

Proceedings
3rd SYMPOSIUM ON THE
DESCRIPTION AND/OR COMPARISON
OF ENGLISH AND GREEK

April 10-12, 1989

THESSALONIKI 1989

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ABSTRACT

Van Oirsouw (1983) proposes a syntactic criterion to assess semantic relations holding between coordinated sentences. On the basis of this criterion he distinguishes four distinct types of coordination, which he calls: (a) Identity Coordination, (b) Ordered Coordination, (c) Concomitant Coordination and (d) Coincidental Coordination. This paper demonstrates that van Oirsouw's claim to the four types is unfounded and, hence, his theory is inadequate. Instead, it is argued that his syntactic criteria might at best afford a method whereby coordinated sentences can be classified in order of decreased acceptability.

In his paper titled 'Coordinated Sentences' Van Oirsouw proposes to examine semantic relations holding between coordinated sentences; syntactic relations, it is noted, will remain outside the scope of his analysis. However, he does not conceptualise semantic relations of coordinated sentences, as an enumeration of types of circumstances under which coordination is acceptable, as has often been the case, or as governed by acceptability judgements which rely largely on issues of common topicality extracted from coordination, because, as he rightly

VAN OIRSOUW ON
«COORDINATED SENTENCES»

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notes in criticising P. Lakoff (1971), "a theory which endeavours to specify the circumstances under which sentences may sensibly be coordinated, i.e., enumerates the situations which may be reported on by means of a coordinated sentence is misguided" (136).

In other words, as van Oirsouw, does not want to rely on such criteria as the topicality of the conjoined sentences, he has recourse to the use of a syntactic device, the additive adjuncts 'too' and 'as well' as a means of extracting semantic characteristics. He claims that the presence of these additive adjuncts in coordinated sentences gives rise to the generation of inferences which he classes into two types: Intrasentential inferences, when the inferences are restricted to the sentence containing the additive adjunct, and extrasentential, when the inferences extend beyond the boundaries of the sentence at issue, relating it, or parts of it, to previous discourse.

These inferences afford us four types of coordination, which are: Identity coordination, Ordered coordination, Concomitant coordination and Coincidental coordination.

Identity coordination he calls coordinated sentences which always have either identical subjects or identical predicates. This type, therefore, can be specified by a particular formula:

$\boxed{A \psi}$ & $\boxed{A \psi}$

or $\boxed{A \psi}$ & $\boxed{B \psi}$

This type does not generate any inferences either intrasentential or extrasentential by the presence of an additive adjunct as witness (17):

(17) Rufus is a very good tennis-player, and Knut is a very good tennis-player, too.

The second type of coordination he calls Ordered coordination because "the order in which the sentences occur in the coordination is relevant to the interpretation of the sentence" (p.142).

The third type of coordination he distinguishes is that of Concomitant coordination whereby sentences are "inextricably linked" by the presence of additive adjuncts.

The fourth and final type of coordination he terms Coincidental, its characteristic being that "neither intrasentential nor extrasentential interpretations seem to be available for this sort of coordination with an additive adjunct" (p.143). He adds that the conjunction is rendered incomprehensible with the addition of the adjunct 'as well' or 'too', the syntactic device he uses throughout his analysis.

I propose to show three things: first that, although van Dirsouw criticises, and quite rightly so, Robin Lakoff's (1971) theory of conjunction as misguided,² since it "endeavours to specify the circumstances under which sentences may sensibly be coordinated" (p.136), his account amounts to little else than what he criticises. Second, in order to accept his four types of coordination, the criteria he proposes must stand to criticism. If there are counterexamples to his own, which however conform to the criteria he proposes then his theory collapses. Third, his four types of coordination are not genuine, distinct types. Rather, employing the same criteria, there can be proposed a method whereby we can classify coordinated sentences in order of decreased acceptability.

Apparently, for van Dirsouw an account of coordination relying on conversational implicatures does not satisfy his criteria, which, he claims, have to be syntactic. Gricean implicatures have been devised to carry off all the burden of explaining all other aspects of meaning or function of 'and' or 'but' except the logical aspect.

Indeed, Identity Coordination meets certain syntactic criteria and specific formulae can be set up, since a condition for this type of coordination is that the two coordinated sentences share either identical subjects or identical predicates, as shown by the structures above. However, as far as the other three types of coordination are

concerned, van Dirsouw does not give any syntactic criteria whereby the types can be identified.

Regarding the second type which he calls Ordered Coordination he relies for its identification on very similar criteria to Lakoff's, i.e., criteria concerning the topicality of the conjoined sentences, as he does with the other two types of Coordination. However, he distinguishes this as a distinct type because, basing our judgement on the semantic content of the propositions involved, we can determine whether "the order in which

the sentences occur in the coordination is relevant to the interpretation of the sentence" or not.

As for the criteria for the identification of the other two types, that of Concomitant Coordination and that of Coincidental Coordination, they are very much the same as the ones for Ordered Coordination, i.e., in order to identify Concomitant Coordination you again base your judgement on the propositional content of the conjoined sentences; if your verdict is that they 'go together' then you can rest assured that you have an instance of Concomitant Coordination.

The fourth type of Coordination, Coincidental Coordination, seems to me to be the waste-basket. Whatever does not fit the other types will find some place here, since under this type you can have instances of coordination which will not fit the syntactic formula of the first type or the semantic criteria set up for the other two types, i.e., the propositions of the two conjoined sentences do not seem to be in some order, or to be somehow linked.

Having noted the lack of any inherent syntactic specification for identifying the four types, we can now examine them in the light of the presence of the additive adjuncts, which, as van Dirsouw claims, can be employed as syntactic criteria for distinguishing the four types. If it is found that the inferences they generate are stable for all instances of the type at issue, then we might conclude that their addition affords us a reliable criterion. In other words, inference relations should be systematically encoded in coordinate constructions by the use of additive adjuncts in a manner that knowing the particular type of coordination used, the type of inference relations obtaining thereby must be predictable or vice versa.

Identity Coordination will not be examined as, Van Dirsouw offers precise syntactic specification for this type. Each of the other three types will be, however, examined in some detail as the only syntactic test he offers is the presence or absence of the additive adjuncts.

Ordered Coordination is characterised by the fact that the order of the conjoined sentences is relevant to the interpretation of the sentence; as regards the presence of the additive adjuncts, van Dirsouw claims that Ordered Coordination "is acceptable both with and without the additive adjunct". However, the inference relations generated thereby can have the extrasentential interpretation only.

Van Dirsouw's examples of Ordered Coordination are given below:

- (18) John let go of the ladder and Harry fell to the ground.
(18a) John let go of the ladder and Harry fell to the ground as well.

- (19) Harry fell down the stairs and he broke his arm as well.
(19a) Harry fell down the stairs and he broke his arm.

- (20) I got up and I walked away as well.
(20a) I got up and I walked away.

It must be pointed out that van Dirsouw does not specify the nature of the relevance relations obtaining between the two conjoined sentences. These can be either chronological or etiological or, rather, both, in the sense that a temporal sequential reading involves a causal relation as well, which also involves temporal sequence.

However, a proviso for identifying this type of Coordination is that the inferences generated by the additive adjuncts must, in the first place, make a difference in the interpretation—whereas the presence of the additive adjuncts in Identity Coordination does not affect its interpretation in the least—and, in the second place, these inferences must have only an extrasentential interpretation.

Besides, it must be pointed out that the syntactic formula for Identity Coordination is not unique to the first type only, as is clear from the examples above. Both (19a) and (20a) bear the same syntactic formulae as the one for Identity Coordination.

Therefore, the sole differentiating factor between the first type and this type, Ordered Coordination, has to be based on the generation of extrasentential inferences by the addition of the adjuncts at issue.

However, this cannot be shown to be the case. For an example like (19) can give rise to either extrasentential or intrasentential inferences, as can (20) in the sense of (19b) and (20b) respectively:

- (19b) Not only did he fall down but he also broke his arm.
(20b) Not only did I get up but I also walked away.

Here are some more examples of Ordered Coordination, in which—contrary to van Dirsouw's predictions—the addition of 'as well' will give rise to intrasentential rather than extrasentential inferences:

- (1) He walked out on his wife and he asked for a divorce as well.
- (2) Robin walked out on Aruna and the stupid bastard asked for a divorce as well.
- (3) Robin walked out on Aruna and his lawyer is pressing for a divorce.
- (4) John walked out on Aruna and Steve is pressing for a divorce as well.
- (5) The King abdicated and a Republic was declared as well.
- (6) A Republic was declared and the King abdicated, too.

All these examples conform to the first condition set for Ordered Coordination, i.e., it is clear from the propositional content of the sentences conjoined that "the order in which the sentences occur in the coordination is relevant to the interpretation of the sentence" (p.142). Moreover, example (1) is characterised by identity of subject terms; both instances of *he* are coreferential. In (2), although the terms *Robin* and *the stupid bastard* are coreferential, they are lexically distinct terms. In (3) the subject terms are neither identical nor coreferential.³

However, it is clear that (1) will be interpreted as (1a):

- (1a) He not only walked out on his wife but he also asked for a divorce.

that is, the syntactic device 'as well' will generate intrasentential, rather than extrasentential, inferences. Sentence (5) is not given a different interpretation on account of the additive adjunct whereby one would understand that a Republic was declared somewhere else as well, as van Dirsouw predicts.

Let us now examine the third type of coordination, Concomitant Coordination, as van Dirsouw calls it, which can be acceptable with or without the additive adjunct. An example of this type is (21):

- (21) Ien doesn't like drink, and dope gives him a headache as well.

The additive adjunct, under the intrasentential interpretation, serves to link the two conjuncts. Van Dirsouw adds that "concomitant, meaning going together, can be interpreted in the context of coordination and additive adjuncts as inextricably linked; if we have a coordination of sentences with non-identical predicates and non-identical subjects, and the sentence does not become unacceptable as a result of the additive adjunct, then we may infer concomitance between the predicates" (p. 143).

However, he also classifies sentences such as the following under Concomitant Coordination, although the additive adjunct renders the coordination contradictory, as he says.

- (22) *Sue has never slept with anyone, and sleeping on the settee gives her a headache as well.
 (23) *I've never tried dope, and drink gives me a headache as well.

Although, he explains the incomprehensibility of (22) and (23) on account of the coordination of two sentences expressing two propositions, one referring to an existent situation, and one denoting something that has never occurred, and hence concomitance, as he puts it, between existent and non-existent situations is impossible, he does not specify why these two examples have to belong to Concomitant Coordination and not to his fourth type. Besides, the explanation he offers for the oddity of (22) and (23) on the basis of their negated conjunct is certainly not adequate or correct, as shown clearly by the following examples:

- (7) She has never slept with anyone and she contracted AIDS, too.
 (8) She has never slept with anyone and AIDS frightens her as well.

Quite clearly, (7) and (8) cannot belong to the first type; at least (8) is not characterised by identity of any of its terms. Neither can they belong to the second type as the order of the conjoined sentences does not seem to be relevant. Moreover, they cannot belong to the fourth type as they do not become unacceptable by the addition of the adjuncts, as is predicted for Coincidental Coordination. Therefore, according to van Dirsouw's account, they both have to be instances of Concomitant Coordination, thus invalidating his explanation for the unacceptability of (22) and (23).

Moreover, a sentence such as (9),

- (9) Arune's husband was never faithful to her and her boss is taking her out to dinner tomorrow as well,

would again have to be an instance of Concomitant Coordination, since, again, there is no identity of any terms, the order does not seem to be relevant, and 'as well' does not render it unacceptable.

The last type of coordination, Coincidental Coordination, seems to be, as has been already noted, the 'waste-basket'. The syntactic test goes as follows: If you have an example of coordination which becomes incomprehensible by the presence of the additive adjuncts, then you have an instance of Coincidental Coordination. His examples are the following:

- (25) Harry is digging up the garden, and Peter is in the attic.
 (25a)?Harry is digging up the garden, and Peter is in the attic as well.
 (26) Peter is on holiday, and Sue is ill.
 (26a)?Peter is on holiday, and Sue is ill as well.

With regard to these sentences, van Dirsouw argues that "they ostensibly have nothing in common, and the additive adjunct, which seeks to imply that they do have something in common, merely makes the sentence odd" (144, our emphasis).

The emphasis in the quotation serves to underline the function of the additive adjuncts, which is to bring about the common topicality of the conjoined sentences. Consequently, we can judge whether the coordination is acceptable, or odd, relying on purely syntactic criteria, as van Dirsouw argues.

Having shown that there are counterexamples to his own, which, however, satisfy his criteria, and hence that there are not four distinct types of coordination, we now wish to claim that the syntactic criterion of the presence of the additive adjuncts affords him a method whereby he can evaluate coordinated sentences in terms of a scale of decreased acceptability.

Coordination of the first type is apparently the most acceptable one as the presence of the additive adjunct does not bring about any difference of interpretation. However, although the syntactic formula he gives for this type is supposed to secure some common topicality of the two sentences, since either the subjects or the predicates must be lexically identical, it can be easily shown that this need not be the case.

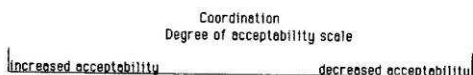
- (10) They have four children, and they went to Spain last summer as well.

Far from being inconsequential, as predicted by van Dirsouw's theory, 'as well' serves to make (10) rather odd. So one is inclined to classify (10) as an instance of Coincidental Coordination, or rather, as an instance of coordination of decreased acceptability, despite the fact that it exhibits identity of subject terms. One is inclined to claim that not only identity of either subjects or predicates is a necessary condition for the first type or for increased acceptability, but also that the remaining terms which are not identical must be of a canonical form, i.e. of the same syntactic category, as is the case with van Dirsouw's example (17).

Envisaging a scale of acceptability, the next most acceptable type of coordination would be that of sentences which denote situations or events which are in some temporal order and, or exhibit a relation of cause and effect. However, since our knowledge of the world can afford us an explanation for the coordination of these two situations linguistically, any reliance on the test of the presence or absence of the additive adjuncts is pleonastic. Moreover, we would like to claim that the choice between the intrasentential and extrasentential interpretation brought about by the additive adjunct is a direct consequence of the degree of the relation that obtains between the two conjuncts.

More specifically, the closer the relationship is between the two coordinated sentences the more likely we are to read 'as well' as generating intrasentential inferences, and the looser the connection seems to be between them, the more likely we are to read 'as well' as generating extrasentential inferences. And this is so because in our attempt to detect coherence in linguistic chunks we bring our knowledge of the world to bear on what we read or hear. This is clearly shown in our critical examination of the second type of coordination.

A schematic representation of this finding might be as follows:



Effect of presence of additive adjunct

- A= inconsequential
 B= intrasentential inferences
 C= extrasentential inferences
 D= address

This scheme is more flexible and will therefore accommodate a much greater majority of coordinated sentences.

Thus coordinated sentences such as (7) or (8) will be accommodated within this scheme without worrying about the specific type to which they might belong since the four types of coordination proposed by van Dirsouw have been proved to be void.

Now to a final aside: Both (25a) and (26a) could be perfectly acceptable if uttered under certain circumstances. Suppose the conversation is about a party and (26a) answers a question enquiring about Peter's and/or Sue's participation in it:

- A: Do you know if Peter and Sue are coming tonight?
 B: Well, Peter is on holiday, and Sue is ill as well.

To conclude, it must be stressed that in this paper we have not addressed such questions as why some kinds of coordinated sentences seem to be more acceptable and more frequently used than others, or what is the significance of elliptical coordinate constructions as compared to their expanded forms. Rather, we have concentrated on an account purporting to afford a method based on syntactic criteria whereby coordinated sentences can be classified into four distinct types. Having proved this theory unfounded, we proposed instead that van Dirsouw's syntactic test can at best assign coordinated sentences along a continuum of decreased acceptability.

NOTES

- 1 VO's numbering is preserved throughout.
 2 For a comprehensive critique of Robin Lakoff (1971) see Kitis (1982).

³ Van Oirsouw (1987) defines identity as "nondistinctness relative to a discourse".

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