FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO INTERNAL RELATIONS WITHIN A TEXT

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Abstract:

Texts are produced through paratactic and hypotactic relationships within clause complexes and through cohesive conjunctions relating these clause complexes to each other. Texts produced in this way foreground realizations of conjunction as logico-semantic relations between processes. The logico-semantic relations are difficult to classify because of their diversified realizations. A large number of classifications have been proposed, but in this paper we take the hypotactic clause complex as point of departure for our analysis.

The first part of this paper makes a short presentation of the most important approaches regarding relations, both internal and external, within a text. We consider that this short presentation is important due to the fact that there are important differences among various classifications which can lead to confusions. Functional analysis emphasizes the differences between internal and external relations; the second part enumerates the most important characteristics of internal and external relations, emphasizing the fact that external relations display the sequence of actions, while internal relations are oriented to text-time, time in relation to what is being said not with what is being done. The third part of this paper analyses the external relations: temporal, consequential, comparative, additive and locative, but this analysis will be limited to those hypotactic clause complexes that allow dependent clauses to be realized in first or second position. However, where possible, we will give examples of cohesive and metaphorical realization of the features established before.

Key words: *lexicogrammar, logico-semantic relations, hypotactic, clause complexes, external relations, internal relations*

Preliminary remarks

When analyzing internal relations within a text, one major problem is represented by the relationship between discourse structures and grammatical ones. Due to Halliday's theory regarding the lexico-grammar which has always been seen as making resource, this relationship has become an important issue. This is true especially with conjunctive relations since it is in this field that Halliday has elaborated his theory about grammatical description. His complex analysis identifies two types of interdependency: paratactic and hypotactic, and the logico-semantic relations into: projection (locution and idea) and expansion (elaboration, extension and enhancement).

In this paper we take into account logico-semantic relations that can be classified with difficulty because of their diversified realizations. A large number of classifications have been proposed: Martin (1983), Halliday & Hasan (1976), Halliday (1985), Mann and Thompson (1986). Some of these classifications take into account all relations that can form correct grammatical structures from one language to another (Mann & Thompson); others focus on particular languages, analyzing the relations realized there (Halliday & Hasan, Martin & Halliday, Martin). Another problem that appears among these classifications has to do with what type of realizations is taken as point of departure for the analysis. For example, Halliday & Hasan focus on cohesive relations between clause complexes, Martin uses hypotactic conjunctions as basis for his classification, and Halliday develops a classification for hypotactic and paratactic relations within the clause complex.

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Halliday & Hasan classify the conjunctive relations around two axes: four types of logico-semantic relations: additive, adversative, casual and temporal and the external/internal opposition. Halliday's table (1985) of expansion takes a different set of logico-semantic relations as one axis: elaboration, extension and enhancement and the diversification of the realization of these categories as the other. Martin recognizes four main types of logico-semantic relations: additive, comparative, temporal and consequential.

Although there are many differences among these theories, we have to remark that all three classifications have similarities that should be noted. They set up comparable additive, temporal and consequential categories for the possible meanings of ***and, then*** and ***so***. Halliday and Hasan focus on 'cohesive' relations between clause complexes and set up additive, adversative, causal and temporal logico-semantic relation with the items ***and, yet*** and ***so*** and ***then*** for all these four general conjunctive relations. On the other hand, Martin starts with hypotactic relations and divides the adversative category into concession (typically realized with the conjunction *although*) and contrast (typically realized with the conjunction *whereas*), concession is grouped with causal relations under consequence and contrast is grouped with similarity under comparison:

Martin (1983)		**Halliday & Hasan (1976)**
- additive: *besides*		additive: *and*
- comparison:	contrast: *whereas* similarity: *like*	adversative: *but*
- consequence:	concession: *although* cause: *because*	causal: *so*
- temporal:	*after*	temporal: *then*

I. Internal and external relations

Internal relations (also called "rhetorical relations") are the relations obtained in the organization of the text itself rather than in the organization of the world the text describes. The experiential relations are referred to as external, oriented to what happens outside the text, rather than within. Therefore, we can affirm that the opposition between internal and external relations is 'text' versus 'reality'.

The distinction between internal and external relations is probably clearest with temporal relations. External relations display the sequence of actions, while internal relations are oriented to text-time, time in relation to what is being said not with what is being done. Let us exemplify the four major categories of logico-semantic relations we are going to discuss in this paper, first in their external, then in their internal meaning:

e.g. **Additive**

external: *The secretary came into the room*
and *requested our documents.*

internal: *The secretary was angry.*
Moreover*, she had a lot of work to do.*

Comparative

external: *Jane plays tennis*
like *Miriam does.*

internal: *Jane plays tennis very well;*
like *you should see her passing shot.*

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Temporal
external: *Mike came in the office*
and then *looked for the book.*
internal: *Janet was not ready to go.*
First *she changed her dress;*
and ***second*** *she put on her make-up.*

Consequential
external: *Mike was relieved*
because *he could anticipate the victory.*
internal: *Mike is relieved*
because *the victory was close.*

Note: We have to mention that the distinction between internal and external relations to a proper account of the semantics of logical relations does not play an important role in Halliday's classification of expansion where clause complexes are analyzed in relation to the rest of the grammar, rather than in relation to cohesion and text structure.

II. External Relations

The point of departure for this analysis presented here is represented by the hypotactic clause complex. These constructions make the most delicate experiential distinctions concerning the logico-semantic relations between clauses. Because the structure of clause complexes can be extremely different, we have chosen to discuss only those clause complexes that allow dependent clauses to be realized in front or second position. We do not propose a complete description of the realizations of each type of conjunctive relations, but, where possible, we will provide examples of "cohesive" and metaphorical realizations of the specified features.

II.a. External temporal relations

External temporal relations are strongly oriented to the activity sequences. Most of these relations (excepting co-extensive simultaneous ones) have the experiential structure: Anterior – Posterior. The Anterior names the event that takes place before the Posterior.

The first opposition is between the successive relations versus simultaneous relations. In the first situation, the Anterior does not continue after the beginning of the Posterior. In the second situation, the two events overlap to some extend. Within traditional approach, this opposition is marked by using the conjunctions *after* and *while*:

e.g. ***After*** *he was released from prison,*
he became a campaigner for victims of wrongful convictions. (Successive)

It is dangerous crossing the street
while *we are texting a message on our mobile phones.* (Simultaneous)

When the dependent clause encodes a punctual event, simultaneity is realized by *when*; it does not matter if the two events have the same exact duration or if they overlap to some extend:

e.g. ***When*** *the doorbell rang*
nobody wanted to open the door. (Simultaneous: coextensive)

When *the doorbell rang,*
we have been talking for an hour. (Simultaneous: overlapping)

If the dependent clause is durative either *when* or *while* can be used.

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e.g. ***When/ While*** *we were driving,*
we were feeling happy. (Simultaneous: coextensive)
When/ While *we were waiting,*
we heard a scream. (Simultaneous: overlapping)

Apart from the above-mentioned conjunctions, *as* can be also used when the events are overlapping with the condition that the dependent clause is durative and non-stative.

e.g. ***As*** *we were strolling along the beach,*
it started to rain.

Note: We didn't include *as soon as* as a realization of eternal temporal relations because it can not appear first in temporal clause complexes.

With successive relations there is less overlap among the realizations. According to systemic functional linguistics (Martin 1992) two factors should be taken into account: whether the Posterior follows the Anterior immediately or simply follows; (ii) whether the Posterior or Anterior is made dependent.

(i) The opposition between following and following immediately is realized by the conjunctions *after, as soon as*.

e.g. ***After*** *we finished cleaning the house,*
(1)
we went out to dinner. (Following)

As soon as *we finished cleaning the house,*
we went out to dinner. (Following immediately)
(2)

(ii) The opposition between a dependent Anterior and a dependent Posterior is realized by the conjunctions *since, before.*

e.g. ***Since*** *we visited England*
we have visited other European countries. (Following/ Anterior) (3)

Before *we visited England*
we have visited other European countries. (Following/ Posterior)
(4)

Note: In the first example the action of the main clause takes place after the action of the dependent clause; in the second example the action of the main clause takes place before the action of the dependent clause.

Regarding Following relations, a further distinction can be drawn: some relations are deictic, being tied to the moment of speaking (see example 1) and some relations are non-deictic, being non-related to the present moment (see example 3).

Regarding Following Immediately relations, the conjunction *once* contrasts with *as soon as*, indicating a feeling of relief (Martin, 1992)

e.g. ***As soon as*** *we passed the test*
we went on holiday. (Following: relief unmarked)

As soon as *we passed the test*
we felt happy. (Following: relief marked)

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The distinction between Following and Following Immediately relations emphasize that the conjunctions used in these syntactic structures set a lower limit of logico-semantic relations between two processes. The sequence of clauses in examples (1) and (2) could be used to refer to the same sequence of events, one immediately following the other. But in example (1), the conjunction *after* signals only that the Posterior event follows the Anterior event. In contrast, in example (2), the conjunction *as soon as* signals the immediately following between the two events.

The principle of lower limit is very important when interpreting conjunctive relations between clauses. In some cases the explicit conjunctive relations can be analysed as additive:

e.g. *We finished cleaning the house,* ***and*** *went out to dinner.*

II.b. External consequential relations

Like temporal relations, external consequential relational refer to the activity sequences, but the connections between events are "modulated" (Halliday 2004) in such a way that an event can be seen as enabling or determining the other event. This type of relations does not take into account the time sequence of the two actions. All consequential relations have the structure Cause + Efect, and the basic opposition is not between Anterior versus Posterior, but between *how* and *why.*

e.g. ***How*** *did you pass the entrance examination?*
By working day and night.

Why *did you pass the entrance examination?*
For *working day and night.*

The first example shows us the Manner in which the entrance examination was passed; the Cause enabled the Effect (the fact that I worked day and night made me pass the entrance examination). In the second example the connection between the two events is modulated through "obligation". The Cause determined the Effect.

Apart from modulation through obligation, causal relations may also be modalised. There are three types of causal relations: consequence, condition and purpose. The Cause will determine a possibility, a probability or a certainty:

e.g. ***For*** *working day and night,*
I passed the entrance examination. (Consequence)
If *I had worked day and night,*
I would have passed the entrance examination. (Condition)
I worked day and night
so that *I passed the entrance examination.* (Purpose)

II.c. External comparative relations

Within the framework of systemic functional approaches to discourse, comparative relations are the most discussed category by Halliday (2004) and Halliday & Hasan (1976), but they are not treated as major category of logical relations; in fact these external comparative relations are discussed as closely related to concession (under the general adversative category) and to additive. On the other hand, Halliday (1985) treats contrast in relation to additive relations (extension) and similarity in relation to temporal and causal relations. We consider that the opposition contrast – similarity is basic to all discourse systems, and, as a result, comparison can be considered a major category of conjunctive relations.

e.g. ***Whereas*** *generally we go on holiday* (Contrast)
this time we remained at home.
As *generally happens* (Similarity)
we went on holiday.

The similarity can be further divided into two categories: conditional and temporal where dependent clauses can not be placed initially in the clause complex:

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e.g. *She behaved **as if** she were the boss.* (Conditional)
*She behaved **like when** she was the boss.* (Temporal)

II.d. External additive relations

Like the comparative relations, external additive relations form a small category compared with temporal and consequential ones. They can be divided into: addition and alternation. With addition there is a positive and negative system realized with the conjunctions *and/nor*.

e.g. *Richard Burton was a great actor. **And** he was extremely good-looking.* (Addition: positive)
*She didn't speak English. **Nor** did she understand it.* (Addition: negative)
*We could go to Paris. **Or** to Barcelona.* (Alternation)

II.e. External locative relations

They represent a small set of external relations, all of which could be analysed in other terms than conjunctive. This set includes adverbs: *here, there, elsewhere, as far as* and clauses introduced by *where* or *wherever*:

e.g. *Actually I haven't read*
***As far as** I'd have liked.*

Conclusions

The external relations are difficult to classify because of their diversified realizations. A large number of classifications have been proposed, but in this paper we took as point of departure for our analysis the hypotactic clause complex. We emphasized the fact that external relations display the sequence of actions, while internal relations are oriented to text-time, time in relation to what is being said not with what is being done. The analyses of the external relations, temporal, consequential, comparative, additive and locative, focuses only to hypotactic clause complexes that allow dependent clauses to be realized in first or second position.

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