

The Apposition in Contemporary French (abstract)

This doctoral dissertation aims to bring to light the nominal predicate in contemporary French, in which the predication is usually realized by a verbal predicate. For this purpose, we analyze in detail the apposition, especially its predicational mechanism by studying the corpus we ourselves collected.

In the Part 1, the previous studies on the apposition were examined. The Chapter I surveyed the development of the notion "apposition": how the rhetorical notion "appositio" has changed into the grammatical notion "apposition" and how it has been treated by grammarians so far. In the Chapter II, we checked the status quo of contemporary French grammars and dictionaries, which revealed us the fact that the notion "apposition" is not clearly defined and is used in various ways depending on a dictionary or a grammar. In the Chapter III, the contemporary linguistic studies on the French apposition were systematically examined, and their contribution has led us to the morphosyntactic approach for the analysis of the apposition, since its mechanism, which is often assimilated to the one of the copular sentence, is not studied in detail.

The Part 2 examined the predication established by the two state verb, *être* and *avoir*, whose predications are often considered to be identical to the one of the apposition. The copular sentence «X ETRE Y» can be divided into the two following categories; specificational sentence and predicational sentence. In the former one, X is a non-referential variable, while Y is a referential value. On the other hand, in the latter one, X is a referential value, while Y is a non-referential attribute. In the sentence «X AVOIR YZ», *avoir* functions as a predicational connector between Y and Z, and between X and Y-Z. We classified the interpretations of «X AVOIR YZ» into three types according to the relation among the three elements, X, Y and Z.

In the Part 3, we defined what we call "apposition" «X, Y» as follows: the apposition is a predication established between two sequences without being connected by any element. Our corpus (800 appositions collected in written texts) research has led us to classify our appositions into the two following types according to its mechanism; "identification" and

“characterization”.

The Chapter IV analyzed the former type, “identification”, which we compared with a specificational sentence and argued that in the “identification”, both X and Y are referential noun phrases, while in the specificational sentence «X ETRE Y», it is only Y that is referential, but not X. It means that the article functions exclusively as a referential means in the apposition. In the “identification”, the apposed Y identifies the support X by classifying X as a member of group Y, or establishing with X non-anaphoric coreference. The apposed Y reformulates or denominates X, or presents an attribute of X.

The Chapter V studied the other type, “characterization”. Though this type of apposition is similar to the predicational sentence, the former predication depends completely on the semantic relation between X and Y, while the latter predication is assured by the connector *être*. This explains why two sequences in apposition are almost free from positional restrictions.

In the Chapter VI, we examined the two other types of the “characterization”. The one, «XY», is called by grammars “absolute construction”, and the other, «X, YZ», is an apposition whose apposed sequence is composed of an “absolute construction”. The former type differs from the other types of apposition we examined so far in that the two sequences are never separated by a punctuation mark, and they function as an adverbial complement. The «X, YZ» has some points in common with the sentence «X AVOIR YZ», but our analysis revealed the fact that its predication is assured only by the semantic relation “all (X) - part (YZ)”. The study of these two appositions suggests that there are two ways to construct an apposition; the one is to separate two sequences by a punctuation mark and to charge only the support sequence with a syntactical function, and the other is to attach two sequences without separating them by a punctuation mark, and to charge both of them with a function of the adverbial complement.

The Chapter VII studied appositions whose support sequence is predicated by plural apposed sequences, and the Chapter VIII is on the appositions constructed by combining plural appositions. Both research supported our hypothesis that the apposition establishes a predication depending exclusively on the semantic relation. In the Chapter IX, we

analyzed the apposition from the point of the frequency. Our corpus showed us that there are two tendencies according to the texts; the appositions preferred in journalistic texts and the appositions used especially in novels. The former consists of an apposition that is often composed of a proper noun and whose predication is limited between two sequences, while the latter consists of an apposition that is often composed of a common noun and whose apposed sequence predicates not only its support sequence but also a sentence predicate as an adverbial complement.

In the Part 4, we analyzed appositions in spoken French. Though our oral corpus is composed of various kinds of recording, we could collect only 30 appositions. The functions of an apposed sequence are considerably limited, and it seldom presents new information to a support sequence. Our analysis suggested that the apposition is rarely used as a means of predication in spoken language, where a verbal predicate prevails.

After having analyzed various types of apposition in written and spoken languages, we can say that it is a verbal predicate that is the most suitable for the predication in contemporary French. It is true that the apposition establishes a predication by using a nominal predicate, but its predication depends completely on the semantic relation between two sequences and contextual factors. The apposition is a parasite structure which establishes a predication by taking advantage of semantic and contextual factors, and being supported syntactically by the sentence where it dwells. However, this parasitic character enables it to use an article exclusively as a referential means.