13

How does a concessive value emerge?

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13.1 Introduction

The notion of concession is frequently related to the notion of counter-expectation (Lakoff 1971), counter-implication (Morel 1996), or counter-argumentation (Anscombe and Ducrot 1977).1 These different notions are used to represent more or less the same intuition according to which a concession takes place when two states of affairs expressed in two connected utterances are not congruent. The markers connecting them are considered as conveying conventionally a concessive value. Among those, it is possible to find conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs such as Fr. *mais*, *cependant*, *pourtant*, *toutefois*, which all correspond approximately to ‘but’.

In a diachronic perspective, the question addressed concerns the origin of the concessive value, since it is considered as a pragmatic value derived from different semantic values: causal for *pourtant* temporal for *cependant*, or derived from manner adverbials for *toutefois*, as noted by Marchello-Nizia (2008). The grammaticalization theory (Traugott 1995a; 1999; Traugott and Dasher 2002) completed by the notion of pragmatization, theorized in Dostie (2004), are used as theoretical frameworks to explain how from a semantic meaning whose scope is the content of the utterance, the marker acquires a pragmatic one whose scope is the utterance.2 The basic key to explaining this evolution process is that discourse markers (DMs) acquire their pragmatic function through an increasing of subjectivity in the way they are used, as theorized in Traugott (1999: 189) for *in fact*:

Adverbial path for subjectification
VAdv > IpAdv > DM
Least subjective → Most subjective

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1 Only one seminal reference per notion is quoted.
2 For an overview on grammaticalization theory applied to French, see Marchello-Nizia (2006).
The new pragmatic meaning results from the conventionalization of an inference, described by Traugott and Dasher (2002) as the Invited Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change. The repeated occurrence of the adverbial in one particular context helps the emergence of a concessive inference. In a next step, the grammaticalization process allows the adverbial to endorse the inference as a conventionalized feature. In other words, the context guides the access to an inference, which becomes part of the lexical value of one item. Marchello-Nizia (2008) uses such a framework to explain the emergence of the concessive value endorsed by the French adverbial cependant ‘however’. She shows that cependant, which first indicated the simultaneity between two states of affairs, has acquired a concessive value by occurring in more subjective contexts. In such contexts there is at the same time simultaneity and opposition between the utterances expressing the states of affairs.

The polyphony framework conceived by Ducrot (1984) allows further support for the notion of concession. In such a framework, the concession takes place when a speaker alludes to the point of view of an énonciateur ‘enunciator3 that the speaker accepts but does not endorse. She introduces afterward a point of view that she endorses. This analysis is presented by Ducrot (2001), who describes the polyphonic structure of an excerpt such as:

(1) **Certes** la France a de bonnes pistes…  
‘Sure, France has good slopes…”

The context is the following: two friends are talking about their holidays. The first friend would like to go to France, because there are good slopes. The second friend prefers going skiing in Switzerland.

According to Ducrot’s analysis, the concessive value of this sequence results from two different interpretations of énonciateur ‘enunciator’, attitude ‘attitude’, and point de vue ‘point of view’.

- The first speaker has uttered the content [p] (La France a de bonnes pistes ‘France has good slopes’) as an argument among others for the conclusion C (Allons en France ‘Let’s go to France’). The sequence certes p uses two points of view: (POV1) which corresponds to the content [p] and (POV2) which concerns the way this content is used in the discourse, i.e. [p] is an argument for C.
- The first speaker has uttered [p] as the unique argument for the conclusion C. The sequence certes p uses then three points of view: (POV1) which corresponds to the content [p]; (POV2) which indicates that [p] is an argument for C and (POV3) which indicates that [p] is a sufficient argument for C. In this

3 The French quotations are translated by the author, who apologizes for the possible imprecision due to the language transfer of the concepts labelled in French.
case, the speaker has not the same attitude towards the three points of view: she has an attitude of agreement for POV1 and POV2 and an attitude of disagreement for POV3.

In such a concept the concessive value is related to the polyphonic interpretation of the certes p sequence. The markers that occur in this configuration are correlates. The most usual pair of correlates in French is certes’ . . . mais ‘sure, . . . but’. But other markers are possible for introducing the first sequence: en effet/effectivement/soit/ d’accord etc., as noted by Garnier and Sitri (2009: 125), referring to Morel (1980).

Certes appartient à un paradigme d’adverbes comme bien entendu, bien sûr, d’accord, soit, oui, en effet, effectivement, certainement, assurément, sans doute catégorisés comme adverbes de validation ou adverbes modaux qui, comme lui, peuvent apparaître dans le premier terme d’un système concessif [. . .].

‘Certes pertains to a paradigm of adverbs such as bien entendu, bien sûr, d’accord, soit, oui, en effet, effectivement, certainement, assurément, sans doute categorized as validation adverbs or modal adverbs, which, like certes, can occur in the first segment of a concessive system.’

In the latter case, as mentioned in the quotation above, these markers have the property to express validation in a dialogical context. The concessive value may thus rely on the dialogical properties of the first marker of the sequence.

Among the markers that can occur in this position, the origin of the concessive value of certes has been analysed as the result of the strengthening function that the adverbial has primarily endorsed. According to Anscombe (1980: 118), certes was first only used to strengthen an assertion:

Le simple fait de renforcer une assertion, c’est par là même signaler que cette assertion avait besoin de l’être, et qu’elle pouvait donc être combattue. C’est de cette façon qu’une marque de renforcement devient une marque de concession.

‘The simple fact to strengthen an assertion is a way to indicate that this assertion needed to be strengthened, and thus that it could be contested. It is in this way that a marker of strengthening becomes a marker of concession.’

Rodriguez Somolinos (1995), who studied the diachronic evolution of this adverb, confirms this analysis. She notices that certes has no polyphonic value in prior uses. Its function was to strengthen an assertion which was not linked to the utterance of a former point of view. The polyphonic value, which gives rise to the concessive meaning, is subsequent to this function (but the author does not date it). Garnier and Sitri (2009) also apply this analysis.

So the question addressing the origin of the concessive value is twofold: either it concerns the marker linking the p and q sequence, such as p, cependant q and the concession is viewed as a counter-implication, or it concerns the marker introducing the p sequence and the concession is viewed as a polyphonic phenomenon.
This contribution will focus on polyphonic constructions. First the exact contribution of each marker will be determined, before addressing the question of the emergence of the concessive value they convey.

13.2 Dialogical and monological use of concessive markers

Any concessive marker used in correlation with *mais* 'but' may occur in dialogical contexts, as already noticed by Rossari (2008) and Garnier and Sitri (2009). More precisely, such contexts can be defined as ‘dialogical structures’, according to the sense given in the Geneva model of discourse presented in Roulet, Fillettaz, and Grobet (2001), i.e. a structure composed of moves that can be (but does not have to be) uttered by two different speakers and sharing illocutionary links (e.g. a question and its answer). In such structures, these markers can constitute by themselves complete illocutionary acts of agreement. In this respect, they share the fifth property listed by Ghezzi in Chapter 2, being simultaneously lexemes and utterances.

(2) Éraste: Vous êtes un coquin.
     Mascarille: D’accord. (Molière, 1663)\(^4\)
     ‘Éraste: You are a crook.
     Mascarille: All right.’

In this dialogue other adverbials could be used:

(3) Vous êtes un coquin
     En effet/Effectivement/Certes/Soit

     Any of these adverbials can be used in correlation with *mais* in monological structures. According to Roulet et al. (2001), in monological structures, moves uttered by the same speaker share interactive links, such as argument, counter-argument, conclusion, or reformulation (cf. Roulet et al. 2001: 172).

(4) Certes je ne vaux pas les deux autres, mais je t’aime autant. (Sand, 1831)
     ‘Sure, I am not as good as the two others, but I love you as much.’

     The first move of this sequence is a counter-argument in relation to a conclusion expressed in the second move. Any of the markers of the previous dialogical structure could be used instead of *certes* in (4).

(5) D’accord/En effet/Effectivement/Soit, je ne vaux pas les deux autres, mais je t’aime autant.

\(^4\) The examples come from the FRANTEXT database. Any use that seems natural in contemporary French, regardless of date, is also taken into account. The English translation always corresponds to a word-by-word translation, as it is relevant to stay as close as possible to the original French version.
The fact that these markers have both uses (monological and dialogical) addresses the question of their value in each configuration. Do they have the same value or do they endorse a different value in monological and dialogical configurations? Even if it is clear that concessive interpretation is only possible in the monological configuration, it is assumed here that the markers have the same value in both discourse patterns. This does not mean that any of them convey the same meaning, or that they are always substitutable by each other.

13.3 Discourse features of the polyphonic conception of concession

Before proceeding to the semantic analysis of each marker, I will give a definition of discourse features of the sequence conveying a concessive interpretation. This definition relies on the tools of Carel (2011: 296ff.) in her theory of argumentative polyphony. She assumes that any content can be associated to a ‘mode de présentation dans le discours’ (‘way of presentation in discourse’). To define the latter, she uses notions specifying the centrality of the content in the discourse flow and the way it is uttered, i.e. the ton ‘tonality’. Three of these notions will be used here: two concerning the centrality of some content in the discourse flow and one the tonality in which some content is presented. The notion of accordé ‘accepted’ or pris en charge ‘endorsed’ relate to the first parameter, the notion of conçu ‘conceived’ relates to the second. They are defined as follows:

Un contenu est présenté comme accordé quand il est introduit et accepté sans constituer pour autant le centre du texte. Il est présenté comme pris en charge quand il est mis au centre du texte. Un contenu est énoncé sur le mode du conçu quand le locuteur déclare concevoir le contenu à l’occasion même de son énonciation. (Carel, to appear)

‘A content is presented as accepted when it is introduced and accepted without constituting the focus of the discourse. It is presented as endorsed when it is the focus of the discourse. A content is uttered in a “conceived way”, when the speaker says that he framed it simultaneously to the enunciation act.’

The configuration which gives rise to a concessive interpretation has the following characteristics: it is formed by two constituents:

- a content said [p]
- a content said [q]

which are differently presented in the discourse as:

- the [p] content is:
  - accordé ‘accepted’ by the speaker
  - conçu ‘conceived’ by another speaker
- the [q] content is pris en charge ‘endorsed’ by the speaker.
The ideal configuration making visible the concessive interpretation is exemplified by the following discourse:

(6) \[L_1: \text{Je trouve Lucie gentille.}[\text{The content Lucie gentille is presented as conceived}\]  
\[L_2: \text{Lucie est gentille, c’est incontestable, mais elle est déjà mariée.} \text{[The content Lucie gentille is accepted, i.e. is not introduced by L}_2 \text{ as the focus of the discourse. The content Lucie déjà mariée is endorsed, i.e. introduced as the focus of the discourse.]}

‘L_1: I think that Lucy is nice
L_2: Lucy is nice, this is unquestionable, but she is already married.’

Such a configuration is compatible with any of the markers listed in (2) and (3):

(7) \[L_1: \text{Je trouve Lucie gentille.} [p] \]
\[L_2: \text{Certes/En effet/Effectivement/D’accord/Soit}, \text{ Lucie est gentille} [p], \text{ mais elle est déjà mariée} [q] \]

‘L_1: I think that Lucy is nice
L_2: [Certes/En effet/Effectivement/D’accord/Soit], Lucy is nice, but she is already married.’

All of them keep intact the properties that they have in their dialogical use. They can all be used to express the agreement of the speaker in relation to the content conceived by the first speaker:

(8) \[\text{Je trouve Lucie gentille.} [p] \]
\[\text{Certes/En effet/Effectivement/D’accord/Soit} \]

The difference with the dialogical structure is that, in the monological one, the second speaker adds, after [p], new information that expresses the reason why the latter content is accepted and not endorsed. In the frame of relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson (1986), one could say that [p] is accepted, because it is less relevant than [q]. Any monological configuration in which these adverbials can be used corresponds to this general pattern. In this regard, if one refers to the difference made in the introduction between discourse and pragmatic markers, the correlates certes/en effet etc. . . . mais can be considered as both a pragmatic marker and a discourse marker. They focus on discourse structure by specifying a discourse relation of counter-argumentation, but they also focus on interaction alluding to a potential prior discourse.

According to this analysis, the concessive value in polyphonic sense is free from any kind of opposition between [p] and [q] contents. The contrast, which gives rise to

* The terms in italics are translated from Carel (to appear).
the concessive value, concerns the manner of presentation of [p] and [q], not their argumentative orientation. Such an assumption addresses the question of the semantic contribution of the second marker of the concessive sequence: in particular, how is it possible to take into account the contribution of mais which is considered as the emblematic marker of argumentative opposition in the seminal article of Anscombre and Ducrot (1977)? And, further, how to explain the necessity of mais in such structures, if it does not serve to underline an opposition? Both questions will be discussed in the two following sections.

13.4 The independence of concessive value from an argumentative opposition

It is assumed here that the contribution of mais in a concessive construction is to indicate that there is a contrast between the way in which [p] and [q] are presented in the discourse. This assumption is based on four clues.

First, in some configuration, a concessive interpretation is available and mais does not underline any kind of opposition.

(9) un pauvre diable de protestant me disait, il y a quelques jours, après combien d'autres, qu'on voyait en moi beaucoup de haine. Les paroles de cet homme, d'ailleurs bienveillant, me sont revenues, ce matin, je ne sais pourquoi. Oui, c'est vrai, je suis plein de haine depuis mon enfance, et nul n'a aimé les autres hommes plus naïvement que je n'ai fait. Mais j'ai abhorré les choses, les institutions, les lois du monde. J'ai haï le monde infiniment, et les expériences de ma vie n'ont servi qu'à exaspérer cette passion. (Bloy, 1900)

‘A poor devil of Protestant told me a few days ago, after many others, that one could see in me a lot of hate. I remember now, I don’t know why, the words of this man, who was otherwise kindly. Yes, it is true, I am full of hate since my childhood, and no one has loved the other men as naively as me. But I abhorred the things, the institutions, and the laws of this world. I have hated the world without end, and the experiences of my life have strengthened this passion.’

This excerpt illustrates the discourse pattern of concession. The content italicized: je suis plein de haine depuis mon enfance = [p] is presented as conceived by a first speaker who is mentioned as un pauvre diable de protestant me disait. This content is also presented as accepted by the speaker, as underlined by the use of oui, c’est vrai. It is followed by a content presented as endorsed, introduced by mais, which confirms what is said in the [p] sequence: j’ai abhorré les choses, les institutions, les lois du monde. J’ai haï… It is clear that in such a configuration, the contribution of mais does not concern an argumentative opposition. Instead, it is possible to say,
following Carel (2011: 333), that ‘it indicates that the first segment is only accordé “accepted”’. It is even possible to say that the role of mais is limited to signalling that the previous content is not endorsed.

Second, any marker which is able to underline the contrast regarding the way the two contents are presented could occur in concessive configurations. For instance, in the following discourse, toujours est-il que, il reste que, en attendant ‘it remains that’ has the same function as mais, underlining the fact that the constituent it introduces is the one which counts according to the speaker.

(10) ‘Qui?—où?—le Roi !—Je ne le vois pas;—je vous jure que je ne l’aperçois pas.’
    ‘Il faut que vous soyez aveugle.’
    ‘C’est bien possible. Toujours est-il que je ne vois qu’une foule tumultueuse d’idiots et de fous qui s’empressent de se prosterner devant un gigantesque caméléopard, et qui s’évertuent à déposer un baiser sur le sabot de l’animal. (Baudelaire, 1857)
    “Who? Where?—The king! I don’t see him; I swear to you that I don’t see him.”
    “You must be blind.”
    “It is possible. The fact remains that I only see a tumultuous crowd of idiots who hasten to prostrate themselves before a huge cameleopard [giraffe], and who strive to plant a kiss on the hoof of the animal.”’

(11) Si mon oncle t’a mis là-dedans, c’est qu’il avait ses raisons. Il se trompe peut-être. Personne n’est infaillible. Toujours est-il que ton devoir est de lui obéir. (Gibeau, 1952)
    ‘If my uncle involved you in this, he might have good reasons. Nobody is perfect. It remains that your duty is to obey him.’

(12) J’y attache la plus grande importance, sachant quelle résonance prennent souvent de telles rencontres. Certes, les circonstances ne leur confèrent pas le caractère dramatique qu’elles avaient eu en d’autres temps et les facilités actuelles de déplacement les banalisent. Il reste que, […] , les séjours à Paris de beaucoup de chefs d’État […] forment la trame et l’illustration de notre redressement mondial. (de Gaulle, 1970)
    ‘I attach the greatest importance to it, knowing what resonance these meetings may have. To be sure, the circumstances do not give them the dramatic character they may have had at other times, and today’s ease of movement make them common. The fact remains that… the sojourns in Paris of many heads of state… are the basis and the evidence of the improvement in our international position.’

(13) Quand ils auront été échaudés une ou deux fois, ils apprendront peut-être à se taire… en attendant, tout le monde est au courant dans le village, et on n’a pas souvent du monde venant du dehors dans cette région. (Triplet, 1945)
'When they have been frightened once or twice, they will perhaps learn to shut up... the fact remains that everybody is informed in the village, and outsiders do not often visit this region.'

In these configurations, which have all a concessive interpretation, *mais* could be used with the same function:

(14) C’est bien possible. *Mais* je ne vois qu’une foule tumultueuse d’idiots et de fous qui s’empressent de se prosterner devant un gigantesque caméléopard, et qui s’évertuent à déposer un baiser sur le sabot de l’animal (Baudelaire, 1857)

'It is possible. But I see a tumultuous crowd of idiots and fools who rush to worship a giant cameleopard, and strive to place a kiss on the hoof of the animal.' (cf. example (10))

(15) Si mon oncle t’a mis là-dedans, c’est qu’il avait ses raisons. Il se trompe peut-être. *Mais* ton devoir est de lui obéir.

'If my uncle put you in there, he had his reasons. He may be wrong. Nobody is infallible. But it is your duty to obey him.' (cf. example (11))

(16) Certes, les circonstances ne leur confèrent pas le caractère dramatique qu’elles avaient eu en d’autres temps et les facilités actuelles de déplacement les banalissent. *Mais*, les séjours à Paris de beaucoup de chefs d’État... forment la trame et l’illustration de notre redressement mondial.

‘Of course, the circumstances do not give them the drama they had in other times and current travel facilities trivialize them. But the sojourn in Paris of many heads of state... forms the framework and the picture of our global recovery.’ (cf. example (12))

(17) Quand ils auront été échaudés une ou deux fois, ils apprendront peut-être à se taire... *mais*, tout le monde est au courant dans le village, et on n’a pas souvent du monde venant du dehors dans cette région.

‘When they have been burned once or twice, they may learn to be silent... but everyone is informed in the village, and outsiders don’t often come to this region.’ (cf. example (13))

Third, *mais*, in non concessive structures, can be used without any relation or counter-argumentation. For instance, the *mais* labelled ‘mais de surréalisation’ by García Negroni (2003) is clearly non-adversative.

(18) Soirée, venons à l’essentiel, avec Gary. Très en forme, très paisible, ayant une mine superbe et n’ayant plus aucun problème d’élocution. Peut à nouveau faire de la moto. Beau, *mais* beau! ... Plus beau encore... (Lagarce, 2007)

‘Evening, back to basics, with Gary. In very good shape, very calm, with a beautiful face, and without any elocution problem. Able again to drive a motorbike. Handsome, but handsome! ... Still more handsome...’
The idea of contrast between two ways of introducing \(p\) and \(q\) in the discourse can take into account such a use of \textit{mais}. The first \textit{beau} ‘handsome’ is presented as agreed and the second as endorsed. The contrast conveys the hyperbolic interpretation according to which the protagonist is considered as particularly attractive.

Other uses of \textit{mais} share this non-adversative value. In some sequences, \textit{mais} introduces an adjunction to some previous utterance whose function can vary. In the following example, \textit{mais} re-introduces the object \textit{mot} ‘word’ afterwards to strengthen it.

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(19)] Oui, vous aurez un mot, \textbf{mais} rien qu’un mot. J’ai du monde. (Lespinasse, 1776)
\end{enumerate}

‘Yes, you will have a word, \textbf{but} nothing but a word. I have guests.’

Here again, \textit{mais} marks a contrast between the two occurrences of ‘word’.

Last, the use of \textit{mais} is necessary in some configuration involving a counter-argumentative interpretation, whereas in others still involving a counter-argumentative interpretation it is not.

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(20)] \textit{C’est vrai que} c’est attachant, un enfant \((=p)\), \textbf{mais} le plaisir se paie cher : en charges, en limitations de ressources et de libertés \((=q)\). (Bazin, 1970)
\end{enumerate}

‘It’s true that a child is appealing, \textbf{but} the pleasure is expensive: in charges, in limitation of means, of freedom.’

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(21)] ‘Mama, ça y est, j’ai un amoureux je te dis, c’est lui mon amoureux.’
\end{enumerate}

‘C’est pas vrai!’ protesta Olivier.

‘\textit{C’est vrai que} c’est pas vrai \((=p)\), \textbf{mais} t’es mon amoureux quand même, mon amoureux pour de rire \((=q)\)!’ (Sabatier, 1985)

‘“Mummy, that’s it, I have a lover, I say, he is \textbf{my} lover.”

“It’s not true,” protested Oliver

“\textit{It’s true that} it’s not true, \textbf{but} you are still my lover, my pretend lover!”’

The use of \textit{c’est vrai que} ‘it is true that’ indicates that \([p]\) has already been conceived. Thus it produces a contrast concerning the way of presentation of \(q\). Such a contrast must be marked by \textit{mais}. Therefore, the suppression of \textit{mais} produces a problem of coherence.

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(22)] \textit{C’est vrai que} c’est attachant, un enfant, le plaisir se paie cher : en charges, en limitations de ressources et de libertés.
\end{enumerate}

‘\textit{It is true that} it is endearing, a child, the pleasure pays dearly: in terms of resource limitations and freedoms.’ (cf. example (20))

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(23)] “Mama, ça y est, j’ai un amoureux je te dis, c’est lui mon amoureux…”
\end{enumerate}

“C’est pas vrai!” protesta Olivier.

?\textit{C’est vrai que} c’est pas vrai, t’es mon amoureux \textit{quand même}, mon amoureux pour de rire!

\(^6\) The diacritic ‘?‘ is used when the sequence is not very natural.
The fact that *mais* cannot be removed in such contexts (where the counter-argumentative interpretation is clearly accessible) remains unexplained if *mais* does not mark the contrast between the way in which *p* and *q* are introduced in discourse. *Il est vrai que* indicates that *p* is previously conceived. It thus does not have the same discourse status as *q*. The speaker has to indicate how she takes into account the *p* content. *Mai* allows her to do that by presenting *p* and *q* on two different enunciative levels.

When there is no marker attributing *p* a particular discourse status, the counter-argumentative relationship can be obtained with or without *mais*:

(24) Que voulez-vous que je vous dise? L’homme est mauvais, l’homme est difforme. Le papillon est réussi, l’homme est raté. Dieu a manqué cet animal-là.

(25) Que voulez-vous que je vous dise? L’homme est mauvais, l’homme est difforme. Le papillon est réussi, mais l’homme est raté. Dieu a manqué cet animal-là.

‘What do you want me to say? Man is evil, man is deformed. The butterfly is a success, man is a failure. God failed with that animal.’

Such a contrast shows that the contribution of *mais* does not concern the counter-argumentative relationship, but the way in which *p* and *q* are taken into account by the speaker. When *p* is presented by a marker such as *certes, peut-être*… as already conceived, *p* and *q* have to be presented as pertaining to two different enunciative levels. Thus, the use of *mais* is necessary. Otherwise, this contrast has not to be specified, and the counter-argumentative relationship can be inferred by the content of *p* and *q*.

13.5 The function of the first marker

If a concessive interpretation is due to one particular discourse configuration, what sort of contribution does the adverbial occurring in the initial constituent bring? It helps the understanding of [p] as conveying a content which has been conceived by a previous speaker. If such an interpretation is given by the context, the concessive interpretation is accessible without any marker. Let us go back to the ideal configuration illustrated by (7). In such a configuration, the use of a marker in the initial constituent is not requested for the concessive interpretation:

(26) L1: Je trouve Lucie gentille. [p] *I think that Lucy is nice*

L2: Lucie est gentille [p], mais elle est déjà mariée [q]. Lucy is nice, but she is already married

L1: I think that Lucy is nice.

L2: Lucy is nice, but she is already married.
The dialogical structure allows one to understand \[p\] uttered by the second speaker as conceived by the first. But the fact that the second speaker endorses \[q\] and accepts \[p\] has to be marked. Such an indication cannot be inferred without any marking:

\[(27)\] L1: Je trouve Lucie gentille. \[p\]
L2: Lucie est gentille \[p\], elle est déjà mariée \[q\].
\[\text{‘L1: ‘I think that Lucy is nice}
\[\text{L2: Lucy is nice, she is already married.’}\\

The second speaker has to signal that there is a contrast regarding the way of presentation between the two constituents of her utterance. Therefore a marker is required at their juncture. It can be \textit{mais}, but also a marker such as \textit{toujours est-il que}, \textit{en attendant} . . . as discussed above:

\[(28)\] L1: Je trouve Lucie gentille. \[p\]
L2: Lucie est gentille \[p\], en attendant / toujours est-il qu’elle déjà mariée \[q\].
\[\text{‘L1: ‘I think that Lucy is nice}
\[\text{L2: Lucy is nice, it remains true that she is already married.’}\\

When there is no dialogical context that allows one to understand the first constituent as already conceived by a previous speaker, a marker has to convey this indication. Some adverbials indicating an agreement in a dialogical structure (\textit{certes}, \textit{soit}, \textit{d’accord}) can convey by themselves such a function in a monological structure, others need a larger context to be correctly interpreted (\textit{en effet}, \textit{effectivement}):

\[(29)\] \textit{Certes/D’accord/Soit/? En effet/? Effectivement}/, Lucie est gentille, mais elle est déjà mariée. […]
\[\text{‘Lucy is nice, but she is already married’}\\

To sum up, the markers occurring in the first constituent can help the understanding of \[p\] as a content previously conceived, but they do not contribute to this function in the same way: \textit{en effet} and \textit{effectivement} need a larger context to convey such information, whereas \textit{certes}, \textit{soit}, and \textit{d’accord} can convey it by themselves.

13.6 Different nuances of the concessive value according to the selected marker

13.6.1 \textit{Certes}, \textit{en effet}, \textit{and} \textit{effectivement}

The role of the marker occurring in the first constituent can help the understanding of \[p\] as a content conceived by a first speaker. But the markers differ in relation to the clues that help the understanding of \[p\] as conceived. Some markers need more contextual clues than other.
How does a concessive value emerge?

With *en effet* or *effectivement*, the clues of [p] as a content ‘conceived by the first speaker’ have to be more accessible than with *certes*.

(30) M. de Sacy s’approche: ‘Ne crains rien, mon garçon. Ce n’est pas ta faute. *Certes*, tu n’aurais pas dû faire feu sans un ordre. Mais ce n’est pas toi qui as fait ricocher la balle; c’est le Bon Dieu.’ (Yourcenar, 1988)

‘Mr de Sacy comes close: “Don’t be afraid, my boy. It is not your fault. To be sure, you shouldn’t have shot without an order. But it is not you who made the bullet ricochet; it is God.”’

The use of *effectivement* or *en effet* needs a richer context to be accessed as natural:

(31) M. de Sacy s’approche: ‘Ne crains rien, mon garçon. Ce n’est pas ta faute. *En effet/Effectivement*, tu n’aurais pas dû faire feu sans un ordre. Mais ce n’est pas toi qui as fait ricocher la balle; c’est le Bon Dieu.’

If the structure is integrated in a dialogical context, the use of the adverbial becomes fully natural:

(32) Je n’aurais jamais dû faire feu sans ordre! M. de Sacy s’approche: ‘Ne crains rien, mon garçon. Ce n’est pas ta faute. *En effet/Effectivement*, tu n’aurais pas dû faire feu sans un ordre. Mais ce n’est pas toi qui as fait ricocher la balle; c’est le Bon Dieu.’

‘I should not shoot without an order. Mr de Sacy comes close: “Don’t be afraid, my boy. It is not your fault. *Indeed*, you shouldn’t have shot without an order. But it is not you who made the bullet ricochet; it is God.”’

It is easier for *certes* to present [p] as conceived than for *effectivement* or *en effet*. This characteristic is due to the dialogical properties of *certes*. When used as an answer to an assertion, *certes* conveys the idea that the state of affairs that it confirms is already salient in information state, as shown in Rossari (2008). For instance, in the following dialog, *certes* indicates that the question has to be interpreted as rhetoric. It conveys an obvious state of affairs according to the second speaker.

(33) L’espoir de vie des hommes, eh bien, dans cette contrée, elle est de 25 ans. Celle des femmes de 18.

“But have no measures been taken to combat the famine? *Certainly, certainly*. They tell us there are, they describe them.”

The fact that measures have been taken to struggle the famine is presented by *certes* as obvious. With *en effet* or *effectivement* the interpretation is very different. The question is not understood as rhetoric:
L’espoir de vie des hommes, eh bien, dans cette contrée, elle est de 25 ans. Celle des femmes de 18.
Mais n’y a-t-il pas eu des mesures prises contre la famine? En effet/Effectivement. On nous les raconte. On nous les décrit.

“The life expectancy of men in this country is 25 years. That of women is 18.”

“But have no measures been taken to combat the the famine?” “Indeed. They tell us there are, they describe them”.

Therefore, their use is difficult to interpret in such a context. When they are used to react to a question, they indicate that the addressee shares the same doubt as the speaker. This is very clear in the following configuration:

‘Je ne sais pas trop où les poser.’

‘Foutez-les sur la caisse, dit l’Asperge, voyant mon hésitation.’

‘Mais ils sont mouillés et ça risque de . . . faire des ronds, laisser des traces, je veux dire.’

‘Et alors?’

‘Et alors? En effet.’ (Benoziglio, 1980)

“I don’t know where to put them”

“Stick them on the box,” said Asperge, seeing my hesitation.

“But they are wet and it might make . . . circles, traces, I mean.”

“So?”

“So? Indeed.”

With en effet, the speaker indicates that he/she shares the doubt expressed by Et alors? She restates the question to underline the fact that she has no answer either.

Taking into account their dialogical use makes it possible to explain their function in the concessive structure. Certes indicates that there is some information already available in common. Such an allusion enables one to understand the configuration as conveying the first content as previously conceived. As such content is already available, it is not presented as central in discourse and can therefore be interpreted as accepted.

En effet or effectivement do not share this property. In a dialogical context such as (35), as-ô, they indicate that the speaker shares the doubt of the addressee. They do not indicate that the state of affairs alluded to by the question is already available in information state, but that the doubt expressed by the question is shared, as already noticed in Rossari (2008). More abstractly, it means that the information state represented by the utterance of the first speaker is compatible/coherent with the addressee’s representation (second speaker). With such a function, more clues than certes are required in concessive structures to indicate that [p] has already been conceived, as shown by the contrast between (30), (31), and (32).
But *en effet* and *effectivement* have another particularity in relation to *certes*. They can introduce constituents as mere justification of previous ones. How can this characteristic be explained in relation to their dialogical functioning? It is possible to show that such configurations consist of shortened concessive structures. When \[p\] is not followed by *mais*, the contrast between content accepted and content endorsed disappears. As discussed above, such a contrast is in charge of *mais*: cf. the comments on examples (20, 21) vs (22, 23). Since *en effet* and *effectivement* do not themselves confer on \[p\] an interpretation of concealed content, they only convey a confirmative value (as in their dialogical use) in relation to a previous constituent \[x\]. The constituent \[p\] is then understood as the reason motivating the confirmation of \[x\]. This is clearly exemplified in the following:

(36) *J’ay veu le livre des passions du Pere Senaut de l’oratoire. En effet* il écrit bien \[p\], *mais* es morales chrestiennes du Père Yves, Capucin, qui a fait 4 volumes français de la theologie naturelle […] n’en cedent rien audit Senaut \[q\]. (Mersenne, 1641)

’I have seen the book of passions of Father Senaut of the oratory. Indeed he writes well, but the Christian morals of Father Yves, Capucin, who has written 4 French volumes of natural theology . . . are as good as those of Father Senaut.’

(37) *On dira sans doute que ces peuples ne seront pas toujours en guerre. En effet*, il y aura des intervalles de paix \[p\]: *mais* dans ces intervalles, on ne réparera pas tous les maux que la guerre aura faits . . . \[q\]

’It will certainly be said that these peoples will always be at war. Indeed, there will be peaceful times, but at such times one will not heal all the injuries inflicted by the war will not be healed.’

(38) *J’ay veu le livre des passions du Pere Senaut de l’oratoire. En effet* il écrit bien.

’I have seen the book of passions of Father Senaut of the oratory. Indeed he writes well.’

(39) *On dira sans doute que ces peuples ne seront pas toujours en guerre. En effet*, il y aura des intervalles de paix.

’It will doubtless be said that these people will not always be at war. Indeed, there will be intervals of peace’

The first two examples show the concessive functioning of *en effet*. The italicized sequence allows one to situate \[p\] in a discourse where a previous speaker could have conceived such a content. The concessive interpretation can thus emerge: \[p\] is interpreted as previously conceived and is also interpreted as accepted thanks to the use of *mais* that introduces the contrast with \[q\] (which is endorsed).
When *mais* and *[q]* are suppressed, the concessive value disappears. The adverbial is understood as a confirmation of a previous information state that is represented by the italicized sequence. In such a state, there is a hypothesis which can be reconstructed, such as: ‘the Father is a good writer, such peoples are not always in war, said [x].’ The [p] content is then understood as the reason motivating the confirmation of [x] expressed by *en effet*. Such an interpretation is available in (38) and (39).

Such a functioning is particularly exemplary to illustrate the plurality of the discourse planes on which a marker can operate. *En effet* and *effectivement* operate on three planes which can be more or less salient according to the context they occur in. When they introduce a justification, they seem more concerned with the textual level of discourse organization; when they introduce a concessive sequence, with the social cohesion dimension because of the allusion to a prior discourse; and when they express an agreement, with the personal stance dimension. But all three levels are always co-present in the functioning of these markers.

13.6.2 D’accord or soit

When used in a dialogical structure, *d’accord* or *soit* act on the illocutionary force of the previous utterance. Such an illocutionary functioning make them always allude to some previous request when used in monological structures. The use of *d’accord* in (40) shows the property of this adverbial to allude to a previous request.

(40) Mélanger, c’est ma tendance, dans la première partie vous avez vu. Aucun ordre, tout est mélangé, incestueux *d’accord* c’est ma structure mentale [p], … je le sens. (Angot, 1999)

‘I tend to mix, you’ve seen it in the first part. No order, everything is mixed, incestuous all right, it is my mental structure… I feel it.’

*Soit* could be used instead of *d’accord* with the same function:

(41) Mélanger, c’est ma tendance, dans la première partie vous avez vu. Aucun ordre, tout est mélangé, incestueux *soit* c’est ma structure mentale [p], […] je le sens.

‘I tend to mix, you’ve seen it in the first part. No order, everything is mixed, incestuous all right, it is my mental structure… I feel it.’

By using *soit* or *d’accord*, the speaker indicates that she shares the diagnostic about a mess in her mental structure. The use of *d’accord* is then consistent with a concessive interpretation, by building a potential request that could be expressed as ‘you have to accept that your mental structure is a mess’, to which it reacts. The [p] content is thus presented as previously conceived. This is why *d’accord* or *soit* can give rise to a concessive interpretation in contexts where *en effet*, *effectivement*, or *certes* could not:
(42) Tu veux me parler? Soit! Mais devant Joë, cette fois! (Martin du Gard, 1932)

‘Do you want to talk to me? OK! But in front of Joë, this time!’

Là, je refusai tout net. Le type aux longs cheveux eut un sourire énigmatique:
‘Tu le refuses aujourd’hui? D’accord. Mais dès que ma chronique sera parue
dans Rock et Folk, tu reviendras le chercher en courant!’ (Manceuvre, 1985)

‘There, I refused resolutely. The guy with long hair smiled mysteriously. “You
refuse it today? All right. But as soon as my chronicle is published in Rock and
Folk, you’ll run back to get it!”’

(43) Tu veux me parler???[En effet/Effectivement/Certes]! Mais devant Joë, cette
fois!

(44) Tu le refuses aujourd’hui???[En effet/Effectivement/Certes] Mais dès que ma
chronique sera parue dans Rock et Folk, tu reviendras le chercher en courant!

The use of d’accord or soit allows the speaker to express an agreement regarding
the illocutionary act expressed in her own question: the desire of the hearer to speak
to her in (42) and the refusal of the hearer to do something expressed in the question
(43). The other adverbials (En effet/Effectivement/Certes) are not interpreted as
conveying an agreement concerning the illocutionary act expressed by the question.
Their use seems therefore strange.

To sum up, even if these markers can operate simultaneously on different levels
of discourse organization, they differ in relation to their capacity to mark ‘speaker
or addressee relatedness’ (see Chapter 2, this volume). D’accord and soit allow the
speaker to refer to the illocution of the message whereas en effet, effectivement, and
certes allow reference to the content of it. The illocutionary feature gives these
markers the property of generating concessive interpretation in any monological
structure.

13.7 Diachronic perspectives

Does concessive interpretation result from a diachronic change in the meaning
or functioning of the marker? This study has assumed that concessive markers,
those which introduce the first constituent, convey the same value in monological
structures that they do in dialogical ones. What about this hypothesis in a diachronic
perspective? Have those markers had a prior dialogical use of agreement? The case
of certes and soit, whose concessive value seems the most conventionalized, will
be examined here. This analysis is based on four constructions from the 16th century,
found in FRANTEXT, which correspond to two different realizations of dialogical
(A and B) and monological (C and D) uses:
soit/certes as autonomous constituents (preceded and followed by a point) in dialogical structures;

(B) soit/certes directly followed by *mais* in dialogical structures;

(C) soit/certes directly followed by *mais* in monological structures (= p, soit/certes, mais q);

(D) soit/certes not directly followed by *mais* in monological structures (= soit/certes p, mais q). The latter pattern corresponds to the regular concessive sequence.

For each construction mentioned above, we give one example of early use and one example of most recent use.

(A) Example of early uses of *soit*:

(45) Valère: Mais quoi? L'honneur de vous connoître
Est un si grand bonheur, est un si doux plaisir,
Que de vous saluer j'avois un grand desir.
Sganarelle: Soit. (Molière, 1661).

‘Valère: But what? The honour to know you is such a delight, such a sweet pleasure that I really wanted to greet you.
Sganarelle: So be it.’

(A) Example of recent uses of *soit*:


‘“Have pity at least on your mother.” Stavroguiue, looking at his mother, and Gaganov. “So be it. I will give explanations. But I will give them in secret to Mr. Gaganov, who will understand me.”’

(B) Example of early uses of *soit*:

(47) Et comme il convient que je fasse respecter le nom que je vais porter, je m’engage de passer six mois, à commencer dès demain, dans une maison religieuse […]

‘And since I have to uphold the name I will bear, I commit to spending six months from tomorrow in a religious home. Written in Paris on 22 October 1755. Signed Defresne.
Answer. So be it, but this retirement seems quite useless …’
How does a concessive value emerge?

(B) Example of recent uses of *soit*:

(48) ‘Antoine, écoutez-moi, deux minutes encore!’

*Soit, mais* allez-y droit ou je vous plante là.’ (Garat, 2010)

‘“Antoine, listen to me, two more minutes!”

“OK, but get to the point or I leave immediately”.’

(C) Example of early uses of *soit*:

(49) ‘Où je ris, chante, et bois: le tout, par complaisance.’

‘Par complaisance, *soit*. *Mais* vous ne savez pas?’ (Piron, 1738)

‘“Where I laugh, sing, and drink: all the three by kindness.”

“By kindness, so be it. But you don’t know?”’

(C) Example of recent uses of *soit*:

(50) C’est une table rectangulaire, *soit, mais* c’est aussi une Table Ronde. (Roubaud, 2006)

‘It’s a rectangular table, OK, but it’s also a Round Table.’

(D) Example of early uses of *soit*:

(51) Aïrolo: Ça sent le renfermé. On est captif ici. Cette enceinte me fâche. Protégé, mais coffré. *Soit*, le gibet me lâche, mais la prison me tient . . . (Hugo, 1867)

‘Aïrolo: It smells musty. We are prisoners here. Protected, but prisoners.

*True*, the gallows have left me, but the prison is still there . . .”

(D) Example of recent uses of *soit*:

(52) *Soit*, c’est une idée des plus saugrenues que de se rendre là-bas en contrebande *mais*, après tout, elle est peu ou prou dans son droit de connaître le Mesnil: elle n’y entre pas en voleuse, puisqu’il appartient à sa famille. (Garat, 2010)

‘OK, it is a very strange idea to go there secretly, but, after all, she is more or less within her rights to know Mesnil: she does not go there as a thief, since it belongs to her family.’

The occurrences of *soit* as an autonomous unit are exclusively dialogical until the 18th century. The earliest monological occurrences of *soit* are those where it is directly followed by *mais* and where it concerns a constituent previously expressed by a first speaker, as in (50). Such sequences convey a strong dialogical interpretation. In monological configurations, the most frequent position for *soit* is the final one (*p, soit, mais q*), still used in contemporary French (cf. (51)). This also emphasizes its dialogical value: after expressing *p*, the speaker signals her agreement with what she has just said, and then adds *q*. It is rare to find it in the classical concessive configuration: *certes, p, mais q*. The first occurrences are from the 19th century (see example (52)).
The general tendency is the following: *soit* is more frequently used in dialogical structures, until the 18th century. This use continues in contemporary French, but it is enriched by uses of the D type, whose first occurrences are from the 19th, as in (52). Such a function is consistent with its verbal lexical source (*être*). As discussed in Chapter 2, the markers that are made of verbs are good candidates to convey intersubjective values and meanings. The occurrence of *soit* in dialogical structure in prior uses may be the result of its deverbal morphology. The same tendency can be noticed for *d’accord*, which derives from a verbal phrase (*être d’accord* ‘agree’). It is never used in regular concessive configuration (*d’accord, p, mais q*) before the 20th century.

(53) Emmanuel, … je n’avais pas compris combien c’était important pour toi. C’était important pour toi aussi. Pour nous. *D’accord*, c’était important, mais il faut que tu comprennes qu’il n’y a pas que toi, … (Carrère, 2007)

‘Emmanuel, … I did not understand how it was important for you. It was important for you also. For us. *I agree*, it was important, *but* you have to understand that there is not that you.’

(A) Example of early uses of *certes*:

(54) La solution politique, la voici: réconcilier ces deux frères. Est-ce possible? *Certes*. (Hugo, 1885)

‘The political solution, here it is: reconcile these two brothers. Is it possible? *Certainly*.’

(A) Example of recent uses of *certes*:


‘So, Borinka, you admit? I was right?’

‘Sure’. *

(B) Example of early uses of *certes*:

(56) ‘Ne trouvez-vous pas l’odeur de ce jardin bien délicieuse?’ *Certes, mais* ce mur … (Milosz, 1910)

‘Don’t you find the smell of this garden delicious?’

‘Certainly, but this wall …’

(B) Example of recent uses of *certes*:

(57) Achille: Oui, mais il n’est pas question de toi là-dedans, ni de moi. Aristote ne raisonne que sur des figures abstraites

La Tortue: *Certes, mais* nieras-tu être le champion de la rapidité? (Roubaud, 1997)

‘Achille: Yes, but it is not about you or me. Aristotle reasons only on abstract figures.

La Tortue: *Certainly, but* would you deny being the champion of speed?’
How does a concessive value emerge?

(C) Example of early uses of certes:

(58) Ô homme vieulx, les soubdars desormais Jeunes et fors te lassent certes, mais
Ta vigueur est resolute,... (Rabelais, 1552)

'O, old man, the soldiers now young and strong tire you, certainly, but your
strength is resolute'

(C) Example of recent uses of certes:

(59) En quelques mois, quelques semaines, je couche avec quatre femmes qui,
chacune à sa maniere, m'aiment. Femmes fantômes certes, mais elles ont
leur mot à dire sur moi. (Doubrovsky, 2011)

'In a few months, weeks, I sleep with four women, each of whom loves me
in her style. Ghost women, to be sure, but they all have something to say
about me.'

(D) Example of early uses of certes:

(60) Certes, je ne sçay, dit l'oste, mais à mon sont trois Allemens. (Vigneulles,
1515).

'Surely, I don't know, says the host, but in my opinion it seems to me that
there are three Germans.'

(D) Example of recent uses of certes:

(61) Personne ne pourra savoir si j'ai ou non tiré. Certes, il manquera un trou dans
la cible, mais ce sera parce que je l'aurai ratée. (Juliet, 1989)

'Nobody will be able to know if I shot or not. Certainly, a hole will be missing
on the target, but it will be because I would have failed.'

This brief overview of the occurrences of certes shows that before the 19th century,
unlike soit, it is always used with an assertion. The assertion can be reduced to oui or
non from the earliest occurrences until the most recent:

(62) Nicot: Et pourquoi? ne cognoit il pas mieux que le medecin ce qui luy est bon,
et ce qu'il pourroit bien manger?
Aubert: Non certes. (Brués, 1557)

'Nicot: And why? Doesn't he know better than the doctor what is good for
him, what he might eat?
Aubert: No, certainly.'

(63) Ai-je même le droit de demander la Vérité, si je considère cette vérité comme
un gain? Non certes. Si cette Vérité devient pour moi quelque chose dont je
tuisse tirer vanité? Non, non. (Queneau, 1940)

'May I ask for the Truth, if I consider it as a benefit? Certainly not. If this Truth
becomes for me something that I can boast of? No, no.'
The regular concessive sequence, *certes p, mais q*, occurs already in the 16th century. In this respect too, *certes* is different from *soit*, since the latter occurs in regular concessive structures only in the 19th century (see example (52)). At the same period, *certes* can also be used in complete concessive sequence (see example (61)). In more recent uses (from the 19th century) *certes* can occur as an autonomous constituent to express a dialogical agreement (see (55)). In the same period, it can be followed directly by *mais* (example (57)).

These observations correspond exactly to what is assumed in the diachronic analysis of Roriguez Somolinos (1995): *certes* is an equivalent of *certainement*. It differs from it because of the frequency of the uses where it is combined with *mais*. The co-occurrence *certainement + mais* is ten times less frequent than that of *certes + mais*, but it is as old (from the 16th century).7 Such a functioning is consistent with its adverbial lexical source. As pointed out by Ghezzi in Chapter 2, the markers that are made of adverbs 'seem to be more related to discourse structuring values'. The occurrence of *certes* in monological structure in prior uses may be the result of its adverbial origin. However, in spite of their original tendency, both *soit* and *certes* have acquired uses that cancel it. *Soit* has developed monological uses and *certes* dialogical ones.

13.8 Synthesis of diachronic perspective

It seems then that there is no evolution in the meaning of these markers, but an evolution in the way they are used in discourse. The monological use is prior to the dialogical one for *certes*, and it is the contrary for *soit*. This is due to their core meaning: *certes* is a sentence adverbial serving to strengthen an assertion, and *soit* is an illocutionary adverb serving to express an agreement. The development concerns their exploitation in discourse: a dialogical adverb (such as *soit*) tends to be used in a monological way, and a monological one such as *certes* tend to be used dialogically. Their concessive use is not the result of an evolution in their meaning, but the result of their integration in one peculiar discourse configuration which corresponds to the definition given for the concessive interpretation illustrated by example (6).

13.9 Conclusion

The concessive value of a discourse results from a contrast between a content presented as previously conceived and thus accepted and a content presented as endorsed. The correlate markers helps to access this interpretation, by giving to [p] the status of already conceived for the first marker (*certes, en effet, effectivement,*
How does a concessive value emerge?

d’accord, soit) and the status of accepted for [p] and endorsed for [q] for the second marker (usually mais). None of the markers can be considered as conveying a concessive value, but any one of them helps it to emerge, by assigning to [p] and [q] the right discourse status.

The markers introducing the p sequence differ, on the one hand, in relation to the illocutionary or content level of the utterance to which they react and, on the other, in relation to the way they react to the information state expressed by the addressee’s utterance. Certes indicates that information state represented by the previous utterance is obvious (probably because of its strengthening value), whereas en effet and effectivement indicate that the speaker shares the same one. D’accord and soit react to the illocutionary force of this utterance.

The synchronic and diachronic analysis of these markers show that linguistic change is not only a question of pragmatization (including or not grammaticalization), but a wider phenomenon which relies inter alia on the stylistic habits of the speakers, such as a seemingly recent one consisting in colouring a speaker’s own discourse with dialogical features.