MACRO-LINGUISTICS AND CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

MAYES F. SHAKER
Lyons (1972, *Human language*) → 'idealization of data'.

He identifies three ways in which data is idealized in linguistics:

**REGULARISATION**

Spontaneous speech which is full of false starts, hesitations, Backtracking.

"such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest". (Chomsky 1962)

**STANDARDISATION**

1- literal sense means the selection of the Standard dialect for description (linguistic conservatism, classically determined and logic determined views of correctness,

2- the homogeneity of the data: speakers are mixture of regional or social backgrounds.

In T-G, it is achieved by limiting their attention to the data from one single individual – linguist himself-who serves as his own informant

**DECONTEXTUALISATION**

It can be done in two ways:

1- remove sentence from the company of the sentences that precede or follow it in a text (its context)

2- separate it off from the real-world situation in which it is used (its context of situation).
The argument of idealization of linguistic data

THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF JUSTIFYING THE PRACTICE

1- one can argue that initial idealisation is a sensible step in the context of a long-term strategy for linguistics. We should find the code and the factors that determine its nature (variables).

2- for code linguistics is that in the processes of idealisation, the various psychological, socio-situational and cultural variables are not merely being jettisoned, but they are being systematically identified, and once identified, they can be placed at the disposal of other disciplines. Code linguistic specify the universal and particular properties of human languages.
THE ESSENCE OF SUCH STUDY

Is a ‘division of labour’

But the study of the “context of language” is the job of the psychologist and sociologist.

Our concern is the study of the “language in those contexts”  Macrolinguistics
Yngve (1975) calls it 'broad' or 'human' linguistics, the goal of which he defines as "to achieve a scientific understanding of how people communicate"
ATTENTION HAS SHIFTED

FROM code TO process
IN ANTITHESIS TO CHOMSKY'S COMPETENCE

Which raises the question of how people communicate.

Hymes (1972, On communicative competence) proposes that a speaker's communicative competence should be the object of linguistic enquiry.
Hymes identifies six such variables which he suggests that characterising any particular speech event.

1. Setting: time and place
2. Participants: addressor, speaker, addressee and audience
3. Purpose: communicative functions' of language. Some obvious purposes of speech acts are: persuasion, command, advice, greeting etc.
4- **Key**: Hymes uses this label for the 'tone, manner or spirit'

“I'd get your brakes looked at if I were you"

**friendly**

passenger

**a policeman to**

the motorist.

5- **Content**: the *topic*

6- **Channel**: speech and writing
Carl James suggests who says what to whom, where and when, how and why.
TWO AREAS OF MACROLINGUISTICS

Points to characterize macrolinguistics:

i) A concern for communicative competence rather than for 'linguistic' competence in Chomsky's sense.

ii) An attempt to describe linguistic events within their extra-linguistic settings.

iii) The search for units of linguistic organization larger than the single sentence.
This broadening of scope has so far been achieved in two ways.

1. The formal level and addresses the question of how sentences are organised into larger, suprasentential units or texts. (text analysis)

2. The functional one, and looks at the ways in which people put language to use: this is the field of discourse analysis
TEXT ANALYSIS

• refers to the European traditions
• text analysis starts with linguistic forms and asks in which contexts they are appropriate.
• concerned with the formal devices used for establishing intersentential connections, and units 'above' the sentence
• studied written, and therefore monologic (one-' speaker') texts,
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

• Anglo-American traditions for doing the same thing.
• Discourse analysis starting with the outer frame of situations and working inwards to find the formal linguistic correlates to the situational variables
• handling considerations of use
• Discourse analysis has focused its attention on unscripted (literally) spoken interaction.
WIDDOWSON (1978) MAKES DISTINCTION BETWEEN

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| • has to do with the grammaticality of sentences, and an important part of foreign language learning "involves acquiring the ability to compose correct sentences". Such ability, though necessary, is not sufficient to equip the learner for communication in the FL, | • Rules of use need to be acquired  
• well-formed sentence can be appropriate to its context in two ways:  
• it can be formally appropriate  
• it can be functionally appropriate, |
A  Who switched off the lights?
B1  What Mary did was switch off the lights.
B2  There are fairies at the bottom of our garden.
TEXT ANALYSIS

Lexical Devices

Grammatical Devices
- Reference
- Ellipsis
- Comparison
- Parallel structure

Functional Sentence Perspective FSP
- Clefting
- Pseud-clefting
- Passivation
- Definiteness marking

Contrastive
The formal devices show us the successive sentences and the nature of their relationships.

The formal device may be:

- Lexical
- Grammatical
- Intonational

Carl James suggests that devices differ from one language to another. While the relationships are universal.
1-LEXICAL DEVICES

i) He will give you the name of one or two suitable doctors.

ii) Should there be any hitch, ask to speak to the physician-in-chief.

iii) If you need a doctor for your child in a strange town, find the name of the best hospital.

iv) The physician-in-chief will in all probability not be a children’s specialist.

v) Telephone and ask for the name of a pediatrician on the staff.

(Dr B. Spock: Baby and Child Care)

To serve cohesion

• There are synonymy and hyponymy in language (can not be freely substitutable)

• Hyperonym (general) and hyponyms (specific)

• One-to-one and one-to-many
2- GRAMMATICAL DEVICES

Halliday and Hassan (1976, Cohesion in English) identify four major grammatical means:

a) REFERENCE:

b) ELLIPSIS

c) COMPARISON:

d) PARALLEL STRUCTURE
A) REFERENCE
Categorise types of reference is according to:

- It may refer to the real world reference (exphoric) or to intext (endophoric).

George didn't like work. He avoided it whenever possible.

- It may be Back-referring which is called (anaphoric) or it is anticipatory (cataphoric).

- The size and nature which referred to. Either to sentence (or clause) or to Noun Phrase. (Quirk. 1972. A Grammar of Contemporary English)

  Pro-adv. (there, then) and auxiliaries (may, did) can refer to previous clause or verb.

  Look *under the carpet*. You’ll find the key *there*. John will be here *at 7 p.m.* I’ll meet him *then*.

  *May I have a cigarette? You certainly may.* (have a cigarette)
  *Who killed Cock Robin? I did.* (killed Cock Robin)
B) ELLIPSIS

- A degree reduction is achieved by the use of pro-forms
- Total elimination of segment of text ‘create cohesion by leaving out’
- It is usually anaphoric and sometimes cataphoric

ii) Because Alice won’t (dust the furniture), Mary has to dust the furniture.
C) COMPARISON

Most economical and explicit way to state comparison across sentence-boundaries

John is more intelligent than his sister.
There are ten boys in his class. John is the most intelligent.
D) PARALLEL STRUCTURE

When it comes to writing, it is stressed to vary the successive sentence-patterns to make the sentences tied together conceptually. To serve as one cohesive entity of text.

i) Have you ever seen a pig fly? Have you ever seen a fish walk?
ii) My paintings the visitors admired. My sculptures they disliked.
3. FUNCTIONAL SENTENCE PERSPECTIVE FSP

developed by a group of Czech linguists, notably Mathesius and Firbas, in the 1950s.

The principles of FSP were elaborated by Czech study of Slavonic language with a ‘free’ word order.

Successive sentences must be

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<tr>
<th>Informative</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
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<td>Involves presenting 'new' information to the reader.</td>
<td>Involves associating that 'new' information with information which is already known to the reader.</td>
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THE ASSUMPTION OF FSP

sentences-in-text not only need to convey facts, but have to convey them in the perspective of the surrounding sentences and in conformity with information so far presented in the text or inferable from context.
Englishmen drink beer

This is the normal
Halliday, in his account of what he calls the *Textual Function of language*, talks of 'marked theme':

*markedness* is a concept used by linguists to refer to departure from the norm. One obvious way of achieving theme is by transposing Object, Verb, or even Adverb to sentence-initial position:

i) Beer! he'll drink for hours on end

ii) Sing/ I can't very well

iii) Three times/she's rung me this morning

• It is only possible according to the context.
**JOHN READ THE BOOK**

Given

New

New

Given

We can use suprasegmental (tonic syllable) device to indicate the given and the new, but this is only for speech.
THERE ARE ‘OPTIONAL’ TRANSFORMATIONS IN ENGLISH:
A) CLEFTING

i) We want Watneys
ii) It is Watneys that we want

Kernel
Clefted variant
B) PSEUDO-CLEFTING

The “new-ness” of the theme is postponed

We don’t want Carlsberg. Oh no: What we want is Watneys.
C) PASSIVISATION

Reorder two semantic categories Agent and Goal

i) John has picked these strawberries
   Agent V active Goal
   Theme Transition Rheme

ii) These strawberries were picked by John
    Goal V passive Agent
    Theme Transition Rheme
D) DEFINITENESS-MARKING

- English, unlike Slovanic language, have article system
- Theme-rheme (subject and object) can be marked by definite or indefinite article.
TOWARDS CONTRASTIVE TEXT ANALYSIS

While we are talking about word-order and FSP, this means we are in textual CA areas.

There are three possible approaches to textual CA:

1. Textual Characterization
2. text type
3. translated texts
Collection of data on the preferences shown by each pair of languages for the use of certain devices for achieving textual cohesion.

Wonderly (1968) points out that while ellipsis is a mark of "good style" for English there are languages including the Mayan languages of Central America, for which the exact opposite holds: repetition is a sign of good style.
1. LEXICAL DEVICES: select the lexical thread
2. REFERENCE:. Pronouns
3. ELLIPSIS:
4. FUNCTIONAL SENTENCE PERSPECTIVE:
   How this integration is achieved may well vary from language to language
The United Nations An international organization, based in New York, which aims to preserve peace around the world and solve international problems. It was formed in 1945, and replaced the League of Nations. Most of the world’s independent states are members.
Newsham selected at random twenty-four paragraphs in French and twenty-four in English from textbooks used in freshman classes in various disciplines at Montreal University.

two assumptions

- the theme of each sentence would be linked to the theme or rheme of some other sentence,
- each paragraph, by definition, centres around one original theme
FOUR TYPES OF PATTERNING

a) Relationship of subsequent themes to first theme:
TI-RI Cats eat rats
TI-R2 Cats sleep a lot
TI-R3 Cats chase their tails
b) Relationship of subsequent themes to the first rheme:

TI-RI Cats eat rats
TR1-R2 Rats live in holes
TRI-R3 Rats are bigger than mice
TRI-R4 Rats are hard to catch
c) Relationship of subsequent themes to first (or subsequent) rhemes:

TI-RI Cats eat rats
T2-RI Dogs eat rats
T3-RI Snakes eat rats
d) Relationship of subsequent themes to immediately preceding theme:

TI-RI Cats eat rats

TRI-R2 Rats live in holes

TR2-R3 Their holes are usually in old buildings

TR4-R4 These old buildings are deserted
TEXT TYPOLOGY

what Scherzer (1977) calls "ritual, ceremonial, verbally artistic, and other marked and special uses of speech", tended to select for analysis the exotic and the culture-specific.
Reiss (1971), following Buhler, suggests that there are basically three types of text, according to whether they place emphasis on content, form or appeal.
Nida (1975) distinguishes between the *expressive, informative and imperative* functions of text,
Appeal to native speakers' typical response presupposes the existence of institutionalised text-types. By 'institutionalised' means that they perform certain conventional functions in the daily life of a society.
• Hartmann (1978) points out that the short descriptive poem of Japan, the *haiku* "has no stylistic equivalent in the West",

• Kaplan (1972) comments on the uniqueness of the Chinese 'Eight-Legged Essay'. *Ehewunsch",  

• a text-type so common in German newspapers, the function of which is to advertise one's wish to meet a marriage- partner, appears hardly ever in British newspapers
TRANSLATED TEXTS

• the target language text can show signs of interference from the source-language.
• In bilingual societies one often sees paired texts, in the form of road signs, official circulars, press announcements and so on.
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The main focus is the functionality

Use what is the speaker (or writer) hoping to achieve, and what does he in fact achieve, with this particular bit of language
3 THINGS WE CAN DO WITH LANGUAGE

• Make statements
• issue commands
• ask questions
When we do things through language we perform what Austin (1962) called *Speech Acts.*

*Speech Acts* what speaker performs when making an utterance

- common ones will include *ask, refuse, praise, describe, excuse, explain*
- rarer ones are *commiserate, condemn, blaspheme,* fortunately
Austin suggested that there are about 10,000 without however specifying them or claiming that the average speaker controls them all.

English makes use of a rather large class of words called discourse markers (words and phrases used in speaking and writing to 'signpost' discourse. Discourse markers do this by showing turns, joining ideas together, showing attitude)

He huffed and he puffed and he blew the house down.

He huffed and he puffed, and consequently he blew the house down.
There have been numerous attempts to classify the discourse markers of English. One tradition in which there have been studies is that of 'Freshman English' or 'College Rhetoric' courses in the USA.

Winter's (1971) categorisation of what he calls 'connectives' originates. He identifies the five most frequent categories in scientific texts: these account for 89 % of all the connectives in the texts analyzed. The five categories are:

i) **Logical sequence**: thus, therefore, then, thence, consequently, 

ii) **Contrast**: however, in fact, conversely...

iii) **Doubt and Certainty**: probably, possibly, indubitably ...

iv) **Non-contrast**: moreover, likewise, similarly...

v) **Expansion**: for example, in particular...
in Kaplan's view, language or culture-specific. As he says: "My original conception was merely that rhetoric had to be viewed in a relativistic way; that is, that rhetoric constituted a linguistic area influenced by the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis"
six rhetorical functions:
definition, classification, comparison, contrast, analysis and synthesis.
The investigation of how language and context are related to achieve interpretation is known as Pragmatics.

Stalnaker puts Pragmatics on an equal footing with other branches of linguistics: "Syntax studies sentences, semantics studies propositions. Pragmatics is the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed."
communication is achieved, invoke the notion of speaker(s) and hearer(s) possessing shared knowledge and shared conventions.

(the individuals involved belong to the same group)

Yngve (1975: 56) calls a _colingual community_, a group of individuals who can communicate with each other in certain ways characteristic of their group.
utterances contain two sorts of information:
• new to H,
• that which S assumes he already knows.

My car won't start and Joe's on holiday

Presupposition
These preconditions appear in almost every rule of interpretation and production which concerns making and responding to commands:

1) X needs to be done for purpose Y
2) B has the ability to do X
3) B has the obligation to do X
4) A has the right to tell B to do X
Your ears are filthy

Parents to their child

the actor's dressing room in a theatre, where the actor has been blackening his ears to play the role
Widdowson (1975) exploits Labov's framework in two ways that are extremely interesting to the contrastivist. He lists no fewer than seventeen ways in which commands are issued in English.
a) S can refer to anyone of the four conditions *directly* by a declarative sentence.

b) S can refer *indirectly* to the four conditions. He performs an indirect speech act ‘hints, insinuations, irony and metaphor’

c) S can draw H's attention to the four conditions by using an interrogative that refers directly to each:

d) S refers *indirectly* to the conditions by means of interrogatives. None of these makes explicit reference to the conditions.
finally, there is the imperative for issuing commands:

Clean those windows

'standard' form of command, but not normal
there is that family of speech acts which, in English at least, share with *command* the feature of conventional realisation by the imperative:

*Instruction*: Report to General H. Q. at 0: 600 hours.

*Direction*: Turn left at the supermarket.

*Advice*: 'See a doctor about that cough.

*Appeal*: Be a blood donor.

*Prayer*: Forgive us our trespasses.

*Warning*: Watch out for falling rock.
A more practical application of this approach to the specification of speech acts by sets of conditions involves the assessment of the pragmatic equivalence of acts the labels for which are conventionally viewed as being translationally equivalent.
Questions should be answered by Contrastivists

German *Befehl* as a lexical item is equated with English *command*:

- but is it a pragmatic equivalent also? In other words, is *Befehl* specified by the same four conditions as specify *command*?
- does it hold true for *Befehl* that it can be executed by a S in the same 17 ways as *command* is?
- does the former have a smaller (or larger) range of realisations?
- finally, of the 17 or so possible realisations of this act in German and English?