



DBB 408 TRANSLATION STUDIES IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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3. Conjunction

- ▶ **Conjunction** involves the use of formal markers to relate sentences, clauses and paragraphs to each other.
- ▶ Unlike **reference, substitution, and ellipsis**, the use of conjunction does not instruct the reader to supply missing information either by looking for it elsewhere in the text or by filling structural slots.
- ▶ Instead, conjunction signals the way the writer wants the reader to **relate** what is about to be said to what has been said before.
- ▶ Languages vary tremendously in the type of conjunctions they prefer to use as well as the frequency with which they use such items.

- ▶ The main relations are summarized below, with examples of conjunctions which can or typically realize each relation.
- ▶ **a. additive:** and, or, also, in addition, furthermore, besides, similarly, likewise, by contrast, for instance;
b. adversative: but, yet, however, instead, on the other hand, nevertheless, at any rate, as a matter of fact;
c. causal: so, consequently, it follows, for, because, under the circumstances, for this reason;
d. temporal: then, next, after that, on another occasion, in conclusion, an hour later, finally, at last;
e. continuatives: now, of course, well, anyway, surely, after all

- ▶ these relations can be expressed by a variety of means; the use of a conjunction is not the only device for expressing a temporal or causal relation, for instance.
- ▶ **Example:** In English, a temporal relation may be expressed by means of a verb such as **follow** or **precede**, and a causal relation is inherent in the meanings of verbs such as **cause** and **lead to**.

- The following example from *A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* illustrates the use of conjunction in text:

The shamanic practices we have investigated are rightly seen as an archaic mysticism. On the basis of the world view uncovered by the shaman's faculties, with its vision of another and miraculous plane which could interact causally with our own, the more advanced mystical intuitions of esoteric Buddhism were able to develop.

Today, however, this world view is fast disappearing. The vision of another plane utterly different from our own, ambivalent, perilous and beyond our control, has faded. **Instead** the universe has become one-dimensional; there is no barrier to be crossed, no mysteriously other kind of being to be met and placated.

- ▶ Some languages, such as German, tend to express relations through subordination and complex structures. Others, such as Chinese and Japanese, prefer to use simpler and shorter structures and to mark the relations between these structures explicitly where necessary.
- ▶ Compared to Arabic, English generally prefers to present information in relatively small chunks and to signal the relationship between these chunks, using a wide variety of conjunctions to mark semantic relations between clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. In addition to the types of conjunction discussed by Halliday and Hasan, English also relies on a highly developed punctuation system to signal breaks and relations between chunks of information.
- ▶ Unlike English, Arabic prefers to group information into very large grammatical chunks. It is not unusual for Arabic paragraphs to consist of one sentence. This is partly because punctuation and paragraphing are a relatively recent development in Arabic (Holes, 1984).

- Moreover, Arabic tends to use a relatively small number of conjunctions, each of which has a wide range of meanings which depend for their interpretation on the context, thus relying heavily on the reader's ability to infer relationships.
- According to Holes, /fa/ can be a marker of temporal sequence, logical consequence, purpose, result or concession' (1984: 234).
- Smith and Frawley's (1983) study of the use of conjunction in different genres of English suggests that some genres are generally 'more conjunctive' than others and that each genre has its own preferences for certain types of conjunction. Religion and fiction use more conjunctions than science and journalism.

- Religion displays a particular preference for negative additive conjunctions such as *nor*. Religious texts also make heavy use of causal conjunctions such as *because*, *since*, and *for*. In science and journalism, by contrast, conjunctions in general and causal conjunctions in particular are relatively infrequent. This is partly explained by the high level of assumed shared knowledge in science and by the need to give an impression of objectivity in both genres.



4. Lexical Cohesion

- ▶ **Lexical cohesion** refers to the role played by the selection of vocabulary in organizing relations within a text.
- ▶ Halliday and Hasan divide lexical cohesion into two main categories: **reiteration** and **collocation**.
- ▶ **Reiteration**, as the name suggests, involves repetition of lexical items. A reiterated item may be a repetition of an earlier item, a synonym or near-synonym, a superordinate, or a general word.
- ▶ **Collocation**, as a sub-class of lexical cohesion in Halliday and Hasan's model, covers any instance which involves a pair of lexical items that are associated with each other in the language in some way.

- ▶ (1) I first met Hugh Fraser in 1977. (2) Charming, rather hesitant, a heavy smoker and heavy gambler, he had made such headway through his fortune that he had decided to sell his last major asset, the controlling shares in the business which his father had built up and named Scottish and Universal Investments. (3) Scottish and Universal had, among its assets, 10% of the British stores group, House of Fraser. (4) Lonrho bought 26% of Scottish and Universal. (5) It was part of Lonrho's understanding with Hugh that he would stay on as Chairman of House of Fraser, but it gradually became clear that Sir Hugh was not on terms of mutual respect with most of his Board, and that the loyalty of his colleagues had been to his formidable father rather than to him. (6) They did not welcome the sale of Hugh's shares to Lonrho – and it was only natural, as a change was obviously in the air. (7) Lonrho was an expanding and acquisitive company, and House of Fraser was a quiet and pedestrian one.

- ▶ Instances of lexical cohesion in the above text include the repetition of items such as *Scottish and Universal* (sentences 2, 3, and 4), *Lonrho* (4, 5, 6, and 7), and *assets* (2 and 3).
- ▶ Most important of all, of course, is the main collocational chain which helps to establish and maintain the subject of the text: *fortune, shares, assets, business, Chairman, Board, sale, expanding, acquisitive, company, etc.*

- ▶ One point that should be borne in mind is that languages differ in the level of lexical repetition they will normally tolerate.
- ▶ Arabic tolerates a far higher level of lexical repetition than English. Greek seems to behave more like Arabic than English in this respect.

- ▶ Reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion are the devices identified by Halliday and Hasan for establishing cohesive links in English. These devices are probably common to a large number of languages.
- ▶ However, different languages have different preferences for using specific devices more frequently than others or in specific combinations which may not correspond to English patterns of cohesion.