as the Interior of the associated notional domain, while the bounded interval represents a threshold separating prospective validation from effective validation.

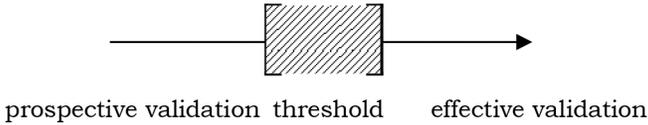prospective validation threshold   effective validation

Figure 2

The symmetry of a graphical representation hides the important fact that prospective validation – unlike effective validation – does not exclude the possibility of *non*-validation. Put simply, before an event has actually happened it may not happen, after it has happened, there is *no* alternative possibility. With this in mind, Figure 2 may be recast as a branching path, leading from prospective validation either to an event, and hence validation, or to the definitive absence of an event, and non-validation (Figure 3). In the terms of the TEPO, effective validation corresponds to the Interior (I) of the associated notional domain and non-validation to the Exterior (E), while prospective validation places us in the offline position, conventionally noted I**E**, from which both validation and non-validation are potentially accessible (Figure 4):
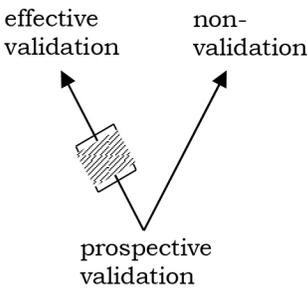

effective   non-
validation   validation

prospective
validation

Figure 3
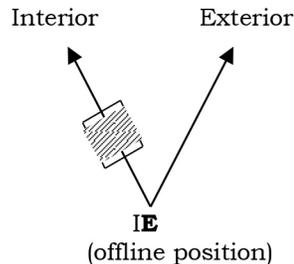

Interior   Exterior

I**E**
(offline position)

Figure 4

The marker YET constructs an occurrence on I**E**, discontinuous with a preconstructed position on I or E (cf. *supra*). And so (1), repeated below, presents the encounter – and the absence thereof – as a future possibility, relative to a preconstructed position on I (anticipated validation):

(1)   So we haven't actually met *yet*. F7J 580

The marker STILL locates an occurrence on a notional domain, continuous with a preconstructed position on the same domain. On the ordered class of instants, this amounts to identifying an instant t_n with a preconstructed instant t_m such that any point on the interval between t_m and t_n is identifiable with its neighbour. In this way, (6) below constructs an occurrence of *we are waiting*, at t_n continuous with a previous occurrence t_m on the same domain.

(6)   We are *still* waiting for them to agree or not to that. J3T 426

We might represent this as follows, where the heavy left-hand boundary represents the beginning of the process *wait*[22]:
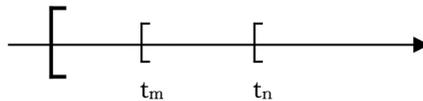
$$t_m \qquad t_n$$

Figure 5

It is possible to envisage *qualitative* identity, but *quantitative* discontinuity, between occurrences, in which case the marker is not STILL but AGAIN:

(6a) We are *again* waiting for them to agree or not to that.

Paraphrastic possibilities between STILL and YET emerge when STILL marks continuity between occurrences in the area of prospective validation, I**E**, as in (7), represented in Figure 6 where the heavy left-hand boundary to the right of t_m and t_n marks an anticipated encounter:

(7)   [I] *Still* haven't met your friend opposite, Laura. KCB 1081

(7a) → I haven't met your friend *yet*

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[22] The properties of the ordered class of instants lead us to represent the instants t_m and t_n as open left-hand boundaries, rather than as static points, for reasons which will not be developed here.
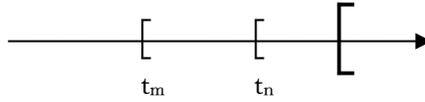
Figure 6

The branching path representation of Figures 3 and 4 is widely used in representations of modality in the TEPO. This helps to explain the collocational affinities of YET with the modal MAY (which marks that the paths I**E** → I and I**E** → E receive equal weighting) or the TO infinitive illustrated below:

(8)   But th--[23] the County Council may *may yet* surprise us on that score. J9S 525

(9)   A statement released this morning confirmed there had been contact but details are *yet to* emerge. FXT 103

In association with MAY, YET constructs a position at I**E** in opposition with a preconstructed position on E, and so in (8), *may yet surprise us…* constructs the possibility of *surprise* relative to the anticipation of *no surprise*. In association with the infinitive in (9), the preconstructed position is on I, as before, which explains the possible reformulation of *details are yet to emerge* as *details have not yet emerged*.

As we noted above, the affinities of YET with negative polarity or non-assertive contexts have often been discussed in the literature. Counter examples, cited by Hirtle (1977), include the association with modals in (8) as discussed, interrogatives as in (10) or certain lexical items such as *early*, as in (11):

(10) Have you eaten *yet*? JYM 635

(11) I thought it was early *yet*, there's a frost isn't it now? KC0 383

(10) can be explained simply in the model presented: the offline position I**E** is by essence a liminal position in which validation is suspended, and is in this respect analogous to the polar interrogative. Naturally enough, WH- interrogatives, which invariably presuppose validation, do not admit YET[24]:

(10a)   *When have you eaten *yet*?

In (11) the notional properties of *early* allow for YET to be used outside a non-assertive context, since *early* and *late* possess aspectual

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[23] A hesitation is represented conventionally here and elsewhere in the BNC by a dash: "th--".
[24] Note however that WH- interronegatives may admit YET, for reasons which can be formally calculated, e.g. *What haven't you eaten yet?*

properties of their own, forming a mutually determined antonymic pair on the ordered class of instants such that *early* is by definition *not late*.

(11a) it is early *yet* → it is not late *yet*

Interestingly, the model presented here finds support from collocational analysis of the BNC[25]. The construction of the event in HAVE NOT YET V-EN patterns as a *threshold* is reflected in the fact that the most common verbs to occupy the participle slot here are the notionally telic processes *finish*, *decide*, *happen*, *start*, *arrive*[26]. These five together account for more than 40% of all verb types in the construction. The most frequent modals to precede YET are MAY and MIGHT, an observation which ties in with the equiponderated branching path construction in the model proposed. MAY YET constructions favour inchoative verbs (*prove* + ADJ, *turn* [*out*], *come* [*to*] and *find*), where YET prefaces a possibility in opposition to an anticipated negative position in E. Results for STILL are less conclusive. However, one interesting point which would require further investigation concerns the fact that the most frequent verbs in the BE STILL V-ING construction often express conative – *i.e.* goal-oriented – values (*going*, *waiting*, *trying*, *working* and *looking*).

This section has demonstrated the application of the schematic form proposed for YET and STILL in 4.1. in a number of constructions characteristic of aspectuo-modal contexts where the markers take clause-internal scope over predication. Conditions for reciprocal reformulation and the non-assertive and modal affinities of YET were elucidated. Collocational data were also seen to lend support to the model.

4.3. Quantifying values

The "quantifying" values of YET and STILL have received less attention than the aspectual values[27]. In such cases, the sequential space targeted by the operations of YET and STILL is no longer – or not primarily – the ordered class of instants, but a sequence ordered in terms of increments of degree, more often than not targeting a single constituent:

(3)   They're probably away on *yet* another holiday. KBF 4802

(12) [...] though we have fewer students than we did before, there's *still* more work involved [...] KRH 2127

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[25] Space prevents us from fully developing the implications of these quantitative data in the present context.

[26] The frequencies concerned here and later are relative frequencies calculated by log-likelihood via the BNCweb interface and including both written and spoken data.

[27] One exception to this is Michaelis 1993 who proposes a scalar model for the analysis of STILL.

In (3), *yet another holiday* adds a further element increasing the total of a sequence of discrete occurrences. In (12), *still more work* adds an increment to a term that functions as a continuous sequence.

Such values can be represented in an analogous fashion to aspectual values. The use of *yet* in *yet another holiday* (3) takes us from E – a position which anticipates the end of the series of holidays – to I**E** – a position from which the series may again be pursued. As before, YET marks the reopening of a paradigm which had been preconstructed as closed.

In (12), *still more work* marks a continuity in an incremental sequence between an initial, preconstructed increase in *work* and a subsequent increase on the same domain.

The sequential space constructed may be more complex than in examples (3) and

(12). Observe the following occurrence of YET:

(13) I have a real thing for frozen yoghurt (it's really popular in the States). It's less fattening than ice cream but it's *still* not good for you. Not in the amounts I eat, anyway! CGN 405-407

Here the speaker constructs a gradient of foodstuffs ordered in terms of their dietary qualities. An initial assertion [*frozen yoghurt is*] *less fattening than ice cream* might lead us to think that *frozen yoghurt is good for you*. The subsequent assertion *it's still not good for you* counters this inference by maintaining a qualitative continuity / *not good*/ between the two products. Schematically, *but* marks the passage from a preconstructed situation where *frozen yoghurt* and *ice cream* are in separate zones (Figure 7), to a situation where the two are in the same zone (Figure 8)[28]:
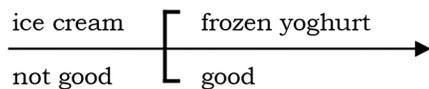

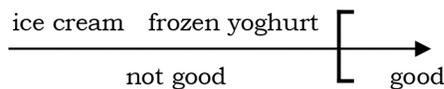Figure 7   Figure 8

The line defended in this paper is that essentially YET marks discontinuity (between a polar position and the offline position) while STILL marks continuity between two positions. Instances such as those just mentioned might be thought to constitute counter-examples since if in (3) *yet another holiday* involves *discontinuity* with an anticipated position, it also involves *continuity* with a previous sequence, while in (13) *still* posits *continuity* between utterances in opposition to a *contrary* expectation. The question then might be to what degree does

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[28] Cf. Michaelis on *Compacts cars are still fairly safe; subcompacts start to get dangerous* (1993: 223*sq.*).

YET involve *con*tinuity and STILL *dis*continuity? My answer would be that these values are not *explicitly* marked but *contextually* derived. The sequence *yet another holiday* posits I**E** discontinuous with E, but since this is a return to I**E**, a re-opening of a possibility, then I**E** at t_n is also identifiable with I**E** at t_m. Similarly with STILL, the construction of continuity involves the elimination of potential discontinuity; this is achieved with *but* in (13). We shall be returning to this point in 4.4.

There are additional corpus-based arguments in favour of the discontinuity / continuity distinction posited between YET and STILL. The marker AGAIN, as noted above, marks qualitative identification but not spatio-temporal continuity. In other words, to do something *again*, is to do the *same thing*, but *in different circumstances*. In that case we would expect the sequences YET AGAIN as in (14) or YET ANOTHER (15) in preference to the sequences STILL AGAIN, STILL ANOTHER.

(14) I feel it's taxpayers money being wasted *yet again*, because they're just going over the same ground. KRL 3721

(15) Congress, this legislation is th-- *yet another* attack on the workers' rights, wages and ability to organize. HLU 219

A corpus query confirms this hypothesis; mutual information scores for the collocational strength of ANOTHER and AGAIN after YET and STILL show a strong preference for YET ANOTHER / AGAIN, supporting the argument for compatibility between markers of discontinuity. The sequences STILL ANOTHER / AGAIN are on the contrary dispreferred, as shown by their negative M.I. scores[29]:

	yet	*still*
another	6.4	-0.919
again	5.2215	-1.6077

In this section we have demonstrated the application of the schematic forms for YET and STILL on non-temporal sequential spaces with the "quantifying" uses of each marker. We argue for a primary opposition between YET and STILL in terms of discontinuity / continuity, although other values may be derived in context. This hypothesis is supported by targeted corpus queries.

4.4. Argumentative values

We now move on to argumentative values for YET and STILL. Although the two are often presented as more or less synonymous as

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[29] Other statistical measures of collocational strength yield comparable results. Again the statistics are those for the whole BNC, not merely the spoken part.

discourse markers, we shall distinguish two argumentative values for STILL, which we label for convenience "concessive" and "conclusive", against only one for YET, labelled "concessive", with no real evidence for YET-STILL synonymy, even between broadly "concessive" values.

Consider firstly the following example:

(16) Now I mean many of the erm practices of religion I'm not sure I understand them all, but but I *still* take part in them. FYB 728

Does such an example belong to the category "aspectual" or "concessive"? On the one hand, there is aspectual continuity between two representations of a state of affairs, *I take part in them*, at t_m and t_n. On the other hand, the fact that the speaker is not sure that he understands religious practices might lead one to anticipate that he does not take part in them, the subsequent contradiction of which would encourage a concessive reading. The following glosses confirm this ambivalence:

(16a) … I continue to take part in them.

(16b) … I nonetheless take part in them

In fact this concessive value for STILL emerges whenever it is possible to construct some anticipated alterity relative to the STILL clause. Let the STILL clause be *q*. If there is some reason to anticipate *non-q* then STILL may be read as concessive. In (16) this concessive potential is triggered by BUT which marks a passage from zone to zone within a domain. This operation constructs the surrounding propositions as counter-oriented representations, so that we infer that *I'm not sure I understand them all* might normally be associated with *I not take part in them*. Schematically, an initial proposition (not necessarily expressed) q_1, *I take part in them*, is followed by a counter-oriented proposition *p*, *I not understand them*, from which one might infer *non-q*, *I not take part in them*. This inference is refuted by the affirmation of continuity between q_2 and q_1, *I still take part in them*.

There are three ways in which one can derive concessive values from the schematic form of STILL: position, prosody and context (cf. 2.3.). The first two factors are linked: clause-initial position detaches the element from the target proposition, and is accompanied by tonic stress. Under such conditions the identification operated by STILL is not a weak, default value but a strong mode of identification, which eliminates any potential alterities[30]. The factor of context is illustrated in (16) by BUT. More generally, STILL exhibits strong collocational

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[30] Cf. Culioli (1990: 50-52) for the different values of an occurrence relative to other occurrences.

affinities with markers of alterity: the top five conjunctions in a 3-L, 3-R window around the node word STILL are BUT, WHILE, THOUGH, ALTHOUGH and WHILST.[31]

Let us consider now another type of occurrence featuring STILL in initial position:

> (17) Ginny: We met er, a beautiful old English sheep dog, seven months old and they've got to find a new home for it, because they're off to America.
> Jackie: Ah, that's a shame <-|->[32] . [...] <-|-> It's a shame isn't it? [...] *Still*, they might hear of somebody who <unclear> <-|-> wants one <-|->. KC9 2337-2347

In (16) STILL was seen to establish continuity between representations such that a representation q_1 is maintained (q_2) in the face of a counter-oriented representation *p*. Such a schema is basically concessive. In (17) STILL functions rather as a marker of continuity between the conditions of utterance, in a use we here term "conclusive". The two speakers Ginny and Jackie are discussing the case of a family who are seeking a new home for their dog in view of a move to America. This situation is qualified as *a shame* by Jackie who then goes on to suggest a possible resolution: *they might hear of somebody who wants one*. The interesting point for our purposes is the way STILL marks a suggested happy issue to an undesired state of affairs, re-establishing continuity between two points in the situation of utterance in spite of some potentially disruptive factor.

This STILL occurs in a number of characteristic collocations which frequently involve an appeal to some gnomic truth that transcends the immediate – often detrimental – situation[33]. Typical examples are:

> (18) Still, I suppose we must move with the times. EW1 438

> (19) Still, "[...] can't complain." GUF 535

> (20) Still, "[...] I can't win them all, can I?" A0F 2460

> (21) "Still, never mind." JXS 1008[34]

This STILL is also found in standalone position or in association with BUT, where it appears to recentre a discussion or to conclude an exchange as in (22):

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[31] Another common configuration which cannot be explored here is EVEN IF… STILL WOULD…, cf. Barker (1991).
[32] Overlaps are represented conventionally in the BNC by <-|->.
[33] This is easily confirmed by a query bearing on those elements most typically found after sentence initial STILL.
[34] These examples include the written part of the BNC.

(22) PS259 [...] It's a very stiff exam I must admit, when I look back on it, and we all had a a day off to go to the [...] or the Grammar school, sit this exam er and since I never heard anything I'm assuming I failed. <laugh>. <voice quality: laughing> *But still.* <end of voice quality>
PS258 And at <-|-> <unclear> <-|->
PS259 <-|-> No loss. <-|-> And I suppose they wouldn't have liked it if I'd had to stay till I was sixteen, cos th-- the money was needed to come in, so I don't suppose they would have liked it. FXV 165-173

Here the speaker evokes his failure to pass a school entrance exam. The use of STILL in association with BUT again reestablishes continuity, minimising the potentially detrimental effect with the subsequent *no loss.*[35]

In (23), in a professional context, STILL is used to mark a return to the business in hand, after the mention of a potentially conflictual situation:

(23) Keith: <-|-> Mm <-|-> I must admit I'm, I'm interes-- be interesting to see the outcome, you know when audit commission and O F S T E D say that thirty percent of people who enter further and higher education fail.
Sue: Yeah.
Keith: Why are we concentrating on them? Why aren't we concentrating all our resources before they start?
Sue: Yeah.
Keith: You know? *Still.* H5D 891-897

Let us move on to concessive YET, which is invariably sentence-initial. As with STILL, this detached position signals clause-external scope and hence discourse marking values. In the case of YET these are frequently described in terms of paradoxical coexistence, with two opposing situations weighing equally in the balance as in (24) (Bell 2010: 1927, Crupi 2006: 272):

(24) Now that, that Street with, with, from two hundred yards of it there'd be nine, nine terraces each with twenty four houses in each terrace within this two hundred yards so there were a lot of people closely knit together and er there was quite a lot of unem-- unemployment, quite a lot of poverty. *Yet* people were friendly, you know. H4B 532-533

Let us call this configuration *p* YET *q*. A negatively connoted situation of overcrowded poverty *p* might be anticipated to be associated with unfriendliness *non-q*. The marker YET places us, as

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[35] Lenk (1998: 122-138) provides interesting commentary on STILL and on the opposition STILL / BUT STILL.

before, in a position from which *q* is accessible, allowing the subsequent endorsement of *people were friendly*. Note that the expectation that poverty and unfriendliness go together is not necessarily shared by all. It is nonetheless this association that the speaker presents as paradoxical, through the use of YET. We might represent this schematically as before with the branching path model.
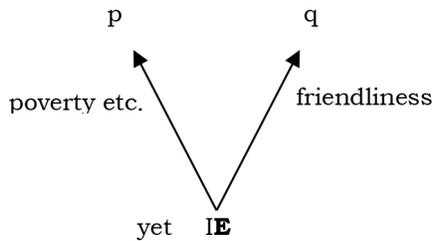

Figure 9

Importantly in the model defended here, YET does not in itself mark an opposing proposition – the passage to E – but simply the *accessibility* of such a proposition, as with aspectual or quantifying uses. This can be seen in particular when standalone AND YET is used to destabilise – without necessarily explicitly refuting – a previous proposition:

> (25) She looked away, pained suddenly by all she was thinking. Li Yuan was her husband, and one day he would be T'ang. He deserved her loyalty, in body and soul. *And yet...* G04 355-358 (written)

The following example, from Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, presents the two protagonists trying to decide whether Hamlet's madness is genuine or not. As before, after the assertion of *p* (and hence potentially *non-q*) AND YET reopens access to the counter-oriented possibility *q*. The paradoxical potential of YET is made more than clear in the surrounding discussion:

> (26) ROS: Ah. (To GUIL) How is he mad?
> GUIL: More morose than mad, perhaps.
> PLAYER: Melancholy.
> GUIL: Moody.
> ROS: He has moods.
> PLAYER: Of moroseness?
> GUIL: Madness. *And yet*.
> ROS: Quite.
> GUIL: For instance.
> ROS: He talks to himself, which might be madness.
> GUIL: If he didn't talk sense, which he does.
> ROS: Which suggests the opposite. FU6 1485-1498 (written)

In summary, three discourse marking values for YET and STILL can be distinguished: concessive YET, concessive STILL and conclusive STILL. These labels are convenient for the purposes of a rough taxonomy, but insufficient, since each marker retains features specific of the underlying schematic form.

Concessive YET constructs an offline position relative to a preconstructed position (I or E) on a notional domain. When *p* and *q* constitute counter-oriented notions, YET enables a speaker both to endorse *p* – implying *non-q* – while at the same time maintaining access to *q*. We can speak of discourse marking here in so far as such values involve both interpropositional relations and intersubjective positioning as a speaker locates his utterance relative to surrounding text and to transindividual norms of expectation.

STILL constructs an occurrence continuous with a previous occurrence on the same domain. For the value to be constructed as *concessive*, this continuity must involve the elimination of potential discontinuity. This can be signalled by various means: initial position, prosodic salience, markers of alterity such as BUT, ALTHOUGH, etc.

The concept of continuity implies that one is working on a sequential space. This means in turn that *concessive* values of STILL involve an inferential order, unlike concessive values of YET. In other words, in *p, but still q*, there is a temporal or causal order such that *p* comes first. If we inverse the propositions *q, but still p*, the inferential order is also inversed. When YET is used, *p* and *q* are counter-oriented, with no particular precedence of order, *i.e.* the same relationship underpins both *p, yet q* and *q, yet p*.

With *conclusive* values of STILL, the continuity is not between states of affairs, but between their conditions of utterance. In other words, in a sequence of the general form *p. Still, q*, the use of STILL maintains continuity between the situation of utterance of *q* and a situation prior to the utterance of *p* with the effect that the utterance of *p* is dismissed as inconsequential relative to some larger consideration. The resulting effect might be to make of *p* an aside and to return to a previous topic, to present *p* as an irrelevant exception to a more general rule, etc.

5. Conclusion

This article opened with a number of objections to monosemy-based or polysemy-based accounts of discourse markers. The concept of the *schematic form* presented in 2.3. enables one to step outside the often sterile dichotomy, by providing a framework for modelling the dynamic construction of meaning in relation to context.

The distinction was then drawn between the *linguistic category* of *discourse markers* and the *grammatical category* of *discourse marking*. Discourse marking was defined as an operation of *utterance*

regulation, targeting operations of representation and reference assignment in various ways.

These theoretical premises were then demonstrated with a short case study of YET and STILL. A single schematic form for each was shown to give rise to various contextually situated values – of micro- and macro-syntactic scope – as a function of the properties of the notional domains engaged. Corpus data confirm that precise configurations of each marker result not from some ill-defined form of pragmatic enrichment but from pressures exerted by linguistically observable factors such as position, prosody and context.

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