

Final *but* and information structure

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The purpose of this study is to complement recent studies on final *but*, an emerging construction in American English and Australian English (Mulder and Thompson 2008, Mulder, Thompson and Williams 2009) and show it is attested in Southern and Northern British English by examining the spoken demographic section of the *British National Corpus* and the spoken section of the *Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech*.

Relying on the five criteria that define the category of theticals, it will be shown that final *but* can be classified as a thetical (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 861). It will be demonstrated that final *but* is a type of constructional theticals (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 875) as it has a schematic structure of its own.

Much attention will be paid to the relationship between final *but* and information structure in order to account for the strategy of information organization. It will be shown that its status as a post-rheme element, which takes into account the position of this particle, does not pay tribute to its main function of textual cohesion and interactional coherence. Its potential status as an Antitopic (Lambrecht 1981) will also be discussed and questioned.

References

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