

POLYPHONIC ASPECTS OF ENGLISH EXPLICATORY REFORMULATIVE DISCOURSE MARKERS IN JOURNALISTIC LANGUAGE

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1. Introduction

Reformulation is a very common linguistic strategy, and it is very often signalled with discourse markers (henceforth DMs). In English *that is*, *that is to say*, *in other words*, *i.e.* (an acronym for Latin *id est*), *namely*, and *viz.* (from Latin *videlicet*) are *explicative* markers of reformulation, in contrast to other types of markers of reformulation, for example, *rectificatives* such as *or rather* or *recapitulatives* such as *in short* (cf. Portolés 1998a).

It may be stated that the general function of explicatory reformulative discourse markers (hereafter ERDMs) is that of equivalence or explanation (Gülich and Kostchi 1983: 325), and that they constitute an interpretative retake (Murat and Cartier-Bresson 1987, Adam and Revaz 1989).

According to Gülich and Kotschi (1983: 113), the object of ERDMs is to solve formulation problems. An addresser who produces an utterance often requires a big effort to solve problems or difficulties. In fact, there is a distance between what one wants to communicate and what one says or writes and this may cause a formulation to be judged inappropriate to communicate something, thus triggering a new formulation or reformulation.

Blakemore (1993: 101) points out that while in unplanned discourse a reformulation may obey the speaker's estimation that the first formulation was not adequate, in planned discourse reformulations are not a change of plan, rather, they

form part of a plan. This plan is a matter of style, as both members of a reformulation may provide the necessary assumptions for the understanding of discourse.

The objective of this paper consists in analysing one further aspect of ERDMs, that of polyphony. Thus, I will try to account for the way ERDMs present and arrange different points of view in discourse and to see if there are differences among such markers concerning this issue. According to Rossari (1994: 17) these types of DMs allow to operate a predication of identity between the point of view to which they send back and the point of view they introduce. In order to develop further this point of departure, it is first necessary to introduce some aspects concerning polyphony in Argumentation within Language, a linguistic school that has accounted for the role of multiple voices in discourse.

2. Polyphony of enunciation

The theory of Argumentation within Language (hereafter AWL) has been developed in France, mainly by O. Ducrot and his disciple J.C. Anscambre, and it provides an interesting framework and very useful tools for the study of DMs. However, it has been considered in very few studies of English markers, at least to my knowledge. AWL proposes that the meaning of each DM is composed by a series of instructions, argumentative and polyphonic -the focus of the present study-, and this proposal allows to see differences among DMs, even among those that are semantically and pragmatically very close.

The developments of AWL have been presented progressively in *Les mots du discours*, by Ducrot et al. (1980), *L'argumentation dans la langue*, by Anscambre and Ducrot, *Le dire et le dit*, by Ducrot (1984), and *Théorie des topoi*, edited by Anscambre (1995), which are the main texts of the theory; also in a monographic issue of the *Journal of Pragmatics* (n. 24), edited by P.Y. Raccach (1995).

Portolés (1989, 1993, 1995) has applied AWL to the study of Spanish DMs. Of special interest is his paper "La teoría de la Argumentación en la Lengua y los marcos del discurso" (1998b), which presents the different possibilities offered by this theory for the description of DMs'.

The theory of polyphony, one of the most valuable contributions of AWL, is based on the distinction of different voices in discourse. Ducrot got his inspiration directly from the studies of M. Bakhtin about voice in literary works, and developed

the theory of polyphony to account for the fact that different voices come into play in ordinary discourse, even within only one utterance. Thus, Ducrot's main objective was to challenge the long-time held unity of the speaking subject within linguistic studies.

The fundamentals of the theory of polyphony are laid in the last chapter of Ducrot's *Le dire et le dit* (1984). According to Ducrot, when we speak we use three different types of characters: the *speaking subject* (*le sujet parlant*²), which is an empirical entity, the *locutor* (*le locuteur*), which is a discourse entity, and the *enunciator* (*le énonciateur*), another discourse entity.

The speaking subject is the human being that has existence in the world. For linguistic studies, however, it is necessary to introduce a discourse entity: the locutor. The locutor is presented as responsible for the utterances (Ducrot 1984: 198), and may be different from the empirical subject. This is very frequently the case in literature, where the author (empirical subject) gives voice to a narrator (locutor). In the following example of direct reported speech, if Peter says,

- (1) John told me: I will come.
(cf. Ducrot 1984: 198)

we have two locutors, Peter and John. The first locutor, Peter, coincides with the empirical subject.

The third type of character mentioned above is the enunciator. The role of the enunciators is to support different points of view or voices within the same utterance (Ducrot 1984: 212). The typical illustrative case is a negative utterance:

- (2) Mary does not like Mathematics.

According to Ducrot, in this utterance there is a kind of dialogue between two points of view or two enunciators: E₁ and E₂. E₁ maintains that Mary likes Mathematics, and E₂ negates this position. The locutor identifies herself with E₂. If direct reported speech shows the presence of two locutors, indirect reported speech lets us use two enunciators and one locutor:

- (3) John told me that he would come.

Peter is responsible for the utterance, he is the locutor. Then there are two points of view or enunciators: Peter's and John's.

2 The translation of metalinguistic terms is mine.

3 By convention, I call a general addresser *she* and a general addressee *he*. Hence, the discourse entities introduced in this article are also referred to as *she*.

I I follow (freely) this paper in this article, trying to implement the theory in the English language. I also follow the prologue to *La argumentación en la lengua* (1994), together with, of course, the text itself, and the publications mentioned above.

There are linguistic expressions that favour a polyphonic explanation that the locutor is different from the enunciator (Ducrot et al. 1980: 46). For example:

- (4) Il paraît que... ['It seems that...']
 (5) Le bruit court que... ['It is rumoured that...']
 (6) Certains disent que... ['It is said that...']

The theory of polyphony is fundamental for the study of DMs. For example, if we look at an utterance with the counter-argumentative connective *on the contrary*:

- (7) I didn't ask her to leave. *On the contrary*, I tried to persuade her to stay.
 (Quirk et al. 1972: 673)

In the first part of the utterance there is a confrontation between two enunciators, E₁ ("I asked her to leave"), and E₂, a negation of E₁, like in the previous example of a negative utterance. *On the contrary* introduces a contrary position to E₁, that is, to "I asked her to stay".

3. Explicatory reformulative discourse markers and polyphony

ERDMs cannot be accounted for without the notion of polyphony. Moreover, this is a reciprocal relationship: ERDMs are one of the most important linguistic means to articulate the orchestration of different voices or points of view in oral or written discourse. All cases of ERDMs show at least the existence of two voices, the voice of the first enunciator and the voice of the second, with which the locutor identifies herself.

The three characters described by Ducrot in his theory of polyphony, namely the speaking subject, the locutor and the enunciator, play a major role in all occurrences of ERDMs. Focusing on the corpus object of this study, which consists in journalistic language (see below), it is necessary to point out that the speaking subject will be a professional journalist in the majority of the cases. These journalists will no doubt express points of view in every situation, and they will do this by means of discursive characters, the locutors, whom they will adhere to or not. Further, there will be other points of view, identified or anonymous, expressed by the enunciators.

It is necessary to remark that with the ERDMs studied in this piece of research the subject hides behind the words -in contrast to what happens in expressions such as *I mean*, in which the subject "I" is present-, which confers these markers a purely metadiscursive instructional value. This value depends exclusively on grammar and presents the second member of a reformulation as a faithful interpretation, which very often is not so faithful.

In order to clarify matters, a classification may be established with the different polyphony situation types that occurred in the corpus. As the speaking subject is an empirical entity, I will leave it aside, concentrating on the two discourse entities, the locutor and the enunciator. The different situation types, illustrated with examples from the corpus would be:

I. One very common situation concerns the concurrence of one locutor and two enunciators. In this case we may differentiate several subtypes:

i. The first enunciator is identified by a name. This case corresponds to indirect reported speech:

- (8) Dr Hamer # estimates that the genetic differences identified account for only perhaps a tenth of the inheritability of the trait *in other words*, there must also be # other genes involved.
 (*The Times*, Tuesday 2nd January 1996)⁴

Here the first enunciator is Dr. Hamer. This enunciator presents a certain point of view, i.e. that some genetic differences account for only perhaps a tenth of the inheritability of a particular trait. Then, there is another enunciator, a voice which supports the fact that there must be other genes involved. The locutor, that is, the utterer of the words, identifies herself with the second enunciator.

ii. Some clues are provided as to the existence of the first enunciator. These are also cases of indirect reported speech.

- (9) Recently there was a rumour that Stephen Fry was going to play himself in a # television version of *Fat Chance*, Simon Gray's book about the disastrous production of his play *Cell Mates*. *In other words*, Fry would be a large # worried actor who flees England for Bruges and ends up in a beret posing as # someone called Monsieur Simon.
 (*The Times*, Thursday 8th February 1996)

In this example the first enunciator is not identified but it is hinted at by "there was a rumour that". This rumour is the source of the first point of view, i.e. that Stephen Fry was going to play himself in a television version of *Fat Chance*, Simon Gray's book about the disastrous production of his play *Cell Mates*. Then, the second point of view -that Fry would be a large worried actor who flees England for Bruges and ends up in a beret posing as someone called Monsieur Simon- is supported by a

⁴ In the examples extracted from the COBUILD corpus there appear sometimes marks and characters which are due to the electronic nature of the corpus. I have chosen to tamper with the examples the least as possible and thus leave these marks as they appear. The symbol "#" corresponds to a sequence of punctuation that the computer that made the corpus was unable to read, and, more often than not, to nothing in particular.

different enunciator, with whom the locutor identifies herself, as in the previous example.

iii. No clues are given as to the existence of a first enunciator:

(10) The opposing player, or team, then has to give the verdict # for or against the litigant identified on the card. If you judge the case properly, *that is*, if you supply the verdict which was given by the relevant # court, and is printed on the back of the card then you may throw the dice to # determine how many moves you travel around the board to the winning post.
(*The Times*, Tuesday 2nd January 1996)

Here two enunciators introduce two ways of viewing a certain condition, but the first enunciator is not marked as being different from the second.

This category would generally include cases in which the reformulated member is a discourse member smaller than a proposition. In such cases, the new points of view of the enunciators would correspond to identifications, corrections, specifications, etc.

(11) The regulator # in *other words*, the government will take the other 30 # But if that deal is # almost done, the debt issue is far from decided.
(*The Times*, Saturday 6th January 1996)

(12) The modern scenes, set more or less in the # 1960s, in which I was to play an actor-dramatist very clearly modelled on a # certain actor-dramatist of the period, namely Osborne, J were absolutely # characteristic of the author: angry, rhetorical, on the edge of being # dangerously offensive.
(*The Sunday Times*, 24th December 1995)

In these examples the second formulation comes from a different enunciator than that of the first one and corresponds to a better way of conveying the message, which the locutor prefers. In example (11) *in other words* introduces an identification, a referring expression ("the regulator") is introduced and then a referent is provided ("the government"). In example (12) *namely* introduces a specification ("Osborne") of a previous cataphoric element ("a certain actor-dramatist of the period").

II. The second situation has to do with the concurrence of two locutors and two enunciators; that is to say, it corresponds to direct reported speech, as in the example:

(13) 'Leonardo # and I are the two skinniest actors in the business,' says Thewlis with # unabashed pride. 'We're both paler than milk and we've got very similar bottoms.' *That is*, hardly any bottoms at all.
(*The Times*, Saturday 18th November 1995)

In this example the two points of view held by the two enunciators are expressed by two different locutors, Thewlis (who says "we've got very similar bottoms") and another locutor, who says "hardly any bottoms at all".

Examples like the following are a special subtype of this case, a very frequent mixture between indirect and direct reported speech, in which only one or a few words are put in the mouth of a first locutor:

(14) She believes that in order to educate and reassure people, the campaign must be 'glocal # in *other words*, it will need Europe-wide co-ordination but must be able # to tap into the concerns of the man or woman in the street #.
(*The Times*, Wednesday 10th April 1996)

Here, a first locutor ("she") utters the word "glocal", and a second locutor provides a contextual definition for this word.

Taking this classification as a basis, cases illustrated in point I will be called ILoc (one locutor), while cases in point II will be 2Loc (two locutors). Further, within ILoc cases there will be two subtypes: marked polyphonic types (1LocMP), which correspond to cases in which the first enunciator is identified or hinted at, and unmarked polyphonic types (1LocUP), in which the first enunciator is not manifest.

As the examples show, there will always be (at least) two enunciators and one or more locutors. The locutor of the second member will identify herself with the point of view expressed by the enunciator in that member (and very possibly with the speaking subject). This will allow the writer or empirical subject to distance herself from some points of view -those of the first members- and to adhere to others -those of the second.

4. Practical analysis

4.1. Corpus description

For this paper I have examined the occurrence of the DMs *that is to say, that is, in other words, i.e., namely* and *viz.* in the TIMES subcorpus of the COBUILDdirect corpus. This subcorpus contains about 5 million words from 39 texts of an average

5 Reformulation instances have been isolated to be accounted for with regards to polyphony. This means that I do not take into account the existence of further enunciators or locutors. For example, in negative utterances or when the reformulations are inside direct or indirect reported speech, the situation is more complex.

size of 128,000 words, collected during 1995 and 1996 from *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, published by News International Newspapers, London⁶.

The TIMES corpus has yielded a total of 226 examples with a length of up to 520 characters, the maximum allowed by the COBUILDdirect software - a context sufficient for the purposes of this piece of research. The following table shows the distribution of examples of the different ERDMs contained in the TIMES corpus and also displays frequency data in permillionages. The average number of occurrences per million words was provided by COBUILDdirect; however, with the DM *that is* these figures had to be calculated because most occurrences of the sequence *that + is* were not a DM but the demonstrative or relative pronoun *that* plus the verbal form *is*.

TIMES

	Number of occurrences	Average per million words
<i>That is to say</i>	10	1.7
<i>That's to say</i>	4	0.7
Total	14	2.4
<i>That is</i>	70	12.1
<i>In other words</i>	90	15.6
<i>I.e.</i>	5	0.9
<i>Ie</i>	61	10.6
Total	66	11.5
<i>Namely</i>	44	7.6
<i>Viz.</i>	3	0.5

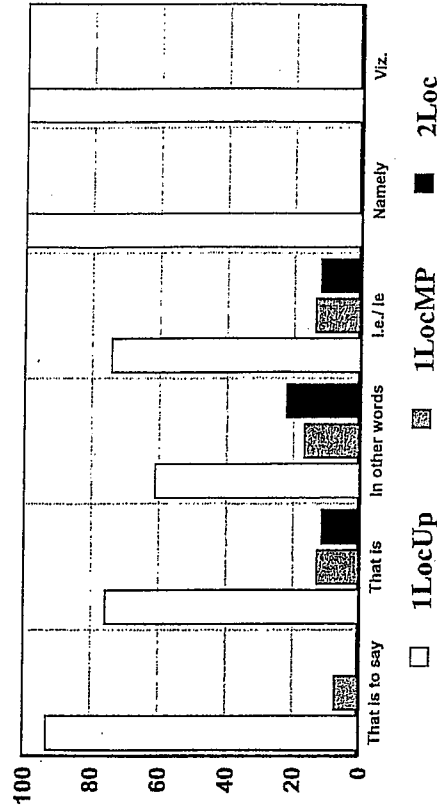
4.2. Results

The results of the analysis of the corpus are presented in the following table. They are accompanied by the percentage they represent out of the total number of appearances of each marker:

⁶ COBUILDdirect, which offers a 50 million-word corpus, is an on-line Internet service offered by Cobuild, a department of HarperCollins publishers based at the University of Birmingham. This corpus is a subset of a bigger corpus known as *The Bank of English* (300 million words), with which since 1980 Cobuild has been carrying out research with the aim of publishing grammar books and dictionaries for language learners. This general information about COBUILDdirect and about the TIMES subcorpus was obtained mainly from the Cobuild FTP Service at [ftp://titania.cobuild.collins.co.uk](http://titania.cobuild.collins.co.uk), accessed in January 1998.

	1LocUP		1LocMP		2Loc	
	Number of occurrences	Percentage	Number of occurrences	Percentage	Number of occurrences	Percentage
<i>That is's to say</i>	13	92.9	1	7.1	0	0
<i>That is</i>	53	75.7	9	12.9	8	11.4
<i>In other words</i>	55	61.1	15	16.7	20	22.2
<i>I.e./Ie</i>	49	74.2	9	13.6	8	12.1
<i>Namely</i>	44	100	0	0	0	0
<i>Viz.</i>	3	100	0	0	0	0

The percentages are displayed in the following graph:



As these results show, it is the DM *in other words* the one that exhibits more cases of occurrence of two locutors and cases of one locutor with identification of the first enunciator. Then follow *i.e.* and *that is*, after them *that is to say*, and, finally, *namely* and *viz.*

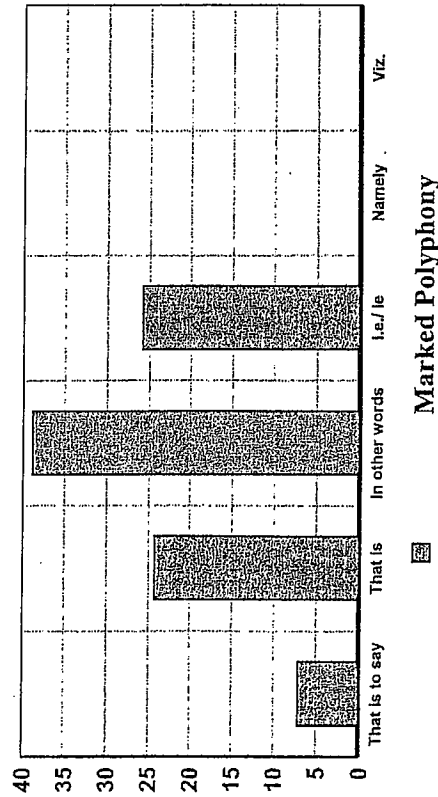
There are a couple of observations I would like to make at this point. In the case of *that is to say* and *viz.*, it could be argued that the percentages may well not be representative of a general tendency, because few examples have been analysed. However, I support the fact that these results may be reliable, as the analysis of this corpus has been supplemented with constant observation of press material. In any case, these markers seem to appear on very few occasions in formal journalistic style, as the table in point 4.1. of this paper shows.

We may take now a step further in this account of the results of the analysis of the corpus. The results of the cases in which two locutors appeared and of the examples in which the first enunciator was identified can be added up and they would

yield the percentages of cases in which polyphony was marked. This is shown in the following table and graph:

MARKED POLYPHONY

	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
<i>That is/s to say</i>	1	7.1
<i>That is</i>	17	24.3
<i>In other words</i>	35	38.9
<i>I.e.</i>	17	25.8
<i>Namedly</i>	0	0
<i>Viz.</i>	0	0



While more illustrative, the results are the same as those of the previous graph: *in other words* is the most polyphonic ERDM, followed by *i.e.* and *that is* then comes *that is to say*, and *namedly* and *viz* are the least polyphonic.

5. Final remarks

This piece of research would not be complete without addressing some relevant pragmatic questions. The first of these questions would concern the possible influence of morphology on the pragmatic behaviour of ERDMs. The fact that *in other words* is the most polyphonic marker might be due to its morphological composition. The indefinite *other* might allow for uses which convey more interpretation than

equivalence. Thus, the second member of a reformulation with *in other words* may take more distance from the reformulated member than that of a reformulation with the DMs *that is (to say)* or *i.e.*, which hint more towards an identity of meaning, perhaps due to the presence of the demonstrative *that* and verb *to be*⁷.

The fact that *namedly* and *viz.* are the least polyphonic markers might be due to the reason that they usually perform the function of specification of a cataphoric element, thus allowing no explicit display of different voices. Let me explain this a bit further. Consider examples (15) and (16):

(15) And unlike many anthologies which are arranged around one central premise # *namedly* that all contributors are female, it isn't either specious or patronising here. Women have been among the most influential and fascinating gardeners. (*The Times*, Thursday 23rd November 1995)

(16) Mr Blair said that whatever the final balance between election and merit in that chamber, it was impossible to justify # doing nothing about a manifest constitutional unfairness, *namedly*, membership # on the basis of birth. (*The Times*, Thursday 8th February 1996)

Example (15) is clearly an example of unmarked polyphony in which the second member of the reformulation identifies the cataphoric element "one central premise". In example (16) the first enunciator would be apparently marked (Mr Blair). However, example (16) would be a case of unmarked polyphony as well, as the two members of the reformulation are supported necessarily by the same voice (Mr Blair's). Mr Blair introduces the cataphoric element ("a manifest constitutional unfairness") and then he identifies it ("membership on the basis of birth").

The special nature of direct and indirect reported speech in journalistic discourse also has consequences for this piece of research. For one part, according to Waugh (1995), reported speech in journalistic discourse is concerned with issues of referentiality, truth and reliability, in other words, it is focused on the existence of a real-world, original speech event. In this type of discourse the journalist may be held accountable for whatever speech she has attributed to someone else. None of this is the case in conversations or in fictional narrative. For another part, today's journalism must be newsworthy, but it is also highly interpretative. True, a journalist may achieve her communicative intention - which may range from a simple account to an evaluation or even irony-, by putting somebody's words in a different context (as in direct speech [cf. Waugh 1995: 155]), or she may do some summarisation, paraphrasing or inferring on these words (as in indirect speech [cf. Waugh 1995: 156ff]).

⁷ See Rossari (1993) for an explanation of the influence of the morphologic composition of some French DMs on their pragmatic functions.

But there is a limit to these routines: she cannot change everything to suit her purposes. ERDMs allow journalists to give interpretations of previously reported discourse in order to achieve their communicative goals. It is because of these preceding remarks that the results of this piece of research are generalisable to all uses of English only with great caution.

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