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# An Approach to the Use of the Spanish Connectors *cuando* and *mientras* in Argumentative Contexts

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**To cite this article:**

Mariana Morón Usandivaras. An Approach to the Use of the Spanish Connectors *cuando* and *mientras* in Argumentative Contexts.

*International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. Vol. 10, No. 3, 2022, pp. 206-215. doi: 10.11648/j.ijll.20221003.16

**Received:** May 13, 2022; **Accepted:** May 28, 2022; **Published:** June 9, 2022

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**Abstract:** This study aims at analysing the differences and similarities in the use of the Spanish temporal connectors *cuando* (*when*) and *mientras* (*while*) in argumentative discourse contexts, with a special emphasis on their capacity to express semantic values that exceed temporal limits, i.e., cause, consequence, condition, contrast, concession, etc. These semantic relationships have indeed been studied in the clauses introduced by *mientras*, although they are not usually considered in the clauses preceded by *cuando*, because it is considered the temporal connector par excellence and, therefore, linguists focus on the different aspect-temporal nuances it can manifest. However, as I have shown in a previous research, *cuando* can also manifest rhetorical values in certain contexts. As expressed in the Prototypical Cognitive Approach (PCA), we understand that grammar emerges from discourse, imposing a usage-based approach within the situational and discourse context. We consider the speaker always selects a given form of speech instead of another and, consequently, this is a significant choice. Therefore, we are starting from the assumption that *cuando* and *mientras* are used in different discourse contexts to express different meanings. Hence, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the use of these two connectors will be carried out on the bases of the two argumentative texts *De la anarquía y sus dos causas principales* by Juan Bautista Alberdi and the genetic edition on Alberdi's text *El crimen de la guerra* by Lois. Qualitative parameters selected are the following: (a) context of the discourse fragment, (b) distribution of information, (c) temporal relationship between the connected clauses, (d) rhetoric values between the clauses, (e) position of the clause introduced by the temporal connector (f) changes in tense, aspect and/or mood between the connected clauses. The results of this analysis, coincidentally with Spanish grammars, indicate that *cuando* is a connector positioned in the centre of the category of temporal relationships since it prefers narrative contexts and expresses a *pure temporality*; whereas *mientras* is found in the category periphery or departs from that centre and is preferably used in contexts of *hybrid temporality*.

**Keywords:** Temporal Clauses, Argumentative Discourse, Cognitive Linguistics, Cuando (When), Mientras (While)

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## 1. Introduction

The study of the Spanish temporal connectors *cuando* (*when*) and *mientras* (*while*) presented by this research is expressed within the framework of the Prototypical Cognitive Approach (PCA) [1-3]. Our aim is to account for the preferred contexts of usage of each of these connectors with a special emphasis on their capacity to express semantic values that exceed temporal limits and approach the semantic relationships established by the so called improper adverbial clauses [4], i.e., cause, consequence, condition, concession, etc. These semantic relationships are considered to be rhetoric relations due to the fact that the enunciator establishes a

relationship between two events according to personal communicative objectives [5, 6].

Although the rhetoric value of *mientras* is widely acknowledged, as shown by Rubio & Gauchola [7], this is not the case with *cuando*, which is considered the temporal connector by excellence. Generally, linguists have been concerned in order to point out the different aspect-temporal nuances<sup>1</sup> expressed by *cuando* in temporal clauses [8-10],

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<sup>1</sup> The grammatical aspect differs from the grammatical tense in that, while the tense indicates the moment in which something happens with respect to the

leaving aside other semantic values, such as cause, contrast and paraphrase. We consider temporal clauses in argumentative discourse contexts can add one of those semantic rhetoric values to the temporal relationship established with the other clause of the period, as I demonstrated in a previous study about *cuando* [11]. The qualitative and quantitative analysis aims to determine the morphosyntactic characteristics of the temporal clauses introduced by *cuando* and *mientras* when the communicative intention of the enunciator is to combine a rhetoric value with the temporal relationship and to determine their own specificity.

This study is organised as follows: firstly, some postulates of the Prototypical Cognitive Approach (PCA), which is the theoretical framework chosen in our analysis, are concisely presented since its conception of language as a way to view the world and a grammar emerging from discourse [12] requires an analysis of linguistic strategies within their contexts of usage offering both discourse and explicative answers. Secondly, a brief Status of the question is developed from the characteristics attributed to temporal connectors *cuando* and *mientras* in some Spanish grammars and in some relevant studies on temporal adverbial clauses in Spanish. Next, the presentation of a selected Corpus, comprising two essays belonging to the Argentine political discourse of the XIX century written by Juan Bautista Alberdi and the qualitative and quantitative methodology used in this analysis. Qualitative parameters arise, as proposed by Diver [13], from the analysis itself and the characteristics of the corpus; whereas the quantitative analysis is essential because frequency of usage is at the bases of the grammaticalization of forms and constructions. Then, the aforementioned qualitative and quantitative analysis and the results obtained are presented by means of examples of the more or less prototypical uses of the connectors under study. And finally, the Conclusions accounting for the differences between these connectors are expressed, as the preferred usage contexts of *cuando* and *mientras* are shown; the speaker seeks transparency<sup>2</sup> in messages and therefore attributes meaning to each form.

## 2. Prototypical Cognitive Approach

In Hopper's line [12], the Prototypical Cognitive Approach (PCA) claims that grammar is a system of trends reflecting the notion of the world, the notion of a society. The use of linguistic forms will determine its nature, the most useful forms for the majority of the speaking community will eventually last and grammar will emerge from discourse; grammar is *emergent* in the sense that its structure and

regularities arise from discourse and are established on a *continuum* in each communication event. From this perspective, a usage-based approach is applied; sign is conceived as a unit motivated by the communicative function, the situational context and the characteristics of human behaviour, such as the capacity to infer, the iconicity principle and the egocentricity principle, among others [14]. Syntaxis, as part of grammar, is motivated by communicative intention and responds to the semantic content of what is intended to be achieved [13, 15, 16].

Consequently, linguistic analysis is context oriented. The search for motivation of linguistic occurrences is not limited to the sentence but it takes into account the communicative purposes of the discourse on all levels. PCA considers interrelationship on all levels (pragmatic, syntactic, semantic, morphologic and phonetic-phonologic ones). Pragmatic-semantic phenomena, closely linked to the prosodic phenomena, correlate with syntaxis and morphology. In other words, Syntaxis and Morphology<sup>3</sup> are motivated by pragmatic and semantic factors [5, 6].

PCA also claims that the speaker seeks transparency in the message, i.e., the message achieves its communicative goal in the best possible way. Therefore, the speaker pursues a correlation form/meaning through clarity. Consequently, all the forms are supposed to be meaningful, and the selection of a form depends on the communicative intention of the speaker and on the context of the discourse where it is embedded. If Alberdi uses two different forms (*cuando* and *mientras*) to express the temporal relationship of simultaneity, it is because they respond to different communicative intentions and are produced in different discourse contexts.

On the other hand, we are interested in highlighting the notion of category arising from the Theory of Prototypes [17]. Categorization is a gradual process by which each category is conceptualized from the confluence of different attributes that are totally or partially shared by their members; so, there are more or less prototypical members. The prototype of a category shares more attributes with the members of that category and less attributes with the members of other categories (for instance, on the grammatical category of nouns, "table" is more prototypical than "beauty" as it designates an autonomous physical object with discreet location boundaries).<sup>4</sup> From this perspective, grammar should be understood as the product of a combination of attributes and its elements express different degrees of prototypicality. This notion of categorization is useful when studying temporal constructions of simultaneity because it offers ways of description allowing to include *cuando* and *mientras* forms in

3 Sign motivation is not as visible in Morphology as in Syntaxis, possibly because initial motivation is too far or is unknown by the present speakers.

4 The archetype of nouns is as follows:

1. A physical object is composed of material substance.
2. We think of an object as residing primarily in space, where it is bounded and has its own location.
3. In time, on the other hand, an object may persist indefinitely, and it is not thought as having any particular location in this domain.
4. An object is conceptually autonomous, in the sense that we can conceptualize it independently of its participation in any event [2].

moment of the enunciation or to some point of reference, the aspect specifies the internal time of the action, or the phase of development, or modification of the same one that stands out above all the others: perfective, imperfective, habitual, progressive, iterative, inchoative, terminative, etc. The temporal clauses can also account for these aspects that are added to the expressed temporality.

<sup>2</sup>The term 'transparency' is used in this context to mean 'clarity' and 'simplicity' in terms of interpretation in order to achieve as much 'effectiveness' as possible.

the system of temporal relationships of simultaneity in Alberdi's discourse and account for their more or less prototypical uses.

### 3. Status of Questions

*Temporal clauses*, with or without connectors, establish a relationship between them in which the event in one of the clauses functions as the temporal reference point of the event in the other one. From the semantic point of view, many linguists agree on the fact that the relationship between these two events can be that of *simultaneity*, *anteriority* or *posteriority* according to the meaning of the connector introducing the temporal clause [18-20]. Nevertheless, they recognize there are connectors such as *cuando* (*when*) whose neuter temporal meaning makes it possible to establish more than one type of relationship and that the difference between each other is due to contextual or syntactic factors (mood and verb tense, use of adverbs, etc.).

As Rodríguez Barreiro [10] points out, the classification of temporal links and, therefore, the clauses they introduce is much more complex than the division anteriority/simultaneity/posteriority. As an example, three proposals are briefly presented below by Eberenz [8], García Medall [9] and Veiga & Mosteiro Louzao [20], who studied the temporal relationships of simultaneity in depth. Some grammars (such as [21]), also consider that *cuando* (*when*) can replace *mientras* (*while*) without affecting the meaning of the sentence.

For instance, Eberenz [8] considers that simultaneity connectors can express the following five relations and classifies links according to the relationships they express: (1) synchronization in which the events in the main and subordinate clauses have the same duration (*mientras/while, en tanto que/meanwhile*), (2) concomitance in which simultaneity of both events is partial (*cuando /when, mientras/while, etc.*),<sup>5</sup> (3) coincidence in which simultaneity is conceived as punctual (*cuando/when*),<sup>6</sup> (4) iteration in which both events are jointly repeated (*cuando/when, siempre que/whenever, cada vez que/each time that*)<sup>7</sup> (5) progression in which the event in the main clause takes place as the event in the subordinate one is being developed (*a medida que, según/as*). On the one hand, García Medall [9] adds the moment the statement is enunciated as a parameter to be considered within simultaneity since it can coincide with the moment of speech (*ahora que/now that*) or not (*al tiempo que/at the time that, al punto que/to the point that*). Unlike Eberenz [8], he distinguishes iteration (*cada vez que/each time that*) from habit (*siempre que/as long as*). For García Medall

[9], *cuando* (*when*), as an unmarked member, can adopt any temporal or aspectual value and *mientras* (*while*), one of the two connectors analysed in this corpus, is a tempo-aspectual conjunction of unlimited duration (e.g., *Mientras estudie, todo le irá bien*)<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand, Veiga & Mosteiro Louzao [20] subdivide simultaneity links into progressive (*mientras/while*) and non-progressive ones (*a medida que/as*). Coincidentally with García Medall [9], they consider that *cuando*, as a not one-dimensional link, can express other aspects such as non-progressive simultaneity.

To summarize and focusing on connectors *cuando* and *mientras*, Eberenz considers that *cuando* can express aspectual relations of concomitance and iteration, while Veiga & Mosteiro Louzao and García Medall conclude that this connector is able to express almost every type of temporal and temporal-aspectual relationships. As regards *cuando*, Eberenz includes it within the relations of *synchronization*, Veiga & Mosteiro Louzao places it within the *non-progressive* ones and García Medall considers it indicates *non-limited duration*. On the other hand, NGLÉ [21] claims *while* can be substituted by *when* (*Llamó al director cuando/mientras tú trabajabas en el informe*),<sup>9</sup> although its use is more restricted. As noted, linguists have not agreed on the semantic, and strictly temporal, values expressed by the connectors in question. The PCA considers that the speaker always chooses the form of speech, and such choice is given by the speaker's communicative intention and the discourse context itself. Therefore, *cuando* and *mientras* are expected to have their own meaning and their own contexts of usage.

In this study we are interested in those cases in which temporal clauses exceed the strict limits of a chronological relationship and, in some way, they invade the most specific semantic domain of adverbial clauses, particularly those associated with rhetorical function (i.e., causal, consecutive, conditional, concession and opposition).<sup>10</sup> From this perspective, in the study of the differences between *mientras* (*while*) and *mientras que* (*meanwhile, while o whilst*), Rubio & Gauchola [7] propose a *continuum* in temporal relationships constituted between an objective pole or that of a *pure temporality* and a subjective pole or that of a *hybrid temporality*. They consider a polyvalence of *cuando* allowing it to express every type of temporal relationship, whereas *mientras* can barely express *objective temporality* and preferably conveys *hybrid temporality* values with a predominance of an opposition-adversative relationship.

8 *As long as he/she studies, everything will be fine.*

9 *He/She called the director when/while you were working on the report.*

10 "[en algunos casos] las cláusulas temporales sobrepasan los límites estrictos de lo que podría considerarse una relación cronológica *strictu sensu* para invadir por completo el terreno más propio de otro tipo de subordinadas adverbiales, en particular aquellas que se asocian a la función de argumentación (causales, consecutivas, condicionales, concesivas y opositivas)" [7].

["[in some cases] temporal clauses go beyond the strict limits of what could be considered a chronological relationship *strictu sensu* to completely invade the terrain more typical of other types of adverbial subordinates, particularly those associated with the function of argumentation (causal, consecutive, conditional, concessive and oppositional)"].

5 *Cuando/mientras Pablo estaba en Madrid, Dolores tuvo un accidente de circulación* [8].

*When/while Peter was in Madrid, Dolores had a traffic accident.* (Translations into English are by Mariana Morón Usandivaras, unless otherwise attributed).

6 *Cuando vuelva del pueblo, te compraré la bicicleta* [8].

*When I return from town, I'll buy you the bicycle.*

7 *Cuando/siempre que/ cada vez que llovía, no se podía abrir la ventana* [8].

*When/whenever/each time (that) it rained, the window couldn't be opened.*

## 4. Corpus and Methodology

The corpus comprises 110 temporal clauses: 84 clauses introduced by *cuando* and 26 clauses introduced by *mientras* from the following two argumentative texts by J. B. Alberdi<sup>11</sup> (1810-1884):

- 1) *El crimen de la guerra*, a genetic edition by É. Lois [22]. In January 1869, the *Ligue internationale et permanente de la Paix* (founded in Paris in 1867) called for a prize for an essay on *Le crime de la guerre dénoncé a L'humanité*. This contest was called off due to the Franco-Prussian war that broke out in 1870, but Alberdi had already started writing his essay that was published after his death. PhD Lois carried out a genetic edition of this essay from Alberdi's notebooks.
- 2) The printed edition of *La anarquía y sus dos causas principales, del gobierno y sus dos elementos necesarios en la república argentina con motivo de su reorganización por Buenos Aires* [23]. This essay is an answer to the proposal of federalizing all the province of Buenos Aires sent to Congress by Bartolomé Mitre, governor of Buenos Aires and also in charge of the National Executive Power, on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1862 in order to strengthen the predominance of the Federal Capital.<sup>12</sup> Alberdi, who had just lost the position of Minister Plenipotentiary of the Argentine Confederation and remained self-exiled in Paris, understood this proposal as a political manoeuvre to legally grant the governor of a province the presidency of the nation, so he felt utterly infuriated.

We propose a qualitative and quantitative methodology according to the PCA principles with the aim of accounting for usage differences of the temporal connectors *cuando* and *mientras* in argumentative contexts. As we explained in the Introduction, qualitative parameters arise from the analysis itself and the characteristics of the corpus [13]. As the CPA postulates the interrelation of the levels of linguistic analysis, pragmatic (a and b), semantic (c and d) and morphosyntactic (e and f) parameters are considered, which have been developed, in some cases, from different theoretical frameworks.

Qualitative parameters selected in the description and

11 Juan Bautista Alberdi (Tucumán, 1810 – Paris, 1884). Argentine politician, juriconsult and writer. He lived in Buenos Aires from early childhood, where he developed an important political, cultural and social activity. As a determined opponent to the government of Juan Manuel de Rosas, he was forced to expatriate and spent almost all his life in exile. In 1852 he wrote one of his most important works: *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República*. *Fragmento preliminar al estudio del derecho* (1837), *La Revolución de Mayo* (1839), *Elementos de derecho público provincial para la República Argentina* (1853), *Sistema económico y rentístico para la Confederación Argentina* (1854) and *La omnipotencia del Estado es la negación de la libertad individual* (1880) are also worth mentioning.

12 It is worth mentioning that since the 1810 Revolution, Buenos Aires administered the Customs income tax corresponding to its port that concentrated all imports and exports of all the Argentine provinces, even when this income was the main tax of the national treasury and, therefore, the pillar of national and provincial economy. The outcome was the gradual impoverishment of the provinces and the enrichment of Buenos Aires.

analysis of data corpus are the following: (a) context of the discourse fragment, (b) distribution of information, (c) temporal relationship between the connected clauses, (d) rhetoric values between the clauses, (e) position of the clause introduced by the temporal connector (f) changes in tense, aspect and/or mood between the connected clauses.

- a) Even though we are analysing argumentative texts, the discourse fragment of the temporal clause under study can be narrative or argumentative. We understand narrative or argumentative contexts are those fragments of the text which Van Dijk [24] calls *narrative* or *argumentative superstructures* and are used to organize and hierarchize information.

The narration is characterized as a discourse of action, in which the action is defined as "a change of state brought about intentionally (by a conscious) human being in order to bring about a preferred state or a state change" [24]. The narrative superstructure is divided, fundamentally, into: (a) the introduction, that provides the space-time framework in which the events take place as well as the presentation of the characters and their actions, and (b) the story, which is what it is counted. Each story is made up of at least one episode. In each episode can be distinguished: a setting or framework, a complication and a resolution.

The argumentation, on the other hand, is the presentation of different arguments for or against a certain thesis, in order to convince the interlocutor that the position assumed by the speaker is the best. "Argumentation is a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a point of view, by presenting a constellation of propositions that justify or refute the proposition expressed in that point of view" [25]. In the narrative context, attention is focused on the designated facts, so that the speaker's voice seems to be "hidden" behind those facts, whereas in the argumentative context the focus is on the defence of the speaker's point of view; therefore, the speaker's voice is present and visible. Subjectivity and objectivity are the speaker's perspectives or attitudes taken at the moment of conceptualizing an event. We understand by subjectivity when the situation is presented from the point of view of the speaker, his opinions and feelings, and by objectivity when the attention is focused on the situation and on what happens outside the enunciator. According to Langacker [2], the speaker's perspective used to conceptualize a situation expresses a greater or lesser degree of subjectivity/objectivity. Syntactic constructions and discourse organization are the expressions of that perspective.

- b) The aim of the analysis of information distribution is to consider the relationships established between the different fragments of a text. The way in which information is distributed is one of the indicators of those discourse interrelations. It is also significant to understand the speaker's communicative intention and where the focus of the speaker's message is placed

[26-28]. Therefore, the relation *theme/rheme* is analysed. For the sake of analysis, we understand that *known* or *given* information has been previously mentioned within the discourse, can be inferred or presupposed from the previous discourse context or the communicative situation, or shared by speaker and hearer as a result of encyclopaedic knowledge or common experience. We consider that *new* information has been mentioned within the discourse for the first time without reformulating a previous idea, cannot be inferred from the previous linguistic context or the communicative situation and is not shared by encyclopaedic knowledge or common experience.

- c) As regards the temporal relationship between the connected clauses of the temporal period, we refer to the relationships of simultaneity, anteriority and posteriority that linguists attribute to temporal clauses, as mentioned in our section The status of the question.
- d) We consider that in argumentative contexts the speaker can establish a rhetorical relationship between the main and subordinate clause, namely, a discourse relationship between two events. In other words, two different events are contextualised, and the speaker is the one that establishes a relationship between them. The rhetorical nuances in our corpus that can be added to the temporal value of *cuando* and *mientras* are: cause-consequence, contrast, condition (+/-hypothesis), paraphrase and concession. In the cause-consequence relationship, the temporal clause preferably conceptualizes the event functioning as the cause of the event of the other clause of the period. Even though many linguists use the word opposition to refer to one of the most frequent values of *mientras*, we prefer the term contrast defined as a special relationship the speaker perceives and wants to communicate between two events that differ in some way; this distinction is based on events, facts, attributes or objects perceived as similar ones. In our case, one of the common attributes could be the temporal simultaneity between the event of the temporal clause and the event of the other clause of the period.
- e) The parameter of the (initial or postponed) position of the clause headed by the temporal connector is related to the parameter of distribution of information, since the postponed position is usually considered to be accompanied by new, rhematic and focused information, whereas the initial position is accompanied by known, thematic and periphrastic information [6, 29].<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> “De acuerdo con la progresión esperada de lo “dado” hacia lo “nuevo” (Guerrero, Belloro y Conti, 2017), se espera que las cláusulas temporales antepuestas codifiquen información relativamente dada o más familiar (entidades y situaciones que ya han sido codificadas en el contexto discursivo previo o cuya aparición es esperable a partir del mismo), mientras que las cláusulas pospuestas expresen información nueva o no familiar (entidades o proposiciones que no han sido codificadas previamente)”. [29].

[In accordance with the expected progression from the “given” to the “new” (Guerrero, Belloro, & Conti, 2017), prefixed temporal clauses are expected to encode relatively given or more familiar information (entities and situations that have already been encoded in the previous discursive context or whose

- f) As regards verb tense and mood of the temporal clause, the preference of connectors introducing temporal clauses with reference to the use of verb tense and mood and its correlation with the verb of the main clause are analysed, where relevant. Concerning verb tenses, we resort to Weinreich’s proposal [30] by which the indicative verb tenses are distributed into two temporal groups. Group I (commented world) includes Present Simple (PS), Future Simple (FS) and Present Perfect (PP) (Pretérito Perfecto Compuesto in Spanish) tenses, whereas Group II (narrated world) includes the aorist and Past Simple (PS) (Pretérito perfecto Simple and Pretérito Imperfecto in Spanish) (rarely Past Perfect and Conditional) tenses. Weinreich refers to Benveniste [31], who considers a division between discourse and story levels in his study of French verb tenses, closely relating it to the first attribute, i.e., the type of discourse fragment. The tenses of the narrated world are expected to be objective and found in narrative contexts at story level, whereas the tenses of the commented world are considered to be found in argumentative contexts at discourse level and clearly express the speaker’s subjectivity.

We take into account Borzi’s proposal [32] concerning the intrinsic attributes of the indicative and subjunctive moods in Spanish. Broadly speaking, the indicative mood expresses assertiveness and certainty and new, real-natural, less marked, more significant information, while the subjunctive mood conveys known, unrealistic, less significant and scarcely assertive information. The target is to analyse whether there is a correlation between the use of the indicative mood expressing an objective temporality and the use of the subjunctive mood indicating a hybrid, more subjective temporality.

In the quantitative analysis, the influence of the qualitative parameters in each of the cases of temporal constructions introduced by *cuando* and *mientras* is measured in order to identify the preferred contexts of each of these connectors with relation to other ones and themselves and also the distribution of these connectors within the selected corpus. The totals observed and the percentages will be analysed.<sup>14</sup>

## 5. Corpus Analysis and Results

The analysis of the following examples according to the qualitative parameters explained above will make it possible to account for the results obtained in the quantitative and qualitative analysis. The first parameter to be established will be the discourse context of the fragment where the temporal clause is found, since the superstructure of that fragment not only organizes and hierarchizes information but also determines the communicative intention of the enunciator at that given moment.

appearance is expected from it), while the postponed clauses express new or unfamiliar information (entities or propositions that have not been previously encoded)].

<sup>14</sup> We are aware that the corpus is small, and the data obtained should be confronted with a broader corpus.

(1) *Pero en 1812 y 1813, en que se quitaron las banderas de Tucuman y Salta, no había gobierno nacional regularmente constituido. En 1817 y 1818, en que se quitaron las de Chacabuco y Máipo, la República Argentina se ocupaba de constituir su gobierno nacional. Instalado en 1819, ya no existía en 1821 cuando se quitaron las banderas del Callao. ¿De qué historia nos habla el señor Dominguez? Sea en hora buena todo cuanto él dice á este respecto, con tal que sea para concluir, como lo hace por las siguientes palabras "Esas banderas argentinas son de Buenos Aires", lo cual vale decir: esas banderas ajenas son nuestras, ó bien esas banderas nuestras son ajenas* [23].

But in 1812 and in 1813, when the flags of Tucuman and Salta were removed, there was not a regularly constituted national government. In 1817 and 1818, when those (flags) of Chacabuco and Máipo (were removed), the Argentine Republic was engaged into constituting its national government. Being installed in 1819, it no longer existed in 1821 when the flags of Callao were removed. Which history is Mr Dominguez speaking about? Let's welcome everything he says about it provided it is used to finish with the following words "Those Argentine flags belong to Buenos Aires", that is to say: those foreign flags are ours, or rather, those flags which are ours, are foreign.

Example (1) presents a case of a temporal clause introduced by *cuando* within a narrative context. Events are geographically and temporally placed along a line that respects the order in which events happened (from 1812 to 1821). The order of the clauses is iconic because it respects the temporal order in which the designated events took place. In this way, the enunciator's voice is blurred and hidden under an intended and sought objectivity. In agreement with this, *cuando* establishes a purely temporal relationship of simultaneity between the moment when the Callao flags were removed and the moment when there was not a national government.

The verb tense and mood selected keep the same line. Past Simple is found within the group Weinrich (1968) calls *tenses of the narrated world*, whereas the indicative mood expresses a certain, real, natural and more objective mood. Another temporal mark mentioning the year (1819 and 1821) is also added in the other clause of the temporal period. It should be noted that in the previous sentences the years are mentioned to place events in time in order to give them the character of external, objective and undoubted facts.

As regards the distribution of information, the temporal clause introduces known information that is shared by world knowledge. It is worth noting Alberdi wrote for his contemporary citizens, who had active participation in Argentina's political and economic life. Nevertheless, this information as well as the information in all its narrative fragment has the aim of reminding the readers of the events and highlighting the way in which facts took place. This fragment functions as the basis for the argumentation that follows in the discourse. In other words, the (subjective) argumentation is supported by objective facts presented in the narration.

Unlike example (1), in example (2) the three temporal clauses introduced by *cuando* are found in a clear argumentative context.

2) *Por lo demás, conviene no olvidar que no siempre la guerra es crimen; (a)<sup>15</sup> (también es la justicia cuando es el castigo del crimen de la guerra criminal). En la criminalidad internacional sucede lo que en la civil o doméstica: (b) (el homicidio es crimen cuando lo comete el asesino,) y (c) (es justicia cuando lo hace ejecutar el juez).*

*Lo triste es que la guerra puede ser abolida como justicia, es decir como la pena de muerte de las naciones; pero abolirla como crimen, es como abolir el crimen mismo, que lejos de ser obra de la ley es la violación de la ley. En esta virtud las guerras serán progresivamente más raras por la misma causa que disminuye el número de crímenes la civilización moral y material, es decir la mejora del hombre* [22].

Otherwise, it is convenient not to forget that war is not always a crime; (a) (so is justice when it is the punishment for the crime of the criminal war). In international criminality happens the same as in civil or domestic one: (b) (homicide is a crime when it is committed by the murderer,) and (c) (it is an act of justice when the judge executes it).

The sad thing is that war can be abolished as justice, that is to say, as the death penalty of nations; but to abolish it as a crime is like abolishing crime itself, that far from being the result of the law it is violation of the law. By this virtue, wars will eventually be more infrequent by the same token that the number of crimes of civil and moral civilization diminishes, that is to say, the improvement of man.

The enunciator presents a hypothesis that is defended afterwards: *war is a crime and so is the justice that endorses it*. The enunciator's voice is present and expresses itself in syntax through the use of present tense that belongs to the group of tenses of the commented world. Although the indicative mood seems to be the mood of objectivity, it is also the mood of assertiveness and the enunciator aims at conferring strength to its hypothesis.

Distribution of information is not even in the three clauses. In the first clause (2a) information is undoubtedly new, being the position, the thesis the enunciator defends and the speaker ignores, while (2b) and (2c) express known information shared by world knowledge. New information in (2a) is on focus and important in the following discourse. Conversely, the other two causal periods expose the arguments supporting the thesis and the knowledge of the enunciatary is sought in order to reflect on some common and daily aspects that are therefore not usually questioned.

3) *¿Qué es el poder en su sentido filosófico? – La extensión del yo, el ensanche y alcance de nuestra acción individual o colectiva en el mundo, que sirve de teatro a nuestra existencia. Y como cada hombre y cada grupo de hombres busca el poder por una necesidad de su naturaleza,*

15 (a), (b) and (c) are used to distinguish among the three temporal periods. Each temporal period consists of a temporal clause introduced by *cuando* and the clause by which relationship is immediately established. Each temporal period is marked off with parentheses.

los conflictos son la consecuencia de esa identidad de miras; pero tras esa consecuencia viene otra, que es la paz o solución de los conflictos por el respeto del derecho, o ley natural, por el cual el poder de cada uno es el límite del poder de su semejante.

(a) (Habrán conflictos mientras haya antagonismos de intereses y voluntades entre los seres semejantes); y (b) (los habrá mientras sus aspiraciones naturales tengan un objeto común e idéntico) [22].

What is power in its philosophical sense? – The extension of the self, the widening and the scope of our individual or collective action in the world, serving as a stage to our existence. And as each man and each group of men seek power as a need in their own nature, conflicts are the consequence of the identity in question; but after that consequence comes another, which is peace or solution of conflicts through respect for the law, or natural law, by which the power of each man is the limit of the power of his fellow man.

(a) (There will be conflicts while antagonisms and wills among similar beings exist); and (b) (they will exist while their natural aspirations have a common and identical object).

In example (3) two temporal clauses introduced by *mientras* are included in an argumentative discourse fragment since a thesis and arguments are presented and a conclusion that is expressed syntactically in two coordinated temporal periods is reached. These two temporal periods are precisely the subject of our study.

Both temporal periods express a conditional nuance, a hybrid temporality [6]. Temporal clauses present the condition for the event of the other clause of the period to happen. Tenses and verb moods are indicators of the rhetorical nuances of conditionality: present of subjunctive mood in the temporal clause and future of the indicative mood in the other one; that is to say, tenses of the commented world. The subjunctive mood allows a condition or hypothesis to be conceptualized. Information, as expected in the use of the subjunctive mood, is known as a result of world knowledge or shared information.

4) *La entrega que B<sup>s</sup>A<sup>s</sup> hace del tesoro y de todo lo que tiene de nacional, a la Nación, puede ser una entrega verdadera, pero también puede ser la que una madre hace de su bolsillo a su niño que llora, para contentarlo, mientras lo tiene en sus brazos; en que lejos de deshacerse de la bolsa, en tal entrega tiene en su poder la bolsa y el poseedor* [23].

The delivery of the treasure and everything national in it made by Buenos Aires to the Nation, may be a true delivery, but it may also be like the one a mother makes to her whining child from her own pocket in order to content him, while she is holding him in her arms; thus, far from getting rid of the bag, she has the bag and the possessor in her power by means of such delivery.

In example (4) *mientras* is shown in a narrative context where the enunciator uses narration as an example conferring strength to argumentation. In this case, the relationship between the two clauses is purely temporal and indicates simultaneity between the two events. Even if the use of present tense is found within the tenses of subjectivity and the

commented world, in this case it has a timeless<sup>16</sup> value giving it a universal and objective value, coincidental with the assertive value and that of real information of the indicative mood. Although the clause is in second position, the information it introduces is not new since it is shared by world knowledge. Alberdi looks for such an everyday example because it allows to see his point of view very clearly and show the intentions of Buenos Aires authorities to the detriment of the rest of the Argentine provinces.

Next, we present the results of the measurements of the temporal connectors of simultaneity *cuando* and *mientras* with reference to the qualitative parameters selected in this investigation. Table 1 shows the percentages of connectors *cuando* and *mientras* with reference to the parameter of the type of context of the discourse.

Table 1. Discourse Context Fragment.

	Narrative	Argumentative
Cuando	14,29%	85,71%
Mientras	3,85%	96,15%
Cuando + mientras	11,82%	88,12%

$\chi^2 = 2,08$  df: 1  $p < 0.05$  OR: 4,17

Table 1 shows the predominance of temporal clauses in the context of argumentative fragments (88,18% of the total of temporal clauses) consistent with the type of text selected in this analysis, i.e., the political essay. Connector *mientras* presents just one case in a narrative context (3,85% of its cases) whereas *cuando* is found in 12 cases in narrative contexts (14,29% of its cases). It is possible to think that the enunciator prefers *cuando* to *mientras* in narrative contexts, i.e., *cuando* is more adequate to show pure temporality whereas *mientras* is more productive in relationships of hybrid temporality.

In Table 2, there are differences in the use of these two connectors as regards the parameter of information distribution, since *cuando* is used to introduce new information (76,19% of its examples) and *mientras* shows preference for known information (61,54% of its examples).

Table 2. Distribution of information.

	New information	Known information
Cuando	76,19%	23,81%
Mientras	38,46%	61,54%
Cuando + mientras	62,27%	32,73%

$\chi^2 = 11,18$  df: 1  $p < 0.05$  OR: 5,12

The third parameter refers to the semantic values that can express the temporal clauses of *cuando* and *mientras* when they do not indicate a purely temporal relationship. Firstly, we have analysed the type of temporal relationship (simultaneity, anteriority and posteriority) these connectors can manifest, and the results obtained coincide with most grammars [e.g., 21] indicating that *cuando* can express simultaneity relationships (72,62% of its cases), posteriority (26,19%) and, to a lesser

16 Here the term 'timeless' is used to mean it does not refer to a precise and concrete moment but to a situation that can happen at any time and takes place every day.

degree, anteriority (1,19%). On the other hand, *mientras* shows a marked preference for simultaneity (96,15% of its cases). This difference is also expressed in the rhetorical nuances established by each connector, together with the temporal relationship between the connected clauses of the period.

As observed in Table 3, *cuando* presents a marked proneness to establish a purely temporal value (54,76% of its cases) whereas *mientras* only presents one case of exclusively temporal relationship. This use of *mientras* is consistent with the political essay, the type of text genre selected having a high predominance of argumentative contexts, thus increasing the probability for the speaker to establish rhetorical relationships

and express subjectivity.

Concerning hybrid temporality, *cuando* is inclined to establish cause/consequence relationships (expressing cause in 20,24% of its cases) and conditional relationships (19,05% of its cases). Even though *mientras* prefers conditional relations as shown in our corpus (69,23% of its cases) it also contributes to establish contrast between the connected clauses of the period (23,08% of its cases), which is a rhetorical nuance that *cuando* does not reveal in any of the cases.

As regards the parameter of verb tense and mood, it is interesting to establish a correlation between the choice of verb tenses and their discourse contexts shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Rhetorical Nuances.

	Temporal	Causal	Conditional	Paraphrase	Contrast	Concessive
Cuando	54,76%	20,24%	19,05%	4,76%	0,00%	1,19%
Mientras	3,85%	3,85%	69,23%	0,00%	23,08%	0,00%
Cuand + mientr	42,73%	16,36%	30,91%	3,64%	5,45%	0,91%

Table 4. Discourse Context Fragment/ Verb Tenses.

	PS/ FS/ PP	Past Simple
Argumentative	97,94%	2,06%
Narrative	15,38%	84,62%
Arg. + Narr.	88,18%	11,82%

$\chi^2 = 67,25$  df: 1  $p < 0.05$  OR: 261,25

In Table 4 we can conclude there are significant differences in the selection of the verb tense chosen by the enunciator depending on the fact that the connected clauses of the temporal period are found in argumentative or narrative contexts. As observed, there is a predominance of tenses of the commented world in terms of the argumentative contexts (97,94%) in agreement with Weinreich's proposal [30]. Column B shows that only 11,82% of the total of analysed clauses present tenses used in narration and most of them are found in narrative discourse fragments.

Table 5. Discourse Context Fragment/ Verb Mood.

	Indicative	Subjunctive
Argumentative	92,31%	7,69%
Narrative	81,44%	18,56%
Arg. + Narr.	82,73%	17,27%

$\chi^2 = 0,34$  df: 1  $p < 0.05$  OR: 2,73

In terms of the correlation discourse context/verb mood, Table 5 allows to observe the predominance of the use of the indicative mood (82,73% of total temporal clauses). Alberdi prefers the indicative mood, even in narrative contexts, for it expresses assertiveness, reality, the most outstanding information, giving weight to his argumentation and slightly diluting the subjectivity which is typical of all argumentative texts and that characterizes the subjunctive mood.

## 6. Conclusions

As shown in this corpus, we can conclude that *cuando* and

*mientras* express differences in their contexts of usage and account for the different communicative intentions of the enunciator.

Both connectors are usually found in argumentative contexts (85,45% of total cases) according to the types of texts where they are placed. They preferably express a relationship of simultaneity, although *cuando* also establishes posteriority relationships (26,19%).

Both, *cuando* and *mientras* prefer a postponed position (66,36% of total cases). Coincidentally with the hearer's expectation and the predominant position of the temporal clause, *cuando* introduces new information (80,77% of its cases) whereas known information predominates in clauses with *mientras* (61,54% of its cases). Distribution of information can be associated with two parameters: the position of the temporal clause concerning the other clause of the period and verb mood. As regards the position of the clause, there is no correlation between the type of information introduced by the temporal clause and its position in the period, since either *cuando* or *mientras* prefer the postponed position (66,36% of total cases) regardless of the fact whether the information that both connectors introduce is new or old. This can be due to Alberdi's writing characteristics [6].

In accordance with the argumentative discourse context, both connectors most frequently choose the tenses of the commented world (Present Simple, Future Simple, Present Perfect Simple) in 88,18% of the cases, although *cuando* expresses some cases of the narrated world. As regards verb tenses, *cuando* mainly selects the indicative mood (96,43%) and *mientras* chooses the subjunctive mood (61,54%). This choice of mood agrees with Borzi's proposal on information distribution: *cuando*/indicative mood/new information and *mientras*/subjunctive mood/known information. On the other hand, if the semantic nuances expressed in the clauses introduced by *cuando* (temporal ones with 54,76% and causal ones with 20,24%) are under consideration, the indicative mood expresses assertiveness and certainty, whereas *mientras*

can establish semantic relationships with conditional or hypothetic nuances (73,08%) coinciding with the semantic value that conveys less assertiveness and lack of reality contributed by the indicative mood.

To summarize, the enunciator selects *cuando* as a connector in argumentative discourse contexts with the communicative intention to establish a purely temporal relationship of simultaneity between two events and mainly, in a less causal measure, in those cases in which posteriority is expressed by the temporal relation. The temporal clause introduced by *cuando* tends to present new, central and focused information that is important in terms of discourse continuity.

On the other hand, the enunciator selects *mientras* as a connector in argumentative discourse contexts with the communicative intention to establish a conditional rhetorical relationship between two events that have a temporal correlation of simultaneity. The event that is conceptualized by the temporal clause expresses known information serving as pivot and starting point of the relationship of condition or hypothesis between both clauses of the period in most of the cases, although known information also serves as a starting point to establish a relationship of opposition or contrast between the connected clauses of the period.

In the *continuum* of the temporal relationships of simultaneity, *cuando* is a more prototypic member of the category, since its predominant use is found in the pole call pure temporality, whereas *mientras* is a less prototypical member that prefers contexts of hybrid temporality.

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