

Foreword

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**Text and Discourse Connectedness: Proceedings of the
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**Edited by Maria-Elisabeth Conte, János Sándor Petöfi and
Emel Sözer**

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Foreword

1. Since the beginning of the sixties, an increasingly stronger need has been felt on the one hand to find answers to questions which appeared not to be answerable within the framework of sentence grammar, and, on the other hand, to construct a theoretical device for the analysis of texts (primarily literary texts). These needs have been the origin of the roots of a discipline which has been called, among other labels, text grammar, text linguistics, text semiotics and textology. As to the essence of this discipline, one may with good reason (and without wanting to diminish the importance and merit of K. Pike's (American) School) consider it as a discipline of European origin (cf. Petőfi 1986).

2. It must be admitted that, as in other disciplines concerned with natural languages, we have not yet been successful in defining/explicating the basic notions used in this discipline in a generally accepted or acceptable way. Just to mention some of the fundamental terms, in the scientific community dealing with this discipline no consensus has yet been reached about how to use such terms as 'textuality', 'connectedness' ('continuity', 'connexity', 'cohesion', 'coherence'), 'interpretability'. However, if we carefully follow the literature which deals with the phenomena indicated by these terms (cf. the Selected Bibliography attached to this foreword), we can observe increasing convergence in the development of the respective opinions. The (perhaps most convincing) explanation of this phenomenon is, in our opinion, that within this discipline the need for interdisciplinary cooperation diminishes the individual disciplines' claim to and struggle for autonomy, even if it does not extinguish it. It is not only the fact that many aspects of connectedness cannot be investigated without facing basic questions of text interpretation (with stress on the meaning interpretation) something which becomes more and more obvious, it is also becoming increasingly clearer that the understanding of texts cannot be examined without accounting for psychological and sociological factors.

3. From among the three basic notions mentioned in the previous section, we chose the notion of ‘connectedness’ as the central topic for the conference which was the occasion for the contributions contained in the present volume. Our aim was to provide an opportunity for a personal exchange of ideas and experiences among a wide range of researchers working within the framework of different paradigmata and with different goals in mind. Most of the researchers we invited to participate in this conference did, in fact, come, and thus enabled this volume to be a representative collection displaying a large spectrum of the phenomena concerned.

The complexity of the topic did not allow the application of a consistent classificatory principle. Thus we decided to divide the contributions into three main groups: the first one contains the papers discussing particular aspects or carriers of connectedness; the papers in the second group deal with text-type specific questions; while, finally, the third group is devoted to general methodological/theoretical questions.

3.1. The papers in the first group deal with the following particular aspects: analysis of anaphora (Bellert and Pléh), analysis of how to use emphatic pronoun (Rigau), analysis of deixis (Ehlich), analysis of semantic fields and isotopy (Rieger, Stati), analysis of coreference (Harweg), analysis of the text-constituting role of modality (Lundquist), analysis of the use of marqueurs, conjunctions, and particles (Hölker, Rudolph), analysis of theme, topic and functional sentence perspective (Daneš, Hakulinen), analysis of the role that ellipsis plays in text constitution (Marello), analysis of a particular aspect of representing text meaning (Lönngren). These contributions refer to different object languages, and different methodologies have been applied.

3.2. The second group of papers discusses aspects of the following text/discourse types: discourse in children’s language (Gopnik), narrative texts, stories (Lonzi, Siklaki), horoscopes and anecdote-like short texts (van Peer), literary texts (Metzeltin, Vitacolonna), comics (Weber), and conversations/conversational interactions (Kayser, Parret). Gopnik, Siklaki and van Peer present the results of empirical investigations, while Weber analyses (following from the character of the type of text he deals with) the multi-medial aspect of connectedness.

3.3. The papers classified in the third group partly discuss more than one aspect of connectedness in their interrelations, and partly analyse general theoretical/methodological questions. Two studies deal with aspects of the relationship between factors of connectedness and reading/interpretation on the basis of concrete examples (Charolles, Langleben). One of the papers is devoted to the connectedness-constituting role of inferences (van de Velde), another one discusses the aspects of relevant consequences (Weingartner). Mignolo's paper deals with the relationship between text-typological knowledge and the expectation concerning coherence. Fisher's paper deals with discursive patterns, Grize's paper is centred on the problems of the objects of discourse. Three papers analyse aspects of the connectedness from some special angle: from the angle of a general interpretation theory (Bókay), from the angle of so-called perspective semantics (Komlósi), and, finally, from the angle of the application of semantic nets (Leinfellner-Rupersberger).

Heydrich's paper discusses the notion of 'relevance' as it is used in connection with objects and situations, and, finally, Petöfi's paper is concerned with aspects of the terms applicable with respect to connectedness from the viewpoint of a general semiotic text-theory.

4. The 35 papers in this volume provide a comprehensive picture of the relevant questions concerning connectedness. Nevertheless, an introductory study with the character of a synthesis still appeared to us to be premature, even if we had been able to account for the entire literature written on this topic up to now. However, we hope that the present volume and the attached Selected Bibliography represent a useful contribution to a future synthesis.

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This Selected Bibliography contains mainly English and German publications which can be classified into the following thematic units:

- (i) Bibliographies and historico-bibliographical surveys: Charolles-Petöfi-Sözer (eds.) 1986, Hartenstein-Schmidt 1983, Lohmann 1988, Petöfi 1986, Tannacito 1981, Thorndyke 1978;

- (ii) Readers containing studies on the elements of text constitution: Daneš-Viehweger (eds.) 1976, 1977, 1983, Jelitte (ed.) 1976, Petöfi (ed.) 1979, 1982, 1988;
- (iii) Readers, special issues, monographs, and dissertations on various aspects of connectedness: the remaining publications.

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