

## **Concessive constructions, Natural Logic and Social Representations**

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In this paper we argue that it could be methodologically fruitful to integrate tools of discourse analysis, argumentation theory, Natural Logic and SR in a theoretical and analytical framework. To support this hypothesis, we try to show that concessive structures, as linguistic units, activate natural logic operations. Therefore, they play a specific role in schematisation. We also evaluate the idea that searching for linguistic structures that function as triggers of certain logical discursive operations would constitute an important contribution to the studies and work on discourse analysis, Natural Logic and SR. This article neither presents the results of an investigation nor does it systematically explore the state of the art of a certain field, but it evaluates the potential of the aforementioned approach by reviewing some examples and it also offers a critical discussion of such a proposal.

**Keywords:** social representations, discourse, concessive constructions, natural logic

Although there has been less development of the role that language and communication play with respect to Social Representations (SR) (Marková 2003; Moscovici, 1961), there is a prolific interest in analysing SR in discursive manifestations. The school of argumentative studies of Neuchâtel (Borel, 1991; Grize 1989, 1993; Grize, Verges & Silem, 1987; Miéville, 1986; Vignaux, 1976) has placed greater emphasis on Natural Logic, understood as a logic of operations of thought and which has contributed extremely interesting works. Grize's proposal (1989) focuses on showing that there are natural logic operations through which a discourse schematisation is constructed. Several authors who work on SR and discourse consider that these postulates open a methodological possibility which allows to connect SR with discourse and also to deal with them more thoroughly (e.g. Berruecos, 2000; Gutiérrez, 2002).

## **ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SR AND DISCOURSE**

The relevance of discourse analysis as a method to study SR has been discussed from the origins of this theory up to the present (Grize, et al., 1987; Gutiérrez, 2002, 2006; Marková, 2003, 2016; Moscovici, 1961, Moscovici & Vignaux, 1994). In all these works it is agreed that SR have a close relationship with discourse.

In this article we will focus on the analysis of the discourse manifestations of SR. Due to this, it is necessary to make some points. Firstly, we understand RS

‘as an image: a) structured, b) cognitive, affective, evaluative and operative, c) metaphorical or iconic, of d) relevant social phenomena. These can be "events", "stimuli" or "facts" e) of which individuals are potentially aware and which are f) shared by other members of a social group. This sharing between people represents g) a fundamental element of the social identity of individuals’ (Wagner & Hyes, 2011, p. 69).

Secondly, approaching SR requires the revision of social practices which cannot be separated from discourse (Jodelet, 2000; Wagner & Hyes, 2011), hence when we say that we will concentrate on its discursive manifestations, we recognise, as other authors have, that "we speak of social representations simultaneously as contents of social knowledge and models of social

discourse, therefore we want to understand this separation more as an analytic duality than as a real one" (Wagner & Hyes, 2011, p.74).

Some works seek to establish the way in which certain language devices establish a correspondence between elements of SR and, therefore, form a kind of study of the syntax of SR that opens possibilities for many studies and methodological replications, at the same time they broaden the theoretical knowledge we have of SR when they appear in use and operating in discursive practices. However, the discursive approaches to SR can build very different theoretical frameworks and, from our point of view, to retake the postulates of the argumentation theory of Natural Logic offers a solid and adequate possibility, which allows explaining phenomena that not only concentrate on what has been said, but on what is communicated, as we will try to show in the following pages.

## **NATURAL LOGIC, DISCURSIVE OPERATIONS AND THE CULTURAL PRECONSTRUCTED**

The theory of Natural Logic (Borel, 1991, Grize, 1982, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1996; Grize, et al., 1987; Miéville, 1986; Vignaux, 1976) postulates discourse as the result of a complex activity in which a locutor subject, through natural language, accomplishes communication objectives in a specific situation. According to Grize (1993), argumentation is present in every discourse because arguing implies "taking a determined audience, through discourse, to a certain action" (1982, p.30). Argumentation is a process which, by means of natural language, constructs a schematisation of reality on the basis of the ideology of the group to which the orator belongs, the ideas shared with the audience and a specific objective, this in order to intervene in a specific audience starting from a social or institutionally determined place.

Schematisation is the construction of a microuniverse in which "A (the locutor) provides B (the interlocutor) with a C scheme with the purpose of making it acceptable and plausible to him" (Grize, 1982, p.35). The terms of natural language in which the discourse is produced introduce or activate the cultural preconstructed (CPC) in the auditorium, which "are the deposits that representations leave in the language; in the end it deals with the linguistic aspect of social representations" (Grize, 1993, p.3). All speech anchors in a cultural preconstructed and a situational preconstructed (Grize, 1982, p.200). These often serve as common places (*topos*) in

the course of non-formal reasoning, therefore, they contain in themselves the SR of the social group to which the locutor belongs, with the only difference that the preconstructed do not appear explicitly, but rather they are activated by means of the images being built in schematisation. According to Grize, the communication process not only involves the construction of a schematisation of what is spoken in discourse, but also the building of an image of the locutor, an image of the interlocutor or audience and of the communicative situation.

What one or several subjects do through speech is to construct a schematisation, which is achieved from "a certain number of operations that one may well call logical-discursive. They are logical because they are operations of thought and discursive because thought manifests itself through discourse" (Grize 1993, p.4). The Theory of Natural Logic is a programme that deals with the study of those operations and the way they contribute to the creation of discursive schematisations.

Grize (1982) has proposed five Natural Logic operations related to discursive schematisation: object constitutive operations, operations of appropriation, operations of configuration or composition ( $\eta$ ), operations of temporal and spatial localisation and operations of value projection or lighting. The most recent works have shown that discursive operations do not appear in a pure way and that in some cases they superimpose or overlap (Rodríguez, 2004). From our point of view, Grize's work poses the challenge of developing in-depth knowledge of these operations.

Our specific interest is to analyse how the concessive constructions can be understood from the notion of discursive operations. In other words, we ask ourselves what type of operations are carried out by means of these constructions, what their contribution to the process of discursive schematisation is and how they can relate to RS in their discursive manifestations. In order to answer these questions, first it is necessary to review the characteristics of concessive constructions as linguistic structures, and then to relate them to Natural Logic operations.

## **CONCESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS: POLYPHONY, ARGUMENTATION AND PROCEDIMENTAL MEANING**

Concessive constructions are subordinate sentences (in Spanish they would be regarded as "interordinate sentences", closer to subordinate constructions, than to coordinate constructions) which communicate a contrast of improbability, they are characterised by the use of connectors

such as *although, while, despite the fact that, even, even if, however much, however many, even when* and the juxtaposition of affirmation and negation.

At a discursive level, the concessive constructions respond to the needs of social communication generated "in situations such as manifest or latent debate, persuasive argumentation, the search for consensus between discrepant positions or the presentation of the enunciator as a compromising person [...] a manoeuvre of negotiation between positions and opinions" (Flamenco García, 1999, p. 3839). In addition, concession constitutes an operation that manages the recipient's expectations.

The apparent contrast or incompatibility of these constructions has been studied and explained through different approaches and theories. The specificity concessions have in argumentative processes consists in introducing a weak counter-argument against a conclusion. Hence, the proposal of the Theory of Argumentation in the Language (Anscombe & Ducrot, 1983) explains that in concessive constructions there is a contrast between the argumentative orientations of each of the clauses, and that one of them has greater strength. Example (1) shows that "Even if it rains" seems to activate an argument in favour of the conclusion "I will not go to the movies", while "I will go to the movies" leads to the opposite conclusion.

(1) Even if it rains, I'll go to the cinema

The presence of anti-orientation in the argumentative directions of concessive constructions explains why some authors developed the study of these structures as dialogical ones (Gutiérrez, 2002). Studies of polyphony in linguistics (Ducrot, 1984, 1989) question the uniqueness of the subject of the utterance (locutor / empirical subject), and suggest that certain statements can present a plurality of points of view; besides, the locutor can mark different attitudes with respect to those points of view. Therefore, authors such as those in the ScaPoLine theory recognise concessive constructions as polyphonic structures, given that more than one enunciator seems to be recovered in them (see Puig, 2013). Thus, in (1) the clause "Although it rains" is attributed to another enunciator, one that possibly presents an argument opposing the enunciation of "I will go to the movies". Evidence of this can be found in the fact that "Even if it rains" appears as a counter-argument against the conclusion. However, it seems to be a counter-argument with less argumentative force.

On the other hand, in the linguistic studies applying the Theory of Relevance (Blakemore, 2002), it is postulated that conjunctions such as *although* encode procedural instructions (they

indicate the specific way or in what type of relationship the elements are to be linked). Concessive linkers give the procedural instruction to relate the elements with a sense of improbability, but they do so by activating an assumption by means of which the situation of activated improbability will be cancelled. Moreover, the concessive procedural meaning seems to activate an assumption of improbability that the speaker attributes to the interlocutor and which is opposed to the assumption that the speaker wants to communicate. Thus, in (1) the speaker is communicating his (possibly erroneous) assumption that the listener assumes that "it is unlikely that anybody will leave when it rains" which is opposed to the assumption he wants to communicate, therefore, the speaker communicates that the listener's assumption must be eliminated due to its low likelihood.

As we can see, different theories and traditions in the study of the concession maintain that concessive constructions communicate more than what has been said, (despite them explaining it in different ways) which goes to show that these constructions are highly productive in communicative terms.

## **CONCESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS AND NATURAL LOGIC OPERATIONS**

The central question of our proposal is whether concessive constructions are related to the schematisation process and whether they result in a specific type of natural logical operation.

Grize did not specifically talk about concessive constructions, he only explained that there are composition or configuration operations which he defines as:

[... the ones] that articulate the parts of the text between them. Usually marked in French by conjunctions such as *and*, *if*, they are closer to the operations of mathematical logic. They are so close that many autographs translate them with the help of Boolean operations. Such a dichotomy certainly makes an excellent exercise of logic, but it cannot reflect logical-discursive operations for at least two reasons. One is that they are not necessarily related to propositions (statements), the other is that they are only exceptionally timeless. (1982, p.237).

Grize begins by focusing the function of the logical discursive operations of configuration or composition on the construction of coherence and discursive cohesion. This has been retaken in some discursive analyses to study the way in which, by means of anaphora, the same object or

phenomenon is renamed in different ways and how it has been linked to the SR of that object or phenomenon (Carrillo, 2006; Gutiérrez, 2017). Although Grize tries to give an explanation of how this type of linkers trigger two types of information, in his work, he himself makes it clear that he has felt unable to fully explain the phenomenon underlying this type of elements: "What I said [about these operations] is not clear to me yet" (1982, p.239).

Despite having noticed that they did not contribute to the truth conditions of the proposition, Grize could not capture the added meaning of the operations of composition; that is to say, of the unsaid information that emerges, for instance, from concession and the role it could play in schematisation.

In a construction such as "I'll go to the cinema, even if it rains", the concessive construction unites the elements in a relationship of unlikelihood, which is attributed to a schema present in the auditorium (in the manner of a *topos*) of the type "it is unlikely that when it rains one comes out. " Thus, a *topos*, inferentially attributed to the audience as part of common sense knowledge, is activated. All this shows that in a concessional construction more information is communicated apart from what is said.

It is possible that the added meaning of the concessive constructions has a fundamental role in the schematisation of the image of the interlocutor and the audience by means of the added meaning they communicate. If we consider (1) again in a discursive context in which we try to persuade the locutor not to go to the cinema, we can notice that construction (1) exemplifies that not only everything we have analysed so far is communicated, but also that by using the concessive construction, the locutor attributes an assumption of low likelihood to his interlocutor, which is why he characterises him with less argumentative force at the same time that he characterises himself through a lens of exceptionality ("I do go out even if it rains") and through the meaning of compromise emerging from using a concessive construction, so the locutor shows himself as compromising, and communicates that he, exceptionally, will do the opposite of what probability indicates.

These meanings, derived from the procedural meaning of concession, can have an impact on schematisation, specifically on the image of the locutor and the interlocutor.

### **Examples of the discursive analysis of concessive constructions**

To show that concessive constructions involve complex logical operations of composition related to the construction of the images of the participants, we will use two interventions given by former Mexican president Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (GDO) at a press conference.

### *Discursive context*

On the 5th of April 1977, it was announced that GDO, former president of Mexico would be officially appointed as First Ambassador of Mexico in Spain. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, GDO offered a press conference (CNI40, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018) due to his new position.

By then, 11 years had passed since the events of the 2nd of October 1968 (known in the social imaginary as “the 2nd of October massacre”). In addition, the relationship of GDO with others involved in the Mexican political world was not good: although he himself had selected Echeverría as his successor, they had a falling-out during the electoral campaign. No sooner had the appointment of GDO as ambassador been made public than it sparked criticism and protests (to obtain in-depth information about the aforementioned event, it is recommended to read the articles by Rosas, 2013, 5th October; Editorial of *Proceso*, 1977, 9th April and 1978, 7th October; Villamil, 2018, 18th September; Gutiérrez, 2017, 30th September and 2017, 7th October; Krauze, 2018, 1st October; and Maza, 1977, 23rd April). Although we now know that the Government orchestrated the massacre through a paramilitary group, at the time of the conference only a few testimonies denouncing the government's actions in the massacre were known (Poniatowska, 1971). However, the appointment of GDO as Ambassador led to student protests and the resignation of Carlos Fuentes, ambassador in France, who said it was not possible that the sole responsible for the massacre of hundreds of students was appointed to that position. Everything we have said explains why at the press conference two journalists asked Díaz Ordaz two questions about the events occurred on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1968. We will focus only on those two questions due to lack of space (from minute 14:33 to 18:18 in CNI40, 2018, 30<sup>th</sup> October and 15:02-22:45 in CNI40, 2018, 23<sup>rd</sup> October).

The fragments we have analysed have political discourse as encompassing scene (Maingueneau, 1999). As Charaudeau (2005) affirms, political discourse is a manifestation immersed in the middle of what is political and politics, the objective of which is to create an idealised value system to influence others. Political discourse must take the adversary into account (either to disqualify him or to unmask him). In fact, Verón (1987) affirms that a specific



characteristic of political discourse is the construction of a complex addressee since there will be a counter-addressee (an adversary to be unmasked) a pro-addressee (a sympathiser with whom one wants to strengthen shared values or ideologies) and a for-addressee (the undecided ones who one wants to persuade of something).

The interview, as a discursive subgenre, is characterised by an interlocutory function with more spontaneous interventions (in comparison with read written speeches) which occur at a specific time and space. In the interview there is an implicit contract assuming that both parties, interviewee and interviewer, participate voluntarily and that the former will respond to the issues raised by the latter, generally reflecting or reacting to some concerns or questions according to the context in which the interview occurs. The political interview and the press conference are characterised by the succession of shifts or dialogues in which each of the participants has a role, in addition there is a pre-established format and they are highly conventionalised (Halperin, 1995; Heritage & Gretbatch, 1991). In a press conference, the appearance of intimacy, built up in the political interview, dissolves. However, the press conference maintains the staging of certain confrontation present in every political interview.

Finally, the scenography (Maingueneau, 1999) built by means of the studied discourse is complex. The staging that GDO has tried to mount through his position and his investiture is an official ceremony scene. However, due to the characteristics of the generic scenario it is impossible for him to have absolute control. The scenography oscillates and is unstable due to the fact that there are several journalists who, by means of their questions, disassemble the scenography that the interviewee wants to build. If the reader observes the conference in its entirety, he will realise that GDO has opted for this format to abide by the canons "orthodoxly" and so as not to spread his statements in different media. In addition, throughout the press conference GDO maintained some aspects: His role as the nation's saviour before the events of 1968, his being the victim of unfounded accusations, as well as his boasting of his challenging and ironic character and his humility. In the fragments of our interest, a scenography of accusation and defence is mounted due to the questions accusing him of being responsible for the events of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. Finally, in addition to the direct interaction between journalists and GDO (interviewers, interviewed), there are also more attendees in the auditorium (GDO's team and government officials), but at the same time there is an indirect audience (public in general, Mexicans) who will later receive, through the media, GDO's messages.

### *Analysis of concessive constructions*

We have used the following criteria to make the selection of concessive constructions: 1) only subordinate constructions with a concessive link or a concessive juxtaposition were selected (the intra-regional concession was left out). 2) Each of the sentences was logically outlined according to Ducrot's proposal *p, although q* and it was verified that they met the following conditions: a) To present *q* as a possible argument for an eventual conclusion of *r*, b) To present *p* as an argument against that conclusion of *r*, and c) To attribute *p* more argumentative force in favour of *r* rather than *q*. Only the constructions that passed these tests were taken into consideration. Throughout these two interventions, there appear four concessive constructions, as shown in the table below<sup>1</sup>. In examples used in the analysis section of this paper:

Table 1

#### *Concessive constructions found in corpus*

	<b>Construction</b>
001	[...] I do not remember personally knowing him well, I knew the father, an entire gentleman, a great Mexican, an extraordinary friend, a magnificent ambassador (GDO-CV-01)
002	[...] to give some evidence, <b>even if</b> it is not direct or conclusive, (GDO-CV-02)
003	they will be able to say, as they have said on other occasions, that the corpses disappeared, that they were hidden, that they were buried clandestinely, they were incinerated, that is not easy, it is not easy to do it with impunity (GDO-CV-03)
004	But what I am proudest of in those six years is the year of 1968 because it allowed me to serve and save the country, <b>whether you like it or not</b> , with more than hours of bureaucratic work (GDO-CV-04)

*Note.* What appears in parentheses at the end of the constructions is the key assigned to each of the identified constructions.

Why have we said that these constructions communicate more information apart from what is said? Because for these constructions to be coherent, they necessarily make the audience activate the cultural preconstructed (CP) that makes them logical.

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<sup>1</sup> Given that this paper was not originally written in English, it is recommended to consult the version in Spanish as some of the examples provided in English may not fully exemplify the proposed analysis.

Table 2

*Preconstructed activated by concessive constructions*

<b>Cultural preconstructed</b>	
001	/It is unlikely not to know the son of a person one knows well/
002	/It is unlikely that some given evidence is not direct and conclusive/
003	/It is unlikely to affirm or to be able to say something that is not easy to do or that is not feasible/
004	/If the others do not like something, it is unlikely to be so/

To be logical and coherent, concessive constructions need to be linked with an apparently implicit CP which activates knowledge shared by the audience. The presence of the concessive linker forces us to make a contrasting interpretation of improbability, which cannot operate without the CP. This explains the fact that the CP is also communicated in the manner of a *topos* that, albeit unnoticed, will have to be accepted by the audience. In this way, not only has the CP been communicated but also it is conveyed as assumptions attributed either the interviewer or the audience.

Nevertheless, the improbability expressed and supported in the PC can be of two different types: it can stem from a contrast between the semantic content of the propositions as in 002 or by contrasting the knowledge of the world activated by propositions 001. In other words, in some cases activated CP express an improbability which emerges from more conventional elements (derived from linguistic meaning) which appear more neutral in so far as they are less debatable. Thus, in construction 002, the word "evidence" contains the meaning "being direct and conclusive", therefore, the unlikelihood of evidence not being direct and conclusive has its origins in semantic meanings. Nevertheless, all other constructions refer to a CP containing a contrast derived from the knowledge of the world. In the case of 001, it is our knowledge of the world that tells us that "when a person knows the father well, he is unlikely not know the son". Apparently, CP that derive from the knowledge of the world are more restricted and more ideological principles which could be questioned if they did not appear hidden behind a concessive construction. This is due to procedural concessive constructions apparently attributing assumptions to others, either from something that has been said or from something the speaker has reason to believe to have been made manifest in the listener, albeit not explicitly nor by means of what has been said.

However, such relations of improbability obeying an ideological reading of the world pretend to be credible in the discursive situation and force us to read the world in a specific way. By using them, the president has communicated (perhaps erroneously) that at least part of the audience adopts such a cultural preconstructed. This means that the president has communicated assumptions about what others believe. Not only can the attribution of assumptions be wrong, but also malicious: in 002 we see how by means of the concessive construction it is communicated that at least his accuser assumes that the evidence he will provide is not direct nor conclusive. Thus, the president can communicate what he thinks others think, which cannot be done but by using the components of the SR that he has about the others. In 002 the accuser of GDO has been characterised as someone who speaks without support without saying so.

The concessive construction also induces the communication of a sense of exceptionality, but it is precisely such exceptionality that occurs.

Table 3

*Analysis of exceptionality configuration in concessive constructions*

	<b>Exceptionality</b>	<b>On whom exceptionality falls</b>
001	/Although it is unlikely, I know the father but not his son/	[On GDO]
002	/Although it is unlikely, they can give evidence which is not direct nor conclusive/	[On GDO's accusers]
003	/ Although it is unlikely, they can say that somebody arranged that the corpses disappeared, that the corpses were hidden /	[On GDO's accusers]
004	/Although it is unlikely that something is so if you do not like it, it allowed me to serve and save the country/	[On GDO]

The communication of exceptionality falls on the construction of some actors' image (based on the expression of a broken improbability). Such exceptionality brings attributes to the constructed image of GDO and his accusers.

In addition, there occurs a communication of traits attributed to the discursive participants due to a double and complex movement of these linguistic constructions. By means of the concessive construction, the enunciator, coinciding with the locutor, concurs with others at least

apparently, which discursively "shows" him as more compromising. This necessarily gives with more compromising traits to the speaker's image.

Table 4

*Trait of compromise communicated by concessive constructions*

	Construction	Enunciators
001	[...] I do not remember personally knowing him well, I knew the father, an entire gentleman, a great Mexican, an extraordinary friend, a magnificent ambassador (GDO-CV-01)	E1 (He coincides with the locutor, GDO) I do not remember personally knowing him well E2 I knew the father, an entire gentleman, a great Mexican, an extraordinary friend, a magnificent [I concede to you that it is true that I knew the father]
002	[...] to give some evidence, <b>even if</b> it is not direct or conclusive, (GDO-CV-02) 2	E1 (He coincides con el locutor, GDO) to give some evidence E2 even if it is not direct or conclusive [I concede to you that I will accept the evidence even if it is not direct and conclusive]
003	they will be able to say, as they have said on other occasions, that the corpses disappeared, that they were hidden, that they were buried clandestinely, they were incinerated, that is not easy, it is not easy to do it with impunity (GDO-CV-03)	E1 they will be able to say, as they have said on other occasions, that the corpses disappeared, that they were hidden, that they were buried clandestinely, they were incinerated E2 (He coincides with the locutor, GDO) that is not easy, it is not easy to do it with impunity [I concede to you that they will be able to say...]
004	But what I am proudest of in those six years is the year of 1968 because it allowed me to serve and save the country, <b>whether you like it or not</b> , with more than hours of bureaucratic work (GDO-CV-04)	E1 (He coincides with the locutor, GDO) But what I am proudest of in those six years is the year of 1968 because it allowed me to serve and save the country E2 whether you like it E3 or not [I concede to you that you may like it or not]

As we can see in this table, concessive constructions allow the speaker to construct himself as enunciator, one that shows greater compromise with respect to the other enunciative voices.

However, (and here lies the complexity of the double movement of concessive constructions) what the concessive construction does is to cancel the strength of the counter-

argument despite its apparent compromise, which is attributed to the interlocutors as valid or strong. Although it is accepted, the affirmed conclusion is different. This allows the speaker to characterise different voices by means of concessive constructions, attributing precisely the weak argument to those other voices, as shown in the following table:

Table 5

*Weak argument communicated in concessive constructions*

<b>Construction</b>	
001	/The fact that I know the father does not mean I know the son/
002	/The fact that it is not direct and conclusive does not mean I will not accept it/
003	/The fact that they can say those things does not mean they are true or feasible/
004	/The fact that you do not like it does not mean it is not true/

In this way, discursively, through the concessive constructions it is possible to "show" the voice of these other actors as weak, argumentatively speaking — which is the reason why concessive constructions contribute the trait, attributed to other participants, of being less forceful in the argumentation. For example, see how in construction 004 the use of the concessive construction allows GDO to show his interlocutors (the interviewers) as capricious because, by means of the aforementioned constructions, it seems that the only argument they are giving to counter-argue GDO is that they do not I like what he is saying.

We consider that the elements that we have analysed necessarily have an impact at the level of schematisation, since they emphasise features that characterise the participants of that schematisation. Then, they must activate at least one logical discursive operation. Grize postulated that this was the operation of configuration because they build cohesion and coherence, but this seems to depend on the fact that, by means of a concessive construction, the images of the actors who appear in the schematisation can be attributed some traits, this is impossible without a sub-operation of determination, which according to Grize is "a complex operation that chooses two terms for a couple" (1982, pp. 225-226) as a progressive determination by means of predicates.

However, as we have seen, concessive constructions do not seem to make this determination through explicit predicates, but through inferential ones, resulting from the assumptions they activate and the meaning of exceptionality they add. By means of these

operations set in motion by the linguistic structure, some elements are reinforced which, necessary, allow the construction of the discursive schematisation.

If the study of logical configuration operations does not incorporate these nuances communicated through concessive constructions, evidently it is not accounting for the entire configuration process that stems from the use of concession in terms of Natural Logic. This raises a number of questions that cannot be answered in the light of the few examples that we have provided. Are concessive constructions triggers of a discursive macro-operation which plays an important role in the construction of the discursive participants? Can this shed light on the study of SR in discursive practices?

## **DISCUSSION**

By means of the analysis of concessive constructions we have tried to show that concessive linkers function as triggers of the communication of several unsaid elements. These elements seem to have considerable influence on the schematisation constructed in the discourse, especially on the participants' constructed image. Such operation performs three interesting movements:

- a) It activates a cultural preconstructed in the auditorium and designates it as suppositions of one or more members of the audience
- b) It activates a schema of exceptionality which gives some attributes to the participants
- c) It activates a schema of performance in which certain enunciators are characterised as compromising, while the possible counterarguments attributed enunciatively to other actors fulfil the function of characterizing those other enunciators.

It is true that the examples are few in number and that their analysis cannot lead to any generalisation. However, it would be worth analysing if the constructed schematisation establishes a relationship with the present SR or with the ones to be constructed and propagated or consolidated through discursive practices. Why do we insist on this? Because if concessive constructions are mechanisms used to communicate the assumptions the speaker attributes to other actors, it is impossible to activate these structures without a SR of those other actors and it is also impossible that the attribution of assumptions is not strongly guided and determined by such a SR. However, one of the weaknesses of this work is that we have not sufficiently

pondered on these relationships. Much remains to be discussed and clarified with respect to these relationships to specify the manner in which schematisation and RS are linked or not.

This shows the need to explore the relationship between certain logical discursive operations and certain linguistic manifestations in greater detail, for which reason we believe the Theory of Natural Logic would benefit from this type of analysis. Possibly, it is necessary to deepen the analysis of their discursive role and in the part they play in schematisation, or perhaps a deeper analysis is called for in order to ascertain if they fulfil other operations or logical discursive sub-operations apart from configuration, understood as the construction of cohesion and coherence. The brief work we have done only aims to show that it would be highly interesting to build a methodological approach which incorporates the notions of Natural Logic, because it is conceivable that this will allow us to locate macro-operations or logical discursive operations that have yet to be studied by relating them to certain linguistic structures.

This only implies three things: a) that it would be important to return to the programme of analysis proposed by Grize on the basis of Natural Logic and under the premise that the studies connecting operations of Natural Logic with linguistic structures as triggers of certain operations seem the most fertile to us; b) that it is necessary to make more systematic studies of broader corpora in order to establish if concessive constructions work as a macro-operation closely related to schematisation, specifically with the image of the locutor and of certain interlocutors (political adversaries) in political discourse; c) that the more complete study of the process of construction of schematisation could open up methodological possibilities to approach discursive practices by means of the SR approach.

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