



# Discourse particles, interaction and enunciative approach

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to provide a new perspective on the study of discourse particles by analyzing some elements of metaoperational grammar as a starting point. Specifically, the approach will be focused on the application of three fundamental criteria for the enunciative analysis of utterances (information, the utterer's attitudes, and reference to the speaker). This perspective will help to explore the explanatory potential of this grammatical approach in the study of discourse particles in the Spanish language.

## KEYWORDS

discourse particles, enunciative analysis, metaoperational grammar, Spanish grammar

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to reflect upon some of the descriptive problems regarding discourse particles in the current study of linguistics. It suggests that by reinterpreting the linguistic study of discourse particles from a communicative perspective, and taking into account the metalinguistic operations involved in the articulation of utterances, the potential provided by the enunciative approach<sup>1</sup> for the analysis of discourse particles in the Spanish language can be explored. Although this field has been extensively written about, especially in the last two decades, no studies seem to have been conducted on discourse particles<sup>2</sup> from an enunciative perspective. These types of explorations suggest new avenues for the explanatory potential of this approach, and will also serve as a complement to existing contributions and, to a certain extent, to mitigate some of the deficiencies in the analysis of these elements in current linguistic studies. Given that the communicative factor is essential in understanding the operation of these units, and that they are directly linked to linguistic use, the study of discourse particles will be based on the following hypothesis: that it is possible to decipher numerous grammatical processes in languages according to two fundamental vectors for organizing information. These are: the relationship between utterer and utterance; and the utterer's attitudes (and complementarily, the relationship between

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1 The theoretical assumptions of this study are related to the philosophy of linguistic analysis developed within the scope of metaoperational grammar by Adamczewski (cf., *inter alia*, 1983a, 1983b, 1991, 1992, 1995, 2002) and Matte Bon (*inter alia*, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 1999, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b), among others.

2 I use the term 'discourse particle' in the sense proposed by Portolés (2008: 181), as a hypernym of terms like 'discourse marker', 'connective', 'discourse operator', etc. 'Discourse particle' is a more neutral term and encompasses the others; therefore, it is more appropriate to use it to refer to the different elements studied here from a broader perspective.

speaker and hearer, which may be important in the description of some typically conversational communication processes). Few analyses have used these patterns for the study of discourse particles. And those that have used them, have obtained little in the way of overall findings to expand the current research perspectives and contribute to a better understanding of these units in languages. In my view, the study of the different relationships that exist in connection with the information vector and the speakers' vector can help clarify the functions and uses of discourse particles (both intralinguistically and interlinguistically), and provide some insights into their similarities and differences in meaning and combinatorial potential, among others.

Reference to extralinguistic reality is a constant problem in linguistic analysis. Linguistic descriptions, and particularly grammatical descriptions, are plagued with constant allusions to reality, as demonstrated by the use of countless terms that are barely conceptualized or lead to confusion, and point to the frail boundary between language and the world. The grammatical terms that now come to mind, such as *subject*, *direct object*, *indirect object*, *adjunct*, etc., which our grammatical tradition commonly uses to refer to unclear concepts, are failed attempts to find explanations of what happens in language (in the linguistic construct) through the mirror that reflects this, that is, the reality it interprets or of which it speaks. The truth is that languages speak of the world around them and have a referential dimension: *niño* 'child', *coche* 'car', *amor* 'love', *correr* 'to run', and expressions like *Paula pinta soles* 'Paula paints suns', *No quiero nada de comer* 'I don't want anything to eat', *Vente a casa esta noche* 'Come home tonight', etc., all refer to actual events; they are, so to speak, ways of encoding and interpreting real events in a particular language that logically differ from the interpretations made in other languages. The very existence of different languages is in itself proof that language and the world do not fully identify with one another; knowing two or more languages is sufficient to see that the semantic field to which the lexicon of each language alludes is coded intralinguistically, and depends on the lexical relationships between its elements, regardless of the associations and relationships that may occur in the lexicon of another language, be it neighboring or distant. Languages, therefore, interpret reality, but at the same time, are constructs that exist outside of them, whose operating mechanisms should be studied in and of themselves.

In addition to this referential facet, languages come coated in a metalinguistic dimension that I would like to emphasize here. This is frequently overlooked in linguistic analysis, possibly not because it lacks importance, but rather, due to the difficulty of its interpretation. A metalinguistic reference is clearly found in those elements that are hardly ever referred to (articles, prepositions, conjunctions...); but there is also a metalinguistic reference particularly in many other elements of the language which, if correctly analyzed, can provide clues as to this dual nature of utterances: firstly, their reference to the extralinguistic world; and, secondly, their reference to one's own language. Thus, language speaks of the extralinguistic world, but also speaks "of language itself, of what we say, or of our interaction with the hearer" (Matte Bon 1997: 10). The analysis of this metalinguistic aspect is especially interesting regarding its relationship to the elements being studied here, namely discourse particles. Discourse particles are elements originating from many diverse ver-





bal categories which, following a grammaticalization process, no longer have a referential dimension<sup>3</sup> and play a purely procedural role in the communication process; through these, we can help hearers to interpret our messages concerning the different aspects of the communicative act.

This study is not intended to conduct an exhaustive description of the system of Spanish discourse particles, but rather to explore the explanatory potential of some of these elements through an analysis of the most outstanding concepts and parameters of utterance grammar. This will enable a better characterization and definition of some similar pairs of particles in the Spanish language, which will undoubtedly enhance the specific description of each of these elements, so that it can be translated and introduced into lexicographical praxis in the coming years. These parameters will be analyzed below.

## 2. THE INFORMATION VECTOR

Speech can be considered—as aptly affirmed by Coseriu (1967: 286)—in three ways: as linguistic activity, as potential activity and as activity realized in its products. Speech (understood in a universal sense as a concrete linguistic activity) is always presented as a phenomenological fact, as a unique and unrepeatable activity in which one particular speaker communicates with a particular hearer. This teleological character that the Prague School attributed to linguistic activity, directed toward a specific purpose, is none other than communication itself.<sup>4</sup>

It can be said that when a particular individual decides to intentionally communicate with someone, they are subject to a number of environmental constraints that force them to contextualize their communication, in other words, to shape their verbal activity into a certain context or integrate it into that context. Specifically, this is what Coseriu called ‘extraverbal context’ (2007: 223–228), which includes any non-linguistic circumstances that speakers can perceive or have knowledge of. There are different subtypes of extraverbal contexts: a) physical (made up by things that are visible to the speakers, or by those to which a sign is immediately attached); b) empirical (which consists of objects or states of affairs known by the speakers at a particular time and place); c) natural (the entire known world as verbal context, i.e., all possible empirical contexts); d) practical or occasional (related to the instance of speech, i.e., the particular subjective or objective discourse situation); e) historical (the set of historical circumstances known to the speakers); and f) cultural (pertain-

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3 For a historiographical review of the conceptual background of discourse markers in Spanish grammar cf. Gaviño Rodríguez (2010), who investigates the conceptual evolution of discourse markers, as they are currently called in numerous studies, through interjection, conjunction and adverb.

4 As Mathesius argued, “language is a system of the means of expression, a system of signs, manifested in actual communication as the sum total of the possibilities available to the members of the same language community at a given time in a given place for the purpose of communication” (Trnka 1983: 249–250).

ing to the cultural tradition of a more or less defined community). The extraverbal context, therefore, has a strong impact on the relationship between speakers and helps their interaction move in a particular direction, depending on the circumstances surrounding the communicative process. However, to speak of communication is inevitably tantamount to an exchange of information, which is one of the most important vectors that articulate our verbal activity, and presents many different linguistic mechanisms.

## 2.1 NEW INFORMATION AND ACQUIRED INFORMATION

When we communicate, not everything that we transmit is new to the hearer. There is usually one portion of information that is new; however, alongside it, there is always some previously acquired information that refers either to the particular context or to prior information and is somehow reclaimed in our discourse with different intentions. There is a classic differentiation originally provided by Prague School linguists between the concepts of theme and rheme, which have been used to describe the information structure of utterances. They have been associated with known information and new information, respectively. These are the exact parameters that have been used for years by Adamczewski in his analysis of many grammatical phenomena,<sup>5</sup> organized into pairs based on the division between theme and rheme, which correspond to a binary opposition between an open paradigm and closed paradigm and serve to distinguish many pairs of elements through their informative character. According to Adamczewski, transfer of information has two stages (which he called phase 1 and phase 2) that constitute distinct ways of presenting information in discourse and which result in a binary opposition between elements: either 1) the elements are presented and introduced within the context, or 2) the elements are not presented, but rather already known; their existence is presupposed, either because they have previously appeared in the verbal context, or because they are part of our shared knowledge (extraverbal context):

(1) A: Tenemos que llevar 20 euros.

‘We have to bring 20 euros with us.’

B: Claro que hay que llevar 20 euros porque hay que pagar el viaje en autobús.  
‘Of course you have to bring 20 euros, because you need to pay for the bus ride.’

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5 He explained this through the simple idea that enunciative behavior can differ when analyzed through several pairs of elements in languages such as English (a/the, this/that, till/until, shall/will, nearly/almost, some/any, etc.) and French (un(e)/le, la, voici/voilà, Ø/bien, presque/quasi(ment), aussi/également, à/de, etc.) (cf. Adamczewski 1983a, 1983b, 1991, 2002) and Matte Bon (1997, 2006, 2008a, 2008b) reached the same conclusion by applying this to other pairs in Spanish (un(a)/el, la; hay/está(n), muy, mucho/tan, tanto, indicative/subjunctive, simple future / periphrastic future, etc.). The aim of this paper is to study the information vector, as well as the operations through which these pairs can occur in our language through the use of discourse particles, to demonstrate the potential that this model of analysis has in order to define and describe these elements.



- (2) A: Esa gente se fue de las viviendas después de la plaga de enfermedades.  
 ‘Those people left their homes after the epidemic of diseases that occurred.’  
 B: Después de lo sucedido, en efecto, se marcharon.  
 ‘Indeed, after what happened, they left.’
- (3) A: Son las diez de la mañana y Pedro no ha venido todavía.  
 ‘It’s 10 am and Pedro has not come yet.’  
 B: Al parecer, no ha venido hoy.  
 ‘It seems that he has not come in today.’
- (4) A: Tu hermano no está bien.  
 ‘Your brother is not okay.’  
 B: Por lo visto, quiere dejar el equipo.  
 ‘Apparently, he wants to leave the team.’

In the above utterances, each discourse particle has a distinct function as regards the information vector: in (1) and (2) the function of the particle is to reinforce a certain item of information that is already assumed in the context, in order to strengthen the statement made in the first part of the discourse: in (1), *claro* could not be used unless the information that we have to bring 20 euros had been included in the previous (verbal or extraverbal) context; similarly, in (2), the particle *en efecto* could only appear because reference had been made to the fact that some people had left their homes. In (3) and (4), the particles *al parecer* and *por lo visto* weaken the information that follows, as it is treated as information that was already shared, as in (3), which has a rhematic information structure (new or not assumed elements), and in (4), where the particle partially closes the previous part of discourse and proposes a new focus.

Another similar case is that of the pair *por lo tanto* and *de ahí (que)*, whose differences have traditionally been loosely defined based on the presence or absence of an argument that can be considered as evidence; this is an aspect that can be bound by the various circumstances that surround the extraverbal context of each communicative act, and does not seem to clarify the different uses of these markers in utterances like the following:

- (5) Llueve demasiado, por lo tanto, no iremos a pasear.  
 ‘It is raining too much, therefore, we will not go for a walk.’
- (6) Llueve demasiado, de ahí que no vayamos a pasear.  
 ‘It is raining too much, hence we will not go for a walk.’

Again, the way in which these markers operates varies depending on the information provided. In (5), *por lo tanto* introduces a consequence in phase 1 (terminology coined by Adamczewski), as new elements are presented in the discourse that provide the speaker with the first item of information (the fact that *no iremos a pasear*); the segment introduced by *de ahí* in (6) does not introduce any new information, since what is being spoken of is already known; the information *que no vayamos a pasear* is in



phase 2, because it was somehow already present in the discourse, either in the verbal or extraverbal context, and now only what is already known and shared by the speakers is taken up. This is also the reason for using the subjunctive in (6), which helps to better visualize the suggested interpretation; but even without using the subjunctive mood, the same analysis can be made, as shown in the following utterance, taken from the study by Martín Zorraquino and Portolés (1999: 4103):

- (7) Ese tipo es el culpable; de ahí, las muchas cosas que sabe.  
 ‘This guy is the culprit; therefore, he knows a lot about it.’

In the previous case, *de ahí* and *por lo tanto* are not interchangeable since, as in (6), the part of discourse that introduces *de ahí* is not new information, but rather a mere commentary on shared information about which the hearer already has some previous data.

The same differentiation operates with the use of many other particles. Thus, for example, some of the ‘reformulation discourse markers’, as they were traditionally called (*es decir, o sea, esto es, a saber*)<sup>6</sup> differ from markers used for rectification purposes (*mejor dicho, más bien, digo*) precisely in the kind of information that these types of particles present:

- (8) Está aquí todas las vacaciones, es decir, todo el verano.  
 ‘He is here for the entire vacation, that is to say, all summer.’
- (9) Hay que terminarlo todo a tiempo, o sea, hoy.  
 ‘We have to finish everything on time, in other words, today.’
- (10) No vamos a engañar a nadie, esto es, contaremos la verdad del asunto con pelos y señales.  
 ‘We will not fool anyone, that is, we will tell the whole truth.’
- (11) Mi cliente pasará por la vivienda a recoger todas sus pertenencias. A saber: la ropa, los cuadros, las joyas, la televisión y el equipo de música.  
 ‘My client will come to the house to collect all of his belongings. Namely: clothing, paintings, jewelry, the television and the stereo system.’
- (12) Ayer empezó a decir cosas en la calle, o mejor dicho, me empezó a insultar a voces.  
 ‘Yesterday, he began to say things in the street, or better said, he began to insult me in a loud voice.’
- (13) La gente vive como puede, más bien, malvive.  
 ‘People live as they can; rather, they survive.’

6 For a particular study of reformulation discourse markers *es decir* and *o sea*, cf. Gaviño Rodríguez (2009).



- (14) Ella, para mí, aunque no estemos casados, es mi novia, digo, mi mujer, ¿entiendes?  
 ‘Although we are not married, to me she is my girlfriend, I mean, my wife, you know?’

Both groups of elements reformulate a piece of information that had been previously learned; however, in (8), (9), (10) and (11) the discourse markers introduce a reformulation of what was said in the first part of the discourse: therefore, they constitute reformulated information about what has been said, which the utterer verbalizes because he or she believes that the data presented there can clarify or explain what was previously said; in (12), (13) and (14), the reformulation is not merely explanatory, but rather it is used for rectification purposes (the very name given by the grammatical tradition to these elements now provides sufficient clues regarding their instrumental behavior): through the use of these operators, new information can be introduced that serves to amend and replace incorrect information in the previous part. The key difference is again information-related: in the second group, the particles introduce information that is new to the speaker, while in the first group they do not present new information, but known facts that have already been spoken of in the first part of the discourse.

## 2.2 CONTROL OF INFORMATION

“Un énoncé (une phrase) est le produit fini d’opérations effectuées par cet énonciateur” (Adamczewski 1995: 35). Within these operations it has been analyzed how the speaker, in communicating with the hearer, can present information that is either new or already known. However, that is not all. Since the utterer is the source or origin of the message, he or she can also introduce information as either something controlled by or something alien to him or her, thus somehow either pledging for, or taking distance from, the information that has been stated. In the analysis of the linguistic phenomena, these two possibilities lead one to inquire about the control the utterer has over the information, and in this way delimit the individual to whom such information is attributed. In this way it can also be ascertained how various linguistic mechanisms operate in communication, in this case, regarding discourse particles. An utterance with a clear representative function, objectively focused on the transmission of descriptive information (for example, *Mi hermano está de resaca* ‘My brother is hungover’) can be transmitted by the utterer in different ways, based on the control exercised over this information, as shown in:

- (15) Efectivamente, mi hermano está de resaca.  
 ‘Indeed, my brother is hungover.’
- (16) Por lo visto, mi hermano está de resaca.  
 ‘Apparently, my brother is hungover.’

In the first utterance, the utterer commits himself or herself to the stated information which, despite having been taken from a previous context, is now transmitted as





something that the utterer controls; contrarily, in the second utterance, the speaker attributes the knowledge of said circumstance to a third party and conveys the message in this way, as if it were a piece of information alien to himself or herself. Both particles (*efectivamente, por lo visto*) are interchangeable in the utterance, though what is communicated by using each of them is not the same, as the informational control presented by the utterer in each utterance differs. The analysis of this parameter is of particular interest for the differentiation of some pairs of particles that have been traditionally characterized in exclusively philosophical terms and based on their referential dimension; however, through a purely enunciative analysis, a satisfactory explanation can be found for these utterances.

A similar situation occurs with other pairs of elements like *o sea* and *entonces*<sup>7</sup> in the communicative exchanges listed below. The particles in them are not interchangeable, as the control exercised by the utterer over the information in each segment also differs. While using *entonces*, the speaker presents the information as something he or she controls, which could be new to the hearer, when using *o sea que*, the information is presented as something the speaker already has knowledge of, or could have deduced, that is, as information the speaker does not control, and comes from outside, which the utterer merely uses:

- (17) Me enfadé con él porque trabajaba a las diez y a las nueve todavía no estaba lista la cena. Entonces me hice un bocadillo, porque no tenía tiempo de cenar otra cosa.  
‘I got mad at him because I had to work at 10 and dinner still wasn’t ready by 9. So, I made myself a sandwich because I didn’t have enough time to eat anything else for dinner.’
- (18) Ayer estuve con Paola. Me dijo que se ha peleado con Mario. O sea que ya no son novios.  
‘Yesterday I was with Paola. She told me that she had a fight with Mario. So they are no longer together.’
- (19) Si queremos estar a las dos en Salamanca tenemos que salir temprano. Entonces esta noche nada de fiesta. O sea que todos a casa a dormir.  
‘If we want to be in Salamanca at 2, we have to leave early. So, no partying tonight. Everyone home to bed then.’

The marker *entonces* is used in (17) to present information (*me hice un bocadillo* ‘I made myself a sandwich’) that the speaker could not have known or deduced; this is also the case in (19) with the information *esta noche nada de fiesta*, ‘no partying tonight’, which is emphasized by the utterer as something new. Meanwhile, by using the marker *o sea* in (18) and (19), the speaker informs the hearer of what will happen next (*que ya no son novios* ‘that they are no longer a couple’ and *que todos a casa a dormir* ‘that everyone

7 The differences between the items in this pair have already been previously discussed by Matte Bon (1997: 16–17), whose analysis is presented here.





should go home to bed') as something that he or she could have already been apprised of or deduced from the previous (verbal and extraverbal) context. For example, if the speaker had mentioned previously in (18) that Paola and Mario had had a fight, the hearer could have deduced that they are no longer in a relationship. As Matte Bon (1995b: 228) argued, when using *o sea*, the speaker introduces a consequence that seems implicit in what has already been said; when using *entonces*, new information is presented to the hearer, the outcome of which is not implicit, nor can it be gathered from what has already been said.

A similar opposition is found in the contrast between two groups of what have traditionally been called reformulation discourse markers used for recapitulation (cf., *inter alia*, Martín Zorraquino and Portolés 1999: 4133–4138), those that merely present a conclusion based on some prior information with which it is aligned in terms of its direction (*en resumen*, *en conclusión*, *en suma*, *en síntesis*) and 2) those that introduce a conclusion that is not aligned in terms of its direction (*en resumidas cuentas*, *a fin de cuentas*, *en definitiva*, *en fin*, *total*):

- (20) Si no eres alta, rubia, con ojos azules, en resumen, una muñeca andante, pasan de ti.  
'If you aren't tall, and blonde with blue eyes, in short, a walking doll, they just ignore you.'
- (21) Ya hemos tenido demasiados días sin clases, primero por la huelga; después, la excursión; ahora, las vacaciones. En conclusión, no habrá ya más fiestas este año.  
'We have already had too many days without classes, first because of the strike, next because of the trip and now, the vacation. In conclusion, we will not have any more days off this year.'
- (22) Es una persona que escribe con mucha elegancia, usa juegos de palabras, siempre tiene la rima perfecta y, en resumidas cuentas, sabe conectar con el público.  
'He is a person that writes elegantly, uses puns, always has the perfect rhyme and, in short, knows how to connect with the public.'
- (23) La mayor parte de estas casas están sucias, con muebles viejos, no tienen electricidad... En fin, son tristes.  
'Most of these houses are dirty, have old furniture and don't have electricity... Well, they are sad.'

With *en resumen* and *en conclusión*, the speaker introduces in (20) and (21) information that seems implicit in what has been said previously. This is, therefore, a deduction that the hearer has already made by himself or herself and that, therefore, is not new to him or her; the speaker merely verbalizes an objective deduction that he or she does not actually control, but rather that comes from his or her own discourse. With *en resumidas cuentas* and *en fin* in (22) and (23), the speaker presents new information

that is not implicit, nor can it be deduced by the hearer from what has been said, as it is a subjective deduction made by the speaker.

Finally, I will also analyze the contrast between the pair *a decir verdad* and *en realidad* based on the speaker's control of information. According to Briz, Pons and Portolés (2008) *a decir verdad* “destaca un miembro del discurso como verdadero frente a algo distinto que se podría haber pensado o dicho. Se refuerza así el compromiso del hablante con la verdad de lo expresado” [‘highlights a part of discourse as being true, as opposed to something different that could have been thought about or said. In this way, the speaker’s commitment to the truthfulness of the information is reinforced’]. This dictionary does not have a specific entry for the particle *en realidad*, but as argued by Martín Zorraquino and Portolés (1999: 4140), it presents the part of the discourse that includes it as a ‘reality’, in contrast with a different argument that is shown as an ‘appearance’. These definitions suffice to establish differences between these markers with respect to the utterer’s control of the information contained in a discourse:

- (24) Si quiere este trabajo, que se prepare, y así verá si lo consigue. Aunque, a decir verdad, no creo que su cabeza llegue para tanto.  
‘If he wants this job, he should prepare for it and then he will see if he succeeds. Although, to tell you the truth, I don’t believe he is smart enough.’
- (25) Va siempre muy bien vestido, muy peinado... Pero, en realidad, no tiene un duro.  
‘He always is very well dressed, nicely groomed... but, in reality, he doesn’t have a dime.’

There is a contrast between *A decir verdad* and *en realidad* based on the subjective/objective character each of them confers to the information it introduces. Whereas by using *a decir verdad* in (24), the utterer commits to the part of discourse that the particle introduces (*no creo que su cabeza llegue para tanto* ‘I don’t believe he is smart enough’), presenting it as true information dependent on the actual speaker, in (25) *en realidad* introduces some information (*no tiene un duro* ‘he doesn’t have a dime’) as if it were foreign to the speaker, presenting it as if it were an objective reality.

### 2.3 HIERARCHY OF INFORMATION

When we communicate, we do not usually give equal weight to all of the transmitted information: some items of information stand out more than others, either naturally or because as speakers we choose to emphasize the most important information over information considered to be accessory. This implies that the utterer has the option to either give the same importance to two pieces of information and present them as being equally informative, or to subordinate one piece of information to another, through a hierarchy within the various items of information presented in an utterance. There are many different mechanisms to do this, including different discourse particles that the utterer can use to select and give more importance to certain information, while presenting other pieces as accessory. This can be seen, for example, in the information presented by *y eso que* and *sin embargo* in the following expressions:



- (26) Pedro se fue de vacaciones, y eso que no tenía dinero para el viaje.  
 ‘Pedro went on vacation, even though he had no money for the trip.’
- (27) Está enfermo del corazón, sin embargo, corrió los cien metros más rápido que cualquiera de nosotros.  
 ‘He has a heart condition, however, he ran the 100 meters faster than any of us.’

Martín Zorraquino and Portolés (1999: 4115) characterized *sin embargo* as a marker to make counter arguments, and Pagès (2006) argued that *y eso que* is a concessive locution. But these linguistic labels do not throw much light on the instrumental behavior of each element. I propose that this can be improved by analyzing the information vector, as it seems to yield some differences in the hierarchy relationships regarding information established for each one of these particles. In the first utterance, the main information that the speaker wants to transmit to the hearer is centered on the fact that *Pedro se fue de vacaciones* ‘Pedro went on vacation’ and, additionally, provides the counter argument that *no tenía dinero para el viaje* ‘he had no money for the trip’, which could also be a piece of information already shared with the hearer; in the second example, the utterer grants the same importance to both parts of discourse, presenting the information *está enfermo del corazón* ‘he has a heart condition’ and *corrió los cien metros más rápido que cualquiera de nosotros* ‘he ran the 100 meters faster than any of us’ at the same level.

The same is the case for the pair *por lo tanto* and *de ahí*. The differences between them have been previously defined in this study using the opposition between new and known information in examples (5) and (6). However, through the lens of the hierarchy of information, other differences can also be found: *por lo tanto* focuses its interest on both the cause and the consequence, so both items of information presented in (5) that *llueve demasiado* ‘it is raining too much’ and *no iremos a pasear* ‘we will not go for a walk’ are placed on the same level of importance; on the contrary, the presence of the marker *de ahí* in (6) focuses on the cause and not on the consequence, namely on the fact that *llueve demasiado* ‘it is raining too much’, which is presented as new information, to which the shared, secondary information *no vayamos a pasear* ‘we will not go for a walk’ is subordinated.

### 3. THE SPEAKER’S VECTOR AND THE SPEAKER’S ATTITUDES

It has been seen that when the utterer speaks and uses a given particle, he or she provides a set of instructions related to the informative status intended to attribute to each item, which can be used to decode the message uttered. These data are not enough, however, to establish the differences between some pairs of elements. This is why a new aspect will be discussed at this point, a new vector around which the opposition of different discourse particles is organized. It is related to the different attitudes expressed by the utterer in relation to a given utterance; through these, the hearer is informed of how the speaker feels and what his or her attitudes are regarding what has been said. This happens, for example, with the use of the marker *encima*,

which is differentiated from *además* precisely by the attitude shown in a given situation, a characteristic that does not appear when using *además*, which is merely limited to making an additional argument, without expressing an attitude about what is said:

- (28) No podré salir hoy. Esta tarde trabajo y encima mañana entro temprano otra vez.  
‘I can’t go out tonight. I have to work this evening and, on top of that, I have to work early again tomorrow.’
- (29) No podré salir hoy. Tengo en casa a las niñas y además mi marido está trabajando hasta tarde.  
‘I can’t go out tonight. I have the girls at home and also my husband is working late.’

This modalizing value of *encima*, which *además* lacks, has already been defended in previous studies. While in some utterances, such as (28), it can be deduced that by using this marker, the speaker wishes to convey his or her displeasure, reproach or inconvenience about the fact being reported (as argued by Domínguez García 2007: 60, 66–68, for example), it does not seem that these negative connotations are systematic in nature. Even though this element often introduces a fact classified as negative within its context, this is not a prerequisite for its use, as defended by Santos (2003: 360), among others. This is evidenced by the following utterances:

- (30) Tiene mucho dinero y encima es guapísimo.  
‘He has lots of money and, on top of that, he’s gorgeous.’
- (31) Estoy haciendo lo que me gusta. Y encima me pagan.  
‘I am doing what I enjoy. And on top of that, I get paid.’

Therefore, these linguistic markers can help speakers to adopt a certain attitude about a given utterance, but it is true that the exact nature (positive or negative) of this attitude can only materialize contextually, as observed in previous utterances.

A similar case is that of the discourse marker *hombre*, to which most studies assign the specific function of capturing or attracting the hearer’s attention. This is why it is traditionally included among the markers that serve to maintain contact in communication (cf. Briz 1998: 224; or Portolés 2001: 145), to focus on otherness (‘enfocadores de la alteridad’ according to Martín Zorraquino and Portolés (1999: 4171)) or have other purposes, such as vocative, nominal phatic markers (for example, in Boyero 2002: 237). There is a more or less extensive list of expressive effects (depending on the study) associated with this marker, which includes affirming, giving permission, confirming or proving something right, expressing agreement, reservations or reluctance about something, denying, opposing something, contradicting, refusing permission, rejecting something, encouraging, insisting, reassuring, providing reasons, gaining time to think, expressing surprise, disappointment, disillusion, dis-



pleasure, annoyance, disbelief, disdain, and disagreement, reprimanding, etc. Each of these seems to be exclusively linked to the context where it appears, which cannot ultimately explain this discursive element. When analyzing the utterer's parameter (including his or her attitudes), it is confirmed that this particle, regardless of the function of *hombre* to reformulate discourse,<sup>8</sup> operates as a marker of conversational reaction in respect to a given piece of information provided previously (whether this comes from previous discourse, from previous knowledge of the specific speaker, or from the knowledge shared with the hearers). Thus, the marker *hombre* plays an important role in how information is presented by the speaker and how certain attitudes are expressed in connection with what is said or inferred, as seen in the following examples:

- (32) A: ¿Vas a venir entonces?  
 'Are you coming then?'  
 B: ¡Hombre, faltaría más!  
 'Sure, of course!'
- (33) A: Pedro es muy egoísta siempre.  
 'Pedro is always selfish.'  
 B: Hombre, no sé.  
 'Well, I don't know.'
- (34) Hombre, ¿dónde habré puesto yo las gafas?  
 'Oh no, where have I put my glasses?'
- (35) ¡Hombre, cuánto tiempo!  
 'Wow! Long time, no see!'

The function of *hombre* in each of these utterances is none other than expressing a certain reaction to previous information (whether or not it is shared by the speakers) to which this element is linked. *Hombre* operates as a particle that always reflects the (implicit or explicit) reaction to something: in (32) and (33), the speaker uses the marker *hombre* to introduce a part of discourse that shows a reaction to a previous utterance it refers to, with respect to which it also shows a certain attitude; in (34) and (35), the conversational reaction is not cotextually motivated; instead, it is contextually motivated by certain contextual information (implicit or explicit) that could be the origin of these reactive statements using *hombre*, even if it is not expressed linguistically.

In other cases, the speaker's attitude to what has been said is clearly reflected in the utterances, due to the procedural transparency that the particles themselves have laid out in their lexicalization process. Thus, some discourse particles are specialized in expressing a particular attitude, regardless of the context in which they appear:

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8 Regarding this function, cf. Gaviño Rodríguez (2011).



- (36) Este libro es para leerlo despacio, deseando que nunca termine o, aún mejor, leerlo poco a poco, sin prisas.  
'This book is to be read slowly, hoping that it will never finish, or even better, reading it little by little, slowly.'
- (37) Estas personas están abandonadas. Nadie las visita y están a la espera de la muerte o, aún peor, de una vida infinita.  
'These people have been abandoned. No one visits them and they are awaiting death, or even worse, an infinite life.'
- (38) Llevo un día horrible. Se me olvidan los papeles de la reunión. Llego tarde. Y para colmo ahora no tengo aquí la cartera.  
'I've had an awful day. I forgot the papers for the meeting. I'm late. And on top of that, now I don't have my wallet with me.'
- (39) Yo creo que en la fiesta habría, a lo sumo, doscientas personas.  
'I think at the most there must have been 200 people at the party.'
- (40) Hay que terminar esto, así que nos quedaremos aquí todo el día para tenerlo listo a las ocho, todo lo más.  
'We have to finish this, so we will be here all day to have it ready by eight, at the latest.'
- (41) Yo le dije que, como mucho, pagaba cincuenta euros, así que no estoy dispuesto a dar ni un euro más.  
'I told him that, at the most, I would pay 50 euros. So, I'm not willing to pay even a euro more.'
- (42) No te puedo decir cuánta gente había pero por lo menos cien personas.  
'I can't tell you how many people there were, but there were at least 100.'
- (43) Oye, ¿y cómo es que has venido solo? ¿No tenías novia?  
'Hey, how is it that you came here by yourself? Don't you have a girlfriend?'
- (44) No voy porque es que tengo trabajo.  
'I'm not going because I have work.'
- (45) Gracias a ti he podido entregar todo a tiempo.  
'Thanks to you, I was able to turn in everything on time.'
- (46) No quiero decir nada pero, por culpa de Ana, hemos tenido que parar tres veces en el camino.  
'I don't want to say anything but, because of Ana, we had to stop three times on the way.'



*Aún mejor* or *aún peor* present arguments seen with a positive attitude (*leerlo poco a poco, sin prisas* ‘read it little by little, slowly’) or a negative attitude (*de una vida infinita* ‘an infinite life’),<sup>9</sup> respectively in (36) and (37); *para colmo* in (38) signals that it takes into account what has already been said and that one more item of information must be added to the previous data, which the speaker did not think that he or she had to mention (*ahora no tengo aquí la cartera* ‘now, I don’t have my wallet with me’); other particles such as *a lo sumo*, *todo lo más*, and *como mucho* in (39), (40) and (41) indicate dissatisfaction with the information provided, presented as being superior to the real information; contrarily, in (42) *por lo menos* presents an amount that is lower than the real one; there is an expression of surprise on the part of the speaker when the question begins with *cómo es que*, whose appearance in interrogatives like (43) indicates that what was said was not within the expectations of the speaker; in other cases, as in (44), *es que* clearly justifies the reason that it accompanies (*tengo trabajo* ‘I have work’);<sup>10</sup> *gracias a*, *por culpa de* are specialized in presenting reasons that are either welcome or unwelcome by the speaker.

#### 4. THE HEARER’S VECTOR

This aspect will not be discussed here in much detail, but I want to highlight the importance that the hearer’s vector has for the analysis of some discourse particles in this paper, and how the speaker refers to it by using particles with different functions.<sup>11</sup> Whereas this is a vector that enunciative grammar studies often fail to account for in linguistic analysis, it can be very useful in the particular study of discourse particles, since these elements can perform distinct roles that are related to the hearer in the communication process: firstly, there are some particles specialized in an appellative function, that is, they are used by the speaker to somehow solicit the participation of the hearer, to ask them for something (*mira, oye, ¡eh!*, etc.); secondly, other particles perform a phatic function, and help the speaker verify that the information

9 J. Dubois (1969: 100) stated that “l’énonciation est présentée soit comme le surgissement du sujet dans l’énoncé, soit comme la relation que le locuteur entretient par le texte avec l’interlocuteur, ou comme l’attitude du sujet parlant à l’égard de son énoncé”. In this way, it can be argued that in contrast with the utterance (‘énoncé’) as a created product, the utterance act is individual, and the utterer uses language for his or her own creation and to express a particular attitude. Some specific elements (such as *aún mejor* and *aún peor*) can be semantically marked and show positive or negative attitudes regarding the utterance.

10 For specific studies of this particle, cf. the work of España Villasante (1996), Fuentes (1997) and Porroche Ballesteros (1998), which show the uses I have highlighted here, among others.

11 This position is a development of the different theories of linguists such as Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Benveniste (1966, 1974), etc., in the field of discourse analysis. The fundamental idea is to take into account the important role that the participants in a linguistic interaction play in negotiating information, because everything is based on the body of knowledge that speakers share.



reaches the hearer properly (*¿sabes?, ¿entiendes?, ¿comprendes?, ¿vale?, ¿de acuerdo?, ¿me oyes?, ¿verdad?*):

- (47) Mira, si quieres hablamos con Pedro.  
'Look, if you want we can talk to Pedro'
- (48) ¡Oye, no vayas a llegar tarde!  
'Hey, don't be late!'
- (49) ¡Eh! ¿Qué haces? ¡Estate quieto!  
'Hey! What are you doing? Stay still!'
- (50) Si ella te pregunta algo, tú haz como si no supieras nada, ¿entiendes?  
'If she asks you anything, act as if you knew nothing, got it?'
- (51) Lo haré todo hoy mismo, ¿vale?  
'I'll do everything today, ok?'
- (52) Tú quieres que me vaya, ¿verdad?  
'You want me to leave, don't you?'

While these particles that carry out an appellative function usually appear in an initial position in discourse, attracting the attention of the hearer, warning and notifying of subsequent information, the particles with phatic functions that focus their attention on a prior part of the discourse appear in a later position.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper was to explore the potential that the study of discourse particles has from an enunciative perspective, as a complementary approach to the existing theories in linguistic studies:

<b>New information (phase 1).</b> <b>Elements are presented and placed in context.</b> <b>It is the first information stage</b>	<b>Acquired information (phase 2).</b> <b>No elements are presented; already known elements are spoken of.</b>
<i>al parecer</i>	<i>naturalmente</i>
<i>por lo visto</i>	<i>por supuesto</i>
<i>por lo tanto</i>	<i>de ahí (que)</i>
<i>mejor dicho</i>	<i>es decir</i>
<i>más bien</i>	<i>o sea</i>
<i>digo</i>	<i>esto es</i>
	<i>a saber</i>



<b>Information is presented as something that the speaker controls. The speaker is committed to what has been said</b>	<b>Information is presented as something foreign to the hearer. The speaker is not committed to what has been said</b>
<i>Efectivamente</i>	<i>por lo visto</i>
<i>Entonces</i>	<i>o sea (que)</i>
<i>en resumidas cuentas</i>	<i>en resumen</i>
<i>en fin</i>	<i>en conclusión</i>
<i>a decir verdad</i>	<i>en realidad</i>
<b>Information is introduced that is secondary to the main information</b>	<b>Two pieces of information are introduced to which the same level of importance is attributed</b>
<i>y eso que</i>	<i>sin embargo</i>
<i>de ahí (que)</i>	<i>por lo tanto</i>

**TABLE 1.** Information vector

<b>Discourse particle</b>	<b>Does it express the speaker's evaluation?</b>	<b>What type of evaluation?</b>
<i>Además</i>	No	No evaluation
<i>Encima</i>	Yes	Modalizing value with respect to information that is considered to be an additional argument
<i>Hombre</i>	Yes	Modalizing reaction with respect to previously introduced information
<i>aún mejor</i>	Yes	Positive attitude
<i>aún peor</i>	Yes	Negative attitude
<i>para colmo</i>	Yes	It takes into account what has been said and adds one more negative aspect to the previous argument, which the speaker did not think would have to be mentioned
<i>a lo sumo</i> <i>todo lo más</i> <i>como mucho</i>	Yes	Dissatisfaction with the information provided, presented as superior to the real information
<i>por lo menos</i>	Yes	Dissatisfaction with the information provided, presented as inferior to the real information
<i>es que</i>	Yes	Justification purpose Expressing surprise in questions
<i>gracias a</i>	Yes	Welcome reasons
<i>por culpa de</i>	Yes	Unwelcome reasons

**TABLE 2.** Speaker's vector. Speaker's attitudes

The study of the different parameters through which the communicative exchange is organized (information vector, speaker's vector and speaker's attitude and hearer's vector) seems to account for the individualized value of some of these elements by separating them from other similar units, establishing their differences, their vari-

ous uses and, ultimately, by providing new avenues to explore their proper application to, and translation into, other languages. Further research along these lines is required to corroborate or refute these premises, in an attempt to provide a full and comprehensive analysis of how these particles operate in the communicative process.



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