Denominative variation and the dynamics of special knowledge construction in texts

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Outline

- Terminological variation: motivation and functionality
- Intra-textual Term Variation
- Research: Denominative variation in academic texts in Psychology
  - Role in knowledge construction
  - Distribution along text
- Conclusions and future work
Specialised discourse according to experts

- Quick and efficient transfer of specialised knowledge
- Facilitate communication among experts
Characteristics of specialised discourse

Conciscion          Term variation          Precision
Systematicity       Impersonality
Characteristics of specialised discourse

- Concision
- Precision
- Systematicity
- Impersonality

1 concept $\rightarrow$ 1 term
Variation in specialised discourse

- Different perspectives on the same reality (Temmerman 2000)
- Different socioprofessional groups (Gaudin 2003, Diki-Kidiri 2010)
- Different communicative scenarios, participants, purposes (Cabré 1999)
Denominative variation with cognitive consequences

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Domestic violence
- Spousal abuse
- Violence towards women

- Reflects a viewpoint
- Affects the way the concept is understood
Intra-textual term variation

- Stylistic function
  - Avoid repetition
  - Creative, expressive needs

- Cognitive function
  - Knowledge construction and transfer
Term variation has a cognitive function

- Emphasises different conceptual features (Mortureux 1997; Freixa 2002)
- Provides a enriched conceptual representation (Rogers 2004)
- Contributes to text coherence (Collet 1997, Adelstein 2002)
Role of Intra-textual Term Variation in knowledge construction

Psychology
Chilean Spanish
2000-2012

Research Article (RA)
(211,098 words, 22 texts)

Undergraduate Research Thesis (RT)
1,189,473 words, 35 texts

¿What kind of information is conveyed?

¿Does it vary across genres?
Methodology

- Conceptual information displayed by term variants

\[ \text{Term}^n = \text{concept 1 relation concept 2 rel. concept n} \]

- Spousal abuse = \( \text{EVENT affected object HUMAN} \)

- Concept of spousal abuse = \( \text{ABSTRACT ENTITY Attributed concept EVENT Af.object HUMAN MODIFIER} \)
Results

- Role in knowledge construction
  - Intracategorial information
    - Concept characteristics and dimensions
  - Intercategorial information
    - Relationship with other concepts within structure of subject field
(TP 2005_84) : Violence, violence against women, domestic violence, process of violence, concept of spousal abuse, situation of household violence, family violence against women
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SPECIFIC EVENT
(VIOLENT INTERACTION)

violence

abuse

PLACE

domestic

PEOPLE

INDIVIDUALS
women/spouse

GROUPS
household/family

PARTS
physical/psychological

place/affected object
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SPECIFIC EVENT
(VIOLENT INTERACTION)

violence

abuse

place/affected object

PLACE
domestic

PEOPLE

INDIVIDUALS
women/spouse

GROUPS
household/family

PARTS
physical/psychological

Violence, violence against women
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PLACE

SPECIFIC EVENT
(VIOLENT INTERACTION)

violence

abuse

people

GROUPS
household/family

PARTS
physical/psychological

INDIVIDUALS
women/spouse

PLACE

domestic

Violence, violence against women, domestic violence
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ACTIVITY INDICATOR
process

attributed concept

SPECIFIC EVENT (VIOLENT INTERACTION)

violence

abuse

PLACE
domestic

PLACE

PEOPLE

GROUPS

PARTS

INDIVIDUALS

household/family

physical/psychological

women/spouse

Violence, violence against women, domestic violence, process of violence
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Violence, violence against women, domestic violence, process of violence, concept of spousal abuse.
Violence, violence against women, domestic violence, process of violence, concept of spouse abuse, situation of household violence.
Results

- Role in knowledge construction
  - Intracategorial information
    - Concept characteristics and dimensions
  - Intercategorial information
    - Relationship with other concepts within structure of subject field
For the first time in history family violence against women was recognised as a human right violation.
Results

- Role in knowledge construction
  - Intracategorial information
    - Concept characteristics and dimensions
  - Intercategorial information
    - Relationship with other concepts within structure of subject field

- Term variation and text parts
  - Relationship between communicative purpose and term choice
Pacientes diagnosticados con VIH/SIDA
Seropositivo
Caso
Persona con VIH/SIDA
Personas infectadas

Pacientes diagnosticados con VIH/SIDA
Sujetos
Participantes
Personas
muestra

Pacientes de nuestro estudio
Sujetos del estudio
Pacientes con VIH/SIDA
Personas con VIH/SIDA

• dynamics of cognition
• Strong contextual dependency
Conclusions and future work

...SO FAR

- First qualitative results on intratextual term variation
  - Intra and intercategorial structure
  - Relationship with text parts

FUTURE WORK...

- Quantitative analysis in bigger corpus
  - Are differences statistically significant?

- Does variation improve comprehension?
  - Reading comprehension tests
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