

THE (PERSISTING) PROBLEMATIZATION OF THE STRUCTURAL VERSUS CONTEXTUAL ARGUMENTATION FOR THE TREATMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ‘SEMANTIC PARADOX’ BY THE THEORY OF SEMANTIC BLOCKS

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- **ABSTRACT:** This article focuses on the principal question of how to manage the confrontation or alliance between language structure and its functioning to reflect its significance in/of this relationship. To tackle this question, we will mobilize two *objectives*, which disturb semanticists of any affiliation, i.e., how to stabilize, in Linguistics, the theoretical aspects in view of (a) semantically ambiguous obsolete structures; (b) structures that include various uses and therefore, express/produce various meanings. To accomplish this, we utilize the definition of “paradox” as a *corpus*, which will enable us to operate the *object of this study*, viz., the *semantic paradox*, the present-day concept that perceives interdependent contraries, and which we have employed as a technical notion within the Theory of Semantic Blocks proposed by Carel and Ducrot, the principal theoretical support of this research. Our hypothesis is confirmed by the *results obtained*: regardless of the strategic procedure one works with or names oneself, structural signification is both the starting and returning point in semantic analysis, which assists us to draw the *conclusion* that, if it is not possible to understand movement without the concept of inertia, it is not possible to work the enunciative meaning without the structural signification. Such a condition appears to be imperative in Semantics.
- **KEYWORDS:** Semantic paradox. Structural argumentation. Contextual argumentation.

Introduction

Argumentative Semantics holds a significant global position in investigations in Semantics, Argumentation and Enunciation, besides others. A remarkable mark of reformulation of the theoretical picture of this knowledge appeared in 1992: the fundamental concept of investigating the argumentation through semantic blocks, suggested by Marion Carel initiated the Theory of Semantic Blocks (TSB) in enunciative structural studies. The TSB, however, is not a new theory that breaks away from the

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earlier one. In several research studies on Argumentative Semantics, the variety of nomenclatures is not an indication of a variety of autonomous theories. Argumentation within Language, absolute scales, Theory of Topoi, Polyphonic Theory of Enunciation, Argumentative Theory of Polyphony and Theory of Semantic Blocks are *distinct ways of working the same proposal of argumentation in language through specific procedures used by each one of them*. Those “ways” were initially collectively termed, Argumentative Semantics (CAREL; DUCROT, 2005), and today they are known simply as TSB. Therefore, these diverse names are merely different ways to construct a single Semantics through argumentative means, via theoretical devices that complement each other: the watchful reader of TSB will notice that in order to work on the argumentation on the language, the various engenderments over the years promote a complementary, and not a contrasting relationship (CAREL, 2012). They are the frameworks within which the investigation of the language must be done in enunciation through structural care, with unequal preoccupations. What we have is rather a *single theory*, in constant evolution since its creation, and which has now deepened radically in its present phase, the TSB.

Besides, the same initial interest in the language objects, enunciation, signification and meaning always continues to be investigated through the prism of argumentation within language.

This variety that we understand as a “whole,” that is, the echo of decades of discussion on the theory of Anscombe and Ducrot (1983), is now richly researched, reformulated, deepened and refined in the present TSB, as we will observe. The TSB was consolidated as a successful semantic hypothesis intending to investigate the language and the discourse by argumentative ways without abandoning the Ducrotian proposal of a “structural conception of enunciation” (DUCROT, 1987, p.83).

The objective of this article is to consider precisely the way that meaning/signification behaves in language, in two dimensions, viz., structure and enunciation, polemized, contrasted, allied or isolated in various linguistic affiliations, and understood here in a specific argumentative manner, as we will see, based on certain TSB updates, especially over the last decade.

The results of this rigorous updating have been the interesting course it gives to researches about Argumentation and Semantic, by relating structural and enunciative postures to modern concerns peculiar to the strands of Linguistics or to others kinds of strands, like the paradox studies, for instance. Such a gap, at least, resignifies what is currently understood as Enunciative Structuralism, from among the other meanings produced.

The value of the sentence or the statement: the aspect/chaining relation

A methodological singularity particularizes the whole TSB: the argumentation notion by which TSB investigates signification and meaning will be always technically

treated as the *value* (of the sentence or statement). This *value* preserves the purpose of TSB of observing in sentences some traces relating to their construction, and in statements, some traces concerning their enunciation (DUCROT, 1987). These goals will be achieved by the dynamics of two notions: “The two *values* that TSB will associate with a statement are the *aspect* that it expresses and the *chaining* that paraphrases it.” (CAREL, 2011, p.160, translation and emphasis ours)¹.

When investigating the *value* (aspect and chaining) of a word, for instance “prudent”, Carel explains that such a word *expresses* the aspect [DANGER, THEREFORE PRECAUTION], and that this aspect *evokes* a chaining which *concretizes* it, which could be: “Peter was prudent”. As the linguist² well explains it:

Peter was prudent has a dual meaning. On one hand, the statement *expresses* the argumentative *aspect* DANGER, THEREFORE PRECAUTION, and on the other hand it *evokes the chaining* ‘it was dangerous, therefore, Peter took precautions.’ [...] The chaining evoked makes the statement a concrete formulation of the aspect expressed. [...] The expressed aspect will now constitute the ‘purpose’ of the statement only on what it has divided, and the chaining evoked will replace the recourse to the objects it is going to represent on what the statement studied has of its own. (CAREL, 2011, p.220-221, translation ours).

In agreement with Ducrot, when he affirms that the statement has the function of illustrating a portrait of an enunciation (DUCROT, 1987), Carel states that a sentence/statement has the semantic function of illustrating aspects, making them concrete (CAREL, 2011). It is in this way that TSB marks the semantic movement from the statement to the sentence, or technically, the notion of aspect marks the movement from meaning (particular, of the statement) to signification (universal, of the sentence). To Carel, the aspect has a universal characteristic that defines it. When Carel, as shown above, declares that the aspect “divides something”, she refers to a universal property, as explained below:

These two *values* are going to reflect the usual and singular character of *Peter was prudent*, as well as the fact that this statement shares with *John is going to be prudent* a Universal, and thus is distinct or distinguishable from it by a few singularities. The aspect (DANGER,

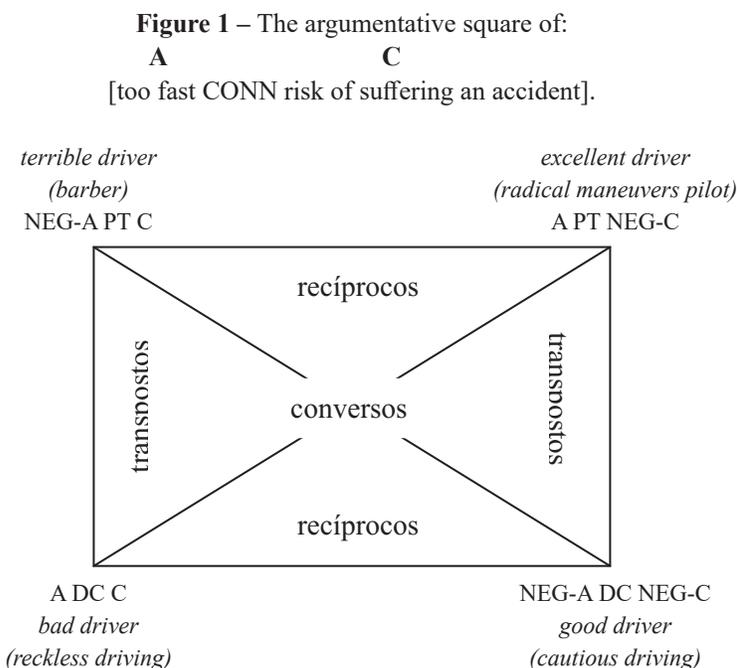
¹ Original: “Les deux valeurs que la TBS associera à un énoncé seront l’aspect qu’il exprime et l’enchaînement qui le paraphrase.” (CAREL, 2011, p.160).

² Original: “Je rends compte de cela en disant que le sens de Pierre a été prudent est double. D’une part, l’énoncé exprime l’aspect argumentatif DANGER DC PRECAUTION et d’autre part il évoque l’enchaînement <c’était dangereux donc Pierre a pris des précautions> [...] L’enchaînement évoqué fait de l’énoncé une formulation concrète de l’aspect exprimé [...] L’aspect exprimé constituera dorénavant le <propos> de l’énoncé en cela seulement qu’il est partagé et l’enchaînement évoqué remplacera le recours à des objets en cela qu’il représentera ce que l’énoncé étudié a de proper.” (CAREL, 2011, p.220-221).

Therefore, to operate the analysis we shall maintain the abbreviations DC for normative movements in *therefore*, and PT for transgressive movements in *however*. Other notations required are the known negation (NEG) and the semantic block (BS).

It is still relevant to emphasize that both DC and PT are metalinguistic connectors, theoretical notions, i.e., they are not equivalent to grammatical procedures, but are rather theoretical connectors whose role is to semantically operate the standard and the transgression in language and enunciation, in the meanings they are assigned by the TSB. As a technical notion, both DC and PT may be easily substituted by any connector that carries the equivalent concept, for instance, “so, because, ergo, thus, despite, although etc.,” which at the time of analysis will paraphrase DC or PT.

With these points made clear, we shall proceed to their application to the argumentative square, a visual device, the four sides of which compose a semantic block:



Source: Based on Ducrot (2009, p.22) and Carel (2011, p.67).

Paradox of opposition and semantic paradox

We begin presenting the paradox of opposition according to Carel and Ducrot. This is a technical notion, which does not subsume or correspond to the semantic paradox, the subject of our study.

First, we address the paradox of opposition. In the initial study, linguists observe a block/block (doxal/paradoxical) relationship in signification, revealing that Carel and Ducrot have identified that for each doxal block (B1) there is a paradoxical block (B2). We may arrange the two of them as shown below:

B1: Peter is facing danger, *therefore* he will give up (DANGER DC GIVE UP).

Peter is facing danger, *however*, he will not give up (DANGER PT NEG-GIVE UP).

B2: Peter is facing danger, *therefore* he will not give up (DANGER DC NEG-GIVE UP).

Peter is facing danger, *however*, he will give up (DANGER PT GIVE UP).

The oddness in these two blocks is discussed: from a more philosophical or social perspective – which prefaces the linguistics approach – it is clear that it is more “obvious”, or more socially acceptable, for someone to avoid (B1) when facing danger: for example, one avoids robberies, hazardous streets, trips with high index of police occurrences, purchases from suspect websites, etc. Yet, we refrain from forcing a universal unilateral lucidity and recognize that likewise, even if less obvious or less socially acceptable, there are those who like, appreciate, seek, encounter, disseminate or dwell in all kinds of danger (B2), like masochists, drifters, lunatics, rebels, or depressed people etc. Besides, there is also a range of thinkers who will claim the counter-doxal, by stating that living itself is already dangerous, because safety is imaginary and fortuity is unpredictable.

Focusing these ideas on a more linguistic level, but not completely dispensing with the philosophical and social thinking which integrates the meanings, Carel and Ducrot (2008, p.11) have propounded the treatment of this “more obvious/less obvious” relationship as the doxal block and the paradoxical block, respectively. Thus, they termed the first block B1: (meaning DANGER DC GIVE UP) as doxal, and the second block B2: (meaning DANGER DC NEG-GIVE UP) as paradoxical. The peculiarity of this first elaboration relies on the fact that each aspect of B2 is opposed to each aspect of B1. *The paradox would be a secondary counter-block, only visible to the primary block.*

The semantic paradox will be now observed to include another phenomenon, which is the contrary of opposition: the *never division* one. It is an important method which will constitute the analyses of this study: *the interdependent relation of paradox*. The significations/meanings of a paradox are not dissociable in parts (not if we want to maintain the paradox), and must be understood in its global oddness. For instance, the statements: “War is peace” and “freedom is slavery” (ORWELL, 2014, p.14), in some way, should be analyzed excluding the stanchness* [war] and [peace], on one hand, and [freedom] and [slavery] on the other. Our methodology intends an analysis like [war+peace] and [freedom+slavery]. This is the semantic paradox.

This type of methodology is derived from two sources: the interdependence studies by Carel and the unifying sense by Wolowska when he concludes, regarding the paradox:

“its function is to unify, not divide” (WOŁOWSKA, 2008, p.13, translation ours)⁴. This is the method of the “paradox’s paradox”: the paradox may not be solved; otherwise it would not be a paradox. Therefore, if it is not solvable, it is only observable (observe, for us, is an analytic gesture of globality that is in operation, without splitting). Thus, this longitudinally summarizes this specific methodology throughout the entire study: *we shall observe the paradox, not solve it*.

Ultimately, here we must emphasize this homonymy: one thing is the *paradox of opposition* – the initial theoretical notion proposed by Carel and Ducrot (which opposes common sense, doxal sense, or its gradients), and another is the *semantic paradox* – our hypothesis (which merges opposite significations), and which is explored here. The paradox of opposition connects the doxal/paradoxical. The semantic paradox that we postulate imposes inseparability, using the concept of the interdependence of TSB. To Carel, the reason for it being a paradoxical block, at least in its commencement, theoretically speaking, was the contradicting (and complementing) doxal aspects. For us, the reason for it being a semantic paradox, theoretically speaking, is establishing the inseparability between the oppositions. To Carel, paradox is a relation (of opposition, first, and gradation, secondly). For us, semantic paradox is insolvency and union. Therefore, we do not intend to equate homonymous notions. We wish to display two distinct notions: the theoretical technical term by Carel and Ducrot (paradoxical/doxical), and ours, which merges the opposites (semantic paradox).

Internal argumentation and external argumentation: the relation presence/absence of analyzable structure

According to TSB, there are two ways of argumentatively investigating any word: by the internal and external means to the words. For instance, Carel (2011, p.106) selected five aspects relating to the word *prudent*, among others. They are: [DANGER DC PRECAUTION]; [PRUDENT DC SAFETY]; [PRUDENT PT NEG-SAFETY]; [RESPONSIBLE DC PRUDENT], and [NEG-RESPONSIBLE PT PRUDENT]. Carel (2011) noted that, regarding *prudent*, all of these aspects do not follow the same rule in their signification. She proposed a distinction between *internal argumentation* and *external argumentation* for the word *prudent*. In practice, this means that both argumentations (internal and external) refer to the material presence of this word, *prudent*, in the aspect in focus.

This implies that the relation between the entity *prudent* and the aspect [PRUDENT DC SAFETY] illustrates that this same word includes the statute of material sequel “external” to this word (*prudent* dc...), therefore, this aspect will be said to belong to the *external argumentation* of *prudent*.

⁴ Original: “*sa fonction est d’unifier et non de diviser.*” (WOŁOWSKA, 2008, p.13).

On the contrary, the relation between the entity *prudent* and the aspect [DANGER DC PRECAUTION] illustrates the absence of this word; it does not have the material presence of the word *prudent*, although the relation implies it. This aspect, according to Carel, is locked in the “interior” of *prudent*, as she metaphorically explains; thus, it will be said to belong to the *internal argumentation* of *prudent*. “The argumentative predicate ‘take-precautions-due-to-the-danger’ is one of the significations of *prudent*.” (CAREL, 2011, p.107). It lies “within”, in the interior of *prudent*.

Briefly, when considering the relation between a word and an aspect, two types of argumentations arise, identified by the theoretical criterion of material presence:

- *External argumentation (EA)*: When the expression in focus appears in the observed aspect. It is a relation of presence within the analyzable structure. For instance, while investigating the full word *heinous*, beginning such an investigation by the aspect [HEINOUS DC LEGAL REPROVATION], there is, in this aspect, an EA of the work *heinous*. If such an expression appears, it intervenes materially and semantically in the chainings or aspects that expose the expression (CAREL, 2011), there is an EA;
- *Internal argumentation (IA)*: When the expression in focus does not appear in the observed aspect (yet it is part of it), it indicates a relation of absence within an analyzable structure. For instance, when investigating the term *heinous*, this time observing it in one of its aspects in which the structure “*heinous*” does not appear, it is still possible to propose the aspect [SHOCKING DC REPULSIVE]. In this aspect, an IA is illustrated. It indicates the argumentation within the structure of *heinous*. If such an expression does not intervene materially in any of the chainings or aspects that describe this expression (CAREL, 2011), and it still intervenes there semantically, an IA is said to be present.

It must be emphasized that we refer to the relation as “an entity/an aspect”, meaning that the aspect itself is neither an external argumentation nor an internal one: “an argumentative aspect is not in itself ‘external’ (or ‘internal’): it is external or internal to *such an entity*. Thus, the aspect [DANGER DC PRECAUTION] belongs to the internal argumentation (IA) of *prudent*, yet it belongs to the external argumentation (EA) of *dangerous*”. (CAREL, 2011, p.110, translation ours)⁵ For an example of the

⁵ We notice that Carel technically understands that the nouns and their adjectives (*danger*, *dangerous*; *prudence*, *prudent*; *life*, *alive* etc.) can be observed with the equivalence of aspects, together with their characterizations, operations, and singularizations of course, which will specify them. For instance:

- *Peter is in that dangerous place*. Expresses: {Peter + place + [DANGER DC AVOID]}; and
- *Peter is in danger in that place*. Expresses: {Peter + [DANGER DC AVOID] + place}.

[DANGER DC AVOID] is EA of *danger* and *dangerous*, and is IA of *prudent* or *prudence*.

The basic chaining evoked – which could be better particularized, when enunciated – is as follows:

- *Peter is in that dangerous place*; therefore, he should avoid it.
- *Peter is in danger in that place*; therefore, he should avoid it.

paradoxical, the aspect [NEG-DEAD DC ALIVE] belongs, at the same time, to the IA of the term *healthy*, as well as to the EA of the term *alive*.

Corpus

In the light of the theoretical framework considered, we now take a less theoretical-expositional path and a more analytical-situational one. Therefore, we shall present our *corpus*, initially regarding a definition of *paradox* from the *K Dictionaries Password*:

Paradox [ˈparədoks] *noun*. A statement *etc.* that seems to contradict itself but which is nevertheless true: *If your birthday is on February 29 you could state the paradox that you are thirteen years old, although you have had only three birthdays.* (PARKER; STAHEL, 2005, p.374).

According to the speakers of this excerpt, we will have, in the initial statement, the following chaining (which does not mean that this is the paradox, but by an enunciative affiliation, means what this dictionary “says” to be the paradox):

Evokes: A sentence seems to contradict itself; *however*, it is true, nevertheless.

Expresses: [CONTRADICTION PT NEG-FALSE]

In the statement referred to above, the aspect [CONTRADICTION PT NEG-FALSE] belongs to the IA of *paradox*, the paradox of Logic (which ascertains truth and falsity). On the contrary, if we consider the anaphoric element of the statement, we can reorganize the aspect of the statement:

Evokes: Paradox: a sentence that seems to contradict itself; however, it is true, nevertheless.

Expresses: [PARADOX PT TRUTHFUL CONTRADICTION]

By the bias of the chaining shown above, the aspect [PARADOX PT TRUTHFUL CONTRADICTION] belongs to the EA of *paradox*.

External argumentation on the right/external argumentation on the left: the relation between an analyzable structure and its presence in the support or contribution

Carel still distinguishes, in the layout of the external argumentation (EA) of an entity, two other subtypes of argumentations: the external argumentation *on the right*, and the external argumentation *on the left*. This principle is equal to the external argumentation: the presence of the entity, but now, the presence-location of the entity.

We now consider the aspect [PRUDENT DC SAFETY] and its converse [PRUDENT PT NEG-SAFETY], both the EA of *prudent*. Carel (2011) explains that both aspects belong to the EA *on the right* of *prudent*, because the aspect and its chainings develop materially on the right of *prudent*, in this contribution: [PRUDENT CONN...].

Likewise, we consider the aspect [RESPONSIBLE DC PRUDENT] and its transposed form [NEG-RESPONSIBLE PT PRUDENT], as both EA of *prudent*. Carel (2011) explains that both aspects belong to the EA *on the left* of *prudent*, because the aspect and its chainings develop materially on the left of *prudent*, in its support: [... CONN PRUDENT].

We now shift the analytical axis towards the aim of this study, viz., the paradox. Still according with the dictionary definition above, we observe that [PARADOX DC TRUTHFUL CONTRADICTION] is an EA on the right of *paradox*. When we analyze the second statement of the definition: “If your birthday is on February 29, you could state the paradox that you are thirteen years old, although you have had only three birthdays”, we can consider the aspect illustrated: [BE 13 YEARS OLD ALTHOUGH HAVING HAD ONLY THREE BIRTHDAYS DC PARADOX], which is an EA on the left of *paradox*.

Against the above considerations, it is still interesting to emphasize that Carel drew attention to the fact that Anscombe and Ducrot focused only on the normative (CAREL, 2011) external argumentations on the right, which Ducrot assumes as follows: “In 1995, the type of argumentation which I associated with an expression was related to what we now call its EA in DC.” (DUCROT, 2002, p.12). This verifies that the TSB has come to take the studies of the previous phase forward, the so called Argumentation in Language (or the new linguistics) of Anscombe and Ducrot, in a broader, deeper and richer way, which until then was undeveloped, as Ducrot (2006, p.154) claims: “The conception of linguistic semantics in which I am currently working on seems to me as an extension of the new linguistics. [...] More precisely, it is about the TSB [...] in which I see a deepening and a radicalization of the new linguistics.” It is not about two theories, therefore; it is about only one, deepened and radicalized.

Structural argumentation and contextual argumentation

Our approaches, thus far, are leading us to our core issue: the confrontation between structure and its functioning, and the reflection of signification in this/of this relation.

To capture the big picture, we put forward an issue that is disturbing to the semanticist: how can we stabilize the aspects in DC and PT in light of ambiguous structures? What about facing structures that permit various uses, and would therefore present various aspects? How would you stabilize a method when you encounter such a problem?

To tackle this predicament, faithfully adhering to the assumptions of the ‘*new linguistics*’ which facilitates the semantic work determined by the double instance

sentence/statement, Carel affiliates the notions of IA and EA to two other notions: the *structural argumentation* and the *contextual argumentation* (CAREL, 2011). The analytical condition remains unchanged: the structural argumentation expresses aspects enrolled in the language, out of use, or the pure construction of the linguist (DUCROT, 1987). The contextual argumentation expresses aspects which depend on factors such as enunciation, functioning of the language, situation, speakers and listeners, discourse, as Carel and Ducrot explains: “[...] giving the meaning of an expression is associating different argumentations to it, which are evoked by its use.” (CAREL; DUCROT, 2008, p.10). Thus, Carel delimits that a linguistic phenomenon (a phenomenon of the language) will be of a phrastic dimension (and, therefore, will express structural argumentations), and the phenomenon of discourse will be of an enunciative dimension (and, therefore, will express contextual argumentations):

I would state that an aspect A is structurally expressed by a linguistic entity E, if E expresses A by its own linguistic signification; I would state that A is contextually expressed by E, if the association of E and A is not linguistic. (I would be interested essentially by the case in which the discourse declares that this association is made). (CAREL, 2011, p.114-115, translation ours)⁶.

This disposition is shown in the general frame of TSB as:

Table 2 – Formulation of the dimension “language/speech”

Language	Speech
Sentence	Enunciated
Signification	Meaning
Structural argumentation	Contextual argumentation

Source: Author’s elaboration.

We now face a strong methodological conception since the beginning of the new linguistics of Anscombe, Ducrot and Carel. They selected the functioning of the language as the focus of analytical attention to describe it. It is this double dimension, which is essential in Semantics, which is operated and operable through the statement: “I will get interested essentially by the case in which discourse is the one to declare that this association is made.” (CAREL, 2011, p.115, translation ours)⁷. However, what stands out are the significant developments observable in/through the complex

⁶ Original: “[...] je dirai qu’un aspect A est structurellement exprimé par une entité linguistique E si E exprime A de par sa signification linguistique même ; je dirai que A est contextuellement exprimé par E si l’association de E et de A n’est pas linguistique (je m’intéresserai essentiellement aux cas où c’est le discours qui déclare que cette association est faite).” (CAREL, 2011, p.114-115).

⁷ Original: “Je m’intéresserai essentiellement aux cas où c’est le discours qui declare que cette association est faite.” (CAREL, 2011, p.115).

unit of the statement, which are only possible by means of signification present in the language, that is, in the lexicon and in the structure.

Two applications of the new pair are presented below, viz., structural argumentation and contextual argumentation, the first in EA and the other in IA (CAREL, 2011, p.114, translation ours).⁸

- Structural EA of *rich*: [RICH DC MAKE THINGS POSSIBLE]

evoked, for instance, in the sentence: *Peter is rich, therefore, he can do whatever he wants.*

- Contextual EA of *rich*: [RICH DC HAVE FRIENDS]

evoked, for instance, in the statement: *Peter is rich, therefore, he has many friends.*

According to Carel, we have a *structural* EA on the right in the word *rich*, because [RICH DC MAKE THINGS POSSIBLE] is proper to the linguistic signification of the word *rich*. “Have-possibilities” is one of the structural significations of the word *rich*. But the meaning “wealth-produces-friends” is not in the language, in the structure of *rich*, it is a *contextual* argumentation. It is the enunciation that provides this aspect. Not in the structure, but from the structure. The contextual argumentation is a singular association, circumstantial of the event of the statement, produced from the structural argumentation. There is no way to be contextual without going through the structural, and this is the great merit of structural semantics.

Next, we consider the application of the new structural/contextual pair. To accomplish this, we recapitulate and split the definition of paradox given above, in two parts, the analysis of which is given below:

(A) A statement etc., that seems to contradict itself but which is nevertheless true: The statement above illustrates three aspects, at least: two IA (a contextual and a structural) and one structural EA. All the three are explained as follows:

- Structural IA of semantic paradox: [OPPOSITES DC INSEPARABLE]

evoked for instance, in sentences like:

There are two opposites here, and somehow, therefore, they do not separate.

Evocation concretized, for instance, in statements such as:

Love is a fire that burns unseen; a wound that aches yet isn't felt; an always discontent contentment; a pain that rages without hurting (CAMÕES, 1975, p.181);

As considered, the structural argumentation does not need to take part *ipsis litteris* in the aspects of the enunciation itself. It somehow corresponds to the project of the

⁸ Original: “*Pierre est riche, donc il peut faire ce qu’il veut. Pierre est riche, donc il a beaucoup d’amis.*” (CAREL, 2011, p.114).

enunciation. This structural IA of paradox above is concretized in statement (A) as follows:

- Contextual IA of the paradox: [CONTRADICTION PT NEG-FALSE]

This aspect can be evoked, for instance, in statements as given below:

- Contextual IA of *paradox*: [CONTRADICTION PT NEG-FALSE]

This aspect can be evoked, for instance, in statements as the one mentioned below:

A statement or etc., that seems to contradict itself, but which is nevertheless true.

It is also one which has been concretized, in the dictionary in focus, by the statement (A). Concretization which arises from the structural EA of *contradiction*, of Logic:⁹

- Structural EA of logical contradiction: [CONTRADICTION DC FALSE]

It is relevant to highlight that the first statement of this dictionary (as it happens with all dictionaries) intends to imitate, describe and explain a structurally proper signification of a word – in this dictionary, the signification (out of use) of the word paradox is something which is done only through Logic, by the structural aspect of contradiction as falsity, leaving out of the definition many structural aspects of other knowledge (failing, for instance, to enunciate the structural aspect “opposites-inseparable” above).

It is proper for dictionaries to present the structural definitions based on the utopia that constitutes them, the utopia of knowing, of being able to convert many meanings of a certain word into a single structural inscription. Perhaps, this is the main problem with dictionaries, from a semantic point of view: in an attempt to state the structural, they end up enunciating the contextual. Every search there for signification (general) ends up in meaning (local). Therefore, the dictionary operates using the generalization which universalizes; however, it always makes it through the enunciation which singularizes. That is where the following maxim originates from: a dictionary can be efficient, but never enough.

We shall perceive the second statement from the dictionary under consideration, the example-definition:

⁹ When Argumentative Semantics approaches Logic in its work, it seems to depart from slopes of Logic that go along with contradiction. The approach of the Logic that is of interest here, therefore, may be explained by the studies of paradox performed by Wolowska (2008, 2005). The Polish language evidenced two principles regarding paradox:

- The principle of Logic, in which there is no place for contradiction, understanding contradiction as two opposites which do not co-ordinate. According to Wolowska (2008, p.31, our translation), “The main principle of logic [...] is the principle of non-contradiction.”; and
- The principle of Semantics, in which contradiction is accepted without a problem, continuing to understand the contradiction as two opposites, which now co-ordinate.

It is interesting to emphasize that in one of our recent researches in France financed by the Federal Government (CAPES PDSE 5637-13-9), we observed that in more than 40 dictionaries all over Europe, America and Japan, in 12 distinct languages, many definitions of “paradox” are described by mentioning this Logic (without specification), which does not support contradiction. This corroborates that this Logic, from Aristotelian origin, refutes contradiction, calling it false, is far from being disused.

(B) *If your birthday is on February 29 you can state the paradox that you are 13 years old, although you have had only three birthdays.*

This statement shows:

- Contextual IA of paradox: [29/02 DC 13 YEARS OLD DESPITE HAVING HAD ONLY 3 BIRTHDAYS]

This can be evoked, for instance, in the statement:

Having been born on February 29th means therefore, being 13 years old despite having had only 3 birthdays.

It is important to understand the argumentative game involved in the statement, which reveals that this contextual IA of *paradox* is formed from two other IAs: Structural IA of *February 29th*: [LAST DAY OF A MONTH DC CALENDAR DATE] Contextual IA of *February 29th*: [LEAP YEAR DC QUADRIENAL OCCURRENCE]

It is correct for dictionaries to present contextual examples in an attempt at structural definition (which sometimes deconstructs the structural definition itself). In short, these two statements that define *paradox* reveal one of the structural EAs on the right proper of the full word *dictionary* itself:

[DICTIONARY DC DEFINE FIRST AND EXEMPLIFY AFTER]

Another angle may enable a better understanding. Contextualists of all kinds and affiliations could replicate our findings, emphasizing that the structuralist argumentation hypothesis subsumes in the contextual, just as we have affirmed that the simple fact of a certain word entering a dictionary, being enunciated by authors who selected these words for definition, install a historic enunciation, which according to Ducrot did not exist before nor will be there later (DUCROT, 1987). We concur with this, when we declare that every attempt to state the structural culminates in the contextual.

The issue, however, is first of all being able to think of the possibility and difficulty of doing semantics without a basic scientific criterion: would it be possible to think of the unstable (meaning) without the stable (signification)? It is irrelevant if the second is a necessary condition for the first, or if the second is kind of return to the first, or if one is the future of the other, or whatever other definition one may wish to assign to this recalcitrant relationship. The TSB understands that the issue is one of necessary relation, not of isolation. Particularly in linguistic scientificity, this regularity appears to impose itself (even if authors deny the structural signification; interestingly they operate by renewing it in other ways, believing they are eradicating it), because while thinking out the process the scientist creates abstractions of this process, or as Ducrot states, the linguist builds the sentence to be able to account for the statements (DUCROT, 1987). We would respond in rejoinder: if in the enunciation of structural signification there is any unreliable contextuality, there is

also, in the same manner, in every enunciation, insistent structural significations, stubborn, present and omnipresent in the peculiarity of every statement, not stated but implied, structural significations that constitute, disturb, and therefore build the statement. In a more refined way, we declare that it is not possible to understand the idea of movement without the idea of inertia, and this applies to Semantics. It is not possible to understand meaning without signification, and if there is, therefore, functioning, it is because there is (and persists) that which does not function before. Every war (meaning) starts from peace (signification), and peace reverberates in the war project, even if the former is neither effective nor sought after.

As a concrete example, we shall consider the following: would it be too hard (or even, would it be possible?) to explain that the meaning of statements (A) and (B) mentioned above build the definition of paradox without bumping, touching, referring, updating, alluding, and extrapolating the following structural significations, which disturb the functioning of the words in these two statements:

Structural IA of *paradox*: [OPPOSITES DC INSEPARABLE];

Structural EA of *contradict oneself*: [CONTRADICTION DC FALSE];

Structural IA of *February 29th*: [LAST DAY OF A MONTH DC CALENDAR DATE];

Structural EA on the right of *being 13 years old*: [BE 13 YEARS OLD DC HAD 13 BIRTHDAYS];

Structural EA on the left of *birthday*: [INCREASE AGE DC PASS ON BIRTHDAY];

Structural EA on the right of *dictionary*: [DICTIONARY DC DEFINE FIRST AND EXEMPLIFY LATER].

Obviously besides these listed aspects, it would be possible to illustrate many others, own of the significations of every term used in the enunciation of the definitions (A) and (B).

It may still be stated that, in a certain way, one of the meanings of the statement (B) can be described as an attempt to “get away” from the structural obvious, from a structural condition of language (age means to pass on birthdays), present in the structural EA on the left of *birthday*: [INCREASE AGE DC PASS ON BIRTHDAY]. Yet, it gets away in vain, as there is no way to eradicate this structural aspect that “bothers” the meaning of the whole statement (age without birthdays). The problem is not in [INCREASE IN AGE DC LIVE FOR 365 DAYS], or in [BIRTHDAY DC LIVE FOR MORE 365 DAYS], but in the structural aspect [INCREASE IN AGE DC PASS ON BIRTHDAY], which “bothers” the statement above and puts it in a semantic crisis.

It is precisely the significant confrontation (the structural: aging by birthdays *versus* the contextual: aging without birthdays) that will produce the meaning crisis, which will end up emphasizing, reinforcing, going back, or at least considering the structural IA of paradox: [OPPOSITES DC INSEPARABLE]. This structural aspect enables the production of the “odd” contextual meaning of [someone-aging-with-only-

three-birthdays]. This is what composes one of our formal definitions regarding the semantic paradox: the oddness that merges a universal structural aspect into its opposite contextualization, inseparable from each other.

The argumentative complex

About this insufficient stance of stanching the structural or contextual argumentation, at least two aspects must be considered:

I) According to Ducrot (1987), it is the objective of the semanticist to select the argumentation that should be explored; and

II) The analytical standard of the TSB has never been tight: language/speech is separated by bad readings of the TSB, from our perspective, according to the reading we have done from the mobilization of this cache of knowledge. A theory that puts itself in a state of Enunciative Structuralism should investigate these two words equally (the Structuralism and the Enunciative). On the one hand it is imperative and essential to observe the lexical structure, assuming that “[...] certain argumentative predicates are lexicalized, as if they were summed up by language, condensed in its words.” (CAREL, 2011, p.122, translations ours)¹⁰. On the other hand, every structure claims its purpose, its own enunciative statute. It is by this and in this enunciative statute that we observe how the significant thickness behaves itself: “[...] it is the discourse which declares that this association has been made.” (CAREL, 2011, p.115, translation ours)¹¹.

About this item (II), Carel describes the difficulty the semanticist faces before the language, that ends up proceeding to a kind of “intuitive feeling of the language”, a general term to mean that there are strong significations present in language, which appear to mean something by themselves, and will interfere with the enunciation/statement: “To say the truth, I do not see how to avoid a recurrence of the intuitive feeling of the language [...] the practical problem is to know what this intuitive feeling means and how to analyze it.” (CAREL, 2011, p.121, translation ours)¹². It is regarding this practical problem that one part of the theoretical purpose of our work inclines towards: (to try) to formalize the significant opacities.

A final question that still continues to persist for the semanticist who makes use of the IA and EA notions, contextual and structural, is: Is (are) there criterion(a) to quantitatively establish the aspects of a word? That is to mean, how many aspects does a word carry? Or will this question not fit into this theoretical model, as the illustration of these word’s aspects present themselves freely, for the richness of many aspects?

¹⁰ Original: “[...] certains prédicats argumentatifs sont lexicalisés, comme s’ils étaient résumés par la langue, condensés dans ses mots.” (CAREL, 2011, p.122).

¹¹ Original: “C’est le discours qui déclare que cette association est faite.” (CAREL, 2011, p.115).

¹² Original: “À vrai dire, je ne vois pas comment éviter un recours au sentiment intuitif de la langue [...] Le problème pratique est de savoir ce que signifie ce sentiment intuitif et comment l’analyser.” (CAREL, 2011, p.121).

Regarding semantics, this last option seems to be the most reasonable, because every semanticist agrees that the meaningfulness, regardless of the theory, is a difficult phenomenon to explain or to exhaust in few words. On the contrary, the significant wealth of a word does not prevent the observation of a central signification line as more general. It is this central orbit, general or universal, that the Argumentative Semantics desires to illustrate *a priori*, by the aspects of a word.

Thus, each word (expression, sentence, text, image etc.) will have at least three ways in which to initially address the phenomenon of significance: (1) a structural EA on the right; (2) a structural EA on the left; and (3) a structural IA. If the case concerns a certain analysis of a word in use, three of the same aspects will be added to the previous three, now contextually: (4) a contextual EA on the right; (5) a contextual EA on the left; and (6) a contextual IA.

For instance, a plain word *dictionary* may present, at least, the following aspects:

- (1) Structural EA on the right: [DICTIONARY DC EXPLANATION BY LIST OF TERMS];
- (2) Structural EA on the left: [ORDER THE CAST OF THE SIGNIFICATIONS OF A LANGUAGE DC DICTIONARY];
- (3) Structural IA: [EXPLORE WORDS SIGNIFICATIONS OF A LANGUAGE DC PRESENT THE SIGNIFICATIONS ALPHABETICALLY]

In case these three aspects fail to fully illustrate the wealth of dictionary meaning, the semanticist will expand the range of aspects, for example: [DICTIONARY DC LIST OF TERMS]; [DICTIONARY DC WORDS IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE]; [DICTIONARY DC LINGUISTIC INSTRUMENT THAT CONSTITUTES KNOWLEDGE OF A LANGUAGE] etc. The signification of the dictionary is all of this and more. It is the ability of the semanticist to catch the extent to which the signification guides the analytical procedures and its limits, in Semantics. However, the semanticist will choose one key aspect for unfolding his/her analysis (according to his/her goals), which may be, for instance, the number (3) mentioned above.

This context of analysis of signification by “family of aspects” inspired Carel and Ducrot (2016), recently, to formulate the *argumentative complex* neo notion. Thus, every word presents a complex of aspects that illustrates it, which “[...] we will call ‘argumentative complex’ the set of argumentative schemes.” (CAREL; DUCROT, 2016, p.27, translation ours)¹³ Hence, in this article, we reasoned the argumentative complex of *paradox* and *dictionary*, which in our case specifically, contact each other contextually and therefore intersect semantically, due to our *corpus*.

¹³ Original: “*On appellera < complexe argumentatif > un assemblage de schémas argumentatifs.*” (CAREL; DUCROT, 2016, p.27).

Conclusion

As a result of this, we in some way refer to Benveniste (2006), not because we are assuming his assumptions of semiotics and semantics, but because the TSB ends up concurring with his basic idea: if enunciations are discussed, two plans are always to be considered, viz., a generic one, immanent and closed in the signs, and a particular one, transcendent and open to reality. Such plans complement and require each other, based on Saussure, strengthened by Benveniste's work, and carefully accepted in TSB, from the epistemic way of considering semantic means, operable according to the structural and contextual argumentation of this theory.

We declare that we do not believe in a complete analysis, if it leaves the language level, or engages only in it. Use and non-use are two faces unattainable of and for the signification/meaning and its investigations.

For us, the flag of Linguistics without language is poor and rootless, mainly if one discusses Semantics; also, an investigation of the language without its use would be worthless, since the existential reason for a language is enunciation. The sophistication and the condition of meaning lie in the relation of language/speech, regardless of the technical terms they are given. This article, through the reflection of the structural and contextual argumentation, simultaneously reveals the immeasurable richness of the significant phenomenon of language and its complexity, which we have presented through Argumentative Semantics (or as Ducrot states, which conveniently fits here: we are dealing with a structural conception theory of enunciation).

Thus, it appeals to us to complete this subject, perhaps controversial within Linguistics by the infinity of affiliations that it allows, with an inquiry that is interesting to us because it comes from a discourse analyst, who stands out by his emphasis in his works on Enunciation, yet ends up recognizing the strong primacy of structural signification in enunciative studies (approached by him in a literal sense):

If at each enunciation, some meaning effect may be new and unrepeatable, on the other hand, the "great mass" of meaning effects is effectively a recapture of previous meanings and it coincides with them. This is the fact which installs the possibility of the literal meaning within the theory of enunciation. (POSSENTI, 2001, p.30, translation ours).¹⁴

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¹⁴ Original: "*Se a cada enunciação, algum efeito de sentido pode ser novo e irrepitível, por outro lado, a 'grande massa' dos efeitos de sentido é efetivamente uma retomada de sentidos prévios e com eles coincide. É este o fato que instaura a possibilidade do sentido literal no interior de uma teoria da enunciação.*" (POSSENTI, 2001, p.30).

MACHADO, J. The (insistently) problematization of structural *versus* contextual for the treatment of significance: an analysis of the ‘semantic paradox’ by the Theory of Blocks Semantics. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v.62, n.2, p.273-292, 2018.

- *RESUMO: O presente artigo elege a seguinte questão fulcral: como operar o confronto ou aliança entre estrutura da linguagem e seu funcionamento para refletir a significância nesta/ desta relação? Para apreendermos esta problemática, mobilizaremos dois objetivos, que são questões que inquietam o semanticista de qualquer filiação: como estabilizar, em Linguística, aspectos teóricos diante de (a) estruturas fora do uso, ambigualmente semânticas, e também diante de (b) estruturas que permitem vários usos, e por isso apresentam/produzem vários sentidos? Para analisar tais objetivos, valer-nos-emos de uma definição de “paradoxo” enquanto corpus, que nos permitirá operar, de fato, nosso objeto de estudo: o paradoxo semântico, neonoção que observa contrários interdependentes, e que tomaremos enquanto noção técnica no interior da Teoria dos Blocos Semânticos, de Carel e Ducrot, filiação teórica basilar desta pesquisa. Nossa hipótese é confirmada pelos resultados obtidos: qualquer que seja o procedimento estratégico que se opere ou que se nomeie, a significação estrutural é ponto de passagem e de retorno em análise semântica, o que nos leva a concluir que, se não se pode entender o movimento sem a ideia de inércia, não se pode trabalhar o sentido enunciativo sem a significação estrutural. Tal condição parece ser imperativa em Semântica.*
- *PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Paradoxo semântico. Argumentação estrutural. Argumentação contextual.*

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