

Notes from

Michael Hoey, *Textual Interaction*

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With occasional parenthetical comments in Spanish....

1. What to expect and what not to expect

5 Reader's expectations- "The point is that you will have *interacted* with the passage. One of the aims of this book is to show the linguistic implications of the fundamental fact that texts gain their meaning from a reader's interaction with them." Writers presume a shared understanding of what texts do, "This shared understanding is another feature of interactivity and is, more than anything else, the subject of this book."

10 Kaplan 1966, different cultures have different preferences for sequencing an argument. Griems 1972, 1975: “distinguishes outline and overlay languages (the former moving quickly from narrative point to point, the latter building the narrative by a process of accretion involving considerable repetition and paraphrase”

2 Text as a site for interaction

11 “Texts can be defined as the visible evidence of a reasonably self-contained purposeful interaction between one or more writers and one or more readers, in which the writer(s) control the interaction and produce most of (characteristically all) the language.”

13 Model of interaction in fiction “is very limiting if one looks at a wider range of texts. In the first place it treats writing as a proactive process and reading as a receptive process”

14 “It can be useful to see texts as the product of an interaction not between two participants but amongst four: the author, the writer, the audience and the reader.”

“The audience of a text is the intended readership, the imaginary person or persons whom the writer addresses and whose questions s/he tries to answer.”

15 “Morley (1998) has shown how this use of nominal groups to compress known or assumed-to-be-known information is

used by newspapers to encode ideologically-loaded positions”

Purposes of the interactions amongst author, writer, audience and reader. “The interactions amongst author, writer, audience and reader are complex. The author has a purpose in communicating to the audience and authorises the writer to produce a text that will achieve that purpose. The writer composes a text for an audience that may or may not match the description of the actual readers. The readers also have a purpose in reading the text which may not be the one that the writer had in mind and may not be congruent with the author’s original purpose.”

E.g. RAC advertisement: author, RAC, writer, copywriter.

16 A reader chances upon the text; I don't have a car "So I am the 'wrong' reader; I am a reader, for all that."

Reading a statute: if a lawyer reads, "Such a reader's interpretation may not always be a co-operative one"

"Natural science articles are different from advertisements and statutes in having personal authors."

"The audience is made up of fellow scientists with a specialist knowledge in the field, as again a glance at the nominal groups reveals. As with the statue, there is little chance that the actual readers will differ much from the ideal reader that the writer had in mind."

17 Newspaper stories: authro is the newspaper. Audience of political news is expected to have been following the story, know main participants, etc.

“Sometimes there is more than on audience intended for a text” e.g. till receipt contains information for a variety of audiences.

18 The Writer’s Desire to meet the audience’s needs: And the author’s, if not the same (*Cf Goffman: principal, speaker...*).

20 “First, texts are indeed the product of an interaction between their author and their audience, and second, adults manage the interaction diffrently”

23 Sentences give rise to sets of expectations by readers, met or not (*cf. Eco & me*).

“on the basis of reading a sentence, a reader forms expectations about how the text may continue. S/he then matches those expectations against the next sentence. If this sentence appears to match one of his/her expectations more than any of the others, it will be interpreted in that light.”

24 “our understanding of texts is partly governed by our ability to generate sensible hypotheses about what is going to happen in the text that we are reading and by the attempts we make to find those hypotheses fulfilled”

25 “Narrative texts are much the same with regard to the matter of answering the reader’s questions except that, in principle, they are easier to process.”

26 “As a general truth, text is not built up with sentences as building blocks: sometimes, the building blocks of text are smaller (as here), sometimes much larger...”

27 Signals from writer to reader:
moment-by-moment guidance:

e.g. “the former” as a signal that “the latter” will follow, nominal group constructions to create expectations, or disambiguation, etc. “Signals at the level of text are of a different kind. They vary in nature and will be discussed in more detail in later chapters. For the moment, I note only that they may take the form of specialised nouns (e.g. *consequence*), verbs (e.g. *differs*), adjectives (*contrasting*) and adverbs and prepositional phrases (e.g. *therefore, as a result*), the last being enshrined in grammars as ‘conjuncts’ or ‘sentence conjunctions’.”

28 Signalling may include signals of what questions have been answered (retrospective signalling).

30 Clause relations as a reflection of a text's interactivity:

“the signals writers use are a way of reducing the amount of inference necessary in any particular case.”

“Signals sometimes eliminate the need for such inferences, but few texts do not require some inferencing on the part of readers.”

Winter, 2 kinds of relations between clauses or sentences, “Sequence relations and Matching relations” (time sequence, cause-consequence, means-purpose, premise-deduction are sequence relations).

31 “Matching relations, by contrast, do not involve putting things in any order: instead statements are brought together with a view to seeing what light they shed on each other” (comparison, difference, exemplification, preview-detail, exceptions. May be signalled by subordinators and sentence conjunctions, often by repetition and parallelism).

32 Implications for learner: accurate recognition of signals may ease processing.

33 proponents of interaction: Goodman, Smith 1978, Goffman, Winter.

3 Interaction in text: The larger perspective

35 “At the same time that we formulate expectations about the immediately unfolding text, so also we formulate larger-scale hypotheses about the text as a whole, and the text will be written with these larger hypotheses in mind as well as the local ones that could be modelled in terms of a question-answer dialogue.”

Questions that receive a deferred answer.

41 Cohesion features, etc. “they are part of the signalling that a writer, consciously or unconsciously, supplies to enable a reader to detect places where expectations are to be met—or at the very least connections to be made.” Cohesive ties: “their real significance lies in their availability as means for connecting sentences, both close to and far off.”

42 Successful predictions of most general features of a text on the basis of few sentences, etc.

43 “a measure of the writer’s own successs at predicting what his readers will want to know.”

An article in embryo at its beginning.

Signals as messages from writer to reader: previews and intertextuality—

“The writer knows that readers will expect certain things on the basis of previous texts of the same kind that they have to read and so takes the trouble to conform to those expectations” etc.; “preview statements that function as signals to the reader about the nature of the text to come”

e.g Borges's "Death and the Compass"
begins with allusions to detective stories.

46 "Borges is exploiting the genre conventions to make the reader believe s/he is reading an old-fashioned detective story, but it is only a detective story in a rather indirect and unusual way."

48-49 Fowles's *The Enigma*: "The startling effect of the change of direction Fowles introduces into his story would not be startling at all if our expectations of texts were not normally met. Writers anticipate our needs by presenting information in the order we need it and in which we have received it in the past and we in turn have expectations that are shaped by our confidence that the writer will anticipate our needs"

49 Implications for the language learner. Cohesion-seeking exercises, etc.

50 “a learner will find it easier to make sense of a text if the intertextual connections are recognised.”

51 “it is not necessary to argue that cohesion creates coherence; it is sufficient to note that the coherence of a text is reflected in and is signalled by the cohesion in the text.”

“Schema theory can also be seen as a theory of intertextuality.”

4 The hierarchical organisation of texts

53 “the writer has to anticipate the reader’s needs both locally and globally” → hierarchy.

Simple hierarchies. Determination of constants and variables as sentences are added. Relationships of contrast, sequence, similarity, among groups of sentences. Matching relations and sequence relations.

61 “patterns of text organisation are grounded in the detail of the text. Discourse description that does not engage with this detail is not truly linguistics—it may be literary, semiotic or rhetorical and have a value in such terms, but the linguistic description of text/discourse, as well as developing its own categories, must also engage with the categories of other levels of linguistic description.”

Hierarchical sections of texts, etc. (*Literary criticism is light years ahead of this... JAGL*).

66 “there are relationships across blocks of sentences that no neat hierarchical diagram can do justice to.”

69 “What Borges has in effect done is to force readers to question the pattern-making skills they use in making sense of narrative.”

70 Some text linguists forcing text into the hierarchical structures, etc. “Shepherd (1988) shows that that one of the less obvious characteristics of narrative is that they make extensive use of repetition-signalled matching: this claim is supported in part by the narrative analyses in this chapter.” (*Cohesion*).

5 The organisation of some ‘Cinderella’ texts

72 “The preference of grammarians for fictional narrative as a model for introspected data was no more than a natural consequence of their confident literacy...”

“Text analysts have developed descriptions designed to account for the interconnectedness of argumentative and narrative prose, without acknowledging the fact that not all texts take the form of continuous prose composed of complete sentences semantically related in respects of their lexis and the propositions they articulate.” (Cf. *Goffman, la coherencia la da un contexto que no es lingüístico*).

73 “the Cinderella texts that get neglected in most text theories” “a relatively homogeneous class” (????). “They are homogeneous in respect of their discourse characteristics but highly heterogeneous in respect of their appearance and use—the class covers a wide range of types of text from shopping lists to statutes, bibliographies to Bibles.”

74 The statute: no lexical coherence necessarily, etc. (*What of pragmatic coherence?*)

The text as ‘colony’.

(Confunde los parámetros de descripción debidos a la disciplinariedad como si proviniesen del objeto descrito).

75 “the criminal statue and other such texts might be characterised as *colonies*”

“a colony is a discourse whose component parts do not derive their meaning from the sequence in which they are placed”

(Reference books, etc. —*pero si no estan ordenados no existe la colonia???? JAGL. Problema de relación utilidad / significado en esta definición*).

76 “ a colony may be embedded inside another colony and in so doing a hierarchical organisation is normally created. Thus a newspaper is a colony whose component parts are themselves colonies”

79 “the framing context of a colony is usually essential for its interpretation in a way that is not normally the case for ‘mainstream’ texts”

Title protocols, etc.

81 “In marked contrast the parts of a scientific paper relate to each other independently of the influence of the title”.

Colonies may have multiple authors not responsible for the whole. Editors not the authors of every component.

Matching relations and sequence relations structure mainstream texts, colonies structured otherwise even if sections may have that structure.

Numerical ordering (*no es simplemente numérico: pragmático, etc.*)

87 “Numerical and temporal ordering can in many cases be regarded as

functioning somewhat like conjunctions, some of which are used to signal sequence.” Only cohesive because author and reader connive at making them so.

89 The way colonies are read. “Reading can take several forms, and texts have developed in response to these forms.”

Scanning looking for information:

“Colonies ... have largely arisen in response to this reading strategy: they are organised so as to allow the reader to select what he or she needs. Interestingly the colony organisation of statutes would appear also to be a way of inhibiting uncooperative readings (Hoey 1985 a).

90 “Mainstream' texts may likewise be read as if they were colonies” Colony-like elements in mainstream texts. Indexes, etc.

Implications for the language learner. Vs. reading as a single skill and linear processing.

91 “From the point of view of teaching academic reading, perhaps the most important implication of the ‘colony’ analysis is that academic textbooks have many of the features of a colony.” Vs. prejudice of complete reading as only way of reading. Libraries and computer folders as further colonies.

92 “the boundaries of our units should not be protected like barricades” “Our discourse boundaries are the product of our theories, not the raw data to be accounted for”

White: ‘solar system’ model for news stories around initial statement.

6 A Matrix perspective on text

93 Pike 1981 “Kenneth Pike seeks to distinguish between the structure of a happening and the structure of a telling of that happening. He argues that if we could find a way of describing the structure of a happening separately from its telling, then we might have a way of comparing the kinds of telling that people could use to report the happening.” (*Esto es delirantemente pre-teórico*).

Structure of event from the point of view of each of the persons involved, time bands and the narrative’s route through the matrix of each participant, omitting cells, changing order, etc.

99 (*Meditaciones sobre qué es story y que es happening, pero son self-defeating, presupone un contexto único que da la realidad de los hechos..*)

100 “Notice that this allows us to compare alternative tellings and to compare the telling we have with the tellings we might have had. If we have alternative tellings, they are presumably mappable onto the same matrix” (*Ignora su posición metalingüística*).

The variable precision of matrixes (Goldilocks and the Three Bears, matrix analysis).

102 (*Todo esto sin referencia al trabajo de los narratólogos*).

105 A matrix perspective on *Death and the Compass*. “The relationship between genre and path through the matrix exists for literary genres as well as non-literary ones”

Alternative matrix analyses, sequence or comparison-based, etc.

115 “The matrix brings certain features of the text to light that might otherwise be overlooked. These might be described as the exposure of false symmetry, on the one hand, and the highlighting of true symmetry on the other” (*O crea prioridades mecánicas*).

118 “If a telling seems not to work in the judgement of readers, the explanation may lie in an inconsistent perspective, which can be identified readily by means of a matrix” (*pss.*).

7 Culturally popular patterns of text organisation

119 Another interaction strategy may be adopted by writers:

“The third strategy that a writer can adopt, however, is to answer an agreed sequence of questions, to operate in effect with a template of questions that both writer and reader know about and can refer to.”

Schemata and scripts (*and genre?*) Cultural presuppositions spelled out, etc.

120 “It is important to note, though, that other interpretations of the text are possible: the words do not *have* to have the meaning

that reader and writer co-operate in making.” (*atypical contexts, etc.*)

121 “A schema represents the (non-narrative) connections between facts; a script represents the sequence in which likely events will occur.”

122 “readers seem to bring two kinds of knowledge to bear on the texts they read—the specific knowledge described by schemata and scripts and a more generalised sets of expectations that are shared across a range of texts” — “culturally popular patterns of organisation”

123 Problem-solution pattern, the most common of all.

Signals of evaluation point to problem, e.g. “illiteracy”

128 Two advertisements displaying problem-solution patterning. “It is important in any analysis to identify the signals that trigger recognition of the pattern and subsequently confirm its existence, since they are a direct linguistic reflection of the pattern.”

“The greater the knowledge the reader shares with the writer, the less need there is for the writer to make explicit linguistic reference to the pattern being followed, since the significance of the information being provided will be quite obvious to the reader”

130 Recognising writer’s patterns and signals “does not prevent me reflecting critically upon the value systems that the writer has chosen to encode”

Recycling in Problem-Solution patterns.
(Negative evaluation leads to further
response, until a solution is reached).

139 Interlocking problem-solution patterns
(problem for one character is solution for
another. etc).

8 Other culturally popular patterns

Problem-Solution is the more basic.
Limitations: other types of pattern needed to
account for textual structure.

145 Goal-Achievement pattern.

148 “one text may represent the interleaving
of different patterns”

150 Opportunity-taking pattern.

155 Desire Arousal-Fulfilment pattern.

161 Gap-in-Knowledge-Filling pattern.
(*No Bremond anywhere here*).

Used in narratives as well as scientific or academic writing.

164 “In *Death and the Compass* Borges uses three of the patterns we have been considering in this chapter: the Gap in Knowledge-Filling pattern, the Goal-Achievement pattern, and the Opportunity-Taking pattern.”

165 “The word *mystery* confirms the pattern, and *solving* shows that the Gap is being filled”

“I argued that the differences amongst alternative tellings of the same ‘happening’ were so considerable that it makes no sense to talk of them all sharing the same story”.

166 “Depending on which pattern we attend to, the story looks different.”

“Borges reminds us that text is the site of an unreliable and variable interaction between reader and writer and it is to that textual interaction that we again turn in the final chapter of this book, looking at two patterns that seek to replicate the interactivity of face-to-face talk”

167 “One of the defects of statistical measures of readability is that they compute

difficulty in terms of sentence length and word length but cannot take account of the possible presence or absence of shared schemata/scripts.”

SPRE patterns as ready-made templates, an orientation for learning writers.

168 “A good writer does not use signals heavily but does give clear indications of the different stages of the pattern to his or her readers. The signalling vocabulary is valuable vocabulary and deserves to be given some priority in language teaching”

9 When the pattern turns into a dialogue

170 “all the patterns are brought to a conclusion or else re-activated by a Positive or Negative Evaluation and/or Result”... “all the patterns are characteristically signalled either by inscribed or evoking lexical choices”

Question-Answer Pattern. Questions, answers, rejected, basis for rejection, answer, etc.

178 “under some circumstances, the Question can be omitted.”

(Problem cannot be omitted).

184 a cline of patterns from Problem-Response to Question-Answer.

“text is the site of an interaction between writer and reader. The Question-Answer and Claim-Denial/Affirmation patterns seem to point to a further form of textual interaction, that between the author and someone other than the reader.”

187 “I am claiming in fact that all the patterning we have been considering in this and the last two chapters may be seen as a record of, and derivative from, the structures found in spoken discourse and social behaviour”

This book is just a preliminary study, etc.

“I have initiated: I leave it to you to respond.”