

# Italian *allora*, French *alors*: Functions, convergences and divergences\*

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## Abstract

The functions, convergences, and divergences of Italian *allora* and French *alors* are analyzed in two Italian texts (the *Novellino*, in Old Italian, and *Paso Doble*, in Modern Italian) and their French translations. The discourse marker is used differently in the two languages, and the contrastive analysis allows us to better assess those differences, by explicitly quantifying the degree of correspondence, omissions, and non-literal translations. Furthermore, our work confirms the existence of functions which may be identified as more central or more peripheral within a certain configuration, and emphasizes the existence of cross-language preferences for a more/less rich

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set of forms for expressing a particular function. The polyfunctionality and context-boundness which characterize discourse markers in general are held responsible for differences in translation, thus motivating the several shades of meaning which distinguish Italian *allora* (with regard both to Old and Modern Italian) from French *alors*.

**Key words:** discourse markers, translation, polyfunctionality, context, *allora*, *alors*, Italian, French.

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## 1. Translating discourse markers

Within the theoretical framework outlined in Bazzanella (1995, 2006a), and on the basis of existing empirical studies of Italian *allora* and French *alors* (cf. section 2), we will approach *allora/alors* analyzing the functions, convergences, and divergences of the two cognates in two Italian texts (the *Novellino*, in Old Italian, and *Paso Doble*, in Modern Italian) and their French translations. We will not be dealing here with the general topic of translation, but only with some specific points related to the translation of discourse markers (DMs), a functional category (cf., *inter alia*, van Dijk 1979, Schiffrin 1987, Hansen 1998, Jucker and Ziv 1998, Pons Bordería 1998, Martín Zorraquino and Portolés 1999, Fischer 2000, 2006, Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg 2006). DMs, no more considered as a peripheral phenomenon, have increasingly been studied in recent years, and have contributed to the change of grammar paradigms towards pragmatics and interactional linguistics.

Four features of DMs are generally agreed upon by scholars, though an unified treatment is still lacking. Let us start with the first two features:

- their polyfunctionality, i.e. the fact that they operate on several levels simultaneously,<sup>1</sup> and
- their relatedness to the speech situation and not to the situation talked about, which corresponds to an extreme sensitiveness to the variation of both context and cotext.

The close context-boundness and the polyfunctionality of DMs constitute, of course, a crucial problem for translation. Though the indeterminacy of translation

1. Kroon (1995: 43) distinguishes between two kinds of polyfunctionality (category-internal, i.e. “their apparent variety of modal uses”), and the external one, the so-called cross-categorial polyfunctionality, i.e. “their property of having one or more uses that are commoner for other grammatical categories (e.g. adverbs or conjunctions)”; cf. also Bazzanella’s (2006: 456) distinction between paradigmatic (*in absentia*) and syntagmatic (*in presentia*) polyfunctionality.

in general has been stressed several times, both by linguists and philosophers, translating DMs appears to be particularly difficult, much more so than in the case of other parts of speech, since words used in a DM function are ‘indeterminate’ *per se*, and one can determine DMs only with regard to the specific usage in context (cf. Bazzanella and Morra 2000: 155).<sup>2</sup> In fact different functions, which correspond to different shades of meaning, can be ‘activated’ simultaneously by a particular DM in a given language, and the choice of an equivalent in the target language is unlikely to preserve all the different shades of meaning and all the different functions it conveys in the source context.

Translators have set up different solutions to this problem, consciously or unconsciously. Literal translations are often rightly ignored, and functional correspondences are pursued. To quote an example, according to Bazzanella’s (1999) analysis of the Italian translation (by A. Micchettoni, *Fratelli e Sorelle*, published by Garzanti, Milan 1982) of *well* in an English literary text<sup>3</sup> (*Brothers and Sisters*, by Ivy Compton Burnett), in 49.5% of the cases there are 46 different functional correspondences. Among this wide variety of corresponding terms, some DMs are more common, such as *ebbene*, *allora*, *be’*, *ma*, *ecco*, while 27 occurrences of various DMs are used only once, and are highly context-specific.

The third essential feature of DMs is that they do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance, in other words they do not add anything to the propositional content of an utterance. This feature is partly responsible for the long neglect of DMs in traditional grammar and is reflected in the frequent deletion of DMs in translations: e.g., more than one third (39%!) of the occurrences of *well* in the above-mentioned Italian translation are deleted.

The fourth and last feature of DMs, related to their non-propositional nature, is that they serve to indicate the mood of a sentence, to express attitudes and emotions, and more generally to relate utterance to aspects of the speech situation. Within the framework developed by Bazzanella (2006a), these functions are seen as pertaining to three domains, i.e. interaction, text structure, and cognition.

In recent years, much attention has been paid to this basic aspect of linguistic interaction in pragmatics and in interactional linguistics, a development that has increased the interest in DMs and has revealed the importance of translations that are sensitive to all facets of communication. In fact, translating DMs strongly posits the need for a careful functional correspondence: semantic equivalence is not crucial at all, but “a substantial amount of inferencing over and above their decoding” (Ariel 1998: 250) is required as a starting point for their interpretation and translation, which necessarily involves various levels and components of language use in its context.

2. “The notion of context has long been recognized as central to pragmatic enquiry and to the study of translation and interpreting” (Baker 2006: 317). A recent issue of *Journal of Pragmatics* (2006, 38) is dedicated to the intersection of interests and challenges in these domains. With regard to the translation of DMs, cf., among others, Fischer (2000), Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg (2003, 2006), Cuenca (2004, forth).
3. As Mason (2006) rightly points out, “current studies of interpreting are based on a view of source texts and utterances as discrete entities with stable meanings that are encoded in textual material rather than negotiated in the course of interaction”.

## 2. *allora/alors*

### 2.1. *Functions of Italian allora and French alors*

Italian *allora* and French *alors* are etymologically closely related, both forms deriving from Latin *illa hora* (ablative) ‘at that time’.<sup>4</sup>

Both items in origin are adverbs with a predominantly temporal anaphorical meaning (cf. Zénone 1982 and Gerecht 1987 with regard to French; Bosco and Bazzanella 2005 with regard to Italian): they express (a) the simultaneity of a state/process B with a temporal reference point A specified in the previous context (ex. 1) or (b) the posteriority of an event B with regard to a state of affairs A specified in the previous context and considered of particular relevance for B, mostly in the sense that B is a consequence of – or a reaction to – A (ex. 2). In both cases, A as well as B are distant from the deictic centre – a reminiscence of the distal character of *illa*.

- (1) Usavansi *allora* le medaglie, in Firenze, che le due valevano uno danaio piccolo. (*Novellino*, novella 96)  
‘*In those days* the Florentines used the *medaglia* as currency, two of which were worth a penny.’
- (2) «[...] Pregoti che mi dichi come queste cose tu le sai». *Allora* il greco rispose: «Messere, io lo vi dirò. [...]» (*Novellino*, novella 2)  
‘[...] I pray you tell me how you came to know all these things». *Then* the Greek replied, «Sire, I will tell you everything. [...]»

Subsequently, temporal adverbial *allora/alors* became less used and *allora/alors* was extended, instead, to a number of contexts in which it has come to fulfill new functions as a connective and a DM (cf. Bosco and Bazzanella 2005, Bazzanella *et al.* a, b, Hansen 1997). This diachronic process, which to date has only been partly analysed,<sup>5</sup> seems more advanced in French than in Italian (e.g. Mosegaard Hansen 1997 found only one instance of temporal *alors* of type (b) and no instance of the temporal use of type (a) in her spoken French corpus).

4. With regard to *allora*, existing etymological dictionaries (Battaglia 1961: 335, Cortellazzo and Zolli 1979: 41) suggest that it has developed out of Lat. *ad illam horam* ‘at that time’. Since that phrase is not attested either in classical or in medieval Latin texts, a derivation from the ablative form, such as has been proposed for French *alors* in the *Trésor de la Langue Française* (Imbs 1973: 607) seems more plausible. *Illa hora* (abl.) is well attested in Latin; in French, it gives rise to *lors*, whereas in Italian it has survived only within prepositional phrases – most prominently in *allora*, but also in other forms such as *inlor(a)*, *allo* (Old Lombard). See von Wartburg (1952, vol. 4: 478).
5. Bosco and Bazzanella (2005) analyze semantic change on the basis of Old Italian and present-day Italian corpora as well as dictionaries, whereas Bazzanella *et al.* (forth. a, b) are corpus-based studies of *allora* in present-day spoken Italian. Hansen (1997) is concerned mainly with present-day spoken French, which she analyzes using spoken corpora; her diachronic argument is based on evidence from dictionaries.

A first extension to be mentioned is the use in hypothetical constructions, well attested both in standard written Italian and French. In this co-text, *allora/alors* reinforces the implicational relationship expressed by the construction, i.e. it helps to signal that the apodosis B is true (only) in the specific mental space defined by the protasis A (cf. Dancygier and Sweetser 2005):<sup>6</sup>

- (3) “Del resto”, aggiungeva, “nel caso di un black friday di solito sono gli ultimi assunti a essere licenziati. Se però dimostrano di avere ottimi skills e buona volontà, *allora...* (*Paso doble*, p. 25; see below § 2.)  
 “Besides”, he added, “in the case of a Black Friday, usually it is the people who have been taken on most recently who are laid off. But if they have very good skills and are eager to work, *then...*”

*Allora/alors* maintains an anaphorical meaning with clearly defined scope, and A and B still have the property of being distant from the deictic centre, albeit in the modal dimension rather than on the axis of time. *Allora/alors* is invariably placed at the beginning of the apodosis.

Probably simultaneously and partly under the influence of the extension to hypothetical constructions, *allora/alors* has been extended to co-texts that lack the feature /distal/, developing speaker-related, textual and interaction-managing functions that are very frequent in present day spoken Italian and French. These functions may be seen as reinforcing two properties that are already present in the earlier temporal uses of the marker (*Novellino* dates from 1281 to 1300) and that are partly present in hypothetical constructions, depending on the exact nature of the conditional relation expressed by the construction. One set of functions is related to the *consequential* meaning present in the temporal use of type (b). A second set of functions, which we term *correlative* (cf. Bosco and Bazzanella 2005), is related to the (meta-)textual effect of foregrounding and change of perspective that characterises many instances of temporal *allora/alors*, again above all those of type (b). We will analyse both sets of functions in more detail in the remaining part of this section.

In present-day Italian and French, the *consequential* meaning of *allora/alors* may be transposed to the epistemic domain, with a predominantly cognitive function (‘given A, I infer B’, cf. ex. 4, taken from the *Ipar Corpus*,<sup>7</sup> quoted in Bazzanella 2006b: 150), and to the domain of speech acts performed by the speaker, with a dominant interactional function (‘reacting to what happened immediately before (A), I perform speech act B’, cf. ex. 5, taken from Hansen 1997:183). As to the level of form, consequential *allora/alors* is prosodically integrated, and it is placed at the margins of the utterance, having lost part of the freedom of placement typical of its use as a time adverb.

6. There is a specifically French collocation, i.e. *ou alors* (‘or’), which can probably be linked to the use of *alors* in hypothetical constructions, since disjunctive *ou* is semantically similar to a protasis of the type ‘if not’.
7. With regard to *Ipar corpus*, which will be available at [cirass@unina.it](mailto:cirass@unina.it), cf. Albano Leoni (2003), Albano Leoni and Giordano (2006).

- (4) <eh!> *allora* ce l'abbiamo uguale:  
'<yeah!> *that means* we've got the same one'
- (5) A. y a ton oncle?  
B. non  
A. *alors* pourquoi t'es éclatée?  
'A. Is your uncle there?  
B. No.  
A. Why did you laugh *then*'

In utterance-final position produced with question intonation, non-temporal consequential *allora/alors* fulfils the additional pragmatic function of reinforcing the interrogative value of the utterance, whether it be on the epistemic level (expression of doubt and low speaker commitment, cf. Hansen 1997:182) or on the level of interaction (request for the interlocutor's reaction, cf. Bazzanella *et al.* forth. a, cf. ex. 6, taken from *C-Oral-Rom*, inatla02, cf. Cresti and Moneglia 2005):

- (6) E adesso qui c'è un altro mandato / *allora*?  
'So here we have another writ / *then*'

Another instance of interrogative consequential *allora/alors* is the question *e allora?/et alors?*, which is used as a back-channel to make the interlocutor advance in a narrative or an argumentation.

As to *correlative* uses, we observe that already temporal *allora/alors* of type (b) often has a foregrounding function in narratives. Moreover, it is frequently used to report action sequences, in particular dialogues (cf. also § 2.2.2), which are characterized by changes of perspective between various protagonists of the narrative. Originally a mainly contextually induced side-effect, foregrounding and re-orientation have later become important functions of the marker *allora/alors* itself. This "metonymical" change in meaning (Hopper and Traugott 2003) has been accompanied by the "metaphorical" transposition of the relationship expressed by the marker from the content level to the textual level. As a consequence, the scope of *allora/alors* has become less clearly defined and more context-dependent than that of its non-correlative uses. Correlative *allora/alors* expresses the beginning of a new segment or sequence B, stressing B's particular relevance relative to the way discourse and interaction have evolved up to the moment of the speech event (A), and fulfilling mainly textual and interactional functions. Syntactically, correlative *allora/alors* is always positioned at the beginning of B; it may be followed by a prosodic break.

In both Italian and French, correlative *allora/alors* is used to signal the shift to a new topic (ex. 7) or to a subtopic, to introduce a parenthesis or a self-repair (sometimes with the prosodic contour of a hesitation marker, assuming a planning and turn-holding function), to signal a frame-break (e.g. a change of addressee), but

also to introduce a new phase of activity or a new interactional sequence<sup>8</sup> – a use that is typically made by speakers with special rights as to interaction management, e.g. by moderators in a discussion (cf. Bazzanella *et al.* forth.a, Hansen 1997:172).

- (7) bene fratelli *allora* oggi c'è un episodio che è quello della cacciata dei mercanti dal tempio. (taken from *Lip*, fd14; cf. De Mauro, Mancini, Voghera 1993).  
'well brothers *so* today we have an episode which is that of the cleansing of the temple'

In French, correlative *alors* is developing new uses as a focus particle with reduced scope, the segment B being a constituent rather than an entire utterance (cf. Hansen 1997:181):

- (8) et il me semble que c'est dans celui-ci/ elle nous *a/* sur des: des colonnes, y a vraiment, des cartouches, *alors* assez profonds avec des dessins, répétitifs  
...  
'and it seems to me that it is in this one/ she has/ on some: on some columns, there are really, some cartouches, *I mean* very deep ones with drawings on them, which are repeated...'

In Italian, on the other hand, we find an interrogative holophrastic use of *allora* (cf. 9, taken from *C-Oral-Rom*, itelpv13) – simple *allora*, as opposed to *e allora*, mentioned earlier – which may be seen to have a dominantly correlative and interaction-regulating function, requesting the hearer to introduce a new topic, often the first topic of the ongoing exchange (cf. Bazzanella *et al.* forth.a):

- (9) C. sì //  
Z. chi è / Christiano?  
C. oh zio //  
Z. oh//  
C. oh//  
Z. *allora*?  
  
'C. yes //  
Z. who is / Christiano?  
C. oh uncle //  
Z. oh//  
C. oh//  
Z. *well*?'

8. It is often placed at the beginning of a turn, a position where we find also other variants of non-temporal *allora/alors*, resulting in a particular frequency of the marker at turn-beginnings, at least in Italian (cf. Bazzanella *et al.* forth.a).

## 2.2. A case study: allora in the Novellino and its French translation

2.2.1. *The Novellino*. We cite the *Novellino* from the *Padua Corpus*,<sup>9</sup> which is a raw corpus of texts written in the Florentine language. In particular, within the *Padua Corpus*, the *Novellino* is part of the OVI (*Opera del vocabolario italiano*; <http://www.csovi.fi.cnr.it/>) database, which includes 1,780 texts from the origins up to 1375, corresponding to 20,000,000 words.<sup>10</sup> With regard to the *Padua Corpus*, a morphological and syntactic searching system is available (*Gatto*, i.e. *Gestione automatizzata del tesoro delle origini*; <http://www.oivi.cnr.it/index.html>), but an adequate tagging of the pragmatic functions is not yet available, because of the complexity of the task.

*Allora* is commonly used in Old Italian;<sup>11</sup> in the *Novellino* it occurs 90 times. These occurrences of *allora* can be distinguished according to whether they carry a temporal value or not; the temporal occurrences are by far more common (cf. ex. 2 above).

2.2.2. *French translations of allora in the Novellino*. The study of the French translations of *allora* in the *Novellino* helps us to answer to the following questions:

- 1) how Modern French *alors* corresponds to Old Italian *allora*. In other words, what is the relationship between the two Romance derivative forms of the same Latin expression in heterogeneous diachronic stages?
- 2) how the correspondences and the discrepancies between *allora* and *alors* (see § 2.1) are related to the pattern of a specific text type (for the principle that establishes a 'bond' between text types – or subtypes – and DM cf. Kroon 1994, Garcea and Bazzanella 1999).

We should first stress that the *Novellino* is a prototypic example of a narrative text where different states of affairs (irrespective of the differences between actions, processes, situations, events, etc.) follow each other in sequences that are chronologically ordered by a narrator and can be focalised in different ways. Since chronological order is also a subcategory of the additive relations of textual coherence (cf. e.g. Mann and Thompson 1986; Sanders, Spooren and Noordman 1992), the temporal references have not only a propositional but also a metatextual (structuring) function, i.e. they highlight single discourse units (cf. on Latin texts Garcea 1998, van Gils 2003). In the *Novellino*<sup>12</sup> *allora* commonly has this function, which

9. Cf. *Italant* (*Per una grammatica dell'italiano Antico*), the forthcoming project for a grammatical description of old Italian, directed by Lorenzo Renzi and based on *Padua Corpus* (cf. Renzi and Bisetto 2000, Renzi 2002). The printed version of the *Novellino* referred to by the *Italant* project is the following: *Novellino* (II), sec. XIII u. v. (Guido Favati ed., Genova, Bozzi, 1970).
10. The project includes, as well as the corpus, the old Italian vocabulary TLIO (*Tesoro della lingua italiana delle origini*) built using the OVI corpus. It currently includes around 9,000 items, but only 2,500 of them can be accessed by users.
11. For an analysis of the uses of *allora* in both Modern and Old Italian, cf. Bosco and Bazzanella 2005.
12. We quote from the electronic text of *Italant*, but we compared this version with the edition *Le cento novelle antiche o libro di novelle e di bel parlar gentile detto anche Novellino*, ed. Letterio

is also wholly expressed by the Modern French *alors*, as will be clear from many of the following examples. This systematic correspondence is attested in 62 out of 89<sup>13</sup> cases, i.e. 69,6%. In such a highly widespread use, *allora/alors* seems to be losing the propositional value of the temporal adverb; it rather becomes a DM of simple metatextual junction, as this example on Alexander the Great shows:

- (10) Alexandro *allora* si volse {*Alexandre*  $\emptyset$  *se tourna*} inverso i suoi baroni e disse: «Dov'è chi mi domandava ch'io li donasse?». *Allora* fu tramesso { $\emptyset$  *On dépêcha*} per lo cavaliere ch' addomandava il dono. Lo cavaliere venne, et Alexandro parlò e disse ... Lo cavaliere rispuose ... *Allora* Alexandro sorrise { $\emptyset$  *Alexandre sourit*}, e comandò che lli fossero dati duemila marchi d'ariento. (novella 3)

'Alexander *then* turned toward his barons and said, "Where is he who asked gifts of me?" *Then* the knight who had requested gifts was sent for. The knight came and Alexander spoke and said ... The knight answered ... *Then* Alexander smiled and commanded that he be given two thousand silver marks.'

As the same (10) shows, when its role is external to the propositional content, *allora* is sometimes ignored by the French translator: on the whole this kind of 'zero-translation' is relatively frequent, since it is chosen in 16 out of 89 cases, i.e. 17,9%, but this result is less significant than the case of *well* in *Brothers and Sisters*, see section 1.

A similar phenomenon of 'under-determination' (cf. Bazzanella and Morra 2000) can be observed when *allora* is translated by the conjunction *et* (1 out of 89 cases):

- (11) «Madonna, sì come poco v'è caluto di costui, che mostravate di tanto amarlo, così vi carebbe vie meno di me». *Allora* si partì da llei {*et il se départit d'elle*}, et andossi per li fatti suoi; et ella rimase colla vergogna. (novella 59, adaptation of the tale of the widow of Ephesus, found in Petronius' *Satyricon*)  
 "'My lady, how little time it took for the great love you showed for this man to subside; it would take even less for your love for me to dwindle". *Then* he left her and went about his business, while she remained greatly ashamed.'

The cases of *allora* having a prevalently temporal value (or at least those considered predominantly temporal by the translator) are more complex. As Modern

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di Francia, Torino, UTET, 1945, which was used by the French translator Charles-Albert Cingria, *Le Novellino. Les cents nouvelles antiques ou le livre du beau parler gentil*, Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2004. We have also taken into account the more recent *Novellino e Conti del Duecento*, ed. Sebastiano Lo Nigro, Torino, UTET, 1983. English translations come from *The Novellino or One Hundred Ancient Tales*, ed. and transl. by Joseph P. Consoli, New York/London, Garland Publishing, 1997.

13. We must consider 89 instead of 90 occurrences because in one case the French translator (like the English one) chooses a version of the text with *et* instead of *allora*: *El Re cioè il Soldano disse* {*et le roi, c'est-à-dire le Soudan, dit*} (novel 76 on Richard I, King of England, called Lion-Hearted) = *And the king, that is the Sultan, said*.

French *alors* is not an adequate rendering, the translator uses explicitly temporal adverbs and stresses specific values, such as posteriority (*et ensuite*, ex. 12), iteration (*de nouveau*, ex. 13) or immediateness (*aussitôt*, ex. 14), punctuality (*à ce moment*, ex. 15, 16; *à cet instant*, ex. 17). This applies to 6 out of 89 cases, i.e. 6,7%:

(12) E lo ‘mperadore li disse: «Conoscerestu tuo bariglione?» «Sì, messere». Allora lo ‘mperadore lo si trasse di sotto {*l’empereur le sortit alors de dessous son vêtement*} ... per dare a divedere ch’elli era suto in persona. Allora lo ‘mperadore {*et ensuite ... l’empereur*}, per la nettezza di lui, li donoe riccamente. (novella 21)<sup>14</sup>

‘And then the Emperor said, “Would you recognize your flask?” “Yes, Sire.” Then the Emperor reached down and brought up the flask for all to see that it was there. Then the Emperor rewarded this man most richly for his cleanliness.’

(13) Il pedaggere li domandò un danaio; quelli si contese, azzuffandosi con lui. Il pedaggere il prese; que’ difendendosi trasse fuori un suo moncolino, c’avea meno l’una mano. Allora il pedaggere il vide {*Ø voyant cela, le péager dit*}; disse: «Tu me ne darai due: l’uno per la mano e l’altro per lo piede». Allora furono alla zuffa {*de nouveau les voilà aux prises*}: il capello li andò di capo: quelli avea meno l’uno occhio». (novella 53, with the same main character as novella 21)

‘The toll-collector demanded one dinar from him. The man contested and the two came to blows. The toll-collector grabbed the man, who, while defending himself revealed a stump where he had lost a hand. When the toll-collector saw this, he said, “You now owe me two dinars, one for your hand and the other for your foot.” Then, during the brawl, the man’s hat fell off his head. The man had an eye missing.’

(14) «...insegnatemi campare, ché potete, et io sarò vostro marito, e terrovi onorevolmente». Allora la donna {*aussitôt la femme*}, udendo questo, innamorò di questo cavaliere e disse: «Io farò ciò che voi mi comanderete, tant’è l’amore ch’io vi porto». (novella 59, see *supra*, ex. 11)

“Teach me the way to survive; I know you can, and I will become your husband and hold you in the highest esteem.” Then the woman, hearing this, fell in love with this knight and said, “I will do what you ask, so great is my love for you.”

(15) E tornando al signore per iscommiatarsi da lui, il signor disse: «Or se’ tu ancor qui? non avestu la torta?». «Messer, sì ebbi». «Or che ne facesti?» «Messere,

14. The main character may be Frederick I, commonly known as Barbarossa, or his grandchild Frederick II, King of Sicily.

io avea *allora* mangiato {*Messer, j'avais* à ce moment *déjà mangé*}: diedila a un povero giullare che mi diceva male perch'io vi chiamava mio Iddio». *Allora* disse il signore {*alors le seigneur dit*}: «Va' con la mala ventura: ché bene è miglior il suo Iddio che 'l tuo»: e disseli il fatto della torta. (novella 79, on a minstrel and his lord)

'Then the other minstrel returned to his lord to formally take his leave. His lord said, "You're still here? Didn't you receive a tart?" "Sire, I had it." "What did you do with it?" "Sire, I had *already* eaten and so I gave it to that poor minstrel who chided me for calling you my god." Then the lord said, "My misfortune follow you, for it is true that his god is better than yours." And then he told him all about the tart.'

- (16) Ed elli disse che il fumo dell' aloe e dell' ambra dà loro perduto il buon odore naturale: ché la femina non vale neente, se di lei non viene come di luccio passato. *Allora* i cavalieri di ciò cominciaro a fare gran sollazzo {*les chevaliers, à ce moment, commencèrent à se réjouir fort*} e gran festa, del parlare di messer Migliore. (novella 80, on a misogynistic joke of the poet Migliore Rinaldo degli Abati)

'And he said that, because of the women, the smoke issuing from the aloe and amber had lost its fine, natural odor; "since a woman is worthless unless she smells like a pike past its prime." Then the knights began to laugh mightily, most heartily welcoming the words of Master Migliore.'

- (17) Allora disse messere Azzolino: «Molto è bella, ma la mia è assai più bella»: e trassela fuori. *Allora* {à cet instant}, seicento cavalieri ch'erano con lui trassero tutti mano alle loro. (novella 84)<sup>15</sup>

'Then the master Azzolino said, "It is very lovely, but mine is lovelier still." And he unsheathed his sword. *At the same time*, six hundred knights who were with him, all put their hands to their swords.'

In three cases, the translator over-determines the deductive argumentative function of *allora*. He uses *donc* (which corresponds to *così* elsewhere in the *Novellino*) or complex expressions that stress the narrator's commitment and are very far from the literal translation (ex. 20):

- (18) E quando i Saracini vennero a combattere la Spagna, sì fu elli in quella battaglia che si chiamò la Spagnata, la quale fue la più perigliosa battaglia che fosse, da quella de' Troiani e de' Greci in qua. *Allora* erano i Saracini {*et là étaient donc les Sarrasins*} grandissima multitudine e con molte generazioni di stornenti, sicché Riccar lo Ghercio fue il conduttore della prima battaglia. (novella 31)<sup>16</sup>

15. In an anecdote concerning the sword of Ezzelino III da Romano.

16. On a certain Richard lo Ghercio, probably during the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, 1212.

‘And when the Saracens came to war against Spain, he took part in that battle now known as the Spagnata, which was the most perilous battle that was ever fought, from the time of the battle of the Trojans and the Greeks. *At that time*, the Saracens had arrived in great numbers, bringing with them many war machines which they had engineered. Richard lo Ghercio was in charge of the first battle.’

- (19) La reina così fece tutto: fece cruccio col re e nella pace li adomandoe lo dono, e lo re lel promise. *Allora* fu diliberato messer Alardo {*Messer Alard fut donc dégagé*} di ciò ch’avea promesso, e rimase colle oneraveli armi colli altri prodi cavalieri del reame di Francia, torneando e facendo d’arme. (novella 60, on Éradar de Valéry, counsellor of Charles I of Anjou)

‘The queen did as requested. She became angry at the king and, to restore peace, she asked for that which she wished. The king agreed to grant her wish. And *so*<sup>17</sup> master Allardo was freed from his promise and remained with the other noble knights, jousting and fighting.’

- (20) E messere Polo rispuose: «Perdonatemi, messere: ch’io non mi levo se non per lo ponte che si levò per me». *Allora* li cavalieri ne fecero grande festa {*réponse, on le pense bien, qui mit les chevaliers en belle allégresse*}. (novella 41, on Polo Traversari, master of Ravenna)

‘And master Polo replied, “Pardon me, Sir, if I do not rise as the draw-bridge rose for me.” *Then*<sup>18</sup> the knights were greatly amused by his answer.’

Finally, in one case (see below, ex. 21), *allora* highlights the contrast between the points of view of two characters in the narrative and is translated through the very dissimilar *ah! mais* Yusuf ibn Ayyub, sultan of Egypt and Syria, orders a truce with the Christians and affirms that he is ready to become a Christian if his enemies’ habits please him; but when he sees the Christians walking in his pavilion and spitting on the carpets richly decorated with crosses, he strongly disapproves of their impiety:

- (21) I Cristiani stolti entrarono dentro andando con li piedi su per quelle croci, sputandovi suso siccome in terra. *Allora* parlò il Soldano e ripreseli forte {*Ah! mais le Soudan les admonesta fort*}: «Voi predicate la Croce e spregiatela tanto? (novella 23a)

‘The foolish Christians entered, walking all over those crosses and spitting on them as if they were on bare ground. *Then* the Sultan spoke and he strongly reprimanded them. “You preach the cross, yet you treat it with such scorn?”’

To sum up, the comparison between the *Novellino* and its modern French translations leads to the following conclusions (see also *infra*, Table 1):

17. Significantly, the English translator adds *so*, even though the Italian text he adopted is «*E fu diliberato Messer Allardo*».  
18. We add *then* where the English translator does not put anything.

- 1) the correspondence between Old It. *allora* with correlative/consecutive value and Modern Fr. *alors* is maintained almost systematically;
- 2) the over-determination of the temporal value in the French translation highlights the typology of the narrative text;<sup>19</sup>
- 3) the under-determination of Old It. *allora* aims at making the Modern Fr. writing more fluent by decreasing redundancy. This choice, however, becomes possible only because *allora*, as it is used in the *Novellino*, has already started to lose its original propositional content (ex. 10-11);
- 4) the over-determination of the deductive uses (both for agreeing and disagreeing: ex. 20-21) is evidence for the beginning of a modal shift of Old It. *allora* to metatextual and cognitive values.

From a diachronic viewpoint, Old It. *allora* is more linked to the original temporal value, whereas Modern Fr. *alors* is an example of advanced modal shift. The Old It. form, however, already shows clear signs of a shift from its temporal value linked to the event (*t* of the situation talked about) to utterance-linked values (*T* of the speech situation). It also starts to present the metatextual and cognitive features that will become prevalent in diachronically more recent phases. This kind of development is parallel to the evolution of the Latin temporal adverbs close to *allora* or originally related to the temporal field and eventually affected by ‘modal shift’ and *subjectification* (cf. Traugott 1982, 1989, 1995, Traugott and Dasher 2002).<sup>20</sup>

### 2.3. Paso Doble by Giuseppe Culicchia

A first contrastive analysis of the DM *allora* in Modern Italian and French was carried out on *Paso doble* by Giuseppe Culicchia (1995), a young person’s novel from many points of view: the age of the author (Culicchia was thirty when the book was published), the age of the main character, the events in the plot, and the colloquial language, which simulates the language spoken by young people. In fact, Giuseppe Culicchia may be seen as one of those modern writers who, especially in dialogues, imitate spoken language in their writing style which, as Calaresu (2005) points out, pretends to be spoken language (“*si finge parlato*”). In the novel (149 pages in the paperback edition published in 1998) 20 occurrences of *allora* were found and compared with the corresponding instances in the French transla-

19. With regard to the correlation between the usage of *allora* and the text types, cf. Bazzanella *et al.* (forth. b).
20. See also Hansen (2003: 24): ‘Now, it appears that, cross-linguistically, phasal adverbs are prone to develop additional, non-aspectual uses, including, prominently, modalizing or discourse-marking uses of various kinds’.

With regard to specific adverbs, see e.g. Rosén 1994 (Lat. *demum* ‘then, at last’ from temporal to metatextual); Risselada 1996 (Lat. *nunc* ‘now’ from temporal to metatextual); Bazzanella 2003 (from Lat. *ante* ‘in front of, before’ to It. *anzi*); Bazzanella *et al.* 2005 (from Lat. temporal *iam* to the modal uses in the Romance derivative forms); Garcea and Orlandini forth. (Lat. *denique* from ‘finally’ to ‘for instance’).

tion by Nathalie Bauer (1997 Éditions Payot et Rivages, Paris), published two years later than the original Italian publication (Garzanti Editore, Milano).

In the French text, 16 out of 20 (80%) occurrences of Italian *allora* are translated by *alors* (see ex. 22 with a clear temporal meaning, and ex. 23, with consequential *allora/alors* introducing a speech act).<sup>21</sup>

(22) La copia dell'*Hitler* ancora incellofanata sopra il televisore, la pila di «Vogue» appoggiata alla parete accanto al letto, e chissà perché la formazione della Germania Campione del Mondo nel 1974... *Allora* frequentavo le elementari... [pag. 46]

(J'étais *alors* à l'école primaire... [pag. 49]).

'The copy of the *Hitler* still in its wrapper, the pile of copies of *Vogue* leaning against the wall beside the bed, and for some unknown reason the German team which won the World Cup in 1974...'

('At that time I was at primary school ...')

(23) «Dunque...» mi disse, prendendo una calcolatrice tascabile da un cassetto. «Sono due ore di lavoro per dieci otturazioni... In tutto duemilioni e cinquecentomila lire, sempre che voglia la ricevuta...».

Erano due mesi del mio stipendio.

«E se non la volessi?».

«In questo caso sarebbero due milioni. Ma in contanti. Niente assegni o carte di credito». In banca non possedevo molto di più.

«*Allora* facciamo senza ricevuta». [pag. 102]

(- *Alors*, disons sans facture. [pag. 117])

“Now then...,” he said, taking a pocket calculator out of a drawer. “That’s two hours’ work for ten fillings... Two million five hundred thousand lira in all, if you want a receipt...” That was two months of my salary.

“What if I don’t want one?”

“In that case it would be two million. But in cash. No cheques or credit cards.” I didn’t have much more than that in my bank account.

(*Okay*, no receipt then.)

A strong but isolated (5%) case of over-determination is the following one, where *donc* translates *allora*:

21. Furthermore, the occurrences of *alors* (12) in the French version which do not belong to the set of the *alors* translated from *allora* were compared with the corresponding items in the Italian text. Within the 12 occurrences of the French *alors*, 1 instance is the translation of *poi* (8,3%), 1 corresponds to *in quel momento* (8.3%), 1 to *dunque* (8.3%), 2 occurrences of *alors que* translates the Italian *mentre* (16.6%), and 1 *in questo caso* (8.3%), 3 occurrences of *ou alors* correspond to *oppure* (25%), while 3 occurrences do not have a corresponding version in the Italian text (25%).

(24) «Ragazzi, oggi ci manderanno dai magazzini almeno venti colli di novità. È meglio creare una task-force per dare una mano al collega del pomeriggio». «IO HO IL CORSO DI PORTAMENTO», urlava immediatamente Super Mario, gonfiandosi tutto.

«*Allora* si fermerà Walter», decideva il direttore, senza darmi tempo di aprire la bocca. [pag. 25]

(- *C'est donc* Walter qui restera, décidait le directeur, sans même me donner le temps d'ouvrir la bouche. [pag. 25])

'Boys, they're sending us at least twenty new arrivals from the warehouse today. We'd better form a task-force to help our colleague who works in the afternoon».

« I'VE GOT MY POSTURE COURSE», shouted Super Mario immediately, swelling up...

(« Okay, Walter stays *then*», decided the director, not even giving me time to open my mouth.')

In the French version, 3 occurrences (15%) were given no translation (marked by 'Ø'): (25), (26), under-determinations which concern posteriority and correlation respectively, and (27), where *e allora* is reduced to simple *et*.

(25) «Puoi dirlo. In città la nostra videoteca è quella che vende di più. Diventeremo nel field la catena maggiormente redditizia in Italia. Mica come quelli che si ostinano a vendere libri. Il futuro è nelle immagini che scorrono, non nelle parole che restano immobili. E secondo quanto stabilito a Milano, *allora* il Team guarderà all'Europa, all'America, all'Asia, al Mondo...» [pag. 39]

(D'après ce qui a été dit à Milan, Ø le Team se tournera vers l'Europe, vers les États Unis, l'Asie, l'Afrique, le Monde... [pag. 42])

'You can say that again. In town, our videostore is the one that sells the most. We will become the most profitable chain in the field in Italy. Not like those shops that insist on selling books. The future is in moving images, not in static words.'

('According to what was agreed in Milan, Ø the Team will look towards Europe, the United States, Asia, Africa, the world...')

(26) Se uno si metteva a pensare che le cose funzionavano così a livello mondiale – per non parlare dei minatori sudafricani o delle bambine che fabbricavano i giocattoli in Thailandia guadagnando circa tre dollari alla settimana – be', *allora* capiva in che direzione tirasse il vento da un bel po' di tempo in qua. [pag. 37]

(Quand on pense que c'est ainsi que les choses fonctionnent à l'échelle mondiale – et on ne parle pas des mineurs sud-africains, ou des petites filles qui fabriquent des jouets in Thaïlande pour un salaire d'environ trois dollars par

semaine - , Ø on comprends dans quelle directions le vent tourne depuis un certain temps. [pag. 40])

'If you thought that this is the way things worked worldwide – not to mention the South African miners or the little girls who made toys in Thailand earning about three dollars a week – well, *then* you understood how the wind had been blowing for the last few years.'

- (27) Presi a svegliarmi ogni mattina alle quattro. Sul pavimento tenevo tre sveglie: una vicino al divano letto, l'altra sotto il tavolo, la terza poco distante dal lavandino. Per spegnere la prima mi bastava allungare una mano. Poi attaccava a suonare la seconda *e allora* dovevo sporgermi tutto fuori dalle coperte. [pag. 19]

(Le deuxième se mettait alors à sonner, *et* Ø il me fallait sortir presque entièrement du lit pour l'atteindre. [pag. 16])

'I got into the habit of waking up at four every morning. On the floor I had three alarm clocks: one close to the sofa bed, another one under the table, the third one near the sink. In order to turn the first one off, I only had to reach out. Then the second one would ring, and Ø I had to get nearly right out of bed to turn it off.'

In *Paso Doble*, *allora* frequently has interactional functions, especially in its consequential uses operating on speech acts (cf., respectively, ex. 23 above, and 28 to follow):

- (28) «Sono passato a ritirare quel corso di informatica».

«Vado a prenderglielo subito». Cercai e cercai e cercai. Niente da fare. Non disponevamo di nessun *Super Cobol Tre Punto Quattro*. Perché non mi aveva detto che sarebbero passati a prenderlo? Di solito la gente che telefonava poi non passava mai. «*Allora*, c'è o non c'è questo corso?» [pag. 34]

(- *Alors*, voulez trouver ou non ce cours? [pag. 36])

'«I came to pick up that computer science course».

«I'll go and get it for you straight away».

I searched and searched and searched. But it was no good. We didn't have any copies of *Super Cobol Tre Punto Quattro*. Why hadn't he told me that they would come round to pick it up? Usually the people who phoned up never actually turned up.

«*Well*, have you got this course or haven't you?»'

### 3. Over-/under-determination and overall configuration

The examples discussed in the previous sections clearly show that translating a DM may cause trouble because of the variety of functions it may play, and that under- and over-determination are resorted to.

The cases of under- and over-determination may be summed up as follows:

**Table 1.** Under- and over-determination in the *Novellino* and in *Paso Doble*.

	<i>Novellino</i>	<i>Paso Doble</i>
Total occurrences	89 (100%)	20 (100%)
<i>Cases of under-determination</i>		
omissions of <i>allora</i> <sup>22</sup>	17 (19,1%)	3 (15%)
<i>Cases of over-determination</i>		
<i>allora</i> > <i>et ensuite, de nouveau, aussitôt, à ce moment, à cet instant donc, on le pense bien, ah! Mais</i>	10 (8,9 %)	1 (5%)

Let us consider under-determination first. Clear examples are cases of omissions,<sup>23</sup> where the DM is given no translation in the French versions of both *Novellino* and *Paso Doble*. In the former translation this happens in 17 out of 89 instances (19,1%) – see ex. 10; in the latter, in 3 out of 20 cases (15%) – see ex. (25-27). The examples that receive no translation in the *Novellino* appear to mainly correspond to instances of *allora* showing a meta-textual function. In *Paso Doble*, two out of the three instances of *allora* receiving no translation shows a temporal value in Italian, possibly confirming the greater importance that the temporal value has in Italian than in French (see § 2.1).

A certain degree of under-determination may also be found in examples where the French translation does not fully express the function communicated by the Italian DM. For instance, example (11) shows *et* as a translation of the DM, thus lacking some of the various functions which characterize *allora* in the original version, e.g. the meta-textual function expressed through the chronologically ordered sequence.

Instances of over-determination occur in 1 out of 20 cases (5%) in *Paso doble*, and in 10 out of 89 cases (8,9%) in the *Novellino*, especially in relation to the temporal/meta-textual value of *allora*. As clearly pointed out in section 2.2.2, the translator exploits more specific temporal adverbs in French, making values such as posteriority or punctuality explicit. Using *et ensuite* or *à ce moment* to translate *allora* – see ex. (12) and (15), (16) – clearly over-determines the DM value. In the

22. One of these omissions corresponds to: *allora* > *et* (see ex. 11, § 2.2.1).

23. According to many translation corpora referred to by Cuenca (forth), the omission of *well* can be observed in all cases and it is frequent in many translation corpora: Catalan (35% and 46% in three different studies), Italian (39%), Spanish (25%), Swedish (18.68%), Dutch (6.8%).

case of example (14), the over-determination is particularly strong. In fact, *aussitôt* as a translation of *allora* overstates a particular component of the temporal function found in Italian. As previously stated, *allora* is used for specifying temporal aspects, coherently with its original semantic value. Nevertheless, it is usually not employed to refer to an immediately following event as *aussitôt* clearly does.

We have also pointed out some instances of over-determination (see § 2.2.2. and 2.3., and table 1 above) in relation to the argumentative function of *allora* in the translation of both *Novellino* and *Paso Doble*. In the texts we considered, cases of *allora* showing a consequential value are translated by *donc* – see ex. (18) and (19) – *c'est donc* – see ex. (26) – or even with *Ah! Mais* – the only example is in the *Novellino*, see ex. (21).

To conclude, a number of pragmatic functions have been identified as co-existing in relation to *allora* (Bazzanella *et al.*, forth a). In fact, the DM may play a significant role in conversations because of its interactional functions (e.g., for turn-taking), and in any type of text also because of its meta-textual function (e.g., for introducing new topics) and its cognitive function (e.g., for expressing inferences). Interestingly, many of the functions co-exist in the same occurrence of *allora* (as often happens with other DMs, cf. Bazzanella 2006a), although the degree to which they influence the global interpretation of the DM may vary. Depending on the specific configuration selected within a certain context (e.g., type of text, role of the speaker), some functions may be primarily involved in determining the DM interpretation, while other functions may be involved only secondarily. In other words, all the functions co-exist, to a certain extent, but depending on the configuration that is activated, some will more powerfully participate in determining the DM interpretation (Bazzanella *et al.*, forth.b).

The DM interpretation is particularly important in the case of translation, as it may influence the choice of the corresponding form in the translated text. As we observed for the French translation of *allora*, in the case of predominant temporal value, the translator often uses words offering a richer description.

Thus the contrastive analysis shows the importance of both the configuration that is activated in the original context and the degree of correspondence in the way different languages express that configuration. The discussion of the main features of *allora* in Italian and *alors* in French has showed that it is used differently in the two languages; the contrastive analysis performed on the Italian and the French version of the *Novellino* and *Paso Doble* allowed us to assess those differences more effectively, by explicitly quantifying the degree of correspondence and the number of omissions and non-literal translations.

Finally, the information obtained by means of contrastive analysis has confirmed the existence of functions which may be identified as more central or more peripheral within a certain configuration. Moreover, it has shown the existence of cross-language preferences for a more or less rich set of forms for expressing a particular function.

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