

Approaches to discourse analysis

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**Historical development: from
inward into outward analysis**

1 Historical development: from inward into outward analysis

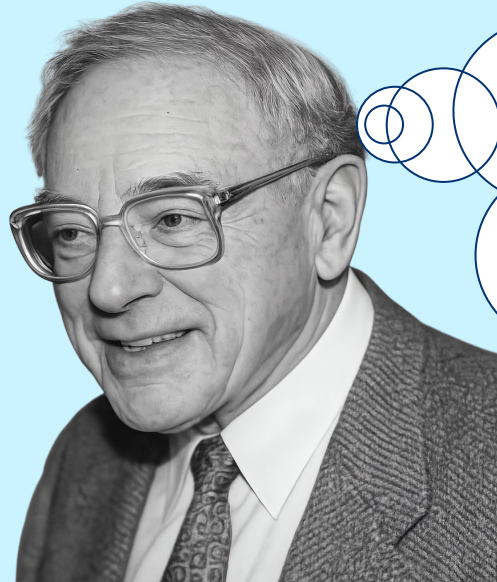
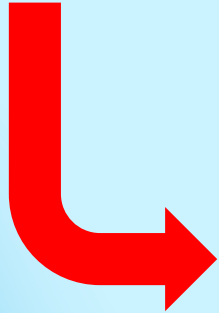
Linguistics has developed in terms of its perspective of studying language; traditionally it was **inward** looking by breaking down the sentence *syntactically*, *morphologically*, *phonologically*, or by a detailed mechanical analysis of the smallest components of language (sounds), i.e. *phonetics*.

1 Historical development: from inward into outward analysis

Now, with discourse analysis, linguistics has taken its first step towards this “outward looking” approach to the study of language: **first**, by being concerned with how sentences are connected together forming a unified text or *texture* (the formal approach). **Secondly**, by adopting a view of language as doing a social action (the functional approach). **Thirdly**, by viewing language as a landscape of social conflict: economic, cultural, and political, in which ideologies (i.e. fabricated realities) are unleashed (the critical social approach).

1 Historical development: from inward into outward analysis

The shift started with the formal approach, with this guy

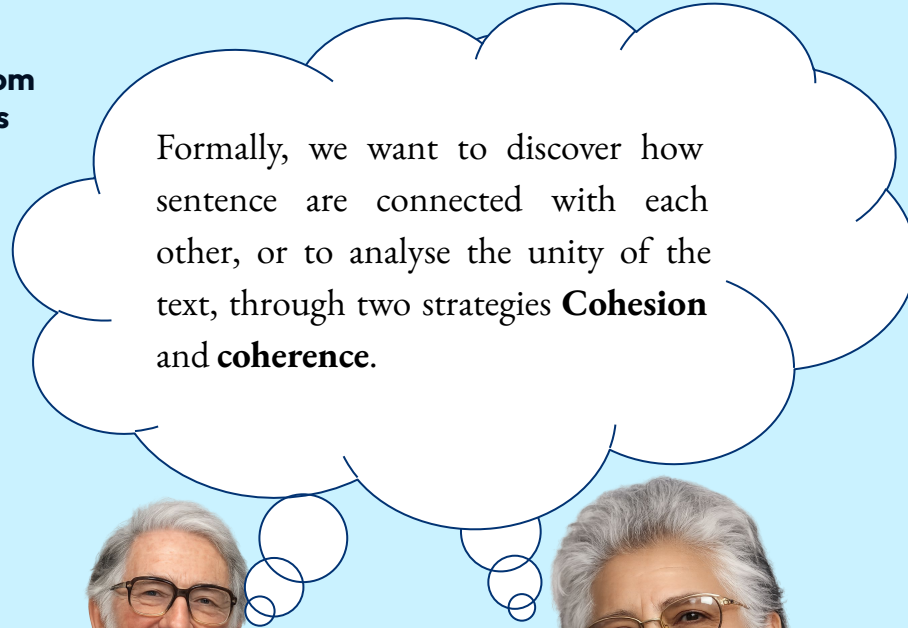
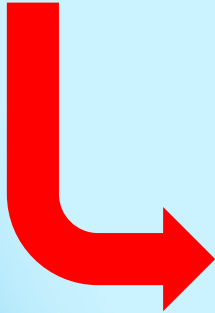


Zellig Harris

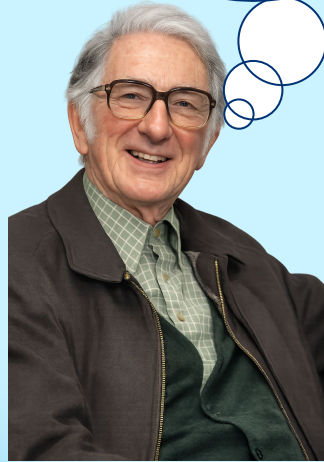
I want to understand how sentences are connected together, forming a unified text. Although I have concern for extra-linguistic elements that connect sentences together, I focus more on the linguistic elements that serve this purpose. For that reason, I use **distributional analysis**.

1 Historical development: from inward into outward analysis

Then these two:



Formally, we want to discover how sentence are connected with each other, or to analyse the unity of the text, through two strategies **Cohesion** and **coherence**.



M.A.K. Halliday



Ruqaiya Hasan

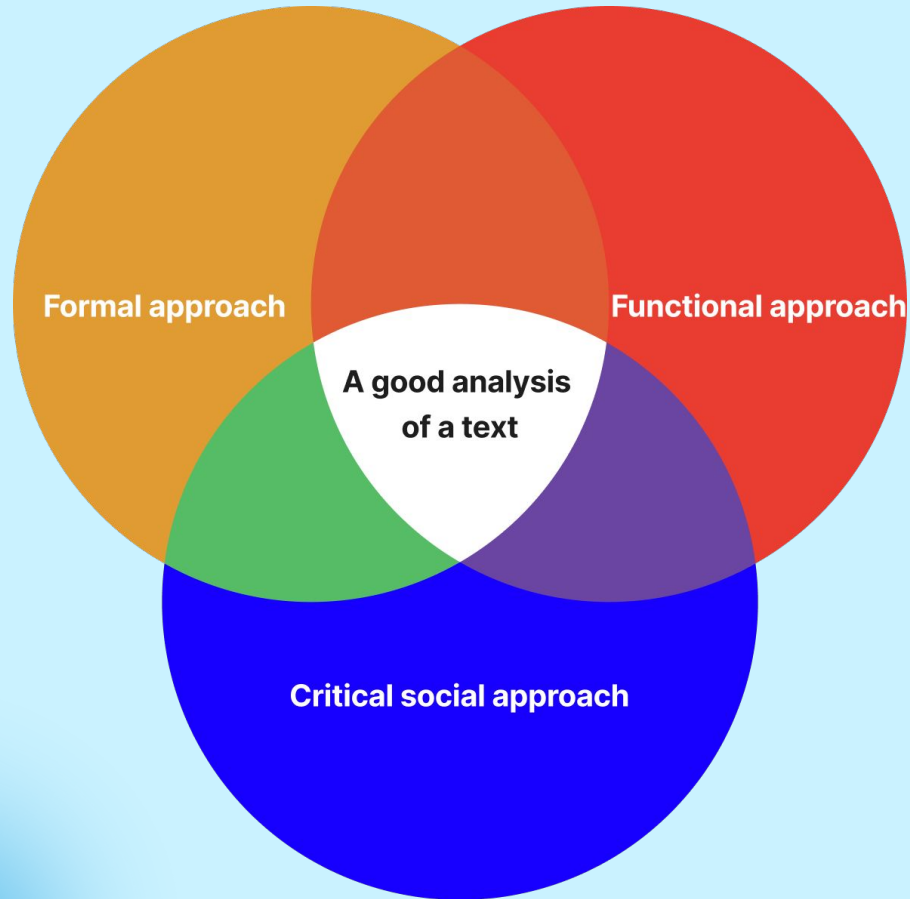
1 Historical development: from inward into outward analysis

Perspective	Focus	Key Concept	Proponents
Formal Approach	Language above the clause	Focuses on rules and conventions that join sentences together to form texts. It looks at the connections <i>between</i> sentences, not just within them.	Zellig Harris (Distributional Analysis), Michael Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan (cohesion and coherence), Michael Hoey (coherence), Labov & Waletzky (coherence), James Paul Gee (coherence),
Functional Approach	Language in use	Views discourse as action. It asks how people use language to do things (e.g., apologize, argue) and how we interpret those actions in specific contexts.	Michael Halliday, J.L. Austin, Paul Grice, William Labov
Social Approach	Social practice	Views language as a tool for constructing social identities, relationships, and ideologies. It examines how discourse creates "knowledge" and exerts power.	Michel Foucault, James Paul Gee

2

Which approach is the best to analyse a text?

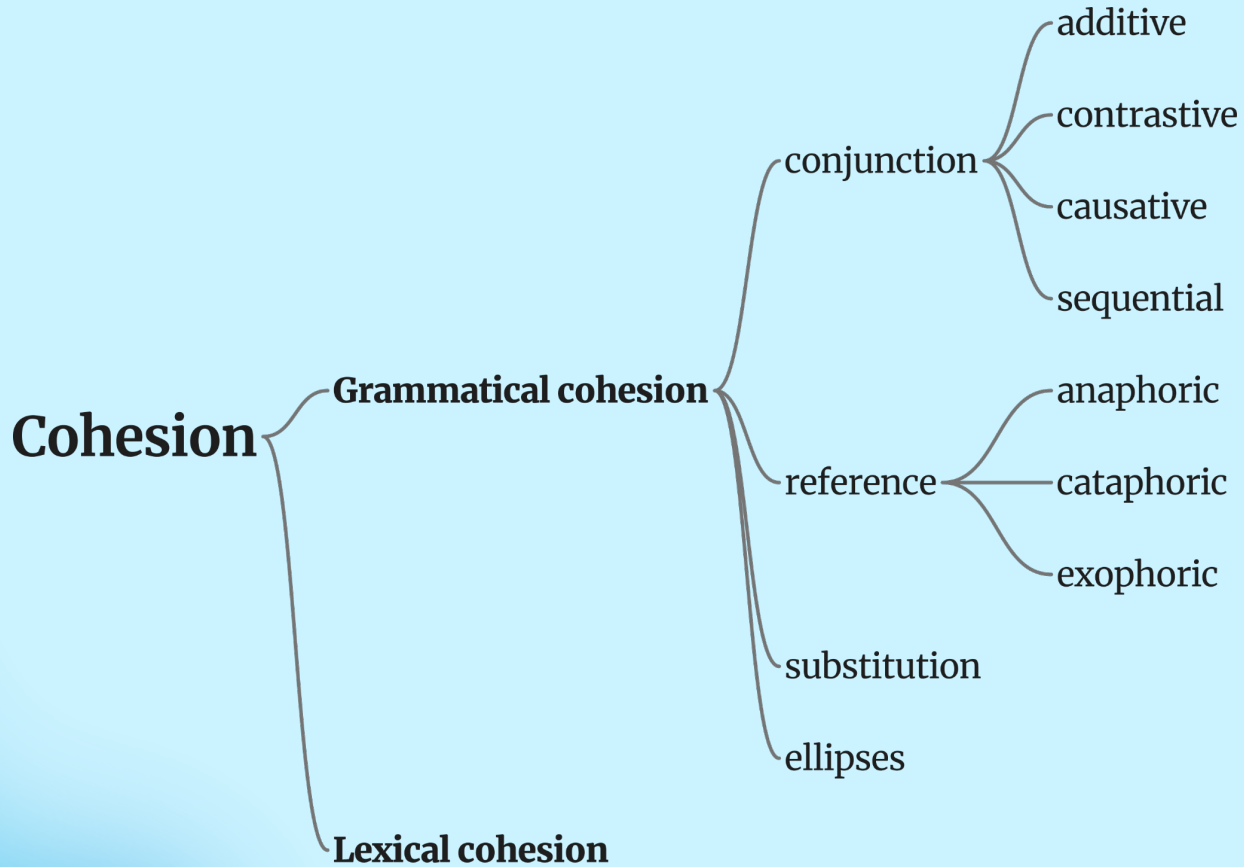
2 Which approach is the best to analyse a text?



3

Cohesion

3 Cohesion



3.1 Cohesion devices: conjunction

A) Additive: they add information to the previous clause (and, also, moreover, in addition)

Ahmed finished the report, **and** he emailed it to the team.

أنهى أحمد التقرير، وأرسله إلى الفريق.

B) Contrastive: they set up contrast with the previous clause (but, however, nevertheless, on the other hand)

وَمَا كُنْتُ مِمَّنْ يَدْخُلُ الْعِشْقُ قَلْبَهُ

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983) **وَلَكِنَّ** مَنْ يُبْصِرُ جُفُونَكَ يَعِشَقِ

I was not of those in whose hearts love takes its seat;

but whoever sees your eyelids is bound to love.

3.1 Cohesion devices: conjunction

C) Causative: they set up a cause and effect relation between clauses (because, so, therefore, as a result)

He stayed home **because** it was raining.

بَقِيَ فِي الْبَيْتِ **لَأَنَّ** الْمَطْرَ كَانَ يَهْطَلُ.

D) Sequential: they set up the order facts or events come in (then, next, after that, finally)

We had dinner, **then** we went for a walk.

تَنَاوَلْنَا الْعِشَاءَ، **ثُمَّ** ذَهَبْنَا لِلْمَشْيِ.

3.2 Cohesion devices: reference

Reference is done by using pronouns, and it consist in the following three types:

A) Anaphoric reference (backward):

Sara bought a new laptop. She loves it.

B) Cataphoric reference (forward):

Although she was tired, Sara kept studying.

C) Exophoric reference (outside the text):

(Looking at the sky) It's going to rain.

***the definite article “the” can have an anaphoric reference:** I saw a cat. The cat was white.

3.3 Cohesion devices: substitution

Rather than using pronouns, other words are used to refer to an antecedent which either appeared earlier or will appear later:

1) Nominal substitution (replace a noun)

a) one / ones

I want the red pen. Do you have one?

b) the same

I bought a new notebook. My sister bought the same.

2) Verbal substitution (replace a verb phrase): do / does / did

I didn't finish the homework, but he did.

3) Clausal substitution (replace a whole clause/idea): so / not

“Will it rain today?” — I think so.

4) Cataphoric substitution (antecedent comes later) (less common but possible)

I think so—that we should leave now.

3.4 Cohesion devices: ellipses

The omission of a noun, verb, or phrase on the assumption that it is understood from the linguistic context:

عيدُ بآيِّ حالٍ عُدتَ يا عيدُ؟
بِما مَضَى أَمِّ بِأَمْرٍ فَيْكَ تَجْدِيدُ؟

Eid— in what state have you returned, O Eid?

[Have you returned] with what is past, or with something new?

3.5 Cohesion devices: lexical

Sometimes cohesion is established by repeating the same lexical item or by items belonging to the same semantic field:

a) Lexical cohesion by repetition

“**The government** faces growing criticism, and **the government** has promised reforms to address public concerns.” (BBC News, 2023).

b) Lexical cohesion by semantic field (economics):

“The **economy** is slowing as **growth** weakens, **markets** react, and **interest rates** remain high.”

4

Coherence

4 Coherence

Coherence

linguistic frameworks

Problem-solving framework

introduced by **Michael Hoey**, based on the subject's experience with other texts having common organization: first the problem is given, then the solution is presented.

Example: Many cities rely heavily on private cars for daily transport. As a result, the government introduced new public transport systems and bike lanes.

generic framework

based on the subject's experience with genres, he/she will establish a generic framework of expected structure, topics, etc.

for example, **Labov & Waletzky** found out that the genre of story telling has the following structure:

- abstract:** a short summary of what we want to say
- orientation:** setting the scene
- complicating action:** conflict
- resolution:** conflict resolved
- coda:** ending or moral

non-linguistic framework

cultural model

introduced by **James Paul Gee**, the subject understands the text because of his/her experience in the world

4 Coherence

Cultural model



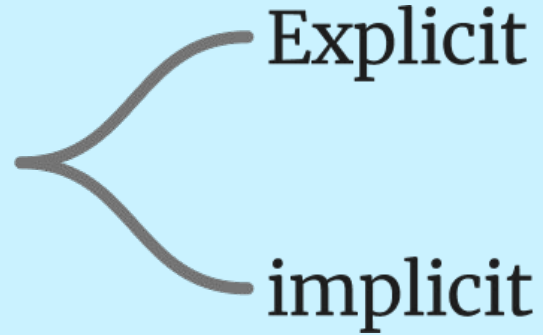
“Peak of purity” is not understood, unless we experienced this cold drink.

5

Intertextuality

5 Intertextuality

Intertextuality



5.1 Intertextuality: explicit



شَوْقِي يَقُولُ وَمَا دَرَى بِمُصِيبَتِي

"قُمْ لِلْمُعَلِّمِ وَفِيهِ التَّبَجِيلُ"

وَيَكَادُ يَفْلِقُنِي الْأَمِيرُ بِقَوْلِهِ

"كَادَ الْمُعَلِّمُ أَنْ يَكُونَ رَسُولًا"

لَوْ جَرَّبَ التَّعْلِيمَ شَوْقِي سَاعَةً

لَقَضَى الْحَيَاةَ شَقَاوَةً وَخُمُولًا

حَسَبَ الْمُعَلِّمِ غُمَّةً وَكَآبَةً

مَرَأَى الدَّفَاتِرَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (Tuqan, n.d.)

5.1 Intertextuality: implicit or presupposed

"أنا مَلِكُ الصِّدْيِ ..."

لا عرشَ لي إلا الهوامش... " (Darwish, 2004, p.72)



ودَعَّ كلَّ صوتٍ غير صوتي فَإِنِّي

أنا الطائرُ المَحْكِيُّ ... والآخرُ الصِّدْيُ!

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983)



6

Genre as moves

3.5 Cohesion: lexical

Genre, as a collection of relevant texts, can be seen as a structure of moves, serving a communicative purpose, for example from studying the introduction of academic articles, one can deduce the following moves which serve the purpose of indicating the the research is worth reading:

The Academic Introduction



Move 1: Establish the Field (Who works here?)

Move 2: Summarize Research (What do we know?)

Move 3: Create Space (What is the gap?)

Move 4: Introduce Study (How will I fill the gap?)

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Thanks!

Any questions?