Book presentation
The textualisation process: Analysis of linguistic units of written performance

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In this book, the authors adopt a multidisciplinary perspective, which combines linguistic, textual genetic and psycholinguistic theories and methods to analyse the textualisation process, that is, the way a text is constructed. They focus their work on the linguistic exploration of bursts of written language (i.e., the sequences of texts that are produced between two pauses), which are considered as performance units. Their analyses are based on real time recording of the writing process with keystroke logging tools which constitutes two corpora, the first involves social reports about children-at-risk, produced by professional writers, and the second consists of academic reports written by students for a Discourse Analysis course. The first chapter presents some of the theoretical issues which grounds the Authors' perspective. The second chapter introduces the criteria used for bursts categorisation and their theoretical basis. In the third and fourth chapter, data are analysed with a large description of bursts categories. The fifth chapter questions bursts as possible routinised, prefabricated performance units, and explores the differences between production and revision bursts.

Production and revision bursts

After an introduction that describes briefly the methodological and theoretical issues related to real time recording and analyses of the textualisation process, Chapter 1 poses the theoretical frameworks that ground the analysis of textualisation through burst of written language. Cislaru and Olive define writing as an interactive and nonlinear dynamic process; the written text being the results of a recursive use of cognitive processes. They also consider texts as relational networks with topological and chronological dimensions: Composing a text is chronologically linear, but it is topologically nonlinear.

To further investigate the dynamic dimension of writing, they distinguish between macro- and micro-segmentation. Macro-segmentation refers to text sequences that create variations between the different versions of a text, while micro-segmentation refers to the different segments of text that are produced in one session, that is the bursts (*jets textuels* in French), which are based on the writers' behaviour and are independent of the analyst's segmentation of a text. Micro-segmentation therefore allows to precisely track the incremental construction of a text (i.e., textualisation).

In the absence of consensus in the literature about the pause threshold that should be used to segment texts (Chenu, Pellegrino, Jisa, & Fayol, 2014), the authors used a 2-second threshold. According to them, this threshold appears appropriate to the analysis of bursts' content, since it makes it possible to identify levels of combinatorial complexity.

Finally, the authors distinguish between production and revision bursts: Production bursts follow the chronological and topographic linearity, whereas revision bursts which are chronologically linear but are not topologically. After these considerations, Chapter 1 presents the main characteristics of the corpus and of the bursts the authors analyse in the next chapters.

Due to the dynamic and non-fixed nature of bursts of language, it is difficult to ground the analysis of bursts' content on a unique and single theoretical framework. Therefore, in Chapter 2, the authors go through the theories that may be of interest to the study of bursts. For example, the notions of chunking, automatisms, entrenchment and prefabricated units are discussed, with the transversal ideas that textualisation relies on two main general mechanisms of language production: direct retrieval in long-term memory of pre-constructions, and generation of new units of language. Additionally, to better understand textualisation Cislaru and Olive claim that it is fundamental to distinguish between a text and its texture (i.e. all relations between the units of a text which contribute to configuration of the final text as a single unit). Accordingly, it is important to analyse how bursts are structured as well as how they are interconnected, and in particular, how they may prime other bursts.

The internal structure of bursts

Chapter 3 begins by questioning the linguistic internal structure of bursts. Because of their large heterogeneity, Cislaru and Olive classify bursts according to their syntactic saturation. Interestingly, the authors do not consider unsaturated burst (which do not contain a complete syntactic form) as non-finished segments that remain to be completed but as primes that open multiple possibilities. To support their claim, the authors report a number of frequent unsaturated bursts presenting a syntactical opening, for example, bursts that end with a preposition, a determinant or a verb. These bursts constitute, in fact, opening boundaries for multiple semantics, syntactic or lexical choices, which anticipate relations between bursts that the researcher has to discover. Moreover, writing also creates hierarchy between units. Moving to conceptual analyses of bursts, the authors show that instead of creating grammatical categories, bursts can also be organized according to their functional characteristics (e.g., theme-rheme dimensions, grammatical functions).

Chapter 4 explores bursts with heterogeneous contents or forms. More precisely, such bursts are constructed with elements that otherwise would be analysed separately in linguistics (e.g., elements separated by a point), but which prepare relations with previous or forthcoming bursts, what the authors call junction attractors (*attracteurs de jonction* in French). For that purpose, Cislaru and Olive focus on bursts that contain breaking marks like punctuation (e.g., comma, full stop, etc.), textual organizers (e.g., conjunction), or anaphoric references (such as demonstrative and possessive pronouns). The bursts analysed in this chapter are mainly concerned with text cohesion and coherence features, two central aspects of what makes a text. The fact that a burst structure overlaps with another one may result from the use of pre-constructions for priming content that will be incrementally added in the forthcoming burst. According to the authors, this suggests that writing performance is supported by the semantic goals of textualisation.

Routinisation

In the continuity of this chapter, focusing to the process-product interface, Cislaru and Olive explore how bursts of language may be the expression of lexical packages, linguistic routines, automatisms, prefabricates or pre-constructions which should therefore be retrieved as a block in long term memory (i.e. as entrenched constructions) (Chapter 5). They begin by verifying whether bursts of written language contain repeated segments of texts, which have been conceptualized in the literature as prefabricated constructions. In this sense, the Authors indicate that writing does not take place on a *tabula rasa*, rather, it uses what they call *déjà-là* (already there), the idea that some units of language are ready to be used, that writers rely on knowledge of the genre and domain they are writing about. As they show, there is little match between bursts and repeated segments suggesting that repetition or frequency is not enough to create routinisation. They next compare specific lexical bundles —well

known to act like routines— to content of bursts. They show that these kinds of linguistics routines are indeed very often produced in single bursts. They also show that some bursts act as procedural routines, such as those that finish with consequence connectives (e.g., hence, therefore). While they explore the *dejà-là* of text composition, the Authors conclude this chapter by presenting some analyses of revision bursts.

Conclusion

To conclude, the peculiarity of this book resides in the new and particularly interesting approach that the authors have chosen to identify the analysable linguistic units. First, they have conducted a linguistics analysis of segments of texts which are identified through the analyses of writers' behaviour. Second, considering the language at the light of usage grammars, and by adopting an inductive approach, Cislaru and Olive are able to identify the linguistic characteristics of bursts of written language. Indeed, this approach allowed them to explain how the interconnection between the bursts creates a text, and how a text is not the sum of all its constituents, but the result of a global communicative project that is semantically guided and syntagmatically constrained.

References

Chenu, F., Pellegrino, F., Jisa, H., & Fayol, M. (2014). Interword and intraword pause threshold in writing. *Frontiers in Psychology, 5*, 189. http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00182