

The discourse particles *nam* and *enim* in Cicero's letters to Atticus*

Svetlana Kočovska

Institute of Classical Studies
Faculty of Philosophy
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University
svetlanakocovska@gmail.com

Key words: discourse particles, nam, enim, Cicero, letters

This thesis investigates the discourse functions of *nam* and *enim* in Cicero's letters to Atticus. In reference books, both particles are summarised under the heading of 'causal coordinating conjunctions'. This designation seems problematic for a number of reasons. The initial part of the thesis, therefore, examines the concept of causality in linguistic theory and its applicability to *nam* and *enim* clauses. Analysis proves that the description of both particles as more or less synonymous markers of a causal link is acceptable only in a number of occurrences. Even in those instances, moreover, the adequacy of this description depends upon how we understand the concept of causality. In some occurrences, *nam* and *enim* might be described only as markers of a so-called 'internal' causal relation; or, in terms of the three causality types discerned by Sweetser, as markers of epistemic or conversational causality. Considering that the notion 'markers of internal or epistemic/conversational causality' does not describe the full range of uses and does not say much about the more particular functions of *nam* and *enim*, this description of the particles as a markers of causal link between two clauses is not fully satisfactory.

This thesis uses Karoline Kroon's analytical framework for the description and classification of connective particles as a pattern of analysis. Central to this pragmatic approach are the notions that every discourse can be analyzed at at least three levels—representational, presentational and interactional—and that discourse particles can be described in terms of the level of discourse at which they primarily display their 'relational' function. Thus discourse particles are divided into the three main groups: *representational*, *presentational* and *interactional* particles. A further differentiation of each of these groups entails determining the more specific type of relation involved, i.e. whether a structural or a semantic-functional type of relation. The linguistic clues for establishing the level at which the particles display their function(s) are: the discourse type; their collocations with other particles, the syntactic status and illocutionary force of the clause in which the particle occurs; the communicative structure; the information structure; the tense in the narrative discourse; and the text type and content.

Analysis shows that in Cicero's letters to Atticus the particle *nam* always signals the occurrence of a discourse unit which has a subsidiary role with regard to more central discourse unit. In most usages, the discourse function of the particle is to indicate one of the following rhetorical relations: *elaboration*, *evidence*, *justification*, *explanation*, *orientation*, etc. Systematic investigation of *enim* confirms that the particle is not a connective in a narrow sense and that its function is to encourage the involvement of the addressee. Hence, *nam* is described as a presentational particle and *enim* as an interactional particle. In accordance

with these conclusions (simplified here), this thesis proposes a few Macedonian functional equivalents of both particles, which are not relevant for all, but for specific usages. Some of the proposed equivalents of *nam* are the adverb *имено* (*imeno*), the conjunction *зашто* (*zašto*) and the particle *инаку* (*inaku*). The Macedonian discourse marker *знаеш* (*znaeš*), the particle *нели* (*neli*), and the particle combinations *а бе* (*a be*), *е па* (*e pa*) and *е ...де* (*e...de*) are among the functional equivalents proposed for *enim*.

* MA thesis publicly defended at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje in February 2009.