

A Reflection on the Use of Argumentative Operators in the Mafalda's Comic Strips Character

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Abstract

This article aims to identify argumentative operators present in strips of character Mafalda and show the direction that give to text and how they contribute to the interpretation and textual construction. For this, were analyzed four strips of said character, proceeding firstly the context of the strips and then to analyze the use of each of the outstanding argumentative operators of verbal text. The results show that to achieve a speech argument size, it has to make use of some argumentative operators in the texts that occur, whether oral or written. From the analysis, it is observed that the argumentative operators are important for teaching and learning the Portuguese language, for the production of cohesive and coherent texts, as well as the understanding and interpretation.

Keywords: argumentative operators; understanding of texts, contextualization.

1. Introduction

The language has a social function. It is used so that we can interact socially with the world, and from that interaction, communication is seen as a discourse full of intentions, of persuasion and subjectivity. This gives the vent to the argumentativity that for Ducrot (1972), is the fundamental linguistic act, it helps to establish the communicative function of language that is formed through linguistic brands present in the statements, Its main focus argumentative operators, which are responsible for the chain of statements, that is, form the structure of discourse and they are of great importance to building a cohesive and coherent text. Therefore, the aim was to identify argumentative operators present in the comic book character of Mafalda strips and show the sense that they give the text and how important they are for a good interpretation and textual construction.

The choice for the comic genre was due to the fact that he attract much of the student body, as well as for being a genre in which we find many linguistic trademarks of argument, even by its nature which has as one of its purposes criticize, with humor, the social ills Linguistic brands present not only in strips, but in other genres, are responsible for the structure of speech. Therefore, we believe that through the strips can show students that it is through communication that human beings interact socially, expressing their feelings, desires, intentions, ideas, etc., and that this whole process is characterized by argumentativity. By this way, agree with Koch (2002) when He affirms that social interaction is marked by argumentativity, since all speech is endowed with intentions.

One of the theoretical bases of this article is on Oswald Ducrot (1972), considered the "father" of argumentative semantics.

Which defines the concepts of semantics, which are of great importance for the analysis of strips; Koch (2002; 2008), which outlines the main features of argumentative operators and language brands of argument; and Marcushi (2008), which features in the concept of genre, which is therefore applied to the strips, which are considered a genre.

2. Construction of the argument and the meaning in the text

For Ducrot (1972), the argument is the fundamental function of language and it is through the language that we can express, interact and defend a point of view socially, so the language allows communication of being either oral or textual. In this sense, Marcushi (2002) defines argument as the act of persuading involving subjectivity, feelings, temporality, seeking for accession and not creating certainties. In the same perspective, Koch (2002) says that in every text can be found several meanings or multiple interpretations, because in every wording is linked to intentionality of the author. Therewith we understand that the ability to understand a text is linked to the way the receiver perceives the intentions of the issuer through the meanings that the text provides. For a speech is well-structured, however, it needs to have all the essential elements for your understanding, so that by reading it, the reader can activate diverse knowledge to understand what he or she read. So, we can say that the speech formed a text.

Thus, we agree with Koch and Travaglia (1992) when they define text as: A concrete linguistic unit (noticeable by sight or hearing), which is taken by the users of the language (speaker, writer / listener, reader) in a situation of specific communicative interaction as a unit of meaning and as fulfilling a recognizable communicative function and recognized, independently of its extent. (Koch and Travaglia, 1992:10). So for that language, then, is established in the speech, it is also necessary that the language acts are present. But although there are many language acts, three stand out: talking, telling and showing. These are characterized by Koch (2002) as follows: **Talking** focuses on production dependent sentences speaker's ability to produce sounds according to certain rules grammars; **Telling**, which comes from the establishment of relations between a sequence of sounds and a state of affairs is linked to the meaning of things (semantics); **Showing** is linked to the sense of the statement, its significance and directs the intention of the statement. Koch says that the text should be a linguistic product needs undoubtedly be guaranteed by certain structural rules, but it basically by what means, when the phrase is updated in statement. Just as meaning is that it gives that transcendence, which tends to refer to a meaning, which is summed up in what we call text. (Koch, 2002: 28). Then from this understanding, we note that the argument is an important element in the fabric of the text, introduced, as a rule, by argumentative operators, which guide the reader to make decisions with respect to the message text or pass, and thus can agree or disagree with the issuer's point of view, depending on the wording of production conditions: historical time, historical background, purpose, target audience; those aspects that should be considered at the time of textual production, whether oral or written, motivated by the context of the communicative situation.

3. The argumentative operators

Created by Oswald Ducrot (2008), the term "argumentative operators" is used to characterize some grammatical elements, in order to show the power of the statements and their meanings. Ducrot shows how this process takes place, making the use of two basic notions of argumentative class and the argumentative scale. For him, while argumentative class is instituted a set of statements that can also serve as an argument for the same conclusion and that is represented by **R**, the argumentative scale happens when two or more statements of a class are presented in increasing strength grading leading to the same conclusion. To illustrate the argument and the argument class scale, respectively, Koch (2008: 30) uses the following examples

Example of an Argumentative Class

John is the best candidate. (Completion R)
 argument.1 - Good Training Economy
 argument.2 - Has Professional Experience
 argumet.3 - does not engage in bargaining

Example of an Argumentative Class

The presentation was crowned with success. (Completion R)
 argument.1 - was attended by personalities from the Artistic world
 argument.2 - was attended by influential people in political circles
 argument.3 - was attended by the President of the Republic (strongest argument).

Argumentative Class

Often, the argument scale is represented by graphs. However, use is made of these examples only to show more clearly how the process is carried out. Below is a table created by Koch (2008) which presents the main types of argumentative operators and soon after will be made some important observations with respect to some types of operators, more specifically to operators **BUT** and **HOWEVER**

Operator	Function
'Even', 'thus', 'not later than', 'inclusive'	Organize the hierarchy of elements on a scale, marking the strongest argument for a conclusion R;
'At Least', 'At the very Least',	Introduce given argument leaving implied the presence of a scale with other stronger arguments
'Therefore', 'Soon', 'Consequently', 'Cause', 'Due to', 'Therefore'	Establish a conclusion on arguments presented in previous statements.
'Or', 'Or Then', 'Anyone', 'Whatever'	Present alternative arguments leading to different or opposite conclusions;
'More Than', 'Less Than', 'Such as'	Establish relationships between elements, towards a given conclusion.
'Because', 'That', 'Whereas', 'Cause'	Indicate a justification or explanation for the preceding statement;
But', 'However', 'Yet', 'Still', 'Though', 'Even Though', 'As it', 'Although', 'Despite'	Oppose oriented arguments to contrary conclusions.
'A little' and 'Little', 'A few' and 'Just a Few', 'Almost' and 'Just', 'Only'	Distribute in opposite scales, i.e. one works in a targeted range for the total affirmation and the other oriented in a range for the total denial.
'and', 'too', 'still', 'neither' (= and nor), 'not only... also', 'As Much as', 'Moreover', 'Besides'	Are arguments that are part of the same argument class, that is, add arguments for the same conclusion.
'Indeed'	Introduces a clincher, summarizing all other arguments.
'Ever', 'Still', 'Now'	Responsible for introducing the stated assumptions content.

Source: Koch, I. (2008). The inter-action by the language, São Paulo: Context.

As can be seen from the above table, argumentative operators **BUT** and **HOWEVER** oppose oriented arguments to contrary conclusions. Thus, these operators perform the same function, which is opposed by arguments, and **BUT** is seen by some authors as a "suspense strategy" **HOWEVER** and is seen as an anticipation of the idea that the previous statement will be abolished. Soon, **HOWEVER** it is seen as "anticipation strategy." Koch (2002 p. 107) says that All operators are part of the grammar's Language. It is evident, therefore, that these instructions, coded, grammatical nature, of course assume a rhetorical value of the building, or arhetorical value - or argumentative - the very grammar. The fact of admitting the existence of rhetorical or argumentative relations inscribed in the language is leading to posit the argument as the fundamental linguistic act.

Therefore, argumentative operators, as well as assist in the text, allowing the apprehension of meaning by what is written or what has been stated orally, allow the speaker has a tendency to bring the listener to a given conclusion, which demonstrates the strength of argumentativity said, which leads us to accept, as advocated Ducrot (1987), which is to say all, or say constitutes do, at work and reflects on the various types of human action that take place through language.

4. The strips of Mafalda

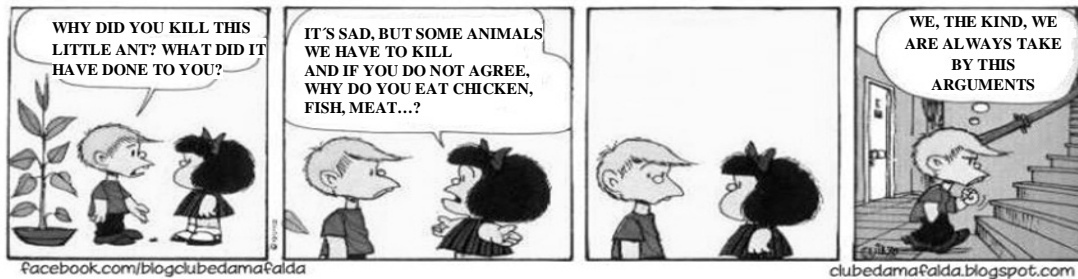
Mafalda is a character of comics created in 1964 by the Argentine cartoonist Joaquín Salvador Lavado (Quino). In his stories he has Mafalda Quino as a girl worried about humanity and world peace and lives questioning the current state of the world. Even in highly successful phase in Latin America and Europe, Quino decides to revoke its publications in 1973. As the strips come from the comic books and became popular for using humor to make social criticism - from the use of dialogue spoken by characters who have also become popular in comic books - they are worth, above all, a language that gives rise to Plural Meanings even make use of ambiguity. Because of the popularity and irreverent way Quino addresses issues experienced not only in Argentina but also in the world, because they are globalized issues, Mafalda comic also gained the form of strips that are worldwide success to the present day, and The image it is always ahead of campaigns for human rights worldwide.

Besides having humor, one realizes that the strips of Mafalda were created by Quino so that the readers could do much more than just smile. They make the audience think, reflect and even indignation. Note also that are critical of universal character. The creator of the character describes situations that reveal themselves matters of any country: economic crisis, family problems, and young people's doubts about his future, among others.

5. The sense of argumentative operators in strips of Mafalda

As we note in the course of the four strips analysis we have selected for this study, it will be evident that they consist of numerous argumentative operators, each directing to a conclusion about the theme addressed by each of them. Accordingly, to better understand the function of each of the operators in each strip before analysis of your job, we will contextualization of each as they are being presented.

Strip 1:



Adapted from Facebook.com/blogclubedamafalda. Accessed on 23 July 2015

In this strip, Felipe, a Mafalda's friend, made questions about what motivated her to kill an ant and Mafalda makes use of some arguments to justify what happened. These arguments are made by the following operators: WHAT - Introduces a justification from the first statement; BUT - It compares the arguments directed to contrary conclusions; E - responsible for adding arguments in favor of the same conclusion.

As a first argument, Mafalda says it is sad that the little ant the end, however, had by introducing the argumentative operator BUT, breaking the expectation Felipe, alleges that some animals must be killed. Lest doubts this need, it uses a much stronger argument, introduced by the conjunction and, and supplemented, after using the condition "if you do not agree," the WHO operator, which take Felipe to agree with the argument that it is necessary to kill some animals. Thus, Mafalda, really, she convinced Philip that did not kill the ant out of malice but out of necessity.

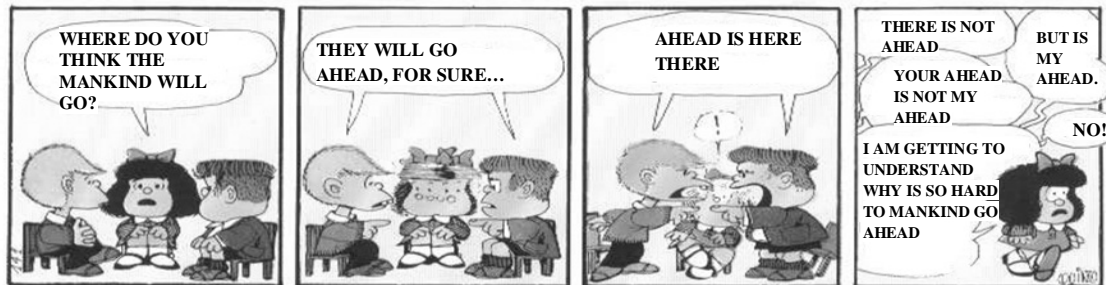
Strip 2:



Adapted from Facebook.com/blogclubedamafalda. Accessed on 23 July 2015

In this second strip, Mafalda is thinking about the future of the world and would be able to do to have peace in it. In her statement, identifies the presence of the following operators: E - operator belonging to the class that sum argumentative arguments for the same conclusion:

WHAT - responsible for introducing a justification or explanation to the previous statement. In this sense, to imagine what it would do if it were an interpreter and a meeting of state delegates some of the delegates speak ill of any country, it would translate giving a contrary information, that is, it would complement the country. Thus, through the use of the conjunction And Mafalda introduces the argument that reinforces that if she acts the way thought there will be fights and, therefore, wars, conflicts cease and hence will be established peace in the world. However, in her "speech", she points out that it is still a child then introduces the conjunction THAT, reflecting what can only be imagined if the world still exists when she grows up.

Strip 3:

Adapted from Facebook.com/blogclubedamafalda. Accessed on 23 July 2015

In this third strip, it is observed Mafalda making an inquiry to your friends, making questions about the future of humanity. For this question, both are sure that humanity is moving forward. But before this certainty comes a widespread discussion between the two friends as to which would be the front position. Then, when reading the strip, you can identify the argumentative operator **WHY** - responsible for introducing a justification and explanation to the previous statement. Such an operator is present in the last strip, at which Mafalda is manifested again after so many friends of discussions about where is forward, claiming to know why humanity does not advance, that is, there is never an agreement for certain issues. In the specific case, humanity does not advance for not knowing the direction to be followed, that is, for not knowing the direction the front is.

Strip 4:

Adapted from Facebook.com/blogclubedamafalda. Accessed on 23 July 2015

In the fourth strip, Mafalda is on the beach with a little friend and while walking reflects on a new world built by the new generations. In this case, and observed the mood of the strip being manifested through the images, you can also identify some argumentative operators, they are: **DESPITE** - operator opposes oriented arguments to contrary conclusions; **STILL** - operator introduces the statement also responsible assumptions contents to understand the purpose of the strip, in this case shows, through the illustrations and not the speech that even among the younger generation there are conflicts. Therefore, when starting her speech, the Mafalda starts with the operator **DESPITE** which directs the reader to the invalidation of what was said, or even with the mess that is in the world, she believes that things can change. This is reinforced by **STILL** employment, which clarifies the belief in a better future Mafalda.

6. Final Considerations

With this abstract it is clear that the reasoning and the use of argumentative operators are important and of great value to the textual production, ie for the construction of meaning, since it is known that in a text one can find different interpretations and meanings and to reach a conclusion on an issue we are manipulated (encouraged) by reasoning which is considered the fundamental function of language, and the language responsible for social interaction. There are some grammatical elements responsible for the strength of statements present in the speech, which was called by Oswald Ducrot of argumentative operators, these elements also help in textual construction and formation of the sense of what was said, whether oral, be written. Through the analysis of strips of Mafalda it was found that the argumentative operators are essential to building a cohesive and understandable speech, it was seen how important it addresses them in teaching learning Portuguese because through education of argumentative operators, the teacher can take your student to discover the intention of what was said and how it was said, that is, take the student to reflect a certain reasoning so that it reaches a conclusion on an issue.

Another reason to appreciate the study and analysis strips, is in relation to textual production student, as to know the argumentative operators, you can organize the arguments as best develop strategies to further persuade the reader and thus the text or speech will be transmitted comprehensively and having a good acceptance.

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