

OU SEJA VS. O SEA: FORMAL IDENTITY AND FUNCTIONAL DIVERSITY*

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RESUMO: Este artigo visa descrever contrastivamente o funcionamento sincrónico dos marcadores discursivos *o sea* (Espanhol) e *ou seja* (Português), usando para tal o modelo de segmentação discursiva de Briz e GrupoVal.Es.Co (2013). Os resultados da pesquisa apontam para uma partilha significativa de funções entre os dois marcadores, embora *o sea* tenha um espetro mais amplo, nomeadamente no que toca aos valores modais que pode sinalizar.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *o sea / ou seja*, marcadores discursivos, funções pragmáticas, modelo de segmentação discursiva, análise contrastiva sincrónica

ABSTRACT: This paper aims at fulfilling a twofold objective: to highlight the functional differences between Portuguese *ou seja* and Spanish *o sea* and to do so by making use of a model of discourse segmentation, namely, the one developed in Briz and GrupoVal.Es.Co. (2003). The results have shown that OSS share most of their functions and differ in the wider range of functions of *o sea*, which has modal functions that are not shared by *ou seja*.

KEY-WORDS: *o sea / ou seja*, discourse markers, pragmatic functions, model of discourse segmentation, synchronic contrastive description

1. Introduction

This paper aims at fulfilling a twofold objective: first and most important, to highlight the functional differences between Portuguese *ou seja* and Spanish *o sea*. Second, to do so by making use of a model of discourse segmentation, namely, the one developed in Briz and Grupo Val.Es.Co. (2003).

* This paper was written with the help of the Research Project FF12009-07034, Fonocortesia, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture (MICINN) and the help of CELGA, funded by FCT (Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia). We also want to thank the anonymous reviewers for their comments.

Regarding the first objective, and although it might seem that two closely-related languages show little or no difference at all in what regards discourse markers (henceforth, DMs), this happens not to be the case: Weydt (1989) showed that the standard adversative markers *but* and *aber* had different uses in English and German. Likewise, Rossari (1994) showed functional differences for French and Italian in the case of *en effet/in fatto*. Also, Garcés (dir.) (2009) contrasts the different reformulative markers in Spanish, Catalan, French, Italian, English, German and Icelandic. In line with these works, and especially with Garcés (2009), our paper will illustrate how diachronical convergence does not guarantee by itself synchronical similarity.

Regarding the second objective, we believe that if the linguistic context where a DM appears is divided into units and subunits, contrasts between DMs can be made on a common, more objective basis.

Besides these two objectives, and through all this paper, it will be assumed that DMs are expressions that require pragmatic explanations, for they operate at the discourse level, enabling joint coordination of interaction and guiding hearers to connect discourse segments, at different levels of the discourse structure (Schiffrin 1987). DMs are prototypically multifunctional, and the description and explanation of their pragmatic functions depend basically on three parameters: the core meaning of a marker, the discourse unit it appears in and its position within that unit. Provided that DMs have procedural meaning, instead of speaking of polysemies, we will speak of the pragmatic functions that Sp. *o sea* and Port. *ou seja* perform in a given context or, to make it shorter, of functions.

The structure of this paper is the following: Section 2 will provide a synchronic description of *ou seja* and *o sea*; section 3 will offer a brief presentation of the Val.Es.Co model, which will be used in section 4 to interpret the distribution of both markers. Finally, section 5 will summarize the main conclusions of this paper.

2. Synchronic description of *ou seja* and *o sea*

Portuguese *ou seja* and Spanish *o sea* have been the object of uneven studies. Whereas the latter has been well described in the literature and, therefore, the description provided here will rest on previous works (Schwenter 1996, Zorraquino & Portolés 1999, Briz 2001, 2002a e b, Santos 2003,

DPDE, Murillo 2007, Cuenca & Bach 2007, Garcés 2008, 2009, Fuentes 2009), to the authors' knowledge, there are no descriptions of Portuguese *ou seja*. Hence, the comparison with its Spanish counterpart will be used to sketch a first description of Portuguese *ou seja*. Henceforth, the descriptive traits common to both DMs, *o sea* and *ou seja*, will be referred to as OSS.

The formal structure of OSS is basically the same. Prosodically, they are hosted in an independent tone unit, separated by pauses from the segments they connect. In written texts, these pauses are generally signaled by commas.

Morphologically, both markers have stem to the same origin: the disjunctive conjunction (*ou* and *o*), plus the third singular person of the present subjunctive of the verb *ser* (*to be*). In both languages, *ou* and *o* are the basic, unmarked disjunctive conjunctions, being their core meaning that of marking an alternative. Also, *seja* and *sea* are instances of the subjunctive mood, which typically expresses possibilities that may be considered in the utterance context (Marques, 2005).

Semantically, as happens with most DMs having connective functions, OSS express procedural meaning: they encode an instruction on how the segment they introduce is integrated into a coherent mental representation of discourse, guiding, therefore, the interpretation process. The core meaning shared by OSS may be roughly glossed by "interpret the following utterance as a better alternative formulation of the preceding one". In this sense, OSS can be prototypically described as two-place operators, for the explanation of their meaning involves taking into account two utterances, the one to the right of the marker and the one to its left.

OSS belong to the paradigm of reformulative markers, along with *quer dizer* (*I mean*), *isto é* (*that is*), *por outras palavras* (*in other words*), in Portuguese, and *esto es* (i.e.), *es decir* (*that is*), and *a saber* (*namely*), in Spanish.¹ Following Gülich & Kotschi (1983, 1995), Roulet (1987), Rossari (1994) and Pons (2014), reformulation will be defined as a metadiscursive operation, by which the speaker re-elaborates or rephrases an utterance in order to facilitate the understanding of what (s)he actually means or to reduce possible communicative misunderstandings. This definition is focused on cases of self-reformulation, but there are also cases of hetero-reformulation,

¹ Murillo (2009, 157-158) warns against *verbatim* equivalences between Spanish and English reformulation markers. For reasons of space, we will not discuss this topic here.

in which the hearer re-elaborates a previous intervention (or part of it), with a cooperative purpose and typically to confirm comprehension.

Apart from the self-hetero-distinction, reformulation is divided into two main operations: (i) a semantic equivalence between two utterances (paraphrastic reformulation, PR), and (ii) a dissociation between two utterances, showing that the speaker fully reconsiders his/her first formulation and substitutes it by a new form/meaning coupling (non-paraphrastic reformulation, NPR)². Although the limits of NPR are far from clear, this paper will assume that NPR ranges from distance to rectification.

Beyond their reformulative functions (paraphrastic or not), OSS also share one additional function: to introduce a consequence or conclusion. Finally, Spanish *o sea* can be also used as a modal particle, a meaning that Portuguese *ou seja* has not developed.

The data regarding the descriptions in this paper come from different sources. The Portuguese data were collected from the oral sub-corpus of *Corpus de Referência do Português Contemporâneo* (CRPC), available on-line (www.clul.www.pt). (958 occurrences of *ou seja*). Spanish data, in turn, have been taken from the Val.Es.Co and the CREA corpus, as well as from previous studies on this marker.

2.1. OSS as reformulation markers

In terms of frequency, the occurrences of *ou seja* in self-reformulation interventions are by far the most relevant ones in the Portuguese corpus and can be considered the core meaning shared by OSS. Reformulation functions are the remnant of the source construction of OSS, a coordinative, disjunctive sentence where the disjunction marker had exclusive meaning. Following Roulet (1987), reformulation will be divided into paraphrastic (Section 2.1.1) and non-paraphrastic ones (Section 2.1.2). Each case, in turn, will be divided into reformulation acts initiated by the same speaker (self-reformulations, in sections 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.2.1) and reformulation interventions initiated by another speaker (hetero-reformulations, in sections 2.1.1.2 and 2.1.2.2). The difference between self- and hetero reformulations, as Roulet et al.(1985) pointed out, regards polyphony (Ducrot 1984): in the first case

² Pons Bordería (2013) proposes an alternative account of the paraphrastic-non paraphrastic distinction which will not be dealt with in this paper.

there is dialogy (two voices) but one speaker, whereas in the second case there is dialogy and two speakers.

2.1.1. OSS as paraphrastic reformulation markers

2.1.1.1. Self-reformulation paraphrasis (SPR).

In the corpus, SPRs have been found under three different constructions. Example (1) constitutes a paradigmatic example of paraphrastic reformulation:

(1) Port.L2: pegando nesta operação que tem agora um mês, faz agora um mês que reduziu, eh, de sessenta para vinte o número de acidentes, **ou seja** em relação ao mesmo período do ano passado há três vezes menos acidentes...

Ref: O-0029-R-O-P-Lis-Redip

(1) L2: looking at this [police] operation which started last month, in a month, hum, the accidents dropped from sixty to twenty, **or-beSUBJ** three times fewer accidents than last year during the same period.

In this example, a first formulation which carries the semantic load of the speaker's intervention (*the accidents dropped from sixty to twenty*) is reformulated via a second formulation which further explains some aspect of it (*three times fewer accidents than last year during the same period*). According to Roulet (1987), explanation involves adding some information, in order to make the previous content more precise or explicit. The structure of example (1) is typical of spoken, colloquial language, where a speaker builds his speech incrementally in communicative units, which are communicatively "complete" in a given context.

However, in written, formal texts, a second configuration can be found:

(2) Span. *Fanerógama* (del griego "phaneros", visible, y "gamos", unión). Plantas provistas de flores, **o sea** de órganos reproductores visibles. (2001. Fuentes Yague. *Iniciación a la botánica*)

(2) *Fanerogame* (Greek "phaneros", visible, and Greek "gamos", union). Plants having flowers **or-beSUBJ** visible reproductive organs.

In (2), the discourse unit introduced by OSS explains the meaning of the word *fanerógama*. This means that communicatively they act as a unit. The element to the right of OSS does not have a full propositional content and, in order to be understood, must be interpreted with regard to the one to the left of OSS.

Finally, the third construction is reflected in example (3):

- (3) Port...daqui a pouco vamos já ouvir o principal da actualidade...do resto da actualidade, eh, esta manhã, mas para já nesta manhã aqui em directo do, eh, ipatimup, **ou seja**, do instituto de patologia e imunologia molecular da universidade do porto, será interessante nós eh, avaliarmos o curriculum deste instituto em apenas dez anos ... Ref: O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redip
- (3) ...in a moment we'll give you the main news...the rest of the news, hum, this morning, but now live from, hum, ipatimup, **or-be-SUBJ**, the institute of pathology and molecular immunology of the university of Porto, it'll be interesting, hum, to take a look at the only ten year old curriculum of this institute.

Example (3) shows that SPR happens in an intra-sentential level – in this case, under the scope of preposition *from*.

All three configurations show that SPR, a semantic move, can be performed under the same syntactic structures in both languages.

2.1.1.2. Hetero-paraphrastic reformulation (HPR)

When a reformulation involves two different interventions from two different speakers (that is, in cases of heteroreformulation), OSS introduces the second intervention. Although OSS still precedes the second part of the reformulation, the fact that it is placed in a dialogical context will give rise to secondary functions. In examples (4), the intervention of speaker S is reformulated by J:

- (4) Span. S: la verdad es que e/ llevo poco tiempo sin fumar→pero lo agradezco
 J: **o sea** que empezaste ↑// pues// casi casicundo se abrió el- este local↑(Briz and Val. Es.Co Research Group 2002, 158, l. 623)
- (4) S: truth be told/ I quit smoking for a short time→but I feel better
 J: **or-be SUBJ** you started↑// well// almost when this place opened(Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 158, l. 623)

The same happens in example (5):

- (5) Port. L2: portanto nós em portugal temos uma elevadíssima percentagem da população com uma doença infecciosa do estômago que provoca alterações que são gravíssimas em termos do que é a saúde da população... L3: *ou seja* este é um mal português. qual... qual será a raiz... a origem desse mal português? (O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redip)
- (5) L2: so we have in Portugal a very high percentage of the population with a stomach infectious disease which causes extremely serious problems in terms of the health of the population...L3: **or-be-Subj** this is a Portuguese disease. which ...which is the root...the origin of this Portuguese desase?

In this dialogical position, new functions arise (described for Spanish by Briz 2001, 2002). In fact, the basic function of a heteroreformulation like the one in (4) and (5) is to show a strong cooperative commitment with a former speaker in a verbal exchange. By initiating his/her intervention by OSS, the speaker wants to confirm his/her comprehension of what has been said or conveyed by a first speaker – thus paraphrasing previous content.

2.1.2. Non-paraphrastic reformulation (NPR)

2.1.2.1. Non-paraphrastic self-reformulation (NPSR)

Non-paraphrastic reformulations convey a wide array of meanings, which range from ‘distance’ to ‘correction’ (Roulet 1987, Rossari 1994, Gülich & Kotschi 1995, Kotschi 2001). In NPSRs, the unit under the scope of OSS re-elaborates the previous one by showing a distance with its content or even by rectifying it. In (6), the speaker rephrases the word *desanimada* (downhearted) by *desilusionada* (disappointed), as a better clue to her communicative intentions:

- (6) Span. E : y nada ↑ como al final estaba muy ((...)) muy mal→entonces me dio que no/ muy desanimada→**o sea** desilusionada no me hacía nada ilusión(Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 111, l. 1220)
- (6) E :and well [as I felt very ((...)) very bad→then I thought no/ very downhearted→**Sor-be-SUBJ** disappointed- nothing made me happy (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 111, l. 1220)

In (7), the speaker rectifies his/her previous formulation:

- (7) Port.E até porque gosto muito de tourear e... gosto muito de, já li umas coisas acerca de tauromaquia em geral e, sei que aqui estamos um pouco atrasados, **ou seja**, muito mesmo em relação a (portugal) continental e a (espanha) e (mexico) (Ref: 744-08-TD0-012-25-M-C-4-4-00)
- (7) And even as I like to bullfight and... I like it a lot, I've already read some things about bullfighting in general and, I know that here we are a bit behind the times, **or-be-SUBJ**, really behind compared to the mainland (Portugal) and (Spain) and (Mexico) (Ref: 744-08-TD0-012-25-M-C-4-4-00)

Interchangeability shows that OSS may be replaced, in these contexts, by correction markers such as *ou melhor*, *ou antes* (*or rather*, *or better*)/ *mejor dicho*, *más bien*, *mejor aún* (Garcés 2008). Features of the verbal context are decisive to license this new interpretation, namely the propositional content

of both units. In all cases, the last movement cancels some information previously stated.

2.1.2.2. Non-paraphrastic heteroreformulation (NPHR)

When non-paraphrastic reformulations occur within speakers, the structure introduced by *ou seja* conveys a distance between what the first speaker said and what the second speaker says:

(8) Port.L4: as pessoas que nascem com mucinas 1 pequenas têm muito maior susceptibilidade à infecção pelo helicobacter pylori1, do que as pessoas que nascem com mucinas grandes.

L3: **ou seja** entrando dentro desse infinitamente pequeno que é possível, eh, desencadear acções preventivas e... e... e avançar para o tratamento, neste caso...

L4: exactamente (Ref: O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redip)

(8) L4: people born with small mucins 1 are much more susceptible to infection by helicobacter pylori1 than those born with big mucins.

L3: **or-be SUBJ** when you get that infinitely small it's possible, hum, to initiate preventive actions and...and... and go on to the treatment, in this case...

L4: exactly (Ref: O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redip)

In non-paraphrastic heteroreformulations, the second speaker distantiates from the content stated by a previous speaker³. The distance expressed by the speaker could even lead to correcting the previous content. Leaving aside the question of whether correction is a distinct operation from non-paraphrase (for different points of view on this subject, compare Roulet 1987 to Kotschi 2001), it is expected that non-paraphrastic markers develop polysemies towards the expression of correction, as happens in example (9):

(9) Span.E : vamos a ver/ ser liberal ¿por qué? yo- yo me rijo por unas normas↑/ y yo conservo o/ unn-yo qué sé§

G: §puesyaestá§

E: §yo tengo unos principios y para mí hay valores fundamentales§

G: §eso/ y tú los sigues ¿no?§

E: §sí

G: ¿o intentas seguirlos?§

E: §sí/ pero que otra persona no los sigaa

³ At the interpersonal level, the non-paraphrastic reformulation may contribute to display interactional solidarity, as seems to be the case in (8).

G: a tí te da lo mismo ¿no?/ pues más o menos/ ese solo- lo que quiere decir más o menos la palabra liberal

E: ¡hombre! Yo- **o sea** yo por liberal↑no entiendo eso (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 91, l. 391).

(9) E: ok let's see/ being a liberal why? I- I follow some norms↑/ and I keep/ aa-I don't know§

G: §that's it§

E: §I have some principles and to me there are some fundamental values§

G : §right/ and you follow them huh?§

E: §yes

G: Or try to follow them?§

E: §right/ but if someone does not follow them↑

G: you don't care right?/ well more or less/ that is what-what means approximately the word liberal

E: come on! I-**lor-be SUBJ** I don't understand liberal means that (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 91, l. 391).

In the corpus there have not been found cases in which OSS constitutes an utterance on its own. Yet it is possible to reconstruct a context where this might be possible, namely, when a hearer asks for a further explanation:

(10) Port. L1: Não basta querer, é preciso investir.

L2: **Ou seja?**

L1: Não te armes em ingénuo, sabes muito bem o que quero dizer.

(10) L1: Wanting is not enough, you have to invest.

L2: **or-be SUBJ?**

L1: Don't pretend to be naive, you know very well what I mean.

In example (9), OSS, in an independent position, functions as a request for further explanation.

2.2. OSS as conclusion markers

Our corpus also displays occurrences of OSS in which the marker introduces a consequence that can be inferred from the previous discourse unit. Therefore, OSS has conclusive meaning and can be replaced by prototypical conclusive markers (Portuguese *portanto*/ Spanish *por lo tanto*):

(11) Port. praticamente todas as escolas de de música têm ha orquestras maiores ou menores de alunos / são orquestras que / devido à pouca população escolar / ha se resumem habitualmente a orquestras de de de arcos / ha **ou seja** ha no actual meio

musical he português / he é difícil ha a população escolar de uma única escola / ha permitir ha a existência e o bom funcionamento de uma orquestra sinfónica com um potencial sinfónico (Ref: O89)

- (11) Almost all the schools of, of music have bigger or smaller students' orchestras / orchestras that / because of the small number of students/ are, are, are usually string orchestras/ hum **or-be-SUBJ** hum, at the moment, in the present Portuguese musical world/ hum, it's difficult for just one school, hum, to have a functioning symphony orchestra.

- (12) Span.S: un seguro de vida en realidades un seguro de muerte ¿o no?/// debería llamarse seguro de muerte// pero es un rollo [porque LUE=]

A: [yo lo que →]

S: = GO↑/ cuando-cuando o/ faltó nuestro padre↑/ está toda la vida pagando/ y luego tuvimos que pagar nosotros ciento y pico mil pelas↑// **o sea** que/ [°(quees un rollo)°]. (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 146, l. 152).

- (12) S: a life insurance is in fact a death insurance, right?/// it should be called death insurance// BUT it's a bore [because THEN↑=]

A: [I what→]

S: = when- when/ our father passed away↑/ he paid all his life/ and then we had to pay one thousand and something bucks↑// **or-be SUBJ que**/ [°(so it's a bore)°]. (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 146, l. 152).

This conclusive meaning is well-documented in Spanish written texts, where *o sea*, under the form *o sea que*, is used to introduce the final, conclusive segment in an argumentative sequence, often without an associated propositional content (Garcés 2008, 98-100). In Spanish, *o sea que*, with a lengthened vowel, indicates the hearer to reconstruct a consequence coherent with the facts described before. In (11), this possibility is made explicit by the speaker, who states explicitly what he has in mind.

2.3. OSS as formulative markers

In some contexts, OSS operates as an on-line discourse planning marker, which has sometimes been labelled "filler" (Cortés Rodríguez 1991). Instead of considering this as an expletive, it will be considered here a *formulative*, planning-related function, in line with Ochs (1979). The following example illustrates this function:

- (13) Port. PAU: /mas / basicamente eu comecei / quando comecei a trabalhar lá / & eh +\$ **ou sej**/ eu &trabalhe / eu trabalhei lá / um mês e pouco (Ref: O-0004-pfamcv04-c_oral_rom)

- (13) But / basically I started / when I started working there / hm, **or-be-SUBJ** / I work, I worked there for a month and a bit (Ref: O-0004-pfamcv04-c_oral_rom)

In (13) OSS, combined with a pause, restarts or re-orientates the discourse, due to planning problems, as shown by the fact that there is a change of project (Sornicola 1981) immediately after *ou seja*. Also, example (14) shows problems regarding the speaker's choice of the right expression in a series (*cigarette* > *beer* > *x*), something that can also be seen by the frequency of restarts (*n- ni un cigarro/ ni una cerve-*), repetitions (*cigarro, cerveza*) and short pauses. OSS explicitly indicates that the microstructural formulation of the message is not the most adequate one:

- (14) Sp. S: me pasa lo mismo con el alcohol y con las drogas/// yo cuando vi que tu ve problemas tu ve qu'(d)ecir/ n- ni un cigarro/ ni una cerve- **o sea** n- ni un cigarro/ ni un porro/ ni una cerveza ↑ niii nada// porque el día que yo me t- tome una cerveza ↑ ya se m'ha acabao la historia (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 158, l. 609).
(14) S: I feel the same with alcohol and with drugs///when I saw that I was having problems I said/ n- no cigarettes/ no **or-be-SUBJ**/ n- no cigarettes/ no joints/ no beers ↑ noo nothing// 'cause the moment I drink a beer ↑ everything is over (Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 250, l. 266).

Compared to Portuguese and to some other Romance languages with the same cognate (Cat. *o sigui*), Spanish shows a striking frequency of use of this formulative function. From a comparative point of view, this could be considered a particularity of Spanish, which "colours" it and which characterizes it among other Romance languages. However, it is more interesting to consider this formulative function as part of the combinatory possibilities *o sea*, but not by *ou seja*, has fully developed. This contrastive difference seems to indicate that the grammaticalization of *o sea* is deeper than the one in *ou seja*, but this remark is subject to further diachronic research (Pons Bordería 2014b).

2.4. Modal meanings in Spanish *o sea*

Research on Sp. *o sea* has repeatedly shown the wide range of modal meanings conveyed by this marker (Cortés 1991, Schwenter 1996, Briz 2001, 2002, Santos 2003, DPDE 'o sea', Fuentes 2009). These modal meanings have been ranged into two groups (Briz 2002): hedging, usually found in

oral discourse (example 15), and stressing, more frequent in written texts (example 16):

- (15) Span. Yo no sé↓la mayoría de tus preguntas ↑ para mí ↑ **o s(e)a** son lógica ¿no? **o sea** no sé (example taken from Briz 2002, 181)
- (15) I don't know↓most of your questions ↑ to me ↑ **or-be SUBJ** area matter of logic huh?
or-be SUBJ don't know (example taken from Briz 2002, 181)

In example (15), *o sea no sé* is an epistemically weaker utterance than *no sé* alone, what can be proven by the fact that it could be replaced by other hedges like *bueno*. *O sea* creates a scale in which the utterance it has scope over is placed below the same utterance without it (*o sea no sé* < *no sé* < *claro que no (lo) sé*).

- (16) Span. Con un presidente que mete esos pies la ministra Aguirre tiene perfecto derecho a escribir Baquero con uve. Está en la línea, **o sea**. (example taken from Briz 2002, 187)
- (16) With such a clumsy President, minister Aguirre has the right to write Baquero with a “v”. She is in harmony with him, **or-be SUBJ**. (example taken from Briz 2002, 187)

In example (16), three data support the status of *o sea* as a particle showing stress. First, *o sea* can be replaced by *claro* or by emphatic *sí* – both stress markers. Second, substitution by *bueno* is not possible in this position and, third, the same utterance without *o sea* would be neutral (*está en la línea*).

These modal meanings have been documented only in Spanish, and not in Portuguese, being this the most relevant difference between *o sea* and *ou seja*.⁴ The absence of modal functions like the ones *o sea* has developed is also attestable in other Romance languages (see Garcés dir. 2009), hence synchronic data suggest that *o sea* has been subject to a deeper grammaticalization process than its Portuguese cognate. Yet further research is needed to test his hypothesis.

3. The Val.Es.Co. model of discourse units

The description in Section 2 above can be better accounted for within a model of discourse segmentation. Models of discourse segmentation aim at dividing texts and conversation into pragmatic-based units and subunits, and

⁴ The Portuguese reformulation marker that also displays a modal value seems to be *quer dizer*. Cf. Lopes (forthcoming).

have been developed mainly in Romance languages (Roulet, 1985; Roulet et al., 2001, Blanche-Benveniste, 1994, Morel/Danon-Boileau, 1998, Cresti, 2000; Cresti/Moneglia, 2005, Briz/Val.Es.Co, 2003, Ferrari, 2003; Ferrari et al. 2008, Preti 2004, Cortés Rodríguez/Camacho Adarve, 2005). In the following, we will adopt the Val.Es.Co. model of discourse segmentation (Briz/Val.Es.Co, 2003), which will be sketchedly introduced in this section. Section 4, in turn, will reinterpret the description of OSS in Section 2 in the light of such model.

When applied to the study of DMs in general, and to the description of OSS in particular, the adoption of a model of discourse segmentation offers several advantages: first, it provides a theoretical framework with a limited number of discourse units and a limited number of discourse positions within a unit. Second, it offers a common ground in which similarities and differences between DMs are easily graspable. Third, it can offer schemata for every function distinguished. Provided that heterogeneity in descriptions is one of the recurrent problems to set a common basis for the study of DMs (“We can’t even talk to one another without a clarifying statement”, Bruce Fraser *apud* Fischer 2006: 17), models of discourse segmentation can provide the minimum requirements for such a comparison.

To introduce the Val.Es.Co. model, we will first present the set of discourse units and discourse positions that will be employed in the rest of this paper:⁵

Figure 1: Units and positions in the Val.Es.Co. model

Unit Position	Subact	Act	Intervention	
			Initiative	Reactive
Initial				
Medial				
Final				
Independent				

⁵ Presentation is limited to the purposes of this paper. For a more complete description, please refer to Briz and Val.Es.Co. (2003).

3.1. Units

Example (16) will be used to illustrate Figure 1 above:

- (16) A: ee mira/ eso es IMPRESIONANTE §
 A: eer look / that is IMPRESSIVE
 V: §ÁNGELES / [eso es=]
 V: §ÁNGELES/ [that is=]
 A: [es un-]
 A: [it's a-]
 V: = una PINTURA
 V: = a painting
 A: ¡ah!/ ¡es un trampantojos!
 A: oh! / it's a trompe-l'oeil!
 V: claro §
 V: right §
 A: §se llama así/ trampantojos / pues no había caído;eh?
 A: §that's what it is/ a trompe-l'oeil / didn't realize uh?

In example (16), changes of speaker delimit the first kind of unit: *intervention*. An intervention is the maximal monological unit of this model; it is uttered by a same speaker and is limited by pauses, and coincide with the *turn* in Conversation Analysis. Interventions are indicated by a number to the right of the capital letter identifying the speaker (e.g., A1 in 17):.

- (17) A1: ee mira/ eso es IMPRESIONANTE§
 V1: §ÁNGELES/ [eso es=]
 A2: [es un-]
 V1: = una PINTURA
 A3: ¡ah!/ ¡es un trampantojos!
 V2: claro §
 A4: § se llama así/ trampantojos/pues no había caído; eh?

Following Roulet et. al. (1985), interventions can be either *initiative*, when they provoke a linguistic reaction; *reactive*, when they respond to previous linguistic material; or, more commonly, *reactive-initiative*. In excerpt (17), all interventions are reactive-initiative, that is, they are a response to a previous intervention and they provoke further interventions.

Not all interventions are created equal. Some of them are accepted by the rest of the conversationalists for the following up of a conversation. If

this is the case, besides being interventions, they are also *turns*⁶. Turns are social units, this meaning that their status depends crucially the (social) acceptance of the rest of the conversationalists. Turns are indicated by a number to the left of the capital letter identifying the speaker (e.g. 1A1), In example (18), all interventions except A2 are also turns:

- (18) 1A1: ee mira/ eso es IMPRESIONANTES
1V1: ¿ÁNGELES/ [eso es=]
A2: [es un-]
1V1: = una PINTURA
2A3:¡ah!/ ¿es un trampantojos!
2V2: claro §
3A4: § se llama así/ trampantojos/ pues no había caído¿ eh?

Interventions can be further divided into *acts*. An act is a monological discourse unit with (full) propositional content and with non-full propositional elements attached to it. Acts show two additional properties: they are *identifiable* (that is, they have clear formal boundaries), and are independent in a given context (that is, they can stand alone in an intervention). Acts are indicated by a (#) sign at their boundaries. See example (19):

- (19) 3A4: #se llama así/ trampantojos#/ #pues no había caído¿eh?#

In (19), there are two predications with full propositional content: *se llama así/ trampantojos*, and *pues no había caído¿eh?*. Each of them, in isolation, would suffice for 3A4 to be coherent. Therefore, they can be analyzed as two acts.

The second act in 3A4, *pues no había caído¿eh?*, can be further analyzed into minor constituents. The first of them has propositional meaning (*pues no había caído*), whereas the second one does not (*¿eh?*). As *¿eh?* can be identified but does not have propositional content and cannot stand alone in the context of (20) below, it is not an act but a minor unit, called *subact*. Subacts are indicated by braces to the right and to the left of a subact({}).

- (20) 3A4: #se llama así/ trampantojos#/ #{pues no había caído}{¿eh?}#

⁶ From this, it follows that every turn is an intervention, but not every intervention is a turn. This difference is not accounted for in Roulet's hierarchical model.

Subacts are classified according to the parameter of propositional meaning. Those with propositional meaning are called *substantive* subacts (*pues no había caído*); those without it, *adjacent* subacts (*¿eh?*).

Substantive subacts can be further classified into *directive* substantial subacts (DSS), *subordinate* substantial subacts (SSS), and *topicalized* (TopAS), if they are parenthetical, detached constituents of an act. The former introduce the main propositional content, like conclusions. The latter, subordinate propositional content, like arguments (Roulet et al. 1985, 2001). The type of subact is indicated by subindexes attached to each brace:

(21) 3A4: #se llama así/ trampantojos#/ #_{DSS}pues no había caído_{DSS}}{¿eh?}#

Adjacent subacts are further classified into three groups according to their function: *interpersonal* (IAS), if they regulate the speaker-hearer relationship (for instance, *look, hear, huh?* usually function as IAS). *Textual* (TAS), if they connect discourse units (parenthetical connectives like *besides, moreover* or *yet* can be found in this group), and finally, *modal* adjacent subacts (MAS), for parenthetical constituents showing the speaker’s stance towards his message. In example (16), reproduced below as (22), adjacent subacts have been explicitly marked:

(22) A: {IAS_{See miral}AS} / eso es IMPRESIONANTES_§
 V: §_{{TopAS}ÁNGELES_{TopAS}}} / [eso es=]
 A: [es un-]
 V: = una PINTURA
 A: {MAS_{ah!}MAS} / ¡es un trampantojos!
 V: claroo §
 A: §se llama así/ trampantojos /pues no había caído {IAS¿eh?_{IAS}}

Figure 2 summarizes the units in the Val.Es.Co. model explained in this section:

FIGURE 2 - Units in the Val.Es.Co. model

Turn	Intervention			
	Act	}	{ Directive Subordinate	
				substantive
	Subact	}	{ Textual Interpersonal Topicalized Modal	
				adjacent

3.2. Positions

The second variable in the Val.Es.Co. model regards positions. Positions are defined in relationship to units. This means that in the Val.Es.Co. model there is not one single initial position, but an initial position of an intervention ([I, I]), an initial position of an act ([I, A]), and an initial position of a subact ([I, SA]). The same will happen to medial ([M, I], ([M, A], ([M, SA])), and to final positions ([F, I], ([F, A], ([F, SA])).

Every unit hosts different functions. Therefore, interactive adjacent subacts, which host interactional functions, will typically be placed in [I, I]:

(23) A1: {_{IAS} ee mira _{IAS}} / eso es IMPRESIONANTE
[I, I]:

Prototypical connectives can bind together acts, in [I, A]:

(24) A: #se llama así/ trampantojos# /#pues no había caído¿eh?#
[I, A]

Finally, subordination markers prototypically join subacts, in [I, SA]:

(25) A: #_{DSS}nos hemos ido DSS} {_{SSS}porque no había nadie _{SSS}}#
[I, SA]

4. Interpreting the distribution of OSS

The data offered in Section 2 can be interpreted within the framework of the Val.Es.Co. model presented in Section 3. This will provide us with three advantages: first, a clearer picture of all meanings developed by OSS; second, the distributional structure of every meaning, represented by the discourse unit which hosts it, as well as the position OSS has within that unit. Finally, the places where Spanish *o sea* and Portuguese *ou seja* diverge.

To provide a global description, Figure 1, reproduced here as 3, maps functions onto a chart, together with discourse positions and discourse units. Functions in italics are exclusive of Spanish *o sea*. Portuguese *ou seja* does not have exclusive functions.

FIGURE 3 - Structural description of OSS

Unit Position	Subact	Act	Intervention	
			Iniciative	Reactive
Initial	Self-reformulation Conclusion	Self-reformulation <i>Hedging</i>		Heteroreformulation
Medial		Formulation		∅
Final		<i>Stressing</i>		∅
Independent				Asking for clarification

This chart provides an easy-to-grasp way to describe a DM, as well as a coherent framework to compare two closely-related DMs, as is the case in this paper.

In the rest of this section, the results of Figure 3 will be explained with the framework of the Val.Es.Co model. To do so, the examples in Section 2 will be reproduced below with their structural description included. In order to make identification easier, they will not be renumbered consecutively, but numbered as 1', 2', and so forth. For any of the constructions described in Section 2, three data will be offered: the description of the reformulation structure, the position of the marker, and its structural description.

4.1. In cases of *paraphrastic self-reformulation* (Section 2.1.1.1), OSS occurs typically in a construction *p OSS q*, the connected segments *p* and *q* having propositional content. If *p* and *q* are semantically autonomous, then they will be considered acts; in case *p* and *q* depend on a wider structure, they will be considered subacts. In turn, OSS is a TAS, and it always occurs in the initial position of the second member, be it an act ([I, A]) or a subact ([I, SA]). For instance, in example (2'), OSS joins two acts: (*pegando...acidentes*), and (*ou seja...acidentes*). Both acts have full propositional content and, in example (1'), are communicatively autonomous :

- (1') #pegando nesta operação que tem agora um mês, faz agora um mês que reduziu, eh, de sessenta para vinte o número de acidentes#, #[_{TAS} ou seja _{TAS}] em relação ao mesmo período do ano passado há três vezes menos acidentes#

In the Val.Es.Co. framework, this is reflected in the following description:

FIGURE 4 - Structural description of OSS in SPR

Structure:	a)	A1 [[TAS] A2]
Position of the DM:	a)	[I, A]
Structural description of OSS:		TAS

Example (2') is a case of reformulation between subacts:

(2') *Fanerógama* (del griego “phaneros” visible, y “gamos”: unión)._[SSD]Plantas provistas de flores_{SSD}, _{[SSS'} _{[SAT} o sea_{SAT]}_{[SSS}de órganos reproductores visibles_{SSS]}_{SSS'}. (2001. Fuentes Yague. *Iniciación a la botánica*)

The first subact (*plantas...flores*) carries the semantic load of its hosting act; therefore it is a directive subact (SSD); the second subact, in turn, (*o sea...visibles*) merely rephrases the first one and, as a consequence, is a subordinated subact (SSS). *O sea*, in turn, is a textual subact (TAS), embedded within an SSS, placed in initial position of a subact ([I, SA]). This SSS, together with a SSD, build up the reformulative structure, which is itself an act.

FIGURE 4' - Structural description of OSS in SPR

Structure:	#[[SSD] [[TAS][SSS]]]
Position of the DM:	[I, SA]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

In example (3'), reformulation does not happen as the immediate constituent of an act, but as a structured subset within an act. That is, the set SSD + SSS is the boundary of a discourse unit which is not the immediate constituent of a higher unit:

(3') *Port...daqui a pouco vamos já ouvir o principal da actualidade...do resto da actualidade, eh, esta manhã, mas para já nesta manhã aqui em directo* _[SSD]*do, eh, ipati-mup*_{SSD}, _{[SSS'}_{[TAS}**ou seja**_{TAS]}, _{[SSS}*do instituto de patologia e imunologia molecular da universidade do porto*_{SSS]}_{SSS'}, *será interessante nós eh, avaliarmos o curriculum deste instituto em apenas dez anos ...* (Ref: O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redlip)

FIGURE 4'' - Structural description of OSS in SPR

Structure:	#[SSD] [[TAS][SSS]]#
Position of the DM:	[M, SA]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

In sum, in examples (1') to (3'), OSS connects two discourse units and has scope over the second one of them. Both discourse units can be either subacts or acts. This means that the minimum scope for self-, paraphrastic reformulation to take place is an act.

4.2. In cases of *hetero-paraphrastic reformulations* (Section 2.1.1.2), the scope of reformulation is now the whole intervention of a speaker: I1:pI2: OS q. Unlike self-reformulations, in HPRs the most important constituent is the one on the reactive intervention. Consider that, on conversational grounds, what is at issue in HPRs is mutual comprehension. As a parenthetical marker, OSS constitutes a subact on its own: a TAS, which appears in initial position of an intervention ([I, I]):

Figure 5 - Structural description of OSS in HPR

Structure:	I1: #A1##A2# ... # An# I2: #[TAS] A1## A2# ... # An#
Position of the DM:	[I, I]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

4.3. In cases of *non-paraphrastic self-reformulation* (Section 2.1.2.1.), two subacts are again connected by OSS within a single act. The second subact is this time the directive one, because it rectifies or corrects a previous formulation. Again, parenthetical OSS will be analyzed as a TAS in initial position of subact ([I, SA]):

(5') Span. E :[y nada↑] [como al final estaba muy ((...)) muy mal→] [entonces me dio que no]/ [SSSmuy desanimada→SSS] [DSS[TASoseaTAS] [desilusionada]]- no me hacía nada ilusiónDSS](Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 111, l. 1220)

FIGURE 6 - Structural description of OSS in SNPR

Structure:	#[SSS] [[TAS][DSS]]#
Position of the DM:	[I, SA]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

4.4. In *non-paraphrastic heteroreformulations*, the interactional relationship between the two speakers is reflected in the fact that OSS has scope over an intervention ([I, I]):

- (7') Port. L4: as pessoas que nascem com mucinas 1 pequenas têm muito maior susceptibilidade à infecção pelo helicobacter pylori1, do que as pessoas que nascem com mucinas grandes.
 L3: [_{SAT} *ou seja* _{SAT}] [_{SSS} entrando dentro desse infinitamente pequeno que é possível, eh, desencadear acções preventivas _{SSS}] [_{SSD} e... e... e avançar para o tratamento, neste caso... _{SSD}]
 L4: exactamente (Ref: O-0008-R-Ci-P-Lis-Redip)

FIGURE 7 - Structural description of OSS in NPHR

Structure:	I1: A1 A2 ... An
I2:	[TAS] A1 A2 ... An
Position of the DM:	[I, I]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

In example (9'), OSS, in independent position, is the only constituent of the intervention which hosts it, and, being semantically autonomous, is an act on its own:

- (9') Port. L1: Não basta querer, é preciso investir.
 L2: ***Ou seja?***
 L1: Não te armes em ingénuo, sabes muito bem o que quero dizer.

FIGURE 8 - Structural description of OSS in NPHR (independent position)

Structure:	I1: A1 A2 ... An
I2:	OSS
Position of the DM:	[Independent, I]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

4.5. When OSS introduces a conclusion (Section 2.2), OSS has scope over the SSD of an act, because this discourse unit is the conclusion of a preceding argument, hosted in the preceding SSS (Roulet et. al. 1985, 145-153):

- (11') Span.S: un seguro de vida en realidades un seguro de muerte ¿o no?/// debería llamarse seguro de muerte// pero es un rollo_[SSS][porque LUE=]
A: [yo lo que →]
S: = GO↑/ cuando-cuandoo/ faltó nuestro padre↑/ está toda la vida pagando/ y luego tu vimos que pagar nosotros ciento y pico mil pelas↑_[SSS]// _[SSD] **o sea** quee/ [°(quees un rollo)°]_[SSD].

OSS, as a TAS, occupies the initial position of a subact ([I, SA]).

FIGURE 9 - Structural description of OSS as conclusion marker

Structure:	[SSS] + [[TAS][SSD]]
Position of the DM:	[I, SA]
Structural description of OSS:	TAS

4.6. OSS can also appear in formulations, placed in medial position within an act ([M, A]):

- (13') Sp. S: #me pasa lo mismo con el alcohol y con las drogas#/// #_[SSS]yo cuando vi que tuve problemas_[SSS]_[SSD] tuve qu'(d)ecir/ n- ni un cigarro/ ni una cerve- **o sea** n- ni un cigarro/ ni un porro/ ni una cerveza↑_[SSS] nada_[SSD]##// #_[SSS]porque el día que yo me t- tome una cerveza↑_[SSS] _[DSS]ya se m'haacabao la histor_[DSS]##(Briz and Val.Es.Co Research Group 2002, 158, l. 609)

Figure 10 - Structural description of OSS as a formulative marker

Structure:	#...[TAS]...#
Position of the DM:	[M, A]
Structural description of OSS:	Formulative marker

4.7. Lastly, *o sea*, but not *ou seja*, occurs within an act, as a modalizer subact (MAS) with two modal functions (Briz 2001, 2002a): the first one is hedging, and occurs in initial position of a act [I, A]:

- (14') Sp. Yo no sé↓la mayoría de tus preguntas↑ para mí↑**o s(e)a** son lógica ¿no?#_[MAS]**o sea**_[MAS] no sé# (example taken from Briz 2002, 181)

The second modal function is stressing. *O sea* conveying stress is found in the final position of an act ([Final, A]), as example (15') shows:

(15') Sp. Con un presidente que mete esos pies la ministra Aguirre tiene perfecto derecho a escribir Baquero con uve. #Está en la línea, [_{MAS}o sea_{MAS}]#. (example taken from Briz 2002, 187)

The structural description of modal meanings is the following:

FIGURE 11 - Structural description of Sp. *o sea* as a modal marker (hedging)

Structure:	#[MAS]...#
Position of the DM:	[I, A]
Structural description of <i>o sea</i> :	MAS

FIGURE 12 - Structural description of OSS as a modal marker (stressing)

Structure:	#...[MAS]#
Position of the DM:	[F, A]
Structural description of <i>o sea</i> :	MAS

5. Final Remarks

The description of two reformulative markers (Spanish *o sea* and Portuguese *ou seja*) widens the corpus of descriptive contrastive information on this subject (Garcés dir. 2009). Nevertheless, instead of replicating an existing contrastive method, this paper suggests an alternative way to describe and to compare DMs within the Val.Es.Co framework.

The results have shown that OSS share most of their functions and differ in the wider range of functions of *o sea*. These results can be taken as a departure point for further contrastive research and also for diachronic studies.

In this sense, the synchronic description presented here lets us hypothesize that modal functions are the last development of Sp. *o sea*, in the sense that modal functions are a further development on any DM with a prototypical connective function (Pons 1998). This hypothesis has to be falsified in further research.

We believe that the method we have followed in this study offers a general framework for the description of DMs regardless of the language they belong to. To our knowledge, there does not exist in the current literature on DMs any alternative model to compare DMs outside discourse segmentation models.

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