Discourse Analysis

Online Lecture
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Why discourse analysis? And what is it?

Consider the following exchanges at breakfast in a hotel between two customers. Find out non-sentences/fragments in the exchanges and rewrite them in full (as sentences)

1. A: You're in a no smoking zone.

   B: Am I?

   A: The whole building's a no smoking zone.

   B: Thanks very much.

2. A: This is a no smoking zone.

   B: Is it?

   A: Outside only I'm afraid.

The magic of language: a bridge connecting the material world to the non-material world

While it is controversial whether language as a tool is created by human beings or a gift endowned by an omnipotent being, a well-known concensus is that language is magical in that it allows us to bring the material and non-material world together.

When we hear someone utter 'The white cloud is floating over the grey tower' an image or a picture emerges in our mind. How come a sequence of sounds (material/physical) brings up something non-material/non-physical, a picture/image in our mind?

It is equally magical the fact that language enables human beings to prosper and become the top animal in the evolutionary hiercharchy (scale/order) since language is most effective means of communication to date.

Language as a means of communication

Linguistics as a science investigates the ontological question of what constitutes language, and so far has gained tremendous achievement.

It is no doubt that knowing what a tool is made of is important for the user, but knowing how to use the tool effectively is equally important.

The linguitic subfield, discourse analysis, shifts the focus from the what-question to the what-for question. That is to say, discourse analysis looks at language as a means of communication.

Questions

We recognized from the exchanges at the beginning many fragments/non-sentences are used, which brings up the following questions.

1. How can people communicate with non-sentences?

2. What brings up appropriate interpretations of non-sentences?

A quick review

In case you forget, a sentence differs from a non-sentence in that if we take a sentence as a performance with the verb as a play and the subject, object... as actors then the former is a performance with fully required actors while the latter is lacking in actors.

For instance, in the sentence 'Mary met John', the play is the verb 'met' and there are two actors 'Mary', 'John'. By contrast, in the sentence 'Mary left', the play 'left' and there is only one actor 'Mary'.

Such imagination would make it reasonable why the questions we just asked

Discourse Analysis

- What is it? A branch of linguistics

- Linguistics => study of language => smallest unit of propositional content: sentence

- Language as tool for communication => sentences cannot be units of communication (a normal conversation never starts and ends with a sentence)

So, what is a discourse?

- A set of sentences?

=> this can't be true considering the following:

Mary is a secretary. A Russian secretary is watching a 'special mission operation' in Ukraine. Doctors operate on patients.

Then what is it?

- Discourse = a series of connected utterances; a text or conversation

=>   utterance > < sentence

=>   connected > < disconnected

Utterance >< Sentence

- We mentioned at the beginning that a sentence is a linguistic unit of propositional content. Propositional content? What is it? In terms of argument structure, the content of a sentence, its meaning, is composed of a predicate and its arguments. For instance, the meaning of the sentence, 'Mary is a secretary', is derived from the argument 'Mary', and the predicate 'is a secretary' through a combinatory rule called 'compositionality'.

Sentence: Propositional content

- The meaning of 'Mary is a secretary', or its propositional content, is that the argument, the entity denoted by 'Mary', belongs to the set of secretaries.

- The meaning of 'Russia used a hypersonic missile in western Ukraine' is that the argument 'Russia' belongs to the set of entities that used a hypersonic missile in western Ukraine.

Are the propositional contents of the following identical?

(1) a. Students are happy people.

b. Happy people are students.

(2) a. Mary met Henry.

b. It is Mary who met Henry.

c. It is Henry that Mary met.

(3) a. This seller sells only German goods.

b. Only German goods are sold by this seller.
c. Does this seller sell only German goods?

Indeterminacy

- Imagine we find a sentence like 'Mary is a secretary' in a grammar book. This sentence does not tell much. We do not know anything about Mary, neither do we know what involves in being a secretary, and importantly we wonder what is this sentence for.

- This sentence at best serves as an example for a grammar lesson.

Sentence >< Utterance

- Suppose a group of five students learning a grammatical point through the example 'Mary is a secretary'. Each is required to utter the sentence once.

- Do we have five sentences?

- No matter how many times 'Mary is a secretary' is uttered, what we have is only one and one sentence.

- Why so?

- Utterance

=> physical event (to utter), time and space bound (uttered by a particular speaker, on a particular occasion)

=> can be fragments (non-sentences)

Sentence

=> not physical, abstract, not time and space bound, abstract (in the mind of the speaker)

=> syntactically well-formed

Which of the following is a sentence?

a. I would like a cup of tea.

b. Tea, please.

c. He put it on the table.

d. On the table.

e. Not much.

f. No shirt, no shoes, no service

Yes or no?

a. Does it make sense to talk about the time and place of a sentence?

b. Is it reasonable to say: 'He made a slow sentence'?

c. Does it make sense to say: 'This is a long sentence?'

- We mentioned previously that a discourse involves a series of connected utterances.

- We have seen the distinction between 'utterance' and 'sentence'

The next question about discourse is what does it mean by 'connected utterances'?

We know informally what it means when someone says he/she has a lot of connections.

It means that person is somehow in a network of something. He/She is part of something bigger

- We can say the same thing about 'connected utterances', meaning utterances that are related to each other. We cannot take one utterance out without affecting the rest.

In terms of discourse analysis, the two essential elements that bring about this 'connectedness' is 'cohesion' and 'coherence'.

We will come back later on these two notions.

- We know what a discourse is, so what about 'analysis'?

- Analysis => detailed examination of the elements or structure of something

The use of language involves stretches of discourses, namely interrelated (cohesive) units

Discourse Analysis => the analysis of language in use

=> the investigation of the relationship between form and function in verbal communication

The relationship between form and function
What is it?

A: Say, there's a good movie playing tonight.

B: Actually, I have to study.

A: Too bad.

B: Yes, I'm sorry.

A: Well, I guess I don't need to ask you if you want me to pick you up.

Task: Analyze the form and function of the utterances in this conversation.

In case you forget, 'form' is concerned with the 'what' question (what is it? Is it a statement? A question?) and 'function' 'what for' (What effects does it bring about?What does the hearer react after hearing it?). For instance, the first utterance is in the form of a statement

Verbal communication

Communication => exchange of information

Verbal communication => communcation via language

Of the many means of communication available, signs, symbols, gestures… , language proves to be the most effective means employed by human beings.

Other means of communication abound in defects: signs and symbols cannot satisfactorily convey complex and abstract content; for instance, they cannot express what might happen in a world thoudsand years away from now.

They are limited in number, and do not have the combinatory power to express new ideas, thoughts, and highly constrained by physical

Activity 2 : More about form and function
What is going on in the following exchanges?

1. A: Could you pass the salt?

   B: Of course. (B continues eating without passing the salt.)

2. A: Will you go to London tomorrow?

   B: My father is hospitalized.

3. A: Is John a good student?

   B: Well, are you Putin?

4. A: Did you enjoy the chicken, sir?

   B: It's very interesting.

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The replies from B in the exchanges 2, 3, 4 do not match the expected answers to a yes-no questions. Also, they are all affirmative in form. Yet, the messages conveyed are negative.

The reply from B in exchange 1

is formally appropriate: Saying 'Of course' amounts to saying 'yes'. What is wrong with this exchange is that B misunderstands or pretends misundertanding A's request.

- To account for the form-function relation we need to assume that we are rational beings.

And we have (convincing) reason to do what we have done.

And we need a philosopher who tells us what it takes to engage in a verbal communication/ what it means to be a rational interlocutor (talker).

The cooperative principle and the maxims (Philosopher Herbert Grice)

- Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the speech exchange in which you are engaged.

Grice's maxims

Quantity (enough, no more no less)

Quality (do not say what you believe to be false)

Relevance (stick to the topic)

Manner (be brief, clear)

Topic, topic and topic

How do we account for the form-function relation of the discourses in activitiy 2?

What do Grice's maxims contribute to the interpretation of these discourses?

To tackle these issues, let us look at a notion, familiar but theoretically difficult to pinpoint, 'topic'.

We learn that a paragraph begins with a topic sentence, and that a topic sentence somehow summerizes the whole paragraph.

So what is topic?

A highly controversial view takes 'topic' as a linguistic element, conveying an 'aboutness' relation.

The opposite view does not consider 'topic' as a grammatical constituent, but holds that 'it is not sentences that have topics, but speakers' (Morgan 1975)

While the theoretical definition remains unsettled, it is commonly agreed that without the notion 'topic' it is impossible explain away many linguistic issues.

One of them is related to Activitiy 2.

Sentence topic >< Discourse topic
A topic is what a discourse, a discourse fragment, or a sentence is about.

Sentence topic

a. Hertha Berlin won.

=> Hertha Berlin

b. Russia attacked Ukrane.

=> Russia

c. Ukrane was attacked by Russia.

=> Ukrane

Despite having the same propositional content, (b) and (c) have different topics. Hence, they serve differently in a discourse.

Discourse topic

A: Did you see the Hertha Berlin – Frankfurt game yesterday?

B: Yeah, Hertha Berlin played boringly, but it won.

=> Hertha Berlin-Frankfurt game

B's reply, 'it won', and (a) 'Hertha Berlin won' are propositionally the same, but different in topicality.

Saint Augustine

'What then is time? If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to him who asks, I do not know.'

What is topic?

Intuitively, as a rational, competent speaker we know what it is, but as mentioned previously, it is not easy to put our finger on this notion.

(Unconscious/Tacit) Rules of conversation

a. Attention getting (verbal or non-verbal)

b. Topic nomination

=> making statements or questions that lead to topics of conversation

=> maintaining conversation by complying with Grice's maxims (quantity, quality, relevance, manner)

c. Topic development

=> turn-taking conventions

(culturally oriented)

=> topic clarification

=> topic shifting

=> topic advoidance

=> topic interruption

d. Topic termination

(1) A: Could you pass the salt?

B: Of course. (B continues eating without passing the salt.)

(2) A: Is John a good student?

B: Well, am I Putin?

Carston (1988) and Blakemore (1992)

=> All implicatures may be accounted for by the single principle of relevance.

=> Language understanding may be reduced to the single theorem: to understand an utterance is to prove its relevance.

The analysis of discourse is the analysis of language in use

- Linguistic forms cannot be analyzed as being independent of functions

- Functions: how the forms are designed to serve in human affairs

Language functions

=> transactional: message oriented; emphasing the importance of the recipient getting the informative detail correct; focusing on the transmission of factual or propositional information.

=> interactional: concerned with the use of language to establish and maintain social relationships.

Activity 3: Transactional or interpersonal?
Consider the following conversation and think of the situation where they happen.

(1) A: What time is it?

B: Six thirty.

A: Thanks

2. A: I've just passed my driving test.

B: Oh, congratulations.

A: Thanks.

3. A: What would you like, sir?

B: What do you have?

A: All kinds of coffee and tea.

B: Then, one Americano, please?

4. A: I was given a new car yesterday.

B: Good for you! It must be very cool. Will you commute with the new car or take public transportation as before?

A: Why? I love driving.

Context in interpretation

There is no one to one correspondence between form and function: the form 'statement' can function as 'order', 'invitation', 'refusal'...

The question is how can a form can perform so many functions?

=> context, context, and context

(1)

A: Say, there's a good movie playing tonight.

B: Actually, I have to study.

A: Too bad.

B: Yes, I'm sorry.

A: Well, I guess I don't need to ask you if you want me to pick you up.

Context, what is it?
Hymes's (1972) SPEAKING

- S= Setting: time, place, other physical conditions surrounding the speech act

- P= Participants: speaker-hearer, addresor-addressee

- E= Ends: purpose-outcomes; purpose-goals

- A= Act sequences: form and content of the message

K= Keys: tone of conversation (serious, mocking…)

Instrumentalities: channels; written, telegraph, forms of speech, dialect…

N= Norms: Norms of interaction (how to interpret a listener suddenly looking away…)

G= Genre: fairy tales, advertisement...

(1) A: Do you smoke?

B: Well, if you've got a cigarette.

(2) A: Where's Sue?

B: There's a white car outside Bill's house.

(3) A: I am out of petrol.

B: There is a garage around the corner.

(4) A: May I speak to the manager?

B: May I ask who you are?

A: No, you may not.

B: You may not, either.

Institutional discourse

- 'Institution': a sociological concept, describing activities by which individuals construct and maintain a society, for instance, activities that are aimed at transmission of knowledge (the institution 'education') or combating 'crime' (the institution 'justice')...

The function of discourse is its objectives and its effects in a specific situation

Activity 5

(1) A suspect appears in court and reacts to a question posed by the judge in the following way:

A: You are John Smith?

B: I've been asked that three times during the investigations. You should know by now.

Explain in terms of objectives and situation what is going wrong in this communication.

Activity 6
Describe the miscommunication in the following dialogue

- A: (conductor speaking to a passenger in the no-smoking section of a train)

  Sir, there is no smoking here.

  B: (passenger holding up a lit cigarette)

  Then what does it look like I'm doing?

Conversation analysis

- Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), based on discourse structure in classroom interaction:

=> there must be a preliminary move

=> there must be one and may be many medial move

=> there can be a terminal move but not necessary

=> So, an exchange involves moves and moves are

Metaphorically three categories 'exchange, move and act' can be compared to a tennis match.

Exchange == the winning of a point

Move == the service/ the volley

Act == the act of serving

Conversation analysis:
identifying regularities of conversational structure by looking at the ways in which participants take turns at speaking

- Turn taking

=> no matter how many participants in a conversation, there is at any interval of time only one participant speaking; the rest listen and wait for their turn to speak

=> turn taking involves a set of rules, culturally oriented

=>Normally people take turn when they are selected (what do you think, John?) or nominated (I would like you to share your view on this) or self selected (I wonder if I may add something to what you just said). If nothing comes up, the current speaker may continue.

Adjacency pairs: two-turn units

(1)   A: Hello.   Greeting
      B: Hi.   Greeting

(2)   A: How are you? Question
      B: Fine.   Answer

(3) A: That's a nice shirt. Compliment

   B: Oh, thanks.   Accept

(Actually, I don't like it. I got it for Christmas). Reject

Adjacency pairs

Adjacency pairs are utterances produced by two successive speakers in such a way that the second utterance is identified as related to the first one as an expected follow up (Richards and Schmidt, 1983).

Utterances function	*Expected response*
Greeting	Greeting
Congratulation	Thanks
Apology	Acceptance
Inform	Acknowledge
Leave-taking	Leave-taking

(Paltridge, 2000, pp. 87-88)

| First parts | Second parts | | First parts | Second parts | |
	Preferred	Dispreferred		Preferred	Dispreferred
			question	expected answer	unexpected answer or non-answer
request	acceptance	refusal	compliment	acceptance	rejection
offer/invite	acceptance	refusal			
assessment	agreement	disagreement			

Activity 7

1. Form adjacency pairs from the following acts

Threat   Denial   Offer   Granting
Request   Acceptance   Counter-threat
Warning   Blame

Acknowledgement   Complaint

Apology

2. Look at these extracts and consider the different functions of 'thank you' in each case.

a. Bus conductor: *One pound twenty*

   Passenger: (gives £1.20)

   Bus conductor: *Thank you.*

   Passenger: *Thank you.*

b. (University seminar, lecturer is facing the class,   using an overhead projector.)

   Student: *It's not focused*.

   Lecturer: *Thank you* (adjusting the projector).

Activity 8: Identify the adjacency pairs in the following, taken from Nunan (1993)

(1)

A: May I speak to the director?

B: May I ask who's calling?

A: John Cox.

B: Okay.

(2)

A. Are you wearing gloves?

B. No.

A. What about the spiders?

B. They're not wearing gloves either.

Are they texts?

It was previously recognized that natural communication never starts and ends with one sentence only.

Uttered out of the blue, a sentence does not tell much about the world except 'who- did- what- to whom'.

Surprisingly, a sequence of sentences in the form of a text may not tell us anything.

a. Once upon a time there was a little white mouse called "Tiptoe". The boys lived in a large brick house with a thatched roof at the end of the longest street in town. That morning Mrs Smooks left home in a great hurry. But, too late, William realised that the car had no brakes. So they ran and they ran and they ran until eventually the giant got tired out so that he couldn't follow them anymore. "What an exciting day," she sighed. And so he never goes alone to the shops anymore. (Eggins 1994 : 89).

When can a set of sentences be a text?

b. Well here we are in the tropics. I've spent many hours just lying around doing nothing. We might go skin diving this afternoon which will be exciting. Well now I'm supposed to say having a wonderful time, wish you were here, but I won't. See you too soon. Love Heather.

(Feez and Joyce, 1998)

(b) is not a text either.

Why not?

=> Whether a set of sentences constitute a text or nor depends on the cohesive relationships within and between the sentences.

=> Text is the verbal record of a communicative event.

What makes a set of sentences a text?

- Cohesion

(to cohere= to be united, to form a whole)

- Linguistically realized (linguistic devices)

Coherence

Labov (1970): the recognition of coherence or incoherence in conversation is not based on a relationship between utterances, but 'between the actions performed with those utterances'.

- ## Incoherence

(doctor to a mental patient)

A: What's your name?

B: Well, let's say you might have thought you had something from before, but you haven't got it any more.

A: I'm going to call you Dean.

(Laffal 1965: 85)

=> There is no relationship between between two actions performed with the two utterances:

A asks B for his name. B responds with a non-sense utterance. If B were rational, the implication of his/her utterance would be that he/she does not want to reveal his/her name, but B is not rational. So, the doctor

Coherence

A: Can you go to London tomorrow?

B: My mother is hospitalized.

=> There is a relationship between two action performed with the utterances:

A request the information from B on whether or not B goes to London. B responds in the form of a statement informing that B's mother is hospitalized, the implication of which is that B cannot go to London.

The term 'text' is cognate with 'textiles', meaning a type of cloth.

We know how cloth is made from cotton, wool… which is a process of getting tiny cotton/wool cords together to form a piece of cloth.

Analogically, we can say that a text (a piece of cloth) is made up of sentences (cotton cords) with the help of cohesive devices.

And they are **reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion.**

Reference

Reference is derived from the verb 'to refer', which, originating from Latin, means 'to bring back'.

The original meaning suggests that reference is a device that brings together two related entities.

Reference is of two kinds. **Exophoric** reference is reference outside the text to the situation; e.g. if someone says *It is beautiful* and points *to the moon*, then *It* has exophoric reference.

Endophoric reference is reference to items within the text. It may be either **cataphoric,** i.e. forward pointing (e.g. *this* in *This is the way Putin carries out the special mission.),* or **anaphoric,** i.e. backward pointing (I *hate the cat. Why don't you bring it back to its owner*).

Obviously, since exophoric reference brings together language (it) and the world (the moon) while endophoric reference relates linguistic elements within a text, only endophric is cohesive. Importantly, the use of anaphoric reference is far more frequent than that of cataphoric.

Activity 9

1. What does *it* refer to in these short extracts: a noun phrase in the text or a situation?

a) A pioneering 'school-based management' program in Miami-Dade Country's 260 schools has also put some budget salary and personnel decisions in the hands of local councils, composed largely of teachers. It's a recognition that our voices and input are important,' says junior highschool teacher Ann Colman.

b) Like the idea or deterring burglars with a big ferocious hound - but can't stand dogs ? For around £45 you can buy an automatic dog barking unn - Guard God, or the Boston Bulldog, both available by mail order from catalogues like the ones you're sent with credit card statements. You plug it in near the front door and its built-in microphone detects sharp noises.

(From Mc Carthy, 1991)

2. Pick out all the instances of text reference (endophoric reference) in the example below from Salkie (1995, pp. 69-70).

We asked Ruby to describe for us what life was like in the African Rilt Valley some 1500 generations ago. She replied that she had lived with a small group of about ten people: she indicated the number by holding up both hands with the fingers spread. They wandered the savanna during the day, looking for food, and sometimes met and socialised by the lake with other groups of hominids. It was during one such encounter that she met her mate, Klono. He wooed her by sharing with her a delicious baobab fruit.

2. Substitution

Substitution: the replacement of where one linguistic item for a longer one'. There are three kinds of substitution: nominal, verbal, and clausal.

Nominal substitution

Nominal substitution involves the substitution of a noun as head of a noun phrase by *one* or *ones,* or the substitution of a whole noun phrase *by the same.*

(1) His old car is out of order. He needs a new one.

(2) I want an Americano. The same for her, please.

Verbal substitution

Verbal substitution is by means *of do (to* be distinguished from the auxiliary *do),* and it substitutes for the lexical verb.

(3) My father doesn't smoke, but I do.

Clausal substitution

Clausal substitution is by means of *so,* for a positive clause and *not,* for a negative one.

Activity 10

1. Say what *one* or *ones* is replacing in these examples:

a. Excess cholesterol enters the body through our foods, especially animal fats, and many people are still unaware of the ones they should avoid.

b. Attempts to introduce forms of workers' participation have often been problematic. The Indian case is a particularly interesting one because the history of these ideas in that country is a comparatively long one, going back to the 1920s.

c. There isn't always an obvious link between the materials you have and the syllabus in use. The link through language is the most obvious and most straightforward one to make if your syllabus is based on linguistic items such as language structures or functions.

2. Say what *do* is replacing in these examples:

a. They stood up. Victor walked towards her and put his hand on her back. —Honestly, Lorie, I wasn't meaning to be a pain in the ass.

—I thought you weren't going to call me that.

—I like it. Can't you be a little flexible too?‖

—About my name? Men seem to think that they can name women as they please, just because Adam did. That way they give women the shape and function they want them to have.

b. Robert Orr-Ewing, responsible for Knight Frank & Rutley's lettings in Chelsea, admits that fewer Americans are coming over, but those who move here are renting, not buying as they did in the boom years of 1987 and 1988.

Activity 11

3. In these examples, distinguish the instances of clause substitute *so* from other uses of *so*.

a. —Marty, you are the third person this morning who has offered to disassemble my body. You are also third in order of probable success. I can't throw a baseball like you can, but the odds are very good that I could put you in the hospital before you got a hand on me.‖. —You think so.‖. "I was proud of myself. I didn't say, "I know so."

b. —In the twentieth century the focus of exploitation has change but exploitation itself remains. Capitalist society now tries to preserve itself with a precariously interlocking and frantically stimulated system of greeds and so it encourages people to think of themselves primarily as consumers living in a consumer society.

c. Plan your travelling to include plenty of opportunities to get up and stretch stiff joints. Don't expect to make a quick eight-hour car trip with only one stop for lunch. Plan in other stretching rests. On a train or plane make sure to walk in the aisle with your child every hour or so.

d. The sparrow perched on the edge of the pram and stared down into the baby's open mouth. Then he turned to Teddy Robinson. —That baby's hungry,‖ chirped the sparrow. —Look, his beak is wide open.‖. —Do you really think so?' said Teddy Robinson.

e. If your network is loaded in the upper-memory region between 640K and 1 megabyte, you might have problems running Windows. If so, try loading the network in conventional memory.

3. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is similar to substitution, but while substitution replaces a constituent with a linguistic element, ellipsis replaces a constituent with nothing, creating a structural gap, filled by reference to a previous sentence. Like substitution, ellipsis may be nominal, verbal, or clausal.

Nominal ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis involves the omission of the head of a noun phrase, sometimes together with some modifiers.

He bought three classic books. I bought seven.

Verbal ellipsis

Verbal ellipsis involves the omission of the lexical verb from a verb phrase, and possibly an auxiliary or two, recoverable from a previous verb phrase.

Are you eating? No, cooking.

She should ask for permission first. Yes, she must.

Clausal ellipsis

Unlike clausal substitution, clausal ellipsis is not concerned with the ellipsis of the whole clause but with the ellipsis of large parts of the clause, the whole phrases and upwards.

Activity 12

The following examples contain various kinds of ellipsis. Say for each instance whether it is a verb, noun or clause ellipsis. For each kind of ellipsis make a list of the words or types of word that can precede the gap (Salkie, 1995, pp.60-61).

a. There are four newspapers specifically for Britain's 330,000- strong Jewish community. The Gulf war has put them in reluctant pole position for a huge international story. Yet all four share the same potential problem: they are weeklies, with deadlines that vary from early morning to late afternoon on Thursday. On the past two Fridays they have risked seeing their front pages made redundant by attacks on Israel.

b. I say that the critic new to the trade —lowers his standards when faced with a weekly fare of rubbish, and so he does; that is, he excuses the badness of the plays and marks them higher than he knows he should. Which is only reasonable while he does it consciously; disaster comes when he crosses the line into truly believing that the bad plays are really not bad at all.

c. The judge said that an employer's duty, under section 99 of the Employment Protection Act 1975, to consult a union when he was proposing to dismiss employees as redundant, arose when matters had reached a stage where a specific proposal had been formulated. Of two possible subjects of negotiation: whether there were to be redundancies and, if so, how and on what terms were they to take effect, only the second was open for discussion, and the redundancies took effect on 31 December 1987.

d. The PM has been wise enough to call for a 'bipartisan' approach, and the leader of the opposition wise enough to concur.

e. One female marine, Jacqueline Bowling, said: —I do not think I have any more fears than the guys have. I think we have the same feelings. —Her husband, who serves at a post not far from hers, disagreed, and was unhappy to find that his wife had been assigned a...

4. Conjunction

Conjunction refers to specific devices (conjunctions) for linking one sentence to another.

She was sick, *yet* she tried to finish the task.

There are a number of words—conjunctions and adverbs that serve this linking function. They are of four groups: **additive, adversative, causal** and **temporal.**

Additive conjunctions

Additive conjunctions connect two sentences, where the following sentence adds further

Adversative conjunctions

Adversative conjunctions draw a contrast between the sentence they introduce or are contained in and the preceding sentence: *yet, however, nevertheless, on the other hand, on the contrary, in any case...*

Causal conjunctions

Causal conjunctions make a causal link between two sentences e.g. *hence, therefore, consequently, as a result, that being so, otherwise, in this respect etc.*

Temporal conjunctions make a time link, usually of a sequential nature, between one sentence and another: *then, after that, previously, thereupon, meanwhile, finally, from now on, up to now...*

Activity 13

Look at the text and find conjunctions linking sentences to one another.

Wind power. Wave power. Solar power. Tidal power.

Whilst their use will increase they are unlikely to be able to provide large amounts of economic electricity. Generally, the cost of har-nessing their power is huge.

However, there is a more practical, reliable and economical way of ensuring electricity for the future

And that is through nuclear energy.

It's not a new idea, of course. We've been using nuclear electricity for the last 30 years.

In fact, it now accounts for around 20% of Britain's electricity production. And it's one of the cheapest and safes; ways to produce electricity we know for the future. What's more, world supplies of uranium are estimated 10 last for hundreds of years, which will give us more than enough time to develop alternatives if we need to. So, while some people might not care about their children's future. We do.

(McCarthy, 1991)

5. Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion refers to the use of the same, similar, or related words in successive sentences, the effect of which is such that these words refer back and link up with the preceding sentences.

Collocation

The habitual juxtification of a particular word with another word or words with a frequency higher than chance. For instance, the word *family* is usually accompanied by words like *parents, cook, houses, children*…

There are two broad types of lexical cohesion:

Activity 14

Read the text and decide how the underlined words are related.

For example: *wrinkles, creases= synonyms*

WRINKLE FREE

Wrinkle <u>Free</u> is an <u>amazing</u> new formula <u>arerosol</u> that will actually <u>remove</u> <u>wrinkles</u> and <u>creases</u> from all sorts of <u>fabrics</u>, leaving them looking <u>neat</u> and <u>super smar</u>t. Fast and convenient to <u>use</u>, Wrinkle Free is <u>ideal</u> for busy people and travellers, and can be <u>used</u> with complete safety on all <u>fabrics</u> and <u>garments</u>, and won't leave a build-up on <u>clothes</u>. It costs only pennies a <u>spray</u>! 3 oz <u>can</u>.

(Thornbury, 2005, p. 165)

Read the text and find examples of the following.

- direct repetition of content words.

- synonyms, and near synonyms.

- hyponyms.

- antonyms.

- collocations.

EASY SHOE SHINE

The Shoe Valet will deal with the family's footwear in record time,, with no mess and no grubby hands. Four interchangeable wheels will give your leather shoes the full valest treatment. One removes mud <u>and dirt</u>, another applies neutral shoe cream to the leather, and the two

At the beginning we learned that a sentence is a carrier of propositional content, and that the propositional content is composed from the argument structure, which involves a predicate and its argument.

We also learned that a sentence is an abstract entity, complying with the grammatical rules of the language. For instance, a sentence in English requires a word order of SVO, Subject-Verb-Object. Changing the word order will change the meaning of the sentence: John bit the dog >< The dog bit John.

However, the word order SVO in some cases can be overruled under certain conditions. For instance, instead of saying 'John bit the dog' (SVO), we can say 'The dog, John bit' (OSV).

While these sentences convey the same meaning, they differ in Information Structure.

To be precise, these sentences differ in how the information (the propositional content) is packaged. The way information is packaged depending on many issues, the common ground shared by speaker-hearer, the hearer's expectation and so on.

Critical categories in Information Structure include Topic Comment Focus

Information Structural Categories

a. Topic-Comment

We learned what a topic is previously. A topic is normally realized by a definite expression. A comment, as the term suggests, 'comments' or 'talk' about the topic. A comment is usually a verb phrase or a clause.

Ex:

This book, I don't like its cover.

Topic   Comment

Mary   admires John.

Topic   Comment

b. Focus-Background

Normally, the focus of an utterance is phonologically prominent, and corresponds to the wh-phrase of a wh-question. The remaining of the utterance is by default the background.

Ex: What did John buy?

He bought   a book.

Background   Focus

Who envied John.

Mary envied him.

Focus   Background

Information Structure does not affect propositional content, but when a focus sensitive particle is used, it can.

a. Mary eats beefsteak.

The proposional content of (a) does not change no matter what the information structure is.

But it does change when an exclusive particle 'only' is used.

b. Only Mary eats beefsteak. ≠ Mary only eats beefsteak. ≠Mary eats only beefsteak.

Can you work out the differences?

Givenness refers to words and information in a discourse that are already known (or given) by virtue of being common knowledge, or by having been discussed previously in the same discourse ("anaphorically recoverable). What is not Givenness is New.

What happened to your back?

I hurt myself   on the back.

New   Givenness

Where did you hurt yourself?

I hurt myself on the back.

Givenness   New

Coherence

- The quality of being logical and consistent

What people bring to the interpretation of linguistic messages

It allows people to 'see' the connection of the elements of the message, with or without overt linguistic connections between these elements

Coherence: what matters is the relationship between the two actions performed with the utterances

- ## Incoherence

(doctor to a mental patient)

A: What's your name?

B: Well, let's say you might have thought you had something from before, but you haven't got it any more.

A: I'm going to call you Dean.

(Laffal 1965: 85)

=> There is no relationship between between two actions performed with the two utterances:

A asks B for his name. B responds with a non-sense utterance. If B were rational, the implication of his/her utterance would be that he/she does not want to reveal his/her

Coherence

A: Can you go to London tomorrow?

B: My mother is hospitalized.

=> There is a relationship between two actions performed with the utterances:

A request the information from B on whether or not B goes to London. B responds in the form of a statement informing that B's mother is hospitalized, the implication of which is that B cannot go to London.

To see how coherence works, look at the following examples

- A: Can you answer the door?
- B: I'm in the bath.
- A: OK.

Consciousness Seminar: Friday 1st January, 2.00 p.m.

Zellig Harris (Department of Linguistics, University of Pennsylvania).

'Conversation between mind and body'

And now the end is near.

Let us wrap up with the question:

What makes a sequence of sentences (utterances to be more precise) discourse?

A sequence of sentences is recognized as discourse only

1. when there is **cohesion** between sentences

2. when listeners or readers can derive the connection between sentences (**coherence**)

3. when the intention on the part of the speaker is saliently defined (**intentionality**)

4. when it is *informative* and **acceptable** to listeners

5. when it is adjusted to the **situation**

6. when there is a relationship between one text and other texts (**Intertextuality**).

The final curtain

Discourse analysis is considered as an on-going project rather than a well-established field in linguistics. Therefore, any discourse-related endeavour cannot be without shortcomings. This introduction course is not an exception.

It is hoped that, as the name suggests, the course will help familiarise learners with the study of discourse as an interdisciplinary research programme in linguistics, and trigger in them a desire to discover more about discourse.