

## Theoretical research on the history of text linguistics

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### Abstract

The purpose of this theoretical research on the history of text linguistics elaborates on the importance of text linguistics and its role in written language. Firstly, it has been given its history and the great movement from analysis of sentence structure to sentence meaning and the changes that were done many centuries ago related to text analysis. The paper continues to elaborate on the origin of the text and its significance in written language as given by different linguists. The second part of this theoretical research involves division of text linguistics based on four directions and provides an elaboration for each of them. And the last focus of this paper analyses the internal part of text by continuing on presentation of seven text criteria which show their significance and role in writing a well-formed text.

**Keywords:** division of text linguistics, internal part of text, text analysis, text linguistics, text's criteria.

### Introduction

Text linguistics is part of the study of linguistics which deals with the formation of the text, its construction, meaning, etc. Language is one of the basic elements of any country, and its history is equally important to be known in order to get deeply in other elements of text linguistics. According to Çeliku (2005:21) text linguistics was started as a new linguistics discipline in the middle of 60's of the last century in Germany. According to Dibra and Varfi (1999) on the half of years' 60 thoughts and hypothesis of different scholars and linguists started to agree on the common linguistic notion of analysis beyond sentence, which practically means agreeing on "transfrastic analysis" (the analysis beyond sentence). In the 70s it was shown some projections of texts' grammar against sentence's grammar. According to Varfi & Dibra (1999) a lot of linguists started to get close to "Text linguistics", this interest came from literature's interests and continued to dedication of literature text as principal analysis of text. In 80s a great movement was toward the "Context", a study of the elements of communication areas in which text's grammar was organized based on: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. In the 90s text linguistics as a field of linguistics theory developed in three lines: 1. Discursive explanation of linguistics over text and its object. 2. Studies extension over text typologies and criteria of classification of text's types. 3. A deep study has been on textual conditions, over cohesion and text coherence (Dibra & Varfi, 1999: 21).

The majority of linguists came to a conclusion that there exists something more than just a construction of sentences. In one way or the other they noticed that the natural meaning of context of a text was misleading. Werlich (1976: 23) in one of his statements stated that sentence grammars do not tell or help learners the all story

about communication by means of language.

"A text is an extended structure of syntactic units [i. e. text as super-sentence] such as words, groups, and clauses and textual units that is marked by both coherence among the elements and completion ... [Whereas] a non-text consists of random sequences of linguistic units such as sentences, paragraphs, or sections in any temporal and/or spatial extension." (Werlich, 1976: 23). The context was important element that a text should have in order to make sense to learners, for example Gary (1976:1) said, that there are certain types of sentences which cannot make sense of, either syntactically or semantically, without examining them with respect to a discourse context. This development was done with purpose to explain other qualities of text, which could not have been explained from a sentential perspective. Later on another statement was done by Brown & Yule (1983: 25-26):

"...in recent years the idea that a linguistic string (a sentence) can be fully analyzed without taking "context" into account has been seriously questioned. If the sentence-grammarians wishes to make claims about the "acceptability" of a sentence in determining whether the strings produced by his grammar are correct sentences of the language, he is implicitly appealing to contextual considerations. After all, what do we do when we are asked whether a particular string is "acceptable"? Do we not immediately, and quiet naturally, set about constructing some circumstances (i. e. a "context") in which the sentence could be acceptable used?"

According to Mujaj (2011:123) text linguistics is a science discipline of linguistics which researches the components of text structure, its relation, circumstances of its productions also its internal factors and external factors. In the middle of the 60s the case of the text was not developed and was not elaborated as later on. Afterwards there arose a great interest in studying it, and getting deeply into the science such as: literature science, semiotic science, communicative interaction, and text studies from psychological perspective, sociological and cognitive perspective (ibid). A famous "Saussurean" approach done by Ferdinand De Saussure (1915:66), who gave a great attention to the arbitrariness of signs in relation to words. A scheme done by Dibra & Varfi (ibid. 1999: 29) explains:

1. Signs serve to create ...
2. Phonemes, which serve for formation of...
3. morpheme/morph which creates phrases that serve to create ...
4. texts, by which such texts can communicate freely, even more texts serve to construct or form other texts, in which their union is not a simple arithmetic sum and their hierarchy relation can be opened or closed.

Another traditional scheme presented by Çeliku (2005:27) shown below explains the extension of phonemes, morphemes, word, and sentence and form a new unit named "TEXT"

Text

Sentence

Word

Morpheme

Phoneme

Furthermore, we can see texts as units of "Parole" and "Langue", which according to Saussure "Langue" involves units of sounds and words, whereas "Parole" involves phrases/sentences. So, a text is a combination of phrases, sentences which are grouped, and can produce a clear message or communication from a writer to a

receiver/reader. A text is not considered just as a simple “branch of sentences” but it deals also with long structures, and of course the main thing is the meaning of it, which makes a text informative, understandable and so on. According to Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) one of the earliest form of the preoccupation with texts can be found in rhetoric, from Ancient Greece and Rome, through Middle Ages till the present. Anthropology, stylistics (*correctness, clarity, elegance, and appropriateness*), and literal studies are considered as disciplines of the history of text linguistics, each of these disciplines are explained as an object study of text linguistics and in what ways has been derived its history (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981:80). We still have some doubts in our journey of this term instead we can ask; what is a text?

Dibra and Varfi (1999:23) pointed out that a text should be named any piece of written form that has huge premises and exceeds the limits of a sentence, it can be: a novel, story, or conversation, etc. The notion “Text” comes from Latin - “texo”- “Textus” which means weaving, joining of words, etc. According to Mujaj (2011:123) a text covers verbal, nonverbal, visual and auditory notification in the form of a code given from a speaker/provider to a receiver, texts are not just written or spoken discourses but also films, drama, ballet, images are part of it. A text is a direct reality, a reality of thought and experience in which the thought and science can be exclusive constituted, when there is not a text there is not an object of study, and any thought cannot exist (ibid). Regarding a definition of a text one contribution has been given by Halliday (1973:55), in which he made distinctions of text which he named “Metafunctions” (systemic clusters) and divided in three categories such as: ideational function (later divided into experimental and logical function), interpersonal function, and textual function. A textual function differs from ideational and interpersonal functions because it deals with the grammatical systems for the tide of discourse inside the text. These systems help to make a coherent text, “– text that coheres within itself and with the context of situation”. By the presence of textual function “language creates a semiotic world of its own: a parallel universe or ‘virtual reality’ in modern terms”. A text can be understood as a sample of written or spoken language use as a unit of communication, in order to be as a unit of communication according to the De Beaugrande & Dressler (1981) we can see a text as “...a communicative occurrence when it meets seven standards of textuality, which will be elaborated later.

## 2.1 Textual linguistics division

The study of the text linguistics has given a great contribution to the study of texts and also to variety of texts. Different approaches have been made so far related to the variety of texts such as:

**2.1.1 A text grammar:** which covers grammatical structures of texts (related to Chomsky’s approach)

**2.1.2 Text linguistics** is a great movement from a text grammar, which involves properties of textuality and describes how texts can be understood. (De Beaugrande & Dressler 1981, Carstens 1997)

**2.1.3 Discourse analysis:** which covers the analysis of “utterances as social interaction” and analysis of written texts (Renkema 1993, Schiffrin 1994)

## 2.2 The division in two directions

According to Çeliku (2005:31) we can find a great division of text linguistics directions based on different linguists that have studied and clarified the functions of textual linguistics in different fields of linguistics. Çeliku pointed out three forms of division which are divided: in two directions (Klaus Banker, 1977), three directions (Viehweger

1989, Van Dijk 1980) and fourth directions (Margot & Wolfgang Heinemann). According to linguist Brinker (1997) text linguistics is divided as a system and the second direction was towards discursive operations. According to Çeliku (2005:31) the first direction studies semantic and syntactic areas of texts, which includes also the studies of textual grammar. Whereas the second direction deals with the study of the pragmatic part of text, furthermore we have to deal with text functions.

### **2.3 The division in three directions**

In contrast to Brinker, a division in three directions presented by Viehweger (1989) includes semantic and thematic units of text, in which a text has a topic and other topics are depended or derived from the whole text (found on Çeliku, 2005:31). Another division of two directions presented by Dijk includes two terms: Textual Microstructure and Textual Macrostructure (found on Çeliku, 2005:31. According to him textual microstructure includes or involves textual linguistics towards system and textual macrostructure oriented towards semantic and thematic relations. The last direction or the third one includes textual pragmatism '...text analyzed as the most précised unit of communication'.

### **2.4 The division in four directions**

The last division of text linguistics is made upon four perspectives presented by Margot and Heinemann (2002) in "*Fundamentals of textual linguistics*":

#### **2.4.1 Grammar Perspective**

Çeliku (2005) stated that a well formed text should rely on some grammatical rules such as for example: the continuity of phrases, which was the focus of linguists in the last century. During the 60s and 70s of the last century linguistics analyzed texts in the same range of sentences, to their structure, functions, etc. (found on Çeliku, 2005:31). Later on a new aspect started to get developed in viewing texts deeply and differencing them among sentence, hence these two terms (text and sentence) started to be studied in different levels, known as a new orientation of sentence transformation '...when text goes beyond the sentence' (ibid).

#### **2.4.2 Semantic Perspective**

Even though linguists 'focus was only on the function and structures of sentences a great movement started toward "Semantic perspective" presented by Heinemann in 2002, in which he stressed out the importance of meaning in text and its crucial role in well writing a logical-semantic continuity of phrases, sentences, and ideas in the text. According to Çeliku (2005) a logic text cannot be completed only by grammar elements, but also the logic-semantic relation fills the text in order to make sense, for example text coherence which can be found in its deep structures.

#### **2.4.3 Pragmatic and Communicative Perspective**

Text as a unit of communication cannot be analyzed only from grammar or semantic perspective but also from pragmatic/communicative perspective since" ...language is not considered as discrete system in itself, furthermore in itself serves as communicative instrument" (Çeliku, 2005:35). Hence text is not filled only by grammar rules or textual coherence/cohesion but also accounts for other premises in external language situation (ibid). In the middle of the 70s linguist started to develop other areas of text linguistics as "...conversation theory, analysis of conversation, communication theory" (ibid).

#### **2.4.4 Cognitive Perspective**

This last perspective plays an important role in text linguistics, since we have to deal also with mental processes in order to produce a successful and informative

communication either in written or spoken form in use of language. To clarify the role of cognitive perspective as a perspective of coherence Çeliku (2005:48) represents seven acts of cognitive perspective in giving information in communication with others. Çeliku (ibid.) took an example: If someone might ask him where a particular place (coffee, vice rector's office) can be firstly he will...

-imagine the place, then he will...

-think of the way, of how to get there...after it, he will...

-conclude in a fast way how to get there and then he will...

-communicate to the person the way, meanwhile he will...

-activate a number of linguistic signs, and also create structural models in his memory, in which he will...

-link in the best way each of them (structural models), after it he will...

-integrate in coherent communicative unit.

In order to help the person to arrive correctly in the place he/she wanted he used these acts with the purpose to produce an effective and informative communications. Sometimes in stressful situations or in difficult emotional cases we may forget what we pretend to say or declare and we face with the blocking memory

## 2.5 The internal organization of text

As it was discussed above a "Text" is not just a group of sentences or words grouped together but there are rules for its internal organization. If we try to analyze deeply a text, we should pay attention to a lot of points or details that help a text to be well formed in order to comprehend it. A well-formed text in order to be communicative or informative one a text should follow several criteria, which were represented or showed by a lot of linguists as the constitutive principles of textuality. They can be ordered as follows: Cohesion, Coherence, Intentionality, Acceptability, Informativity, Situationality, and Intertextuality and three regulative principles of textual communication: efficiency, effectiveness, and appropriateness (De Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, Malmkjaer 1991).

**2.5.1 Cohesion:** Cohesion is considered as one of the principal criteria of text linguistics. According to Çeliku (2005:60) cohesion produces well-formed text linguistics and in addition it has to deal with the relation between phonetics, morphology, and syntactic relations in the sentences of the text. Cohesion it is one of the basic characteristics or principles of a text, which has to deal with the reciprocal relation of surface text's elements and includes all assets that can be used to highlight the relation between surface elements. Whereas another view of cohesion states that with cohesion we can understand functions which the elements of language reveal in order to point out the relation between the elements of surface text (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981). Based on these statements cohesion is an important criteria and useful one for textuality which has to deal with the organization of the elements of a text. To make an organized text cohesion helps through phonetics, morphology, and syntactic relation; with cohesion includes the particular linguistic elements of textuality. A well-formed text should consist with construction of the components in a text, an organization of grammar elements which helps text to be comprehensible and logic too. The relation of the first element with the next one makes the text more contextual and communicative too. Halliday and Hasan (1976) represented a semantic nature of cohesion in a text:

*"Cohesion is a semantic relation between one element and another in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it. This other element is also to be found in the text; but its location in the text is in no way determined by the grammatical structure. The two*

*elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, may be structurally related to each other, or they may be not; it makes no difference to the meaning of the cohesive relation"*

In their work "Cohesion in English" (1976) Halliday and Hasan admitted that the "concept of cohesion accounts for the essential semantic relations whereby any passage of speech or writing is enabled to function as a text" in addition cohesion is systematized in four categories which help to understand text in more practical way:

**2.5.1.1 Substitution:** As a second device of cohesion it is an item used in the place of another word or a phrase in order to prevent the repetition of the word or phrase. Substitution helps text to be shortened and understandable. Substitution can be nominal, verbal, and clausal substitution.

**2.5.1.2 Ellipsis:** Another form of the realization of cohesion is "Ellipsis" which according to Memushaj (2002), is the understanding the missing elements of a word in a text by ourselves". It is substitution by zero. In addition, ellipsis is typical for dialogs. Ellipsis can be nominal, verbal, and clausal ellipsis. For example:

(3) A: What do you want to buy

B: A pair of jeans (instead of saying "I want to buy a pair of jeans). All it depends on the reader or listener to make cohesive link between them.

... Or for example ellipsis found on the dialog:

A: Hello. A return to Bristol please-instead saying "Hello. Can I have a return ticket to Bristol "

B: Day return or period return? Instead saying "Do you want a day return or period return?"

A: A day return-instead saying "I want a day return"

B: How do you want to pay?

A: Cash please- "I want to pay in cash please"

A: That's eighteen pounds- "The ticket cost eighteen pounds"

B: Here's you're a twenty-pound note...

**2.5.1.3 Conjunctions:** As a part of cohesion, conjunctions serve to" reinforce and highlight the relationship between other elements of the text" (Donnelly, 1994:105)

**2.5.1.4 Lexical Cohesion:** It is used for semantic relations such as: synonymy, antonym, collocation. Relying on these semantic relations a text can be cohesive and will make sense to the reader/listener.

**2.5.2 Coherence:** Coherence as the second criteria of text linguistics is considered as a crucial linguistic element in producing a well-formed text. Coherence is what makes a text semantically meaningful. Coherence helps the ideas of texts to be logically related in the text in order to provide the readers the continuity of meaning of text sequences and a clear message.

**2.5.3 Intentionality and Acceptability:** These two terms are considered as principles or criteria in well-formed text or in textuality. It is generally known that a writer of a text tends to give a clear message or to give a clear information to the receiver or reader (listener). On the other hand, the receiver wants to accept the text as a communication unit. In order to realize a successful communication both the listener and writer have to maintain the cooperative principle, which is seen as a useful part to make a successful or clear information/communication. In addition, "Pragmatics" as the study of meaning of speaker or writer plays a great role in understanding the textuality.

**2.5.4 Informativity:** As criteria of text linguistics Informativity relies on the value of

communication text (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981:139-162). This has to deal with the choice of words in the text, for example "The woman is wearing a red dress" a definite expression makes a value communication than using pronouns she in the sentence. Informativity deals with the elements of a text which are used to present the information in the text. Writers should take care on producing an attractive text and taking care not to produce a boring text. Giving all the time new information to the text makes text more attractive and interesting to the reader/listener.

**2.5.5 Contextuality:** Contextuality plays a great role in the text study, and in communication. The context of a text is considered one of the basic elements that a text should have in order to give a clear message. In achieving a great effect on the text we have to carry out the quality and effect that a text should produce in order to have successful and comprehensible communication. Pragmatics and Sociolinguistics as fields of linguistics are useful to explain or determine the language use. Pragmatics is used to explain the speaker meaning in relation to other participants. On other hand, sociolinguistics is concerned with how language use interacts with social factors, including cultural norms, and context.

**2.5.6 Situationality:** Situationality as one of the standards of textuality deals with factors which are designated to make a text relevant to a situation of occurrence. A special attention to situationality should be given to written form rather in spoken form, especially when we try to translate for example from English language to Albanian language we have to carry out the situation of the text. According to Neubert, Albrecht and Shreve, Gregory M (1992) the situationality of a text can be conceived of as a set of pragmatic parameters which are taken into account by the text producer or translator using a projection of the receptive situation, in addition a situationality of text is the location of a text in a discrete sociocultural context in a real time and place (for example: deictics).

**2.5.7 Intertextuality:** Intertextuality as a standard of textuality deals with the interpretation and the formation of a text influenced by the structure of another text which is similar to it (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981). For example, if a person reads a short story it is reasonable to expect from that person to understand or interpret the short story which she/he used to read before.

## Conclusions

In general, it can be stated that many ages ago linguists were only focused on the structure of sentences without giving attention to the relation of sentences in the text. Their target was only on grammar and sentence construction till the 60s where linguistics started to be concerned about the relation of sentences in the text and began to see the written language beyond a sentence. Text analysis as a part of linguistics help a writer to form a text which is fully comprehensible, informative, and well-constructed. To produce a well formed text the text should meet the criteria and principles of text analysis (shown above) which are focused on the continuity of sentences, paragraphs, and ideas of a text. Their importance comes up especially during the process of text translation in which a translator must meet these criteria in

order to translate the text in the most appropriate way. The lack of any text's criteria causes difficulties in producing a well formed text or text translation, its clear message can be transmitted to a reader if the text or translated text is informative, coherent, contextual, and has intertextuality in it.

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