

than differences, and that categories (iii) and (iv) are by far the most common, explicit and implicit markers being rare in all cases. Register is also shown to play a large part in the choice of markers.

The strength of the book is in showing how much more complex Tense-Switching is in oral narratives than could have been expected, and – even more importantly – the need to use all kinds of tools, i.e. not only narrowly linguistic, but semantic and pragmatic to approach such complex areas of research. It also encourages a new broader look at a whole range of different kinds of discourse with an oral dimension. And from the reader's point of view it includes, *en passant*, a wonderfully clear exposition of areas that s/he may have not looked at closely, given the tendency to concentrate on one approach only. [Namely, Moeschler's summary of the theoretical approaches to temporal sequencing (in convenient diagram form), different approaches to tenses on the narrative line (Weinrich, Benveniste, Waugh, Vetters, Revasz, myself, and others), Smith's Narrative mode and Report Mode, Leech and Short's continuum of discourse forms (another useful diagram), Fleishman's table of markedness oppositions for the past and present tenses in ordinary language (adapted), and, Borillo's classification of subordinators. (It also includes niceties such as the fact that there are more than 100 different usages of the coordinator *et*!)]. Altogether a most enlightening book.

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Schneedecker, C. and A. Theissen (eds), *Topicalisation et partition*. Cahiers de praxématique, 37. Montpellier: Université de Montpellier III, 2001, 200 pp. 978 284269 511 9  
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This small volume, composed of a useful introduction and six substantive contributions, represents the first publication resulting from the collaboration of a group of researchers working on a diverse set of discourse markers described either as topicalisers or partition markers (referred to in English as meronomical markers). The initial application of the notion of partition was in relation to indefinite determiners or pronouns such as *quelques*: in an utterance such as *Quelques élèves n'ont pas fait le devoir*, *quelques* effects an operation of partition through the inference concerning the other pupils belonging to a larger set of pupils previously evoked, namely that they did not all do the assignment. This notion has subsequently been applied to the analysis of nonreferential markers such as *quant à*, *à propos de*, *en ce qui concerne*, and *au regard de*. As laid out in the introduction by Schneedecker and Theissen, the research programme in question seeks to bring together various

markers belonging to these two ‘families’, in view of certain common properties that suggest a fundamental relatedness among them. These properties include a certain complementarity of occurrence, their dependence on a previously evoked discourse entity to which the referent in question is semantically related as part to whole, and the ambiguous information status of the accompanying referent, which is neither totally ‘new’ nor totally ‘given’.

The volume possesses a high degree of unity, despite varying theoretical frameworks and differing ‘*angles d’attaque*’. The primary approach is that of systematic description of the functioning of the selected markers, which overlaps in some cases with a diachronic approach. One chapter is dedicated to terminological concerns, while another interjects a comparative perspective through the study of the English marker constituted by the suffix *-wise*.

The nature of Theissen’s initial chapter is revealed by its title, ‘*Petite incursion dans la jungle topicale*’. Theissen succeeds in bringing some order to the confusion engendered by the proliferation of differing uses of the three terms *topique/topicalisation*, *thème/thématisation*, and *focus/focalisation*, passing in review recent formulations by French linguists, notably Nølke (1994). Though the notions of topic and theme are often conflated, Theissen concludes that topicalisation, but not necessarily thematisation, always involves a modification of the order of sentence constituents; focalisation, on the other hand, is characterised primarily by its function of identifying a choice among the members of a paradigm, hence a notion of contrast. The article seeks not only to differentiate the three notions, but also to suggest potential convergences between them.

Among the contributions that systematically describe the behaviour of selected markers in discourse are that of P. Cappeau and J. Deulofeu on *il y (en) a* and J.-M. Debaisieux’s chapter on *quant à* and *en ce qui concerne*. Both of these analyses are based in Blanche-Benveniste’s model of microsyntax and macrosyntax and reveal new insights about the functioning of these markers in oral discourse. Cappeau and Deulofeu’s lengthy article studies several different constructions with the presentative *il y a*, analysed as ‘stabilisers’ of the subject–verb relation, thus allowing indefinite referents to circumvent, so to speak, the constraint against indefinite NPs in subject position that applies in spontaneous oral French. The following authentic example illustrates two of these configurations:

- (1) les malheureux **il y en a qui** sont partis à Fréjus après ils ont ils ont été en Compiègne ils ont été en Allemagne **il y en a qui** sont morts **il y en a** peuchère **ils** sont retournés tuberculeux voyez eh on s’est dispersé et on s’est plus vu (p. 55)

In her chapter, Debaisieux elucidates the similarities and differences between *quant à* and *en ce qui concerne*, both of which are considered to introduce a prefix in a *préfixe-noyau* configuration à la Blanche-Benveniste’s macrosyntax. The study disproves a distinction between the two in terms of topic vs. frame interpretation, but reveals differing formal constraints, namely that only *quant à* is limited to utterance-initial position. Interestingly, *quant à* but not *en ce qui concerne* is shown to

differ in function according to the planned or unplanned nature of the discourse, the planned use implying a strict discursive ordering of its entity as following a previously evoked entity. This difference is attributed to the rhetorical nature of *quant à*, which is seen as learned rather than acquired by speakers, and which is in fact much more frequent in planned discourse than in spontaneous speech.

Space constraints do not permit a detailed account of the other equally interesting contributions. D. Crevenat-Werner studies the verbless relative construction with *dont* (*Cinq Belges, dont un Wallon, ont participé au concours*) using a referential and cognitive approach. Processes of grammaticalisation come to the fore in the chapter on the family of markers constructed with *regard* by B. Combettes and S. Prévost, as well as in the final chapter by C. Guimier on the English domain adverbs constructed with *-wise* (e.g. **Personnel-wise**, I think we have the best team here.)

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Hornsby, David, *Redefining Regional French: Koineization and Dialect Levelling in Northern France*. Oxford: Legenda, 2006, 162 pp. 1 904 350 50 X  
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The work of Gaston Tuailon has undoubtedly provided many useful insights into the description of regional French (RF). However, his less helpful (1974) definition of the variety as ‘ce qui reste du dialecte quand le dialecte a disparu’ has caused me to use a great deal of red ink when marking students’ essays.

David Hornsby’s fresh new perspective on RF will cut my red ink consumption in half, seeking as it does to arrive at a twenty-first century definition of the variety by refusing to characterise it according to what it is not (standard French (SF), dialect) and presenting instead a more scientific investigation of its make-up. The data from his survey come from the mining town of Avion, in the Pas-de-Calais and Hornsby’s analysis of the complex, mixed variety (Picard/Regional French) spoken by many of the older residents draws on Trudgill’s (1986) model of koinéization.

As stated in the Introduction, the book’s structure follows the ‘life cycle’ of Picard, tracing the variety from its beginnings (the emergence of the Gallo-Roman dialects and the rise of *francien*) to its current dedialectalisation. Along the way, we are given a detailed account of its linguistic features, the extent to which these can still be distinguished in the speech of the survey’s informants and a comparison of