Foreword

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Prolepsis ('anticipation') has generally been discussed in the context of rhetoric, and even inside linguistics, the variety of usages is great (e.g., Gonda 1958b). Usually, however, the term has been applied to syntactic constructions, e.g., 'the presence, in a completive construction, of a word or phrase in the main clause, which functions syntactically in it, and is also co-referent with the subject (or the object) of the following subordinate clause,' (Fraser 2001). e.g.,

(1) 'I saw him in the battle range about, and watch'd him how he singled Clifford forth'
(Shakespeare, *3 Henry VI*, II.1.11-12, op. cit.).

The term 'prolepsis' has also been used to refer to noun-phrase internal constructions such as possessive constructions in Ge'ez, an ancient Ethiopian Semitic language:

(2) *bet-u lä-negus*
house-his to-king
'The king's house'

in opposition to

(3 *bet-ä negus*
house-OBL king
'A/the house of a/the king.'

In example (3), definiteness is not specifically marked, while in the proleptic construction in example (2), the reading is almost invariably definite. In this case, prolepsis describes constructions in which there is apparent 'double encoding' of a single relation.

However, as a number of studies (e.g., Gonda 1958a) have shown, the term is applied in a vague and inconsistent manner to syntax, and it has only rarely been considered in the framework of contemporary linguistics. Moreover, almost all discussions of prolepsis as a syntactic construction have focused on Latin and Greek (exceptionally, see Zewi 1996). This has made difficult the kind of cross-linguistic study necessary for the evaluation of prolepsis as a valid term of analysis.

Nevertheless, the set of core phenomena identified as prolepsis has raised many interesting problems; for example, it is almost universally agreed that proleptic constructions encode marked discourse functions (Gonda 1958a, Touratier 1980, Panhuis 1984, Bolkestein 1981), when in opposition to a non-proleptic construction. However, the precise nature of these functions is still very much at issue, and opinions tend to differ

significantly. Also, from a diachronic perspective, proleptic constructions seem to be especially prone to grammaticalization (Fraser 2001). Furthermore, even inside one language, e.g. Latin, the definition of prolepsis varies, and sometimes it is used more generally as a synonym for left dislocation (see Longrée *et al*. forthcoming); concerning discourse functions, these are often similar to other types of proleptic constructions.

The papers presented here are the result of a workshop organised by Eitan Grossman, Hilla Halla-aho, and Dominique Longrée, June 1st and 2nd, 2010, at the Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis (FUSL-Brussels) and at the University of Liège (ULg). Under the aegis of the LASLA (Laboratoire d'Analyse Statistique des Langues anciennes, ULg) and of the SeSLa (Séminaire des Sciences du Langage des FUSL), this workshop had attempted to delimit criteria for identifying proleptic constructions and to understand their discourse functions in diverse languages, but mainly in Latin.

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