The Texture of Discourse
Towards an outline of connectivity theory

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recapped by Yi-Ting TSAI

Recap from last time

Connectivity = texture of discourse

Clause, Sentence, Phrase

- Harris(1952) 1st aim of discourse studies : continuing descriptive linguistics beyond the limits of a single sentence.
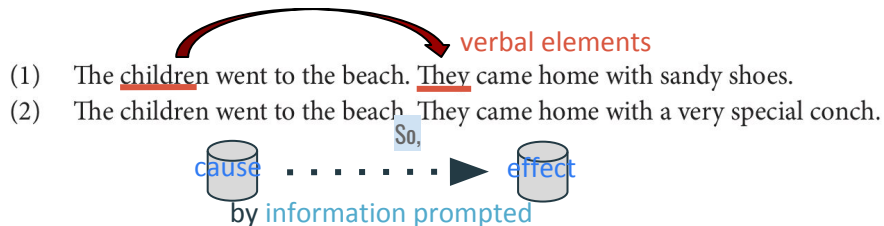- **cohesion** (physical) & **coherence** (mental)

verbal elements

(1) The children went to the beach. They came home with sandy shoes.
(2) The children went to the beach. They came home with a very special conch.

So,

cause · · · · · · · ▶ effect

by information prompted

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- Discourse basics
- 3 aspects (location, ordination, combination) and its schema

CH4 Adjunction : the content characteristics of the segment linkings

- Adding on information
- 3 aspect (elaboration, enhancement, extension) and its shema

CH5 Interjunction : the 'interactional' qualities of the segment linkings

CH6 Connectivity model

- Taxonomy of discourse relations

○ 7 tasks to fulfill in connectivity theory
    i. Provide a framework for describing connectivity.
    ii. Describe the variety of **forms** in which discourse relations occur.
    iii. Explain the various **functions** that discourse relations can have.
    iv. Construct a taxonomy of discourse relations.
    v. Formulate form – function correspondences.
    vi. Predict at any point in a discourse what discourse relations are likely to follow or what readers can reasonably expect as a continuation.
    vii. Evaluate judgments on discourse relations in the communication process.

3: Conjunction = constituents are somehow related **beyond the segment boundaries**

- Discourse -vs- Non sequitur (constituents in the segments are **not** somehow linked to constituents in other segments.)

  - Conditions:

    1. w/i sentences, constituents are to be interpreted in terms of their dependency on other constituents.

    2. w/i discourse, at least some constituents need a dependency with other constituents in other segments.

non sequitur (1) 1. John wants to visit his girlfriend. 2. Mr. Smith lives in a small village nearby. ✗ verbal elements
3. The vacuum cleaner didn't work. 4. It is going to be a long talk. ✗ constituents relate among segments

discourse (2) 1. John wants to visit his girlfriend. 2. Mary lives in a small village nearby. 3. The ✓ verbal elements
car wouldn't start. 4. It is going to be a long walk. ✓ constituents relate among segments

- rhetorical non sequitur : has no relation linked to precedent but claim to be somehow related

  - if enough context & sentence obeys the grammar rules → then any string of constituents in a sentence can make sense

- anacoluthon : grammatical structure incorrectly disrupted sentence

  - if conditions for rules referring to constituents are satisfied or could be easily corrected & enough context is added

    → then: every combination of sentences an interpretation is possible

(3) Peace is war.
(4) France is a hexagon.
(5) Colorless leftish ideas will have to meet certain conditions.

(6) During the weekend Mary working was not allowed.
(7) Mary worked hard that the pig was grunting.

3: Conjunction

- **Location**

  - the *order* of segments

    - anaphoric (←)

    - cataphoric (→)

  Possibilities in directions of linking

  $X \leftarrow Y, X \rightarrow Y; Y \rightarrow X, Y \leftarrow X; X \leftarrow Y \rightarrow Z$

  - *contact* places:

    - **Phoric** / pointer / fixing point

    - **Ground** / anchor position / scope of phoric

  (12)   Ann and Mary were glad because they had asked Bill to keep their secret.

  (13)   She loves him. That's why we have to wait and see.

  - in discourse, phorics can also point to constituents that are **not verbalized**, and even to more or less clearly expressed **speech acts.**

  non-verbalized 'car'

  speech act of questioning
  'I ask you this, for I heard ...'

  (16)   The dealer just called. Only my brakes had to be repaired.

  (19)   When do you want to leave? For I heard about a terrible road accident nearby.

  (20)   Children can stand more than parents think. Look at Ann and Mary.

  2nd possibility of conjunction
  -first segment: act of claiming
  -second segment: speech act: presenting example

- Ordination

- Combination

3: Conjunction

(4) Teun van Dijk wrote more than 20 books. I owe you a bottle of wine.

(5) I owe you a bottle of wine, because Teun van Dijk wrote more than 20 books.

clause < subclause

- Location: *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- **Ordination**

  - Prominence relative status of the linked clauses

  - *Grammar*-based (syntactic information)

Possibilities of Ordination

$X - Y, X - \gamma, x - Y, X - \gamma - z, X - \gamma/Y - z$

- symmetrical or asymmetrical
- even simultaneously have a lower status (than the preceding segment) and a higher status than the following segment)

    ■ Interordination: reaction to the proposition made in the first (greeting – response, offer – acceptance and question – answer)

    ■ Coordination: symmetrical linking between main clauses, between subclauses, and also between independent or complex sentences.

    ■ Subordination: a subclause is connected to a main clause or to another subclause at a higher level.

> Subordination and coordination are used here in a **broader sense** than the strict grammatical meaning.

1st main clause - 'but' - 2nd main clause (24) Peter had organized a short vacation but his wife would not come with him.

1st independent clause - 2nd independent clause (25) Peter was sitting at the window. Mary was busy with her car.

main clause < 2 subclause - { 1st subclause - 'and' - 2nd subclause } (26) Peter would not come because he hated parties, and because he had no time, either.

2 levels subordination (27) Although he did not want to say that he was ill, everyone knew it.

  - RST *Content*-based (level of information flow)

    ■ Nucleus

    ■ Satelite (32) Pete announced a short vacation because his wife was depressed. She had visited many therapists with no result.

- Combination

3: Conjunction

- Location: *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- Ordination: *grammar* (interordination, coordination & subordination) + *contact* (nucleus & satellite)

- **Combination**: how segments are tied

  - **Repetition**: clear and unambiguous lexical items

  - **Substitution**: grammatical or lexical

    - grammatical: dummy word, anaphor or cataphor, 'do', 'then', 'the', etc.

    - lexical: synonyms or hyponyms/hyperonyms.

cataphor	(37)	_She_ certainly has changed. No, behind John. I mean Karin.
verb 'do'	(38)	Have you called the doctor? No, but I will _do_.
adverb 'then'	(39)	We grew up in the 1960s. We were very idealistic _then_.
definite article 'the'	(40)	An old man crossed the street. Suddenly, a gunshot hissed. _The_ old man seemed to stumble.
hyper/hyponym ; synonym flowers - roses ; depressed -down	(41)	People who are depressed are adviced to buy roses. Flowers are said to soothe those who are feeling down.

  - Collocation

  - Connection

  - Zero-linkage

They can occur **simultaneously**

3: Conjunction

- **Location**: *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- **Ordination**: *grammar* (interordination, coordination & subordination) + *contact* (nucleus & satellite)

- **Combination**: how segments are tied

  - Repetition: clear and unambiguous lexical items
  - Substitution: grammatical or lexical
  - **Collocation**:
    - language-based: linguistic aspects (grammar, semantics and pragmatics) of combining discourse segments
    - knowledge-based: encyclopedic knowledge and world concepts (nature, culture and situation)

referential cohesion

Language-based collocation: grammatical, semantic, pragmatic

grammatical	(42)	I sent a postcard last week. My mother was delighted.	send(agent=I, patient=?, object=postcard)
semantic	(43)	Old movies don't do it anymore. New media are more appealing.	old - new
semantic	(44)	We have too many problems. The solutions are not at all clear.	problem - solution
pragmatic	(45)	John came walking. Our car enemy wanted to give a signal once again.	walking - our >> John = car enemy

fuzzynymy

'walking' = signal to express disdain for cars in some kind of knowledge

- Connection
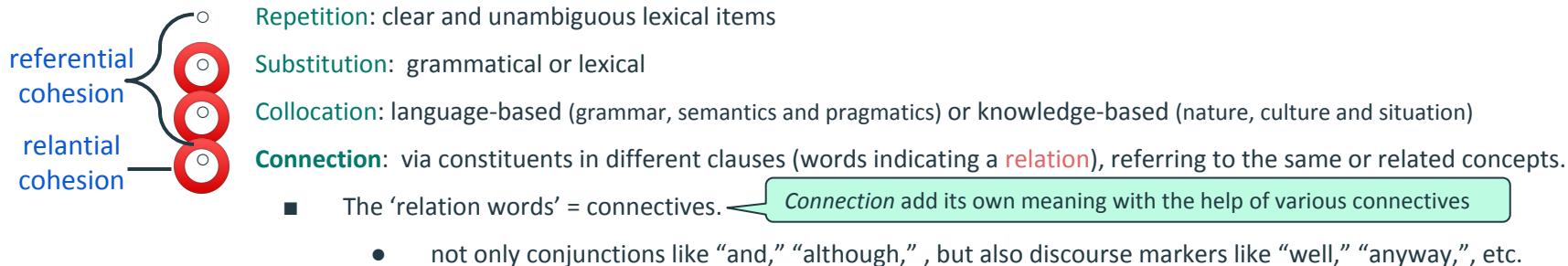- Zero-linkage

Knowledge-based collocation: natural, cultural, situational

natural (people have faces) (46) I saw people in the street. All the faces made such a tired impression to me.

cultural (blood bank and donors linked to Red Cross) (47) Red Cross helicopters were in the air continuously. The blood bank will soon be in desperate need of donors.

3: Conjunction

- **Location:** *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- **Ordination:** *grammar* (interordination, coordination & subordination) + *contact* (nucleus & satellite)

- **Combination**: how segments are tied

  - **Repetition**: clear and unambiguous lexical items

  referential cohesion
  - **Substitution**: grammatical or lexical

  - **Collocation**: language-based (grammar, semantics and pragmatics) or knowledge-based (nature, culture and situation)

  relantial cohesion
  - **Connection**: via constituents in different clauses (words indicating a relation), referring to the same or related concepts.

      - The 'relation words' = connectives.

        > *Connection* add its own meaning with the help of various connectives

          - not only conjunctions like "and," "although," , but also discourse markers like "well," "anyway,", etc.

Disjunction (48) You may go, or you can stay for a while.
Negative connection (49) You may go, or you will miss the train.
Restatement (50) You may go, or to put it more directly: you are fired.

Sequence 'and', 'also' → 'besides', 'furthermore'
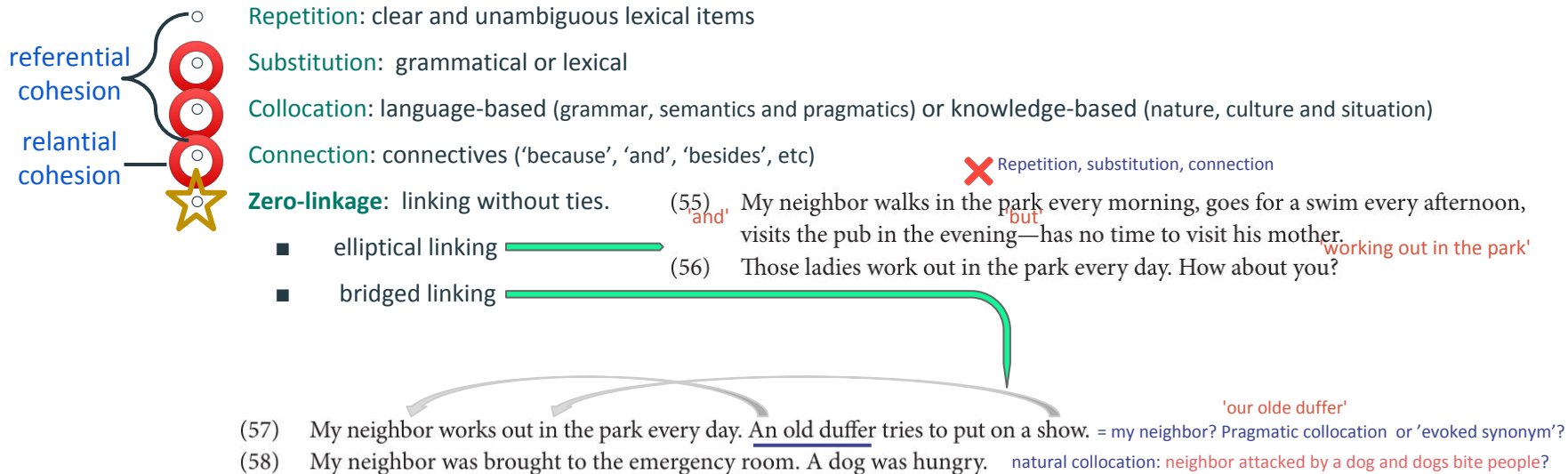
(51) Besides the fact that John is mean, he is also hateful.
(52) She is very competent. Furthermore, she is a good team player.

Causation because → 'and', 'as long as'

(53) Ann got a great job last year and now she is rich.
(54) As long as you have the time, why don't you join us?

  - **Zero-linkage**:

3: Conjunction

- Location: *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- Ordination: *grammar* (interordination, coordination & subordination) + *contact* (nucleus & satellite)

- **Combination**: how segments are tied

  - Repetition: clear and unambiguous lexical items

  referential cohesion

  - Substitution: grammatical or lexical

  - Collocation: language-based (grammar, semantics and pragmatics) or knowledge-based (nature, culture and situation)

  relantial cohesion

  - Connection: connectives ('because', 'and', 'besides', etc)

  ❌ Repetition, substitution, connection

  - **Zero-linkage**: linking without ties.

    (55) My neighbor walks in the park every morning, goes for a swim every afternoon, visits the pub in the evening—has no time to visit his mother.
    'and'   'but'

    ■ elliptical linking

    (56) Those ladies work out in the park every day. How about you?
    'working out in the park'

    ■ bridged linking

    (57) My neighbor works out in the park every day. An old duffer tries to put on a show.
    'our olde duffer'
    = my neighbor? Pragmatic collocation or 'evoked synonym'?

    (58) My neighbor was brought to the emergency room. A dog was hungry.
    natural collocation: neighbor attacked by a dog and dogs bite people?

  → dealing with non sequiturs

3: Conjunction

- Location: *order* (anaphoric & cataphoric) + *contact* (phoric & ground)

- Ordination: *grammar* (interordination, coordination & subordination) + *contact* (nucleus & satellite)

- Combination: *repetition, substitution* (grammatical or lexical), *collocation* (language or knowledge), *connection, zero-linkage* (elliptical or bridged)

Location	**Ordination**	**Combination**
Order	*Grammar*	*Reference*
a X before Y	c interordination	g repetition
X after Y	d coordination	h substitution •
	e subordination	i collocation ★
Contact	*Content*	*Relation*
b phoric	f nucleus	j connection
ground	sattelite	
		Zero-linkage
		k elliptical linking
		l bridged linking

• substitution: grammatical (ana/cataphora, dummy words); lexical (synonymy/hyperonymy)
★ collocation: grammatical – semantic – pragmatic; natural – cultural – situational

'conversational pairs'

conversations (22) You can watch a movie here tonight. Sorry, I have to study.

narratives with reported interactions (23) Can you clean the dishes? he asked. I walked away.

(35) Pete is depressed. His wife left him. That happened just before his birthday.
Their last conversation was a turbulent one.

4: Adjunction

- Adding on information

  - An information = proposition containing a **concept C** (a person, a lie, a mermaid) and an **event E** (actions, processes, states of affairs)

  - **C+E** combination: "John is ill." is a basic information block. → '*discourse proposition*'

  - "My brother John is terribly ill." contain several propositions in a clause which together function as one segment in discourse

Three types of Adjunction (linking information to information)

Elaboration   Adjunction to a C
Linking aspects, details, features or properties to a concept C

Extension   Adjunction to a C+E
Linking C's and/or E's to a clause, a C+E

Enhancement   Adjunction to an E
Linking elements in the frame of an event E

(1)   Mary went to the market. It was a small market in the suburb.
(2)   Mary went to the market. She was in a good mood.

(3)   Mary went to the market. Or was it the mall?   (1) C+E ← (2)C
(4)   Mary went to the market. John went to the hairdresser.   (1) C+E ← (2)E frame
(1) E + C   ←   generalized to the E "doing a household activity"
(5)   Mary went to the market. I cleaned the house.
(6)   Mary went to the market, but she lost her way and ended up at the station.
(1) E + C   ←   (2) E

Where? (7)   Mary went to the market. She had to go to the other side of the city.
When?   (8)   Mary went to the market. That day was the longest day of the year.
How?   (9)   Mary went to the market. It was a pleasant walk.
Why?   10)   Mary went to the market. She wanted to please her mother.

Dialogic principle:
"Please, tell me more about event E?"

4: Adjunction

- **Elaboration:** the discourse continues with information (details, aspects, features or properties) about a concept.

  - the general label Elaboration is mostly not further specified in the practice of discourse analysis.

  - more or less predictable

  - encyclopedic knowledge

  - (15) I would like to introduce a new rule. It works as a rule of thumb.

  - Quality   (16) He is always pestering me. There is never a day without some kind of criticism.

    - Specification (17) I've done a lot of shopping. I bought all we need for the weekend.
      the general la

  - Quantity   (18) The tennis federation has published a list with 170 curses that can be fined.
              A lot of these curses are of French origin.
          (19) Our school will organize a sports competition next month. All students can
              compete in basketball, soccer and gymnastics.

- Extension

5: Interjunction

- Location
  - Phoric/pointer
  - Ground/standpoint
- Ordination
- Combination

6 : Connectivity model - Adjunction

connectivity theory (texture of discourse) chapter reference

1. Provide a framework for describing connectivity.
   - CH2: 2 principles on which the Connectivity Model is based, and then illustrate how these principles can guide a view on discourse.
2. Describe the variety of forms in which discourse relations occur.
3. Explain the various functions that discourse relations can have.
   - CH3 Conjunction : how clauses are linked in discourse
   - CH4 Adjunction : various functions of discourse relations (how info in clauses can be linked)
   - CH5 Interjection : how relations between segments function between writer and reader
4. Construct a taxonomy of discourse relations.
   - CH6 (Why is a taxonomy needed? Why this one? What is the use of it? Why this terminology?)
   - CH7 clarify the architecture of the taxonomy
   - CH8 model will be compared with other important approaches in discussing certain major issues in the study of discourse relations
5. Formulate form – function correspondences.
6. Predict at any point in a discourse what discourse relations are likely to follow or what readers can reasonably expect as a continuation.
7. Evaluate judgments on discourse relations in the communication process.
   - CH12 formulating form – function correspondences in corpus studies, showing recent examples of research into discourse continuation, and discussing discourse relations in the communication process.