A Semantico-Grammatical Study of Some Discourse Connectives in Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'

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Abstract

In teaching English as a foreign language, the novel plays a vital role in developing and enhancing the language skills because in the novel the full range and variety of the English language is displayed with concrete examples of writing skill in action. A novel can be a stimulating resource for activities for language learners without necessarily involving them in a dedicated analysis of a highly literary criticism nature.

Introduction

The linguistic analysis of literature is one of the most active and creative areas of literary studies. Hence, a great interest in the study of the stylistic features of literary texts has been reflected in the last few decades. This interest stems from the fact that literature as an art is realized through language. Moreover, the writer's an, the. depth of his emotional experience,' and spiritual insights are expressed only through his words, and can be apprehended only through an examination of his language, and here conies the role of literary stylistics. Fowler (1977:3) quotes Lodge as saying, "the novelist's medium is language: whatever he does is in and through language". Since in literary works,"(the renlity of experience lies beyond language,

the process of human imagination" (Cox, 1981:76), In stylistic analysis the emphasis is focused on the study of the text where, functionally, we are interested in what a particular writer has written. Traugott and Pratt (1980:20) add that:

> *Linguistics can contribute a great deal to our understanding of a text and may, also, help us solve problems of interpretation by showing us in a vigorous way why one structure is possible but not another.*

Th**e** S**e**mantics a**n**d **P**ragmatics of Discourse Conn**e**ct**i**v**e**s in Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'

This study is devoted to the investigation of the semantic and pragmatic implications of the discourse connectives: **and, but,** and **or** in Conrad's **Heart of Darkness (HOD).** This investigation is done according to the general framework adopted in the present study. According to the analytical scheme of this study, the semantics of the connectives under study is discussed in terms of a complementary

suitable analytical framework that consists of Quirk et al (1972) and Halliday and Hassan (1976). By incorporating the preceding two attitudes towards connectives, we arrive at the position of a thorough understanding of the semantic implications of those connectives and appreciating their role in the interpretation of the literary text **HOD.** The pragmatics of the connectives under study is studied in terms of Van Dijk (1977, 1979). *The* semantic and pragmatic implications of the connectives, under study, are displayed in the same order as presented in the adopted analytical scheme, and each one of them is discussed in detail with some illustrative examples from the text. The study is supported by quantitative data about the frequencies and percentages of the occurrences of the implications of each one of the connectives.

The Semantics of the Conn**e**ctives and, but, and or in HOD

Studying the semantic function of a literary text means the exploration of alternatives to our factual world (Van Dijk, 1976: 48). Hence, investigating the semantic implications of discourse connectives in **HOD** may help in the interpretation of the text due to the semantic relations they indicate in the text. Fillmore (1985:19) explains clearly the importance of investigating the semantic relations of the linguistic elements to the interpretation of the text that "the semantic valences of individual lexical items invite interpreters to look for (in earlier text) or expect (in a later text) the relevant dependent information". Concerning Conard's use of connectives, Lucas (1998:71) refers that Conard has employed the connectives judiciously and effectively in his fiction. Moreover, the semantic study of these connectives in **HOD** may reveal the frequency of the author's preferred connectives in the novel. A close look at the semantics of the connectives and, but, and or in **HOD** reveals that different types of these connectives refer to different types of relations between propositions of clauses. The semantic implications of these connectives vary depending on presupposition and our knowledge of the world.

The Semantics of and

As it is mentioned earlier, the same connective may express different types of relations between clauses, and this is evident in the connective and. It is observed that the use of and is overwhelmingly frequent in **HOD.** This fact is very clear where the reader **of HOD** can detect different, implications of each one of the connectives specially and, depending on the information offered by the context. Mainly the reader of **HOD** could do this since "the reader is regarded as the sole producer of meaning in text" (Fowler, 1977:80). Investigating the semantics of and in **HOD** has revealed that Conard has used the connective **and** skillfully to regulate the flow of information and provide logical relations between events by introducing various functions as: causing, contrasting, sequencing, commenting, concessing, conditioning, indicating similarity, and adding, which make the necessary connection between clauses.

According to the analytical scheme of the study of the discourse connective **and** as an inter-clausal connective in HOD, there are eight semantic implications of this connective due to the conjunctive relations it indicates, which are: causal, sequential, contrastive, commentary, concessive, conditional, similarity, and additive. The total number of the occurrences of the connective **and** as inter-clausal connective in **HOD** is 340 distributed on the various semantic implications of the connective. Table 1 provides us with the frequency and percentage of each of the semantic implications. It also shows that the additive semantic implication is the most frequently used one among the implications, then come contrastive, commentary, causal, concessive, sequential, similarity,, and finally the conditional with no occurrence, respectively as it is illustrated in the following table:

Table 1: The Semantic Implications of the Discourse Connective and in HOD

c	The semantic implications of the connective and	frequency	%
1	Causal	19	5.58
2	Sequential	17	5
3	Contrastive	26	7.64
4	Commentary	20	5.88
5	Concessive	14	4.15
6	Conditional	0	0 ,
7	Similarity	12	3.52
8	Additive	232	68.23
Total		340	100%

The Semantics of or in HOD

According to the analytical scheme of the present study, **or** denotes alternative between the clauses that it connects. There are four semantic implications of the connective **or** which are: exclusive or, inclusive or, elaborative or, and negative or.

The total number of the connective or as inter-clausal connective, in **HOD,** is 30 distributed on its four semantic implications. Table 2 gives a summary of the frequency and its percentage of each semantic implication in HOD.

Table 2
The Semantic Implications of or in HOD

	Semantic implications of *or*	Frequency	%
1	Exclusive	13	43
2	Inclusive	11	37
3	Negative	0	0
4	Elaborative	6	20
Total		30	100%

The Semantics of But in HOD

But semantically indicates contrast. According to the analytical scheme of the study, there are two semantic implications of the connective **but.** They indicate a contrastive relation .between clauses represented by two forms which are concessive but and restating but. The readers, according to their knowledge of the world, detect these semantic implications.

Out of the analysis of the data, the total number of the connective **but,** as an inter-clausal connective, is 125 times, distributed on concessive but and restating but. Table 3 provides us with information about the frequency and percentage of each of the semantic implications, as in the following:

Table 3
The Semantic Implications of but in HOD

	Semantic implications *of But*	Frequency	%
1	Concessive	85	68
2	Restating	40	32
Total		125	100%

The Pragmatics of and

According to the analytical scheme of the study, the discourse connective *and* has two pragmatic uses due to the context of situation in which it is used by the speaker, which are: *additive and,* and *contrastive and.* The total number of the connective *and* in **HOD** is 380 distributed on its pragmatic uses. Table 4 gives a summary of the number of frequency and the percentage of each one of these pragmatic uses in **HOD.**

Table 4 The Pragmatic functions of and in HOD

The pragmatic uses of *and*	Frequency	%
Additive	340	89.5
Contrastive	40	10.5
Total	380	100%

The Pragmatics of the Connective But in HOD

The connective **hut,** prapmatically, according to the analytical scheme of the study, has two pragmatic uses due to the context of situation in which the two speech acts are uttered, which are *Contradictory but* and *protesting but.* The total number of the pragmatic connective **but** in HOD is 132 distributed on its two pragmatic uses. Table 5 gives a summary of the number and percentage of each one of the pragmatic uses in **HOD.**

Table 5

The Pragmatic Uses of but in HOD

	The pragmatic uses *of But* in HOD	Frequency	%
1	Contradictory	90	68
2	Protesting	42	32
Total		132	100%

The Pragmatics of or in HOD

According to the analytical scheme of this study, the connective **or,** pragmatically, has one main pragmatic use which is *ascertaining.* This pragmatic use is Subdivided into three functions, which are checking, making sure or correcting. *The total* number *of ascertaining or* in **HOD** is 35.

Table 6 The Pragmatic Uses of
or in HOD

	The pragmatic uses of *or* in HOD	Frequency	%
	Ascertaining	35	100
Total		35	100

Conclusions

The present study has revealed that the relationship between semantics and pragmatics is a complementary relation. So, the semantic study of the connectives, under study, at the levels of form and meaning should be complemented by a third level, which is of action represented in the pragmatic study of the same connectives. It lies been found that the semantic and pragmatic study of the connectives could give a pro found understanding of them in general, and of the literary text in particular.

It is worth stressing that the connectives have various semantic and pragmatic implications, which are determined by the contents of the linked clauses, or speech nets, respectively. In addition, it has stressed the important role of connectives in achieving "cohesion" of a text by the connections that operate across units to language in a text. Studying the semantic and pragmatic implications of the connectives, under study, has obviously revealed Conard's concern with the inter-relatedness of the cohesive connectives in **HOD.** It has been noticed that Conrad has used these implications of the connectives effectively in **HOD** as stylistic devices by which he links the thought and ideas of his stylistic features employed in the novel. 'I'he effective use and the ability to choose the wanted implication of each of the connectives have presented the novel as a unified literary work.

Another significant conclusion derived out of the present investigation is that Halliday and Hasan's (1976) taxonomy of the functional semantic implications of the connectives, under study, needs to be expanded. The numeration of the semantic implications of connectives in Halliday and Hasan's model is not exhaustive, so the present study has propounded that other semantic implications of these connectives, from Quirk et al's (1972, 1985), could be added. This expansion of the taxonomy of the semantic implications of connectives has been discussed in the present study and used as a framework to analyze the data.'

After a close examination of the semantic and pragmatic implications of the connectives in **HOD,** the present study has demonstrated that Conard, as a modern novelist, and though his native language is Polish, has a powerful manipulation of English language, especially in using the**.B. (1981). Conard,** Heart of Darkness, **Nostromo,** Under Western Eyes.

connectives. The study has shown, also, that what readers may recognize as an exotic quality in Conard's style can be attributed to the semantic influence of his native language Polish and the French language.

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دراسة دلالية – تداولية لبعض روابط الخطاب اللغوي

في رواية قلب الظلام لجوزيف كونراد

<u>**الخلاصة**</u>

يعتبر   التحليل اللغوي للإعمال الأدبية من الوسائل الخلاقة في الدراسات الأدبية الحديثة وعليه فقد
نال هذا الموضوع اهتمام الباحثين في السنوات الأخيرة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل الروابط "و" (and)
و"أو"(or) و"لكن"(but) من ناحية دلالية وتواصلية كما استخدمها جوزيف كونراد في روايته قلب الظلام.
يتم التحليل باعتماد معاني هذه الروابط كما وردت في كتاب كورك وآخرون ١٩٧٢ وهاليدي وحسن
١٩٧٦. وبعد إجراء التحليل يتوصل الباحثان إلى إن المعنى الدلالي و التواصلي ماهما الا معنيان يكمل
احدهما الأخر كما إن جوزف كونراد قد أبدع في استخدام المعاني المختلفة لهذه الروابط كما وردت في
الكتابين أعلاه.

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