

## The role of temporality in semantic-pragmatic cyclicity

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In theories of language change, temporality is considered to be a fertile source for the diachronic development of new connectives and discourse markers (e.g. Kortmann 1997). More recently, studies on semantic-pragmatic cycles have suggested that temporal relations are also the origin of many cyclical developments (Hansen 2020). As work in the field of semantic-pragmatic cyclicity is relatively recent, the extent to which temporality is involved and what factors make it prone to cyclical language change are yet to be further investigated.

In this paper, I will focus on the role of temporality within the context of semantic-pragmatic cyclicity, taking my point of departure in the specific evolution of *enquanto (que)* and *ao passo que*, two recent contrast markers in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) which, both being close in meaning to English *while*, appear to evolve in a cyclical fashion out of the domain of time. While both are still used in contemporary Brazilian Portuguese, *enquanto (que)* seems to be gaining ground over *ao passo que*, with its contrastive uses being propagated across different types of contexts in the language, both in written and spoken BP, whereas contrastive *ao passo que* is only used in highly formal written texts.

In line with the view that source meanings can significantly constrain semantic-pragmatic changes (e.g. Cristofaro 2019), the aim of this paper will be to investigate the specific temporal value that is the source for the diachronic evolutions of *enquanto (que)* and *ao passo que*, with a view to providing insights into the role of temporality particularly in their cyclical evolution and how this could help to gain perspective on phenomena of cyclicity and their relation to the theory of language change.

The results show that simultaneity is the temporal relation that triggers both evolutions, in particular contexts of use. While Kortmann (1997) has already claimed that simultaneity relations are among the most productive sources for new contrastive meanings, it has not been acknowledged as a common source for semantic-pragmatic cycles yet, whose origins, in fact, are yet to be systematized. I will thus propose that cyclical diachronic trajectories, when arising from the domain of temporality, tend to be triggered by specific temporal relations which have been empirically proven to be nuclear to the human experience. As Kortmann (1997) argues, simultaneity is part of a very small set of relations that constitute a core of basic circumstantial relations, which are the cognitively most basic and most central for human reasoning.

### References

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