

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS & GRAMMAR

In the initial phase of the development of the new subject of discourse analysis, it was thought to be the analysis of language just beyond sentence. However, the passage of time moved the discussions from sentence based perspectives to grammar, a discourse based perspective. This chapter highlights those aspects of grammar that help the discourse analysis of a text.

1. **Grammar from a Discourse Perspective** Different linguistic items such as 'it', 'this' and 'that' show different interpretation from a discourse analysis point of view. **For example**, the use of the word 'it' would mean a reference to a non-living thing already mentioned before in a discourse. This grammatical term will be very different and would mean something else compared to the use of the word 'he' later in the chapter.

a. **Grammar and Discourse from a Contextual Perspective**

Hilles (2005) describes the process of **examining grammar and discourse from a contextual perspective**. The first stage in this process is to make a decision as to **what aspect of language to investigate**, in next stage, to look at as many **sources as possible from reference** grammar and the final stage is to **test the hypotheses** that have been formed by the native speakers if they would make the same choices that the research suggests they would make.

b. **Comparing Discourse and Sentence-Based Grammars**

A discourse-based Grammar, makes a strong connection between form, function and context and also aims to place appropriateness.

Reference is the act of referring to a preceding or following element. Reference deals with a semantic relationship. There are different types of reference:

a. **Anaphoric Reference** is the act of referring to a preceding element. *For example:*

She certainly has changed. No, behind John. I mean Karin.

b. **Cataphoric Reference:** Cataphoric reference is the reference to something that is mentioned later in the discourse. It describes an item forward. **For example**, in the sentence **“I said this many times before and let me repeat it again today”** the meaning of ‘this’ and ‘it’ is not specified and it has to come later in the chapter. This reference to something that has to come yet, is called cataphoric reference.

c. **Exophoric reference** This type of reference looks outside for the things it refers to. **David Crystal’s *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*** defines it as **“A term used by some linguists to refer to the process of a linguistic Unit referring directly to the EXTRALINGUISTIC SITUATION accompanying an utterance”**.

d. **Homophoric Reference.** Homophoric reference is where the **identity of the item can be retrieved by reference** to cultural knowledge, in general, rather than the specific context of the text.

2. **Lexical Cohesion** It refers to the relationship in meaning between lexical items in a text and the particular content words and the relationship between them.

a. **Repetition** Repetition refers to words that are **repeated in a text**. This includes words which are inflected for tense or number and words which are derived.

b. **Synonymy:** Synonymy refers to words which are **similar in meaning** such as “date” and “go out”.

c. **Antonymy.** Antonymy describes opposite or **contrastive meaning** such as “Shy” and “Forward”.

3. **Hyponymy:** A word with a particular meaning that is included in the meaning of the more general word **for example dog and cat are the hyponym of animal**.

4. **Collocation.** Collocation is the association between vocabulary items which have a tendency to co-occur, such as combinations of adjectives and nouns as in **‘table and chair’, ‘hair dye’, ‘real-estate agent’, the ‘right direction’** etc.

5. **Conjunction.**Conjunction refers to words, such as 'and' 'however' that joins phrases, clauses or sections of a text in such a way that **they express a logical semantic relationship** between them.

6. **Substitution and Ellipsis** Substitute form is used for another language item, phrase or group.**For example "Try reading this book. That one's not very good."**Here, 'one's' is substitution for book. In ellipsis some essential element is omitted from the text and can be recovered by referring to a preceding element in the text.

7. **Theme and Rheme** Theme is the starting point of a clause; that is, what the clause is 'about'. The rest of the clause is the rheme. Genre is a term in widespread use to indicate an approach to communication which emphasizes social function and purpose.

8. **Focusing on Cohesion in Student Texts** The work of **Halliday and Hasan (1976)** influenced scholars and researchers by the early 1980s.The two terms were distinguished then. Before their work, both the words were used interchangeably. **Cohesion** is now understood to be a **textual quality, attained through the use of grammatical and lexical elements** that enable readers to perceive semantic relationships within and between sentences. **Coherence** refers to the **overall consistency of a discourse, its purpose, voice, content, style, form, and so on--and is in part determined by readers' perceptions of texts,** dependent not only on linguistic and contextual information in the texts but also on readers' abilities to draw upon other kinds of knowledge, such as cultural and intertextual knowledge.