TOPIC 29

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND ARTICULATION. COHESION AND COHERENCE. ANAPHORA AND CATAPHORA. CONNECTORS. DEIXIS.

OUTLINE.

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of **Discourse Analysis and Articulation: Cohesion and Coherence, Anaphora and Cataphora, Connectors, and Deixis** is fundamental for English learners, as it enables them to structure, interpret, and link ideas within communication effectively. Discourse analysis focuses on how language functions beyond isolated sentences, allowing students to understand how cohesive devices, connectors, and deixis contribute to meaning in context. Mastering these elements is crucial not only for organizing thoughts in coherent texts but also for achieving fluency in academic and professional discourse, where nuanced articulation and precise interpretation of language are often required. With targeted instruction and consistent practice, learners can develop the skills necessary to analyse and produce connected discourse, aligning with standards for foreign language proficiency.

The significance of **Discourse Analysis and Articulation** is highlighted within the LOMLOE / RD… and D. … framework, where competencies in cohesion, coherence, and discourse devices are essential to developing linguistic and plurilingual abilities. Through cohesive techniques like anaphora and cataphora, as well as connectors and deixis, students gain valuable insights into syntactic structures and relationships that enhance their ability to convey meaning accurately across various contexts. This also fosters digital competence, social and civic competence, and learning to learn by encouraging critical engagement with language, flexibility in communication strategies, and collaborative interaction. By integrating this topic into the curriculum, educators equip students with essential skills for successful communication in a multilingual and multicultural society, preparing them to express and interpret complex ideas in an interconnected world.

2. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND ARTICULATION.

2.1. The concept of discourse.

Discourse refers to language as it is actually used, paralleling Chomsky's idea of *performance* or Saussure's *parole*. Unlike grammatical units like phrases, clauses, or sentences, discourse encompasses larger structures—paragraphs, dialogues, and interviews—created specifically for communication. In some linguistic perspectives, discourse functions as a macro-structure that underpins text construction. While the terms "text" and "discourse" are sometimes used interchangeably, they relate through realization: discourse is **manifested** in the text.

Discourse represents the meaning that readers or listeners actively construct from a text, intertwining with shared social practices, beliefs, and cultural norms. It's not just shaped by society; discourse is culture-specific. Different discourses connect to particular practices and attitudes, which writers often expect their audience to share or understand. This expectation can lead to misunderstandings for readers from different cultural backgrounds. For instance, in Western societies, the concept of marriage is typically monogamous, and this assumption remains implicit. However, in cultures where polygamy is common, marriage might suggest multiple spouses by default. Thus, discourse relies heavily on shared knowledge and context, with speakers or writers omitting details they consider universally understood.

2.2. Text and Discourse.

While some researchers distinguish *discourse* as spoken language and *text* as written, the concepts share many similarities, though with subtle distinctions. Both can be defined as passages—whether spoken or written—that function as unified, meaningful wholes. Unlike isolated words or sentences, they represent language in action, fulfilling a purpose in a specific context. In any discourse or text, language is organized to impact the receiver and elicit a particular response, making it functional and context-dependent.

The primary distinction between discourse and text lies in their theoretical and practical focuses: *text* is a conceptual construct, realized through discourse. *Discourse* emphasizes the interactive, dynamic, and functional elements of language, while *text* highlights the formal, structural, and tangible characteristics. Thus, a text is a semantic unit conveying meaning through sentences, which act as its carriers. Unlike sentences or clauses, which are structurally integrated at a syntactic level, the parts of a text rely on semantic cohesion, weaving meaning across its sections. **Discourse analysis** examines what we achieve through language, the communicative functions of texts, and the ways a text's structure aligns with its purpose.

2.2.1. Speech Acts

Speech acts explore the relationship between language forms and their functions, viewing language as a form of action. Introduced by Austin, this theory distinguishes three types of acts in communication:

Locutionary act: The form of the utterance. For example, *"Could you pass me the salt?"* takes the form of a question.
Illocutionary act: The function or intention behind the message. In the example, although the form is a question, the intent is a request.
Perlocutionary act: The effect of the illocutionary act on the listener, often non-linguistic. For instance, the listener hands over the salt.

Searle expanded this theory, categorizing five types of illocutionary acts available in English:

Commissive acts: Commit the speaker to a future action, as in a promise (*"I'll call you tomorrow"*).
Declarative acts: Change reality, such as in a wedding declaration (*"I now pronounce you husband and wife"*).

Directive acts: Aim to prompt the listener to take action, like a suggestion (*"Why don't we play basketball?"*).
Expressive acts: Convey the speaker's emotions or attitudes, as in saying *"That's very kind of you"*.
Representative acts: Describe a state or event, for instance, *"There are usually a lot of traffic accidents on weekends"*.

This framework demonstrates how language serves as a means of enacting intentions, where each act's form and function play distinct roles in communication.

3. COHESION AND COHERENCE

3.1. Cohesion

According to Halliday and Hasan, the functional organization of text, known as "texture," relies on cohesive ties. A "tie" connects two related items through meaningful links within the text. Cohesion includes the grammatical and lexical devices used to connect various parts of a text, contributing to coherence. However, coherence may still be achieved without cohesive devices, as shown in this dialogue: *A: The phone is ringing. B: I'm in the bath.* Despite the absence of explicit cohesive links, coherence exists because A infers that B cannot answer the phone due to being in the bath. Cohesion may be grammatical (reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction) or lexical (reiteration, collocation).

3.1.1. Grammatical Cohesion: Reference

Reference, a primary cohesive device, ensures continuity within a text through possessives, demonstratives, comparatives, definite articles, and pronouns (excluding interrogatives). For example, in *I bought a new jacket, but I don't like it*, "jacket" and "it" are co-referential, creating a cohesive link. Reference can be *endophoric* (within the text) or *exophoric* (outside the text). *Endophoric* references are either anaphoric (referring back, e.g., "jacket"/"it") or cataphoric (looking ahead, e.g., *When I met him, John seemed fine*). *Exophoric* reference relies on context, as in *Come here!*.

3.1.2. Grammatical Cohesion: Substitution

Substitution replaces an item with another that refers to a broader category. Halliday differentiates substitution from reference, as substitution relates to linguistic items, while reference relates to meanings. Types include:

- *Nominal*: *I like the red shoes, but I prefer the blue ones.*
- *Verbal*: *I thought you'd quit, but you haven't.*
- *Clausal*: *Will you visit soon? I hope so.*

3.1.3. Grammatical Cohesion: Ellipsis

Ellipsis omits parts of a clause, allowing the reader to infer the missing information. Essentially,

it is substitution by omission. For instance, in *Who's the best singer? Alicia*, "Alicia" elliptically expresses *Alicia is the best singer*. Ellipsis types include:

- *Nominal*: *I have cats and dogs (I have)*.
- *Verbal*: *She sings, but she shouldn't (sing)*.
- *Clausal*: *Will you drive? Maybe (I will drive)*.

3.1.4. Grammatical Cohesion: Conjunctions

Conjunctions connect clauses, aiding readers in interpreting relationships. Halliday identifies four types:

- *Additive*: *and, also* (e.g., *She arrived and started work*).
- *Adversative*: *but, yet* (e.g., *I liked it, but I didn't buy it*).
- *Causal*: *so, therefore* (e.g., *I was tired, so I left*).
- *Temporal*: *then, next* (e.g., *We ate, then rested*).

3.1.5. Lexical Cohesion: Reiteration

Lexical cohesion involves reiteration or collocation. Reiteration repeats or refers to a previously mentioned item through various techniques:
- *Repetition*: *The dog barked, and the dog ran.*
- *Synonymy*: *The student answered; the pupil responded.*
- *Antonymy*: *Day turned to night.*
- *Hyponymy*: *Furniture like chairs or tables.*
- *Metonymy*: *I read the paper (for newspaper).*
- *Co-reference*: Two unrelated items refer to the same entity, as in *The King* and *the ruler*.

3.1.6. Lexical Cohesion: Collocation

Collocation refers to the predictable pairing of words frequently found together, such as "salt and pepper." These linguistic associations, or collocations, establish unity in the text through the habitual linkage of words like *doctor-patient* or *laugh-joke*.

3.2. Coherence.

Coherence is the logical progression of ideas and the semantic connections that give a text its sense of unity or "hanging together." It relies on understanding sentences as parts of a larger context, not in isolation. In conversation, coherence is achieved through shared world knowledge and can be established in several ways:

- **Theme and Rheme Progression**: The *theme* is the starting point of a message, while the *rheme* expands on it. This approach guides coherence by building upon known information. For example, in *This house was built by John. He is a skilled carpenter,* the theme "John" carries over from one sentence to the next.

• **Topic and Comment**: Similar to theme and rheme, the *topic* (or given information) is what the speaker assumes the listener already knows, while the *comment* introduces new information. Typically, the subject introduces the topic, and the predicate provides new insights, reinforcing coherence.

• **Recognizing Speech Acts**: Coherence also requires interpreting the type of speech act (directive, commissive, representative, declarative, or expressive), which shapes the intent of each message within a conversation.

• **Rhetorical Genre Structure**: Each genre organizes information uniquely, lending coherence to its form. For instance, narratives use temporal organization, creating a coherent sequence that aligns with its purpose.

• **System Constraints**: Elements like opening and closing phrases (e.g., "hi" and "thanks"), back-channel responses ("really"), and Grice's Cooperative Principle (quantity, quality, relevance, manner) also contribute to coherence.

Cohesion, the grammatical basis for discourse coherence, involves structural devices that support a text's unity. However, cohesion alone doesn't ensure coherence, and vice versa. For example, *There was a cake on the table, and I ate it* depends on our understanding that "it" refers to "cake," though it's closer to "table." This illustrates that interpreting coherence requires both linguistic and contextual knowledge.

While formal cohesion supports coherence, its absence doesn't always hinder meaning. For instance: *A: The phone is ringing. B: I'm washing my hair* lacks cohesive markers but remains coherent. Conversely, a cohesive text can lack coherence if the logical flow is absent, as in *Fire engines sit 6 in front... Queen Elizabeth ruled the seven seas....* Though connected grammatically, this example only becomes coherent when framed as a riddle, highlighting how cohesion and coherence work together to create meaning.

4. ANAPHORA AND CATAPHORA.

As it has been mentioned above the grammatical cohesive devices which encode reference are said to be endophoric if the interpretive source of the implicit term lies within the co-text, as in "*I bought a new pair of sneakers, but I don't really like them*". Endophoric reference can be divided into: **anaphora and cataphora**.

4.1. Anaphora.

An anaphora is a process where a word or phrase refers back to another word or phrase which was used earlier in a text or conversation. That is, the cohesive device refers back, and so marks the identity of something which has already been expressed.

Common devices are Pronouns such as "**he/she/them/himself/ him/hers/it/them**", as in: *Dolly wanted to go to the cinema but she didn't have a penny*. In other cases, especially with "**this/that**", it may be difficult to find the reference: *For months I have been trying to learn*

about the early hominids' first step on the road to becoming human. And this is not an easy task. (Becoming human? Taking the first step? learning about it? trying to learn?).

4.2. Cataphora.

Cataphora is the use of a word or phrase which refers forward to another word or phrase which will be used later in the text or conversation.

The same cohesive devices used for anaphoric reference can be used for cataphoric reference: *We'll do <u>this</u>, we'll go down to Molly's and we'll discuss the situation*.

However, there are other cohesive devices which can only show cataphoric reference as it is the case of: "**as follows, the following, thus**".

Finally, just mention that cataphora is a typical device for starting a story **'in media res'**: "*He knew he had only two bullets left. The sheriff knew it too*". The reference of "*he*" is still to be mentioned".

5. CONNECTORS OR CONJUNCTIONS.

5.1. Conjunctions

They are words which join words, phrases or clauses together, such as "**but, and, or**": *John <u>and</u> Mary went; she sings <u>but</u> I don't*. Units larger than single words which function as conjunctions are sometimes called **conjunctives**, for example, "**so that, as long as, as if**": *She ran fast <u>so that</u> she could catch the bus.*

Adverbs which are used to introduce or connect clauses are sometimes known as conjunctive adverbs, for example, "**however, nevertheless**": *She is 86, <u>nevertheless</u> she enjoys good health*.

There are two types of conjunctions: **coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions**.

5.1.1. Coordination, through the use of conjunctions such as "**and, or, but**". These join linguistic units which are equivalent or of the same rank: *It rained, <u>but</u> I went for a walk anyway*; *Shall we go home <u>or</u> go to the movie?*

5.1.2. Subordination, through the use of subordinating conjunctions, such as "**because, when, unless, that**". These join an independent or main clause and a dependent or subordinate clause. For example: *I knew <u>that</u> he was lying; <u>Unless</u> it rains, we'll play tennis at 4*.

5.2. Conjuncts.

They are adverbials that are not part of the basic structure of a clause or sentence, but they show how what is said in the sentence containing the conjunct connects with what is said in

another sentence or sentences: *Altogether it was a happy week; however the weather wasn't good*.

Unlike conjunctions, conjuncts are not tied to a fixed position in relation to the units they conjoin. Turns in conversation are often initiated by a common institutionalised conjunct such as *well..., now..., oh..., so... And.., But..., So...* and *Then..* are the most frequently occurring connectors in English, not only as conjunctions, but often at the beginning of turns, linking one speaker's turn with another speaker's, or back to an earlier turn of the current speaker, or else marking a shift in topic.

Conjuncts may be realised by various classes: -**closed-class adverbs**: *Nevertheless;* -**open-class adverbs**: *Consequently;* -**prepositional groups**: *In other words;* -**adjective groups**: *Last of all;*-**adverbial groups**: *More accurately*; -**finite clauses**: *That is to say;* -**non-finite clauses**: *To sum up.* One of the problems of connectors is that the same connector may express different types of meanings and the same meaning may be expressed by different connectors. For example, and may express both addition, contrast, and consequence: *John had eggs and bacon for breakfast* (**addition**); *John smoked a cigar and Peter a pipe* (**contrast**); *John smoked a cigar and Mary left the room* (**consequence**).

5.3. Discourse markers or connectors can express a great variety of meanings, so we find:

5.3.1. **Listing and adding**: In writing and formal speech you can list a series of points by such adverbs as: "**firstly, next, last, finally**". You can also use phrases such as: "**to begin with, in the second place**…".

5.3.2. Reinforcement: "**besides, furthermore, anyway**"… are used to reinforce an argument
5.3.3. **Summary and generalization**; To convey a summary of points already made we can use: "**in short, to sum up, in conclusion..".**

5.3.4. **Explanation**: An explanation can be done in three ways: "**that is to say**", "**namely, viz.**" (videlicet), "**e.g. for instance**".

5.3.5. Contrast/ concession: "However, on the other hand". **Result**: "As a result, consequently, so". **Reason: "**For this reason, Owing to this, Therefore, Thus". **Time/ chronology: "**Finally, in the end, eventually". **Comparison: "**In comparison, Similarly, Likewise".

6. DEIXIS.

The term '**deixis**' comes from a Greek word meaning "pointing". The deictic words are words that specify and identify spatial, temporal, personal and textual entities from the perspective of the interlocutors in the context in which the communication occurs.

In "*I want him to come here now*", the words "I", "here", "him", and "now" are deictic because the determination of their referents depends on who says that sentence, where, when, and to whom it is said.

"**Deixis**" overlaps with "**reference**" in that it is context-specific. It refers to words or phrases which directly relate an utterance to a person, the identity of the interlocutors, time, and/or place. So deictics do not have any precise lexical meaning, their meaning is dependent on the context of interpretation. Deictics are typically: **Pronouns and demonstratives**: this, that, these, those; **Time and place adverbs**: here, now, downstairs, abroad, recently; **Some verbs of motion**: come, go, arrive, leave, approach; **Tenses**: came, is coming.

6.1. Person Deixis.

Person deixis identifies the interlocutors and other people in relation to the interlocutors. The personal pronoun system in English consists of two numbers, singular and plural; three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter; and three persons, first, second, and third. The 1stp refers to the speaker; the 2ndp refers to the addressee and the 3rdp refers to any others who are neither the speaker nor the addressee. 2ndp plural deictics show identification of group membership: *you guys, you kids, you people.* A further complicating fact is that the pronoun "*you*" in English is used in certain impersonal sentences such as <u>you</u> *only understand what freedom means when <u>you</u> lose it*, "you" in this example does not refer to the addressee.

6.2. Spatial Deixis.

Spatial deixis refers to how languages show their relationship between space and the location of the participants in the discourse. In English, the distinction is realized in **demonstratives** (*this/that*), **adverbs** (*here/there*, *up/down*), **prepositional groups** (*in front/at the back/at our place/across the river*), and **verbs** (*come/go*). In English, there is a distinction between a location close to the speaker (*this, here*) and away from the speaker (*that/there*).

6.3. Temporal Deixis.

Words such as "*now, then, yesterday, these days, those days*", and verb tenses express time reference. Now (at the time of speaking); just (a time shortly preceding the time of utterance). Tense is also a very important means of conveying temporal deixis. The present continuous, for example, refers to a period of time at or around the time of speaking. So, time deixis refers to the timer elative to the time of speaking.

6.4. Discourse Deixis.

While person, time, and place deictic markers identify persons and locate them in time and space, discourse deixis has to do with keeping track of reference in the unfolding discourse. So, discourse deixis is fulfilled by language items that refer to pieces of information in the text. Deictic markers point the way to various parts of the discourse: *this, that, in the following chapter, here, above, below, on next page.* etc. The more formal the discourse, the more markers may be needed to keep the text coherent. Discourse markers can be: **clauses** (*before going further, illustrated in the following passages); **phrases** (*in the following lines*); **adverbs** (*Here lies the main problem*); **demonstratives** (*That will be the subject of another chapter*)

6.5. Social deixis.

Social deixis is used to refer to the social roles and status of the participants in society by addressing people by their titles or other vocatives: *Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr, Officer or Constable* (policeman), *Your Honour* (law court).

7. DIDACTIC IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical framework would be incomplete without practical teaching strategies. The topic of **Discourse Analysis and Articulation** allows for varied teaching methods to foster understanding and maintain student motivation. The right techniques can create an engaging, student-centred environment that supports language development.

Our focus should be on building linguistic and communicative competence through the following:
- **Authentic materials** such as opinion articles, dialogue transcripts, and narrative texts offer real-world examples of cohesive and coherent structures, helping students see discourse devices in action.
- **Differentiated materials** ensure inclusive learning, with beginners practicing basic connectors (e.g., *and, but*) and advanced students working with complex deixis and discourse markers (e.g., *therefore, however*).
- **Task-based activities** (e.g., writing summaries, analyzing arguments) allow students to reinforce their understanding of cohesion and coherence through practical applications.
- **Gamification** through matching activities or discourse marker bingo makes practice enjoyable and interactive.
- **Role-plays** and real-world scenarios (e.g., participating in debates, structuring arguments) help students apply discourse analysis concepts effectively, promoting fluency.
- **Problem-solving tasks and CLIL projects** using cross-curricular content (e.g., scientific explanations, historical analyses) expose students to cohesive structures in varied contexts.
- **ICT tools** like Quizlet, Kahoot, or interactive grammar apps offer engaging ways to assess understanding and support cooperative learning, allowing students to practice these concepts interactively.

These methods ensure that students grasp discourse analysis elements meaningfully and practically. *After all, knowing how to connect, refer back, and specify information is key to making language flow smoothly and logically!*

CONCLUSION

As foundational grammatical elements, discourse devices such as cohesion, coherence, anaphora, cataphora, connectors, and deixis are vital for clear communication. Misuse or lack of understanding can hinder the logical flow of ideas, as these devices establish crucial relationships between statements, ideas, and references. Proficiency in discourse analysis enhances fluency, enabling speakers to convey complex ideas with clarity and accuracy.

Grammar, especially elements like **Cohesion, Coherence, and Connectors**, forms the backbone of meaningful language; without these, our words might lack structure and coherence. These devices provide the means to organize thoughts effectively, ensuring that communication remains logical and engaging. Without a solid command of these structures—much like a bridge missing key supports—language lacks stability, leading to potential misunderstandings. As the saying goes, "Communication isn't just about what we say, but how we connect it all together."

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