

Teaching French Conjunction and Text Grammar

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The intention of this paper is modest. It aims to demonstrate a possibility of characterizing a connector "et" in French in a logical and semantic point of view and to make a modest contribution to teaching French conjunction. The sentences or propositions are connected when the coherence is assured in the sequence of sentences in which they take part as an element. The most general restriction on the linear coherence, connexion, is that facts denoted by propositions be chained such that the antecedent constitutes a condition for the consequent. This relation of dependence is a crucial factor for the conjunction to hold true. Of course, this truth is relative and valid in a given universe of credence. What is true for one is not necessarily true for another. The truth itself being relative, the truth condition for the relation of dependence has general validity; one proposition is a condition for another when they are connected to the same topic of discourse. This topic determines the semantic range in which the conjunction can be valid and its connexion is thereby assured.

KEY WORDS: coherence, connexion, conjunction, connector, relation of dependence, antecedent, consequent, topic of discourse, universe of credence.

I. Coherence - A Fundamental Notion

Coherence is for the text what the concept of acceptability (or grammaticality) is for the sentence. If this is the case, we could talk about well-formed texts just as we can do about well-formed sentences. Regarding the text as a maximal unity of grammatical description, in which a sentence takes a part as an element, it seems clear that well-formed sentences are not only conformable to the rules of grammatical and semantic construction, but also they must adapt themselves also harmoniously to the context in which they appear. The coherence determines the adaptation of a well-formed sentence to a context, in other words, a text is coherent when all the sentences that it contains are accepted as

possible suites of the precedent context.

If the term of semantic interpretation designates *grosso modo* the explicit representation of the relation established between utterance, context and inferences extracted from this utterance, the coherence of text is assured by the fact that all the inferences of every sentence " s_i " (for $2 \leq i \leq n$) enter into acceptable relations in a logical point of view with those of the sequence " s_1, s_2, \dots, s_{i-1} ". These inferences can be pulled out by the rules of language, but they can be also done as a function of certain knowledge of the world that the hearer possesses. We realize that the rules of coherence act upon the semantic and logical features of sentential, sequential and textual constituents; and so we should take into consideration the parameters referring to the participants of textual communication.

The coherence of text is assured when all the sentences that a text contains figure under the form of semantic representations chained and arranged such that their relation of dependence should be manifested. This relation of dependence is called for not only on a sequential plan but also on a textual level, that is to say that this relation is imperatively global (macrostructural) and linear (microstructural) at the same time. Depending on these levels, the problems of coherence are understood in different terms. At the local or microstructural level the question concerns exclusively the relations of coherence established between the sentences of a sequence. On the other hand, at the global or macrostructural level the question concerns the relations between consecutive sequences.¹⁾

The connexion, linear coherence, is a specific aspect of the discursive coherence that is manifested essentially in the immediate relation between consecutive sentences, i.e. at the

1) M. Charolles (1978; 7-41) proposes four meta-rules for the coherence of text as follows:

- (i) Meta-rule of repetition: a text should contain in its linear development the elements of strict recurrence.
- (ii) Meta-rule of progression: a text should be accompanied with a semantic contribution constantly renewed in its development.
- (iii) Meta-rule of non-contradiction: the development of a text should not bring in any semantic element refuting the contents posed or presupposed by an anterior occurrence or deducible from this by inference.
- (iv) Meta-rule of relation: the facts denoted in the represented world should be connected.

local or microstructural level. The connexion is a relation of dependence imposed over a pair of sentences and this relation can be made explicit either by the connectors or by the semantic rules of language; or rather by these two factors simultaneously. Strictly speaking, sentences are syntactic objects and connexion is a semantic notion, as has been mentioned above. We had better talk about connected propositions. When we talk about connected sentences, we mean by it the sentences of which underlying propositions are connected. And the property of propositions connected in this way will be called connexion.

The most general restriction for the coherence at the local level is that facts denoted by consecutive propositions should be linked together. Two facts will be connected if one is the condition for another. This condition can be very weak (compatibility) or very strong (implication). In other words, a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the coherence of text lies in the repetition: the logical and semantic structure of every sentence is such that at least one lexical item contained in it, or at least one proposition that can be inferred must be equally at the interior of the precedent sentences. But this coherence is not absolute. The truth in natural language being relative, the coherence can not help but being relative. Is true what is declared to be true. It is necessary to include in a universe of credence all that concerns the truth of connected propositions. The judgment of coherence is variable depending on the level of knowledge that the speaker possesses. R. Martin (1992; 38) defines the universe of credence as a infinite set of propositions that the speaker, at the moment of utterance, believes to be true or that he wants to accredit as such.²⁾ Given that the semantic interpretation of a sentence encloses knowledge of the world, the notion of universe of credence is in close relation with that of coherence. That means that the semantics of possible worlds, in spite of its actual limits, seems to us very promising in the treatment of the problem of coherence.

2) Universe of credence is a virtual set of propositions that the speaker believes to be true or at least imagines them to be so at t_0 (the moment of utterance)

II. Topic of Discourse - A Minimal Condition for Connexion

Sentences are connected if the facts denoted by their propositions are put into relation in non-contradictory worlds. In what conditions can we say that they are put into relation? One of the evident relations between the facts is that of cause or reason. An event A causes an event B if A is a sufficient condition for the occurrence of B, i.e., if the occurrence of A is incompatible with the non-occurrence of B in at least one possible world. A similar definition could be given to the relation of reason in which A means the knowledge of A and B denotes an action or a consequence of an action. The relations of condition and consequence characterize the connexion, but it isn't obligatory. For example, in the conjunctive sentence: (1) *Nous sommes allés à la plage et nous avons joué au football* (We went to the beach and played football), we can't say that the fact that we went to the beach determines or conditions the fact that we have played football. The second proposition is in no way the consequence of the first proposition. But the facts seem to us well connected. In the frame of a situation where we are on the beach, playing football is only one possible event. While in the relation of cause or reason the antecedent is incompatible with the non-occurrence of the consequent, the minimal condition for the connexion of this example is that the two facts are compatible if the occurrence of one doesn't exclude that of another in a given situation. In terms of proposition, $\Diamond(p \wedge q)$ or $\sim \Box(p \Rightarrow \sim q)$. That is to say that the conjunctive "Nous sommes allés à la plage et nous avons joué au football" is true if there exists at least one world where p: nous sommes allés à la plage is true and where q: nous avons joué au football is also true.

But this notion of compatibility needs further specification. In the sentence: (2) *Nous sommes allés à la plage et Paul est né à Marseille* (We went to the beach and Paul is born in Marseille), logically speaking, the facts denoted by two conjuncts are compatible; they don't exclude one another. But we don't have the impression of their being connected, because we can't find any convincing relation linking the facts. The particular activity of going to the beach could not be compared directly with the

more general propriety of being born in Marseille. Can't we say that the logical relation between the two facts represented in (2) are too distant? Sentence (1) can be uttered relevantly after the question like "What did you do yesterday?", but the sentence (2) cannot be. It means that we interpret the relations between facts in relation to some common base. This common base in relation to which the similitude of worlds and of facts are determined, have the proprieties not only semantic but also pragmatic. The sentences are connected or not for certain participants of communication in a particular context of communication. Nevertheless, the conditions making the discourse connected should not be *ad hoc*. They are conventional and general in the sense that we are capable of formulating something like: "If a speaker and a hearer know such a thing, and if they have already said such a thing, then certain sentences or sequences are connected if they express the propositions <p,...>". For example, the information is arranged *a priori* in different levels and it is impossible (in a same implicative and presuppositional series) that the level i_{j-1} belongs to the information if it is not the case for the level i_j . Suppose the sentence: (3) *Mon fils s'est achet  une Jaguar (My son bought a Jaguar)*. If my hearer ignores that my son has purchased a racing car, he would not certainly know that he has purchased a Jaguar; if he ignores that my son has purchased a car, he could not know that he has purchased a racing car. So are outlined possible levels of information ($i_n, i_{n-1}, \dots, i_2, i_1$), determinable *a priori*, in a way independent from all particular circumstances. Certainly, in a particular situation of discourse, the contribution of information takes place necessarily in a certain level. Therefore, after the question like "What did you do yesterday?" or its equivalent, yesterday's activities should be mentioned in the answer. That's why the reference to the birth of Paul in (2) is inappropriate.

This common base is what we can call topic of discourse. The topic of discourse is a set of propositions inferred from the available information that the participants of communication possess all together. Sometimes this set could be empty, i.e., the topic is not specified. In this case the topic would be contextual knowledge. When a discourse begins with a composed sentence, and if any topic is not specified, then the first conjunct is generally used as the topic for the second conjunct. So we can

consider the topic of discourse as an abstract reconstruction delimiting the semantic field or range which permits to form propositions or concepts. In other words, a conceptual structure or a proposition can become topic of discourse if it organizes hierarchically the conceptual structure of the sequence of discourse. In our example (1), this means to say, the first proposition "go to the beach" determines a conceptual range that permits us to mention the individuals and proprieties compatible with being on the beach. The knowledge of the world is largely included in the notion of topic of discourse.

III. Conjunction - Truth and Connexion Condition

The natural conjunction (the conjunction of natural language) generally represented by "et" in French has a rather general (and so, sketchy) character and its signification seems to be included in that of other natural connectors. Given this remark, it is quite possible that these other connectors can, in surface structure, be expressed by a global and neutral "et", so that the specific aspects of their signification result from the signification of connected sentences. One of the problems in the semantics of natural connectors lies in the fact that they may be ambiguous: the same connector can express different types of connexion, and diverse connectors would represent a type of connexion. Typical in this respect is the French conjunctive connector "et" in the following sentences, for example:

- (4) Les enfants lisaient des "comics" et leur mère s'était rendormie. (F. O'Connor, p.10)
- (5) Il y avait du bruit quelque part au premier étage. Ailleurs, derrière un des murs du rez-de-chaussée, un bébé une autre voix murmurait quelque chose (...). (G. Simenon, p.41)
- (6) A l'extrémité du jardin, il y avait un kiosque à journaux. Mondo s'arrêtait et choisissait un illustré. (J.M.G. Le Clézio, p.12)
- (7) J'ai proposé au chauffeur de taxi de m'attendre dans la petite rue Charles-Marie-Widor et j'ai suivi celle-ci à pied jusqu'à la rue Clkaude-Lorrain où se trouvait l'église

- russe. (P. Modiano, p.30)
- (8) Il faisait déjà très chaud, et il y avait chaque soir plusieurs incendies sur les collines. (J.M.G. Le Clézio, p.12)
- (9) A bord des avions découverts (...) on s'inclinait hors du pare-brise, pour mieux voir, et les gifles de vent sifflaient longtemps dans les oreilles. (A. St-Exupéry, p.142)
- (10) Les livres étaient chers et je ne pouvais en acheter beaucoup. (DFC, p.462)
- (11) Dis-moi qui tu hantes, et je te dirai qui tu es. (Le Robert, t.2, p.653)
- (12) Encore un peu de patience, et c'est fini. (Ch. Abbadie, p.126)

Through these examples we can observe that the conjunctive connector "et" may have *in globo* the following meanings:

- (a) (et) en même temps (4, 5)
- (b) (et) puis, (et) ensuite (6, 7)
- (c) (et) là (6)
- (d) (et) alors, (et) en conséquence (8, 9, 10)
- (e) si p, alors q (11, 12)

Apparently, "et" can, according to this table, serve to express not only a simple conjunction (i.e. joining or addition) but also conditional, causal, temporal and local connexion. Given that the difference in meaning can be, in all cases, inferred from the signification of the conjuncts, in other words that these diverse lectures of "et" are determined by the connected propositions, we can say that the connector "et" represents a relevant (or pertinent) conjunction between two propositions furnished with the truth and connexion conditions. And these conditions are given by T.A. van Dijk (1977a; 58) as follows :

- (a) $V^+[(p \text{ and } q), w_i, z_i] = 1 \ 1$ iff (if and only if) $V^+(p, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 1$ and $V^+(q, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 1$;
- (b) $V^+[(p \text{ and } q), w_i, z_i] = 0 \ 1$ iff $V^+(p, w_i, z_i) = 0 \ 1$ or $V^+(q, w_i, z_i) = 0 \ 1$;
- (c) $V^+[(p \text{ and } q), w_i, z_i] = 1 \ 0$ iff $V^+(p, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 0$ or $V^+(q, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 0$, and $[V(p, w_i) = 1 \text{ and } V(q, w_i) = 1]$;

$$(d) V^+[(p \text{ and } q), w_i, z_i] = 0 \ 0 \text{ iff } V^+(p, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 0 \text{ or } V^+(q, w_i, z_i) = 1 \ 0, \text{ and } [V(p, w_i) = 0 \text{ or } V(q, w_i) = 0].$$

(Where “ $V(p, w_i, z_i)$ ” signifies truth evaluation function, “ $V^+[(p \text{ * } q), w_i, z_i]$ ” truth and connexion evaluation function, “ $V^+ = 1 \ 1$ ” true and connected, “ $V^+ = 0 \ 1$ ” false and connected, “ $V^+ = 1 \ 0$ ” true and disconnected, “ $V^+ = 0 \ 0$ ” false and disconnected, “ $V = 1$ ” true, “ $V = 0$ ” false, “ w ” possible world, and “ z ” topic of discourse.)

The table above permits us to remark that the conjunction may have four values, i.e. true/false and connected/disconnected. The truth of the conjunctive sentence “ $p \text{ et } q$ ” depends on the truth of two conjuncts p and q at the same time, and its connexion depends on the connection of each conjunct to the topic of discourse z_i .

So, the sentence (4): *Les enfants lisaient des “comics” et leur mère s’était rendormie* (The children was reading the “comics” and their mother was asleep) is true and connected if two conjuncts are true at the same time and if they are connected to the same topic of discourse. This topic of discourse would consist of such a proposition : *In the course of a trip children and their mother does something*. In this point of view the following sentence is not acceptable:

- (13) Jupiter est un satellite du soleil et je prends mon repas.
(Jupiter is a solar satellite and I am having meal.)

Though this sentence could be true if we read “ et ” as “ $et \text{ simultanément}$ ” (and simultaneously), it would not nevertheless be connected because it is difficult for us to find a topic of discourse that can link easily the two propositions (if we consider this topic of discourse as a set of propositions known and believed by the speaker at the moment of utterance). The first clause is true if in the actual world (w_0) there exists a satellite of the sun which is called as Jupiter, and the second clause is also true if I am having meal at the moment of utterance (w_0): $V(p, w_0) = 1$ and $V(q, w_0) = 1$. If we suppose that the topic of discourse in question is z_0 : *solar satellites*, the first clause is connected to that but the second can not be connected to that as the first: $V^+(p, w_0, z_0) = 1 \ 1$ but $V^+(q, w_0, z_0) = 1 \ 0$.

Therefore, the conjunctive sentence (13) is true but disconnected: $V+[(p \text{ et } q), w_0, z_0] = 1 \ 0$ (cf. The third condition in the table of truth and connexion evaluation function). It is obvious that the connector of conjunction "et" of the natural language must not be considered as a truth-functional operator of classical logical conjunction but rather as an intensional operator that takes charge of the relation of connexion between linked propositions.

The fact that in most of conjunctive sentences "et" can be omitted or replaced by the period (.) or the comma (,) (it will be the case in our examples (4-10)) seems to suggest that "et" represents a general and unspecified condition of connexion between facts or situations denoted by propositions. So the paraphrase of the connector "et" in the examples given above would be "in comparison with this situation", and in this case the situation may be strictly topological (place, time) and also mental (states of mind). Such an interpretation lets us suppose that the semantic operator of connexion effectuated by "et" would be very close to that of connexion over situations if we accept the term "situation" as a set of facts, at a certain moment of time (t_i), in a given possible world (w_i).³⁾

From the observation of the general character of the conjunctive connector the following restrictions become apparent for the truth and connexion:

- [1] the restriction on space and time;
- [2] the restriction on relative interpretation;
- [3] the restriction on the preparation of a conditional frame.

3) This is clear in the following words of T.A. van Dijk (1977b: 41): "In the particular case of conjunction, the interpretation could be such that the antecedent is true in a situation a, the postcedent in b, such that a C b, where a may be identical with b (any situation is connected with itself-which makes C reflexive).

More in particular "and" is used to relate propositions denoting facts such that the first is providing a "frame-work" for the second fact. This explains the normal ungrammaticalness of **We played in the waves, and were at beach*.

Apparently, we here are remarkably close to some features of the connective of relevant conditional. The antecedent of intensional conjunction often specifies the situation or condition under which the consequent is true, i.e. such that the world-situation of the consequent is 'part fo' the world-situation introduced by the antecedent."

IV. Three Principal Restrictions

A. The restriction on space and time

Seeing that it is possible to define a situation as a set of facts at a given moment of time (t_i) in a given possible world (w_i), the operation of connexion over two situations a et b (a C b) necessitates inevitably the working of the notion of space and time. Normally we presume that the conjunction "p et q" is true in the same possible world as that of its conjuncts "p", "q" and, as a matter of fact, this world is identical with the actual world if we can not find any modal expression there: $w_i = w_0$. Therefore, in the example (7), the action which takes place in the sentence: *J'ai proposé au chauffeur de m'attendre dans la petite rue et j'ai suivi cette rue à pied (I proposed the taxi-driver to attend me on the back street and I pursued my way on foot)*, is operated at a moment of time that belongs to the world of what it is (w_0), invariably inscribed in time and which could not have been otherwise than it was (irreversibility of time). Here we have the axiom of irreversibility of time (R. Martin 1992; 35):

$Pp \Rightarrow Gp$ ("if it happened one day that p, then it will always happen that it happened that p")

where P refers to the operator of past, Gp to "it will be always true that p" and Pp to "it has been the case (at least once in the past) that p". This axiom permits us to translate the sentence (4) as follows:

je propose au chauffeur de m'attendre (...) = p
 je suis celle-ci à pied (...) = q
 j'ai proposé au chauffeur de m'attendre (...) = Pp
 j'ai suivi celle-ci à pied (...) = Pq

In view of this axiom, we can say that in the sentence (4) p is true at a moment of time preceding t_0 (the actual moment of time or the moment of utterance) and that so is q. That is to say that p and q are inscribed in time and, therefore, belong to the actual world (w_0). According to the following axiom of Gardies

retaken by R. Martin (1992; 35):

$$(Pp \wedge Pq) \Leftrightarrow [P(p \wedge q) \vee P(p \wedge Pq) \vee P(Pp \wedge q)],$$

we obtain for our example (7) $(Pp \text{ et } Pq) \Rightarrow P(p \text{ et } q)$.

By the axiom of irreversibility of time,

$$P(p \text{ et } q) \Rightarrow GP(p \text{ et } q).$$

It means that if it happened one day that *p* and (et) *q* (*Je propose au chauffeur de m'attendre dans la petite rue et je suis cette rue à pied*), then it will be true that it happened that *p* and (et) *q* : the conjunction "p et q" belongs to the actual world w_0 . Though it has been the case (at least once in the past) that *p* and (et) *q* and, therefore, that the two conjuncts belong to the world of what it is, it needs to note that the chronological order plays also a pertinent part: the fact denoted by *p* precedes the fact denoted by *q* in temporal space.

The introduction of temporal relation will be imperative for the relevant interpretation. In (6), we should suppose that the action of 'acheter un illustré' (to buy an illustrated magazine) follows that of 'aller au kiosque' (to go to the news stand). That's why we note that the propositional connector " \wedge " (logical conjunction) is commutative (it doesn't matter whether we have $A \wedge B$ or $B \wedge A$ since *A* and *B* must be simultaneously true); however, in natural language, the connector of conjunction "et" takes often a chronological value, which forbids the commutativity. (The case of commutativity in natural conjunction is very limited.) The events denoted by antecedents and consequents are generally ordered in chronological way in natural conjunction : if *p* is true at t_i and *q* at t_j , the conjunction "p et q" is true during the period $\langle t_i, t_j \rangle$ on the condition that t_i precedes t_j , i.e. $t_i \leq t_j$, where the identity represents the co-occurrence of events. For example, in the sentences (4,5) it is generally supposed that the actions expressed by the two conjuncts took place during almost the same period.

Besides this chronological value that the conjunctive connector "et" can have, the examples (4-7) are interpreted most naturally as having incorporated the local identity: 'lire' (to read) and 'dormir' (to sleep) took place in a car (4), 'pleurer' (to cry)

and 'murmurer' (to murmur) in a room (5), 'arrêter' (to stop) and 'choisir un illustré' (to choose an illustrated magazine) in front of a news stand (6), etc. But the local identity, as temporal identity, must be interpreted in a larger sense : for example, it would be necessary to take into consideration the trajectories, directions and placements so as to interpret in a more strict model the events, actions and processus of the sentence (7), which may go beyond largely our frame of discussion on the connector.

B. The restriction on relative interpretation

It is necessary to point out that if temporal and local conditions are not general conditions for the conjunctive connexion, that's because they can be different according to the case, that is to say that the identity of time and space is not an absolute factor for the connexity of the conjunctive sentence. So in the following sentence:

- (15) Allez au magasin *et* achetez quelques bières pour moi. (Go to the store and buy some beer for me.)

It is also possible to suppose a certain context in which the two facts denoted by the conjuncts "aller au magasin" (to go to the magazine) and "acheter quelques bières" (to buy some beer) can be interpreted as two independent actions that the speaker must accomplish during one day, and in which the store (le magasin) would be a stationer's not a grocery. The same type of interpretation seems to us necessary in the following sentence, in which the difference of locality is explicit :

- (16) Jean est allé à la bibliothèque et il a rendu visite à son ami à l'hôpital. (John went to the library and he visited his friend in hospital.)

But we ask ourselves if our linguistic intuition permits us to interpret the sentence (15) in such a way that is described as above. In fact we generally identify the store with the place where the purchase of the beer is done. This makes us assume that the natural interpretation would be based upon a rule stipulating that the consequent of a connected sentence is interpreted in relation to the points of space and time

(topological situation) in which the antecedent is interpreted, if any change or difference of this situation is not expressed. This relative interpretation is not limited to the frame of chronological order or local identity.⁴⁾

The two facts, apparently not connected with each other, can be attached by the relation of connexion, owing to a third proposition that specifies an initial situation in which they can take place. The natural interpretation is possible *via* this third proposition, that is to say the topic of discourse, which is accessible from the conjuncts. So we can formulate the restriction on relative interpretation in the conjunction in this way: the consequent is interpreted in relation to the topic of discourse z_1 in conjunction with the antecedent ($z_1 \cup \{p\}$). If z_1 is vacant, it is the antecedent that forms this in general (though it is provisional). If z_1 is vacant and if this is not initiated from the antecedent, the consequent must be attached to the antecedent for the adequate interpretation of the entire conjunction: in the sentence (15), the hearer will understand to what kind of store the speaker demands him to go after having interpreted the consequent. In this case 'acheter de la bière' (to buy some beer) will be the topic of discourse (an action of the hearer that the speaker desires) and the antecedent will express a possible condition of success. In other words, if $V(p)$ is a part of $V(q)$, q is the topic of discourse with regard to which the conjunction "p et q" is interpreted. The restriction on relative interpretation implies in fact the existence of a general principle for the interpretation of the sentence connected of the type $p*q$ (where * designates the intersentential connector), which stipulates that the facts denoted by p and q are linked together in the relation as direct as possible.

4) The topic of discourse takes here an important part, as is noted in the following remark of T.A. van Dijk (1977b; 41): "For example, for *Harry came at six and Bill came at seven* to make sense, it should be part of a (con-)text such that it specifies the 'when, where or why' of the two arrivals thus connected, e.g. by some proposition as 'The meeting began at four o'clock', where an initial situation 'there is a meeting' is specified for the two facts to occur. The arrivals as such may be independent, and their *connection* is thus given over a third proposition C and situation c , accessible from the other facts/situations. This reading of and can thus be adequately paraphrased as 'and in the same situation', implying situational identity in the interpretation of the connects."

C. *The restriction on the preparation of a conditional frame*

As we have already suggested, in our observation of the sentence (15), the conjunctive connector "et" links propositions and the antecedent prepares a frame for the consequent. In other words, the antecedent specifies the situation or condition in which the consequent can be true. If we say that in the sentences (6, 7, 15) the facts denoted by the antecedents constitute the possible conditions for the facts denoted by the consequents, these conditions have a stronger character in the sentences (8-12). In these sentences, a relation between cause and consequence is explicit: the antecedents are a sufficient condition for the occurrence of the consequents. That is the case in the following example in which the causality is expressed:

- (17) Sonachitzé conduisait avec une grande prudence et nous avons mis près de trois quarts d'heure pour arriver à la destination. (P. Modiano, p.19) (Sonachitzé was driving so carefully and it took us almost three hours to arrive at the destination.)

The fact that in the natural interpretation of the conjunction (8-12, 17) a causal relation takes a important part will be also explained by the principle of relationship as narrow as possible that we have mentioned. That means that the causal connexion between p and q is expressed by this general principle rather than by the conjunctive connector "et". In case of ambiguity, we can make explicit the connexion by substituting another connector for "et" in its interpretation. In this point of view, the connector "et" has a global and neutral character in comparison with the others.

The examples (11, 12), with imperative mode in the antecedent, express a conditional relation. Their particularity in relation with the other examples is due to the fact that we can not talk about the actual truth of the conjuncts; the order and demand is not regarded as true or false by itself. In case of order or demand, what the speaker wants is not that the hearer realizes the truth or falsity of a certain proposition but that the hearer should make true a certain proposition in a possible world of future (at w_1, t_{0+k}). What is important in the conjunction

of type "p (imperative) et q"? Is that p expresses a sufficient condition for q to happen? It is necessary to indicate that there exist two kinds of "p (imperative) et q" depending on the relation between the antecedent and the consequent, i.e. "objective" relation and "subjective" relation. For example, the sentence (11) *Dis-moi qui tu hantes, et je te dirai qui tu es* (A man is known by the company he keeps; literally, Tell me whom you frequent, and I will tell you who you are) expresses the "objective" relation between p and q because the imperative loses its value of injunction and in our universe of credence the meaning of this sentence holds always true (the proverbs belong to this category). But the relation between p (imperative) and q is rarely "objective"⁵⁾; very often it is posed by the speaker to make the hearer follow his will. In this case of "subjective" relation, antecedent p keeps its value of injunction (our example (12) *Encore un peu de patience, et c'est fini* (Some more patience, and all is over)). As is the case in the conditional, the antecedent of this kind of conjunction determines the possible worlds in which the consequent holds true. In other words, the world in which the antecedent is true can be specified as a "frame" for the truth of the consequent.

V. Conclusion

The operation of connexion is carried out over two situations in which two propositions p and q are respectively true. We suppose in general that the conjunction "p et q" is true in the same possible world as that of its conjuncts p and q. We also suppose that the local identity and the chronological order should be introduced in the interpretation of "p et q". Proposition p is connected to proposition q *via* topic of discourse z_1 . So q is interpreted in relation to z_1 in conjunction with p. This means that p often specifies the condition in which q can be true. As is the case in the relevant conditional, p chooses the possible worlds in which q can be true.

5) In this case the conjunction has a generic character. The relation between two conjuncts holds true in most of possible worlds.

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