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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Discourse analysis (less frequently referred to as Textlinguistics or Text Grammar) is a sub-discipline of modern linguistics that seeks to understand the relationships between language, discourse, and situational context in human communication. Consequently, it draws upon the insights of several other academic disciplines, in its early years including linguistics, anthropology, sociology, philosophy (see van Dijk 1985), and in more recent years, communication theory, social psychology (Potter and Wetherell 1987), and artificial intelligence. Discourse analysis is, therefore, an interdisciplinary approach to language and human communicative behaviour and cannot, or should not, be reduced to simplistic definition. My goal here is to highlight some of the guiding tenets and major approaches of discourse analysis so as to provide an overall framework that may be useful in the exegesis of the New Testament. In addition, the select bibliography will guide the reader into more detailed models and applications of discourse analysis.

GUIDING TENETS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

A. Analysis of the Production and Interpretation of Discourse

Discourse analysts investigate the roles of the author, the audience, and the text (and its language) in the production and consumption of communicative acts. On the one hand, discourse analysts seek to interpret a speaker's or author's role in the production of discourses. In addition to the speaker's role, discourse analysts also seek to interpret the listener's or reader's comprehension(s) of and response(s) to the discourse. Every discourse eventually has an audience who will listen to or read it, ponder it, and likely respond to it in some way. Even monologue is based on dialogue. We rarely communicate with ourselves. We communicate with others. We communicate to be heard.

These two sides of the communicative process, and the language used to mediate between them, make discourse analysis a complex undertaking. For example, what is said is not always what is meant, and what is meant is not always what is understood. The speaker, the

language, and the listener each have a certain degree of independence in the communicative act. As P. Cotterell notes,

...the speaker may be either unaware of the real message he [or she] was encoding, or unwilling to admit to the message, so that he can disown the message... In the same way the listener, possibly because of his relationship to the speaker, may 'perceive' a message that cannot be detected by anyone else. If he claims to perceive it, on what grounds can anyone else deny that it is there? Certainly not by analysing the offending utterance as though it were a cold sentence.¹

Despite this always possible impediment to communication, readers want to interpret the symbols set before them: 'Hearers and readers have a powerful urge to make sense out of whatever nonsense is presented to them' (Stubbs 1983: 5). They may not 'get it right', but they attempt to understand and, more than that, to understand 'correctly' (i.e. to understand the intended purpose of a given discourse).

The fact that the same message may invoke multiple interpretations presents another dilemma for discourse analysis. The analyst again may look to the actual language of the discourse, the situation and knowledge of the participants involved, and the responses invoked by the message in order to account for multiple interpretations. The 'why' of multiple interpretations, not the 'fact' of them, is important to the discourse analyst.

Brown and Yule summarize this two-part tenet apply:

We shall consider words, phrases and sentences which appear in the textual record of a discourse to be evidence of an attempt by a producer (speaker/writer) to communicate his message to a recipient (hearer/reader). We shall be particularly interested in discussing how a recipient might come to comprehend the producer's intended message on a particular occasion, and how the requirements of the particular recipient(s), in definable circumstances, influence the organization of the producer's discourse. This is clearly an approach which takes the communicative function of language as its primary area of investigation and consequently seeks to describe linguistic form, not as a static object, but as a dynamic means of expressing intended meaning (Brown and Yule 1983: 24).

B. *Analysis beyond the Sentence*

The discourse analyst is also guided by the tenet to *examine*

language at a level beyond the sentence (cf. Stubbs 1983: 6-7). This is perhaps the most distinguishing, if not best known, doctrine of discourse analysis. The long-lived taboo in linguistics that grammar is confined to the boundary of the sentence has been forsaken by discourse analysts. Grammar, they claim, is influenced by linguistic levels beyond the sentence, namely, the 'discourse'. J.P. Louw's prediction that linguistics in the 1970s would direct its attention to units larger than the sentence was already being fulfilled between the late 50s and the early 70s (Louw 1973: 102). K.L. Pike noted in 1964 that '*beyond the sentence* lie grammatical structures available to linguistic analysis'.² This change in perspective arose from the observation that words or sentences are rarely used in isolation, but typically as part of an extended discourse of sequenced sentences (esp. in the case of written texts). T. Givón criticizes those who do not observe this aspect of language:

It has become obvious to a growing number of linguists that the study of the syntax of isolated sentences, extracted, without natural context from the purposeful constructions of speakers is a methodology that has outlived its usefulness.³

S. Wallace is even more trenchant:

That linguistic categories contribute significantly to the structure of an extrasentential text, indeed, that one does not truly understand the meaning of a linguistic category until one comprehends its function in a text, are suggestions that mainstream twentieth-century linguistics has all but ignored.⁴

The study of larger discourse units, however, does not eliminate the need for investigating words and clauses. Discourse analysts advocate a bottom-up and top-down interpretation of discourse. The analyst might begin at the bottom with the analysis of morphology, moving up through words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs (i.e. sequences of sentences and embedded sequences of sentences) until reaching the top, the discourse. From here the direction is reversed to

² K.L. Pike, 'Beyond the Sentence', *College Composition and Communication* 15 (1964), p. 129.

³ T. Givón, 'Preface', in *Syntax and Semantics*. XII. *Discourse and Syntax* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), p. xiii.

⁴ S. Wallace, 'Figure and Ground: The Interrelationships of Linguistic Categories', in *Tense-Aspect: Between Semantics and Pragmatics* (ed. P.J. Hopper; Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1982), p. 201.

¹ P. Cotterell, 'Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation', *Vox Evangelica* 16 (1986), p. 64.

see how the larger discourse influences paragraph construction and on down.⁵ In this framework, the analysis of words and clauses is important, but only from the perspective of the larger discourse, as J.L. Lemke puts it:

Language is not simply used to produce word-meaning or clause-meaning, it is used to produce text-meaning, and texts, by co-patterning many word-choices and clause formations, can make meanings that words and clauses cannot. That is why we make texts. Text-meaning realizes social functions...and among the most important social functions of texts is the maintenance and modification of social value systems.⁶

C. Analysis of Social Functions of Language Use

A third tenet of discourse analysis is that *discourse should be analyzed for its social functions and, thus, in its social context* (see esp. Gumperz 1982). The result has been a strong marriage between discourse analysis and *sociolinguistics and pragmatics*. As Brown and Yule state,

Any analytic approach in linguistics which involves contextual considerations necessarily belongs to that area of language study called *pragmatics*. 'Doing discourse analysis' certainly involves 'doing syntax and semantics', but it primarily consists of 'doing pragmatics' (Brown and Yule 1983: 26).

Discourse is not simply a set of propositions (logical, literal, conceptual, or cognitive) with a certain factual content, but rather social, communicative interaction between humans. As N. Fairclough theorizes, 'Discourse is a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other' (Fairclough 1992: 63). This has led discourse analysts away from abstract formalisms of language and into the realm of the interpersonal and functional roles of language. This focus is based in part on the principle that increasingly larger units of language are less and less constrained by grammar and more and more by the communicative context. Consequently, both the immediate context (Malinowski's 'context of situation') and the broader culture ('context of culture') factor into a discourse analysis, since language and language behaviour 'cannot be acquired in isolation, but rather can only be

learnt and are only available for one's use in situational contexts'.⁷ M.A.K. Halliday has made this tenet central to his theory of language: 'Language is as it is because of its function in social structure'.⁸

D. Analysis of Cohesiveness

That there is a relationship formally, semantically, and pragmatically between the various parts of a given text and that there is some thematic element which flows through it, in part allows a listener/reader to recognize it as a *cohesive* piece of communication rather than a jumble of unrelated words and sentences. How is it, then, that speakers go about forming texts into cohesive units? How do they combine relatively unrelated words and sentences into meaningful wholes? Discourse analysts repeatedly seek answers to such questions, attempting to identify how language is used to create cohesive and coherent communication. Labov describes the task similarly: 'The fundamental problem of discourse analysis is to show how one utterance follows another in a rational, rule-governed manner—in other words, how we understand coherent discourse'.⁹ When attempting to answer such questions, it is important to note that the structural cohesiveness of texts should be viewed as a continuum. At one pole of the continuum are texts with a high degree of unity and cohesiveness. At the opposite pole are texts which can be quickly recognized as a jumble of words and sentences with little 'textuality'. Although a text might be elegantly unified or grossly fragmented, most texts lie somewhere between these two poles—neither altogether cohesive nor altogether incohesive.

Whereas the first tenet of discourse analysis emphasizes the speaker's role in the production of discourse, this tenet recognizes the important role that specific languages (i.e. linguistic codes) play in the production of discourse. Granted, humans are the ones who communicate, who interact with others, who convey 'meaning'. Nevertheless, language (i.e. shared symbols), as it has been formulated and agreed upon by cultural groups, significantly determines the ways in which speakers/authors are expected to construct their message. To put it differently, successful

⁷ R. Wodak, 'Discourse Analysis: Problems, Findings, Perspectives', *Text* 10 (1990), p. 126.

⁸ M.A.K. Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 65.

⁹ W. Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 252.

⁵ On the notions of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' analysis, see Brown and Yule 1983: 234-36.

⁶ J.L. Lemke, 'Semantics and Social Values', *Word* 40 (1989), p. 48.

communication implies shared grammar. Or as Gumperz maintains, It seems clear that knowledge of grammatical rules is an essential component of the interactive competence that speakers must have to interact and cooperate with others. Thus if we can show that individuals interacting through linguistic signs are effective in cooperating with others in the conduct of their affairs, we have *prima facie* evidence for the existence of shared grammatical structure (Gumperz 1982: 19).

In conclusion, many New Testament commentaries say little about the grammatical structure of the text as a whole (though they often comment on the grammar of particular parts of the text) and, conversely, most Greek grammars treat language as an abstract system and not as a system in a particular text (though they often cite examples from particular texts). Discourse analysis of the New Testament should attempt to bring the grammarian and the commentator or exegete more in line with one another. Discourse analysis appraises the language of the text as a whole, keeping in perspective both the language of the text as a system and the individual message(s) of the text. My proposal is that this is what discourse analysis, especially discourse analysis of the New Testament, should be about. It is a reading of discourse based on comprehensive linguistic models of language structure and cohesiveness.

DOING DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The following discussion represents one possible framework for 'doing' New Testament discourse analysis. It is not intended to be comprehensive, but if combined with the many studies in the select bibliography, it may serve as a springboard into more detailed models of New Testament language and discourse. The discussion is organized around four sections: (a) distinguishing the various linguistic and extra-linguistic levels which influence discourse production and interpretation, (b) analyzing the semantic content of discourse, (c) investigating the interpersonal dimensions of discourse, and (d) studying the cohesive structures of discourse.

A. *Levels of Discourse*

The first step in discourse analysis, although seemingly obvious, is to identify the text to be investigated. This will preferably be an entire discourse, from beginning to end, or if only part of a discourse, it should be explicitly studied in relation to the larger discourse. In

addition, it is necessary to clarify what aspect of the discourse is going to be analyzed. This question involves what are termed here the *levels of discourse* or boundaries of discourse. Discourse analysts often try to account for the various linguistic and contextual factors which constrain the production and especially the interpretation of texts. These constraints range from the smallest meaningful unit—the morpheme—to the broadest meaningful unit—the speaker's culture. A discourse, then, pertains to these two communicative levels and all of those in between. These levels of discourse may be categorized under two headings: co-text and context. *Co-text* refers to linguistic units that are part of a discourse and, more specifically, linguistic units that surround a particular point in the discourse. *Context* refers to extra-linguistic factors that influence discourse production and interpretation, and it may be broadly categorized in terms of the *context of situation*,¹⁰ that is, the immediate historical situation in which a discourse occurs, and the *context of culture*, that is, the 'world view(s)' in which a discourse occurs. See the following diagram.

Standard Language/Code	Context of Culture
Variety of Language/Dialect	
Idiolect	
Genre/Register	Context of Situation
Discourse	
(Paragraph)	
Sentence	Co-text
(Clause)	
Phrase/Group	
Word	

At the bottom level is the word. Though admittedly problematic to define, *word* is denoted here as 'sound with *sense*' (i.e. attributed meaning)—this includes the combination of meanings contributed by the 'morphemes' which make up the word. *Phrase* includes the function of *attribution*, the ascribing of a quality or characteristic to a central linguistic item or head term. An adjective phrase, for example, contains a nominal element which is ascribed some quality by an

¹⁰ M.A.K. Halliday, *Language and Social Man* (London: Longman, 1974), pp. 28-29: 'Essentially what this implies is that language comes to life only when functioning in some environment... The "context of situation" does not refer to all the bits and pieces of the material environment... It refers to those features which are relevant to the speech that is taking place.'

adjective. In the phrase τυφλὸς πρῶσαλτης ('blind beggar'; Mark 10:46), the head term is πρῶσαλτης ('beggar') and the adjective τυφλὸς ('blind') attributes meaning to it. The level of *sentence* adds the function of *transitivity*, that is, processes (aspect and modality), participants (voice, person, number), and often circumstances (when, in what manner, etc.). The largest linguistic level, *discourse*, adds the function of communicative *task*, that is, the overarching purpose(s) or role(s) of the author's communication (e.g. speech acts)—this is roughly equivalent to the notion of genre or register. The clause and paragraph are subsets of the sentence and discourse. However, both the clause and paragraph share the function of *relation* (i.e. the ability to signal ties between stretches of language), since they often contain discourse markers that relate them to their co-text. *Clauses* are often combined by conjunctions to form complex sentences. Similarly, *paragraphs* are often combined by discourse markers to form larger parts of discourse. This is typically accomplished by particles (e.g. γάρ, οὖν, διὰ τοῦτο, ὅθεν, ἄρα, διό, ὅτι, ὅν), but can also be signaled by generic formulas (e.g. 'I want you to know...' epistolary formulas), grammatical person, number, tense, case, and semantically-signaled shifts in topic.

With these co-textual levels of discourse in mind, the discourse analyst turns to the text at hand ready to inspect how the speaker/author has combined smaller linguistic forms (and their functions) to form a larger discourse. The question is not primarily whether the speaker has done it well, but how it has been done. An incoherent discourse often reveals just as much about discourse structure as a coherent discourse. But where does the interpreter begin when analyzing the various levels of discourse? The concepts of *bottom-up* and *top-down analysis* provide a starting point. To read from the bottom-up is to begin by analyzing the smaller units of discourse and how they are combined into increasingly larger units. The discourse analyst starts with the smallest unit, the word and its morphemes, and concludes with the largest unit, the discourse. To read from the top-down is to begin with an understanding of larger discourse functions (e.g. register/genre) and then to interpret the meaning of smaller units in terms of those functions. Bottom-up analysis may be likened to inductive reasoning, in which the analyst arrives at a theory (e.g. appraisal of a text's theme) based on separate, individual facts (e.g. microstructures). Top-down analysis, on the other hand, is comparable to deductive reasoning, in which a person

reasons from a known principle (e.g. the function of a certain genre) to an unknown (e.g. the meaning of a particular use of a word)—from a premise to a logical conclusion.

Whereas the previous levels of discourse concern explicit linguistic forms, the following have to do with extra- or non-linguistic factors of communication.

Standard Language/Code	
Variety of Language/Dialect	Context of Culture
Idiolect	
Genre/Register	
	Context of Situation

Sociolinguistic studies have shown that the idea of an isolated, fixed language does not do justice to the facts. Rather, *varieties of language* exist within and across various societies. Only in the case of *standard languages*, perhaps such as Hellenistic Greek, may we think of a *language* in contrast to what is typically termed *dialect*. A standard language, or *code*, is shared by a group of people, either because they are part of the same culture or because they have the need to communicate despite differing cultural backgrounds. Such linguistic codes provide a way to communicate despite regional and social dialects. Each language user not only learns the standard language and varieties of language needed to communicate, but he or she acquires language based on personal experience, resulting in a somewhat idiosyncratic *idiolect* or personal variety of language. All the experiences and events of the individual's life give rise to a unique usage of the linguistic code, a sort of fingerprint. For example, a certain individual might have his or her own pronunciation, intonation, rate of delivery, vocabulary, or sentence structure. More importantly, each language user would recognize the idiolects of others and attach social significance to them. Paul's idiolect, both written and spoken, surely evoked certain types of cognitive and emotive responses from his audiences (cf. 2 Cor. 10:10).

Whereas standard languages and varieties of languages are determined by broad sociological factors, *registers* or *genres*¹¹ have to do with more narrow, limited sociological factors. A variety of

¹¹ The terms are used interchangeably here, perhaps the only difference being that register specifically concerns the social context of a 'way of speaking' and genre has more to do with the spoken or written manifestation of that context.

language refers to *language according to user*,¹² but register refers to *language according to use*. More specifically, the term *register* refers to a *configuration of meanings that is associated with a particular situation* (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 38-39).¹³ Registers are the linguistic expressions of various types of social activities commonly undertaken by social-groups (e.g. telephone conversations; teacher-pupil interchange; doctor-patient appointments; or ancient letters). They are a means of 'doing things' with language. Consequently, registers are one of the most important ways of relating the language of a particular New Testament text to its context of situation.

To summarize the various levels of discourse, words are part of a linguistic code shared by a group of people, but they are also part of a variety of language shared by various subgroups of a society. Furthermore, these words reflect the idiolect of a particular author. This overall semiotic system reflects the context of culture influencing the production and interpretation of discourse. In addition, every discourse is part of a unique historical context (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 42)—a context of situation—which is revealed generically by the register and particularly by its own lexico-grammatical composition. The co-textual levels affect discourse production and interpretation as soon as the first word is written or read. This initial word then influences the possible combinations of other words and in turn the resulting clause influences construction of the ensuing clause. These clauses may be grouped semantically into a paragraph, which in turn influences other formations of paragraphs. Both co-textual (inter-linguistic) and contextual (extra-linguistic) factors, therefore, play a role in the discourse analysis of a particular grammatical item in a text. Consequently, discourse analysis is an attempt at understanding language beyond the level of the sentence (paragraph, discourse, register/genre), but without neglecting the semantic importance of the sentence itself (word, phrase, clause).

B. Analysis of Semantic Content

Halliday, a leading contributor to the field of discourse analysis, proposes two essential functions of language: (1) to understand the environment (ideational), and (2) to act on the others in it

(interpersonal).¹⁴ The first part of Halliday's theory, *ideational meanings* (sometimes referred to as *experiential meanings*), concerns the real world as it is comprehended by human experience.¹⁵ 'Language... gives structure to experience, and helps us to determine our way of looking at things.'¹⁶ Much of discourse analysis of the New Testament involves studying such ideational features of discourse.

To be more specific, ideational meanings have to do with what is 'going on' in the text in relation to what is going on outside of the text, that is, the use of language to represent 'doings, happenings, feelings, and beings' in the real or imagined world (Halliday 1985b: 101). This is what people usually have in mind when they talk about what a word or sentence 'means'—the 'semantic content' of language. This function of language enables humans to build a mental portrait of a discourse. It enables them to relate language to what goes on around them (the context of situation and the context of culture) and to what they have individually experienced in the course of their lives.¹⁷ The grammar of the clause accomplishes this by means of *processes*,

¹⁴ Halliday 1985b: xiii. Halliday's model of language is serviceable for the discourse analyst in that it attempts to relate the meanings of language to the context of situation, thus dealing with two of the major tenets of discourse analysis (see tenets one and three discussed above). In addition, although the sentence plays an important role in Halliday's functional grammar, his theory involves grammatical study into the realm of the discourse (tenet two above). Halliday's notion of textual meanings of language directly relates to discourse cohesion (tenet four).

¹⁵ Halliday and Hasan 1976: 238. Other terms used to describe this phenomenon include 'representational', 'cognitive', 'semantic', and 'factual-notional'.

¹⁶ M.A.K. Halliday, 'Language Structure and Language Function', in *New Horizons in Linguistics* (ed. J. Lyons; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 143.

¹⁷ The notion of ideational meanings may give the impression that discourse simply represents external reality. This, of course, would be a narrow and incomplete understanding of discourse and the processes involved in comprehension. A significant amount of discourse describes non-real (fictive) people and events, and sometimes quite outlandish ones (e.g. the dancing elephants in Disney's film *Fantasia*). Nevertheless, the world of the text is frequently comprehended with reference to the real world (i.e. experiences) of the reader. For example, the ability to draw analogies from a text results in a proportionate level of discourse comprehension (cf. the *principle of analogy* in Brown and Yule 1983: 64-67).

¹² R.A. Hudson, *Sociolinguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 48-49.

¹³ Halliday further specifies this 'configuration of meanings' in terms of the Firthian contextual categories of field, tenor, and mode.

participants in the process, and *circumstances* associated with the process (Halliday 1985b: 101). In Hellenistic Greek, processes are typically expressed by a verbal phrase, participants by a nominal phrase, and circumstances by adverbial or prepositional phrases: for example, Gal. 1:18 *ἐπειτα* (circumstance) *μετὰ τρία ἔτη* (circumstance) *ἀνῆλθον* (process/participant) *εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα* (circumstance) *ἰσχυροῦμαι* (process [of subordinate clause]). These three ideational functions of Greek may be further subdivided, as seen in the following chart which summarizes the five types of processes (i.e. verbal events) in New Testament discourse along with their corresponding participants.

Process	Function	Participants
material: action event	'doing' 'doing' 'happening'	Actor, Goal ¹⁸
mental: perception affection cognition	'sensing' 'seeing' 'feeling' 'thinking'	Senser, Phenomenon ¹⁹
verbal:	'saying'	Sayer, Target, Verbiage
relational: attribution identification	'being' 'attributing' 'identifying'	Carrier, Attribute Identified, Identifier
existential:	'exists'	existent

Process Types and Their Participants

One way of treating the ideational content of a New Testament discourse would be to analyze each clause in terms of the above process and participant types, searching for patterns in the text.

Besides participants and processes, most Greek clauses use *circumstances* to express additional ideational meanings. For example, adverbs, prepositions, and case-forms are all used in Hellenistic Greek to specify functions of extent, location, manner, cause, accompaniment, and role. These functions are summarized in the following chart.

¹⁸ Actor = logical subject, and Goal = patient.

¹⁹ The *Senser* is the conscious participant that is feeling, thinking, or perceiving. The *Phenomenon* is the participant that is being felt, thought, or perceived.

Extent	duration (temporal) distance (spatial)	how long? how far?
Location (Realm)	time (temporal) place (spatial)	when? where?
Manner	means quality comparison	how? with what? in what way? like what?
Cause	reason/purpose/result behalf	why? what for? what result? for whom?
Accompaniment	comitation addition	with whom/what? who/what else?
Matter		about what? regarding whom?
Role		what as?

Circumstantial Functions

The above discussion of participants, processes, and circumstances primarily deals with the *grammatical* forms of ideational meanings. A more obvious way of representing ideational meanings is by means of lexis or word choice. Indeed, an important part of determining the ideational functions of discourse is by analyzing the lexical choices of the author. Some linguists and psychologists have attempted to set forth stereotypical mental representations of human knowledge of the world, variously termed *scripts*, *scenarios*, *mental frames*, and *schemata*.²⁰ The various theories share the belief that knowledge is organized in memory according to contextual scenarios or schemata; the theories are, thus, cognitive-psychological approaches to discourse comprehension. Understanding discourse is, in this sense, essentially a process of retrieving stored information from memory and relating it to the encountered discourse. This remembered framework may then be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary.

The theories emphasise that cognition is central to the act of communication. In order to understand the world 'out there' people organise it into meaningful categories. As an individual's experience increases so does his or her schemata of the world (Brown and Yule 1983: 236).

In the light of work being done on mental schemata, the vocabulary or lexis of a language plays a significant role in conveying the

²⁰ See, for example, D. Tannen, 'What's in a Frame? Surface Evidence for Underlying Expectations', in *New Directions in Discourse Processing* (ed. R.O. Freedle; Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1979), pp. 137-81.

ideational meanings of discourse. Because of the importance of vocabulary for the analysis of ideational meanings, a tool like J.P. Louw and E.A. Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon* is invaluable for the discourse analyst. Despite the title, this work offers much more than the standard lexicon. It seeks to partition New Testament words into their semantic domains and subdomains, that is, the various categories of meaning (usually cultural categories) which distinguish words from one another.²¹ This lexicon is characterized by functional categories, making it especially beneficial for the discourse analyst. For example, rather than listing words in their alphabetical order, Louw and Nida order them according to meaningful categories such as Geographical Objects and Features, Maritime Activities, and Household Activities. Under each category or domain, further subdomains may also be delineated. Under the category of Geographical Objects and Features, for example, are the subcategories or subdomains of Universe/Creation, Regions Below the Surface of the Earth, Heavenly Bodies, Atmospheric Objects, The Earth's Surface, Elevated Land Formations, Depressions and Holes, and so on. By grouping words according to functional categories, Louw and Nida reveal an essential function of words, namely, a means of storing and communicating human knowledge of culture and experience. More importantly, under each category (domain or subdomain) words are listed according to a hierarchy, that is, words with the most general meaning are listed first and those with the most narrow meanings last (from generic to specific). For example, under the category of Household Activities, *οικονομέω/οικονομία* ('to manage and provide for a household') is listed first and *σάρπω* ('to sweep by using a broom') last. In other words, sweeping with a broom conveys a more specific household activity. Though the lexicon is far from perfect (e.g. it needs to be supplemented with extra-biblical literature), it is clearly a move in the right direction for approaching lexis in terms of cognitive schemas of culture rather than isolated and abstracted meanings.

C. Analysis of Interpersonal Dimensions of Discourse

Interpersonal meanings, sometimes referred to as *interactional meanings*, concern the use of language to establish and maintain social

relations (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 26-27). Whereas ideational meanings may be likened to 'language as reflection', interpersonal meanings may be likened to 'language as social action'. Through them the speaker expresses his or her own comments, attitudes, and evaluations on the surrounding environment. In addition, interpersonal meanings are used to act on the others in it (Halliday 1985b: xiii). Consequently, interpersonal meanings also reveal 'how the speaker defines how he sees the person with whom he is communicating'.²²

There are four essential interpersonal functions in Hellenistic Greek—offers, commands, statements, questions—as illustrated in the following four-cell diagram.

commodity exchanged role in exchange	goods-and-services		information
demanding	giving	OFFER Matt. 4:19 ποιήσω...	STATEMENT John 6:48 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄριστος
		COMMAND Rom. 13:12 ἀποδώμεθα...	QUESTION Heb. 2:6 τί ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου δύ...

Behind all four of these interpersonal functions are two roles being played by the speaker: *giving* and *demanding*.

Either the speaker is giving something to the listener (a piece of information, for example) or he is demanding something from him...giving means 'inviting to receive', and demanding means 'inviting to give'. The speaker is not only doing something himself; he is also requiring something of the listener (Halliday 1985b: 68).

These two speech roles are done with respect to two kinds of commodities, what Halliday calls 'goods-and-services' and 'information'. *Goods-and-services* include any speech event with the aim of getting the audience to perform an action ('open the door!') or give an object ('send the letter!'). The other commodity is the exchange of *information*, which implies a verbal response from the listener—'I am the bread of life' may invoke a 'No, you are not'. The intersection of the two speech roles (giving and demanding) and the two commodities exchanged (goods-and-services and information) result in the four interpersonal meanings found in discourse.

By studying the interpersonal functions of each clause of a

²¹ On the theoretical moorings of the lexicon, see J.P. Louw and E.A. Nida, 'Introduction', in *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (2 vols.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), I, pp. vi-xx.

discourse, the New Testament interpreter may gain a better overall perspective on how an individual author chooses to interact with the reader. The following chart may guide such an analysis of an entire New Testament discourse, highlighting the grammatical forms which commonly serve certain speech roles.

Commodity ex-changed	Speech function	Common expressions	Example
information	statement or question ²³	indicative	Rom. 5:21 <u>ἵνα ὁσπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, οὕτως και ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον...</u>
		subjunctive	1 Pet. 3:17 <u>κρῆντον γὰρ ἀγαθοποιούντας, εἰ θελοί το θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, πάσχειν ἢ κακοποιούντας</u>
		optative	Rom. 3:9 <u>τί οὖν...</u>
		modal adjunct	
goods-and-services	command	imperative	1 Pet. 5:2 <u>ποιμάνετε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ... μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς ἀλλὰ ἐκούσως κατὰ θεόν, μηδὲ αἰσχροκερδῶς ἀλλὰ προθύμως</u>
		subjunctive	Luke 2:15 <u>δέξασθαι δὲ ἔως βηθλέεμ καὶ ἴδωμεν τὸ ῥήμα τοῦτο</u>
		lexis	1 Thess. 4:1 <u>... τὸ πὼς δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀσέσκειν θεῶι</u>
	offer	future	2 Cor. 12:15 <u>ἐγὼ δὲ ᾔδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδοπηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν</u>
		subjunctive	Luke 6:42 <u>ἀφες ἐκβάλω τὸ κάρφος</u>
		modal adjunct	Rom. 11:14 <u>εἰ πῶς παραζηλώσω μὲν τὴν σάρκα καὶ σώσω τινὰς ἐξ αὐτῶν</u>

²³ Statements and questions are not always grammatically distinguished; however, the interrogative pronoun is one way of distinguishing the two.

D. Analysis of Discourse Cohesiveness

That there is a relationship, both *semantically and grammatically*, between the various parts of a text (cohesive ties), and that there is some *thematic element* that flows through it (information flow), results in cohesive discourse rather than a jumble of unrelated words and sentences.²⁴ Cohesion 'occurs where the *interpretation* of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one *presupposes* the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 4). These cohesive relationships may occur between words and phrases or even between sentences and paragraphs (i.e. thematically-organized sequences of sentences). That such relationships occur in texts is not an overly sophisticated observation, but the question remains: How is language used to create these cohesive relationships? Or, for the New Testament interpreter: What criteria may be used to discuss the relative cohesiveness of a text? The notion of cohesive ties has been one linguistic approach to such questions. *Cohesive ties* refer to a language system's ability to form relations between linguistic items of the various levels of discourse. The nature of this relationship is primarily semantic, that is, the ties are related in a meaningful way. Cohesive ties consist of two types: organic and componential.

Organic ties primarily concern the conjunctive systems of language, such as particles which serve as markers of transition (e.g. γάρ, ἀλλά, δέ, καί). Organic ties are also signaled by prepositions, grammatical structure (e.g. genitive absolute using γινόμεναι), and conventionalized lexical items (e.g. λοιπόν). Organic ties make up the 'logical' system of natural language and consist of two functional systems: (1) interdependency or 'axis' (parataxis and hypotaxis), which is found at all levels of language, and (2) expansion and projection, which is limited to the levels of clause and paragraph (see Halliday 1985b: 192-251, 302-309). *Hypotaxis* is the logico-semantic relation between a dependent element and the element on which it is dependent (dominant element). *Parataxis*, on the other hand, is the logico-semantic relation between two linguistic elements of equal status and, thus, either could stand independently of the other (e.g. 'I am going to the store' '...and I will buy some soup').

²⁴ Halliday often treats a fourth function of language under the rubric of textual meanings, namely, *logical* meanings (e.g. the rhetorical functions of 'and', 'because', 'if...then', and 'or').

In both types of clause structures, the logico-semantic relation between the primary and secondary clause may be one of *projection* or *expansion*. In the case of *expansion*, the secondary clause 'expands' the primary clause in one of three ways: (1) elaboration, (2) extension, or (3) enhancement. In *elaboration*, the secondary clause or phrase expands upon the primary by 'elaborating' on it or some portion of it, that is, restating, specifying, commenting, or exemplifying. In *extension*, the secondary clause 'expands' the primary clause by moving beyond it, that is, adding to it, giving an exception, or offering an alternative. In *enhancement*, the secondary clause 'expands' the primary clause by qualifying it with a circumstantial feature of time, place, cause, or condition. For example, in Greek a preposition plus infinitive may be used to expand a primary clause, with the preposition specifying the type of expansion. By way of simile, the three types of expansion may be likened to enriching a building: (1) *elaborating* the existing structure of a building; (2) *extending* it by addition or replacement; (3) *enhancing* its environment. The following chart may serve as a reference tool for analyzing these three types of organic ties in New Testament discourse. One benefit of such study is that we may gain a better understanding of how an author builds an argument from one clause to the next or how a story develops from one section to the other.

ELABORATION (+)	
Apposition expository	(restate or re-present; epexegetical) ὅτι, ἵνα, τοῦτο ἐστίν (in other words, that is, I mean, to put it another way)
exemplifying	οὕτως, οὕτω, γέγραπται, ῥητῶς (for example, for instance, thus, to illustrate)
Clarification	(summarize or make precise) μᾶλλον, μὲνούν, μὲνούνγε, ἐλλὰ, οὐχ ὅτι (or rather, at least, to be more precise, on the contrary, however)
corrective	μάλιστα (in particular, more especially)
particularizing	λοπόν, σὺν (in short, to sum up, in conclusion, briefly)
summative	ὁμοίως, ὁμοίως (actually, as a matter of fact, in fact)
verifactive	

EXTENSION (=)	
Addition	
positive	καί, δέ, τε, πάλιν, εἴτα, ἐπί, καί...καί, τε...καί, τε...τε, μὲν...δέ (and, also, moreover, in addition)
negative	οὐδέ, μηδέ (nor)
Adversative	ἀλλὰ, δέ, μὲνούν, μὲνούνγε, μὲνούν, πάλιν, παρὰ (but, yet, on the other hand, however)
Variation	
replacive	ἀντί, τοῦναντίον, μὲν...δέ (on the contrary, instead)
subtracive	ἐκτός, εἰ, μή (apart from that, except for that)
alternative	ἢ, ἢ...ἢ, ἢτοι...ἢ (alternatively, or)

ENHANCEMENT (x)	
Spatio-Temporal	
following	καί, δέ, κατὰ (then, next, afterwards)
simultaneous	ὡς, ὅτε, ὅταν, τότε, ποτέ, καθώς, ἄμα, ἐφάπαξ (just then, at the same time)
preceding	πρό, πρὶν, πρῶτον, ἦδη, πάλαι (before that, hitherto, previously)
conclusive	λοπόν (in the end, finally)
immediate	εὐθύς, εὐθέως (at once, immediately, straightaway)
interrupted	ταχύ, ταχέως, αὐρίον, μέλλω (soon, after a while)
repetitive	δινωθεν, πάλιν, εἰς τὸ πάλιν (next time, on another occasion)
specific	μεταξὺ, σήμερον, αὐρίον (next day, an hour later, that morning)
durative	ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ (meanwhile, all that time)
terminal	ἔως, ἄχρι, μέχρι (until then, up to that point)
punctiliar	νῦν, δεῦρο (at this moment)
Comparative	
positive	ὁμοίως, ὁμοίως, τοιοῦτος, ὁμοίως, ὡς, ὡσεύ, ὡσπερ, καθώς, καθά, καθά, ὡσαύτως (likewise, similarly)
negative	ἢ, ἢπερ, negated 'positive forms' (in a different way)

Causal-Conditional	
(1) causal result	διό, πρὸς, εἰς, ὅν, τοῦν, τοιγαροῦν, ὡς, ὥστε (in consequence, as a result)
purpose	ἵνα, ὅπως, ὥστε, μήποτε, μή πως (for that purpose, with this in view)
reason	ὅτι, γάρ, διό, διότι, χάριν, ἔνεκεν, ἐπεὶ (on account of this, for that reason)
basis	ἐπὶ, νή (on the basis of, in view of)
(2) conditional	
positive	εἰ, εἴπερ, ἐάν, ἐάνπερ, εἴτε...εἴτε, ἂν, πότερον (then, in that case, if, under the circumstances)
negative	εἰ μή, ἐάν μή (otherwise, if not)
concessive	καίπερ, καίτοι, καίτοιγε, κἂν [καί + ἐάν] (yet, still, though, despite this, however, even so, nevertheless)
Respective	
positive	ἔδε, ἐνθάδε (here, there, as to that, in that respect)
negative	ἄλλοχού (in other respects, elsewhere)

The other type of cohesive tie involves *componential* relationships in discourse. Whereas organic ties generally concern various paratactic and hypotactic, logico-semantic relationships between clauses and paragraphs, *componential ties* generally concern the meaningful relationships between individual linguistic components in the discourse (e.g. repetition of words). In order to account for the various semantic relationships between discourse components, Halliday and Hasan appeal to three types of componential ties: (1) co-reference; (2) co-classification; and (3) co-extension (see Halliday and Hasan 1980: 43-59). These are akin to the distinctions of reference, denotation, and sense often discussed in semantic theory.

Co-reference or reference refers to the cohesive ties between linguistic items of the same identity. In the sentence 'John bought the suit, which he gave to his brother', the relative pronoun 'which' refers to the entity 'suit'. Both lexical items—'suit' and 'which'—share the same identity. The same is true of ὁ δαστήρ and ὅν in Matt. 2:9. *Co-classification* or denotation—the second type of componential tie—refers to cohesive ties between linguistic items of the same class or genus. One way to create this type of tie is by *substitution*, as in 'I

want the children to draw with crayons' and 'I want the teenagers to draw with pencils'. By substituting 'teenagers' for 'children' and 'with pencils' for 'with crayons' the two sentences form a cohesive tie of co-classification with respect to who should do the drawing and how it should be done. A co-classificational tie (of 'sinning') is created in Rom. 2:12 by substituting ἀνόμιως with ἐν νόμῳ (ὁ σοὶ γὰρ ἀνόμιως ἤμαρτον...καὶ ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ ἤμαρτον). Another way to convey co-classification is by *ellipsis* or zero-anaphora. For example, an individual might say to another, 'I hit the ball so hard it went over the parking lot. How hard did you [hit the ball]?' A cohesive relationship exists between these sentences because of the elided element 'hit the ball'. Both sentences do not refer to the same event; rather, they fall into the class of 'ball-hitting'. Similarly, in Phil. 2:4 (μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες ἀλλὰ τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστου) the participle, σκοποῦντες, is elided after ἀλλὰ, creating a co-classificational tie of 'considering'. *Co-extension* or sense—the third type of componential tie—refers to cohesive ties between linguistic items of the same semantic field, but not necessarily of the same class. In the sentences 'John ate the pizza' and 'Susie gobbled down the cake' the linguistic pairs 'John' / 'Susie', 'ate' / 'gobbled down', and 'pizza' / 'cake' do not refer to the same entities nor do they refer to the same class (e.g. pizza is not a kind of cake). Co-extensional ties are one of the most common ways of creating cohesiveness in texts and interpreting cohesive links in texts. These ties are primarily lexical. By using words with similar senses, speakers talk about similar things in similar ways.

Co-extensional ties may be further subdivided into (1) instantial and (2) general types. *Instantial lexical relationships* arise from the particular demands of the text (Halliday and Hasan 1980: 43-59). For example, the author of 1 Timothy may be referring to the specific individual Τιμοθέος when he uses the vocative ὦ ἀνθρώπε Θεοῦ in 1 Tim. 6:11. However, this understanding is based on shared knowledge between the author and reader and not gained from the Greek language itself. That is, ὦ ἀνθρώπε Θεοῦ, as a Greek expression, is not a unique referent for Timothy. Instantial ties often prove difficult for the modern reader because their interpretation is based on knowledge of the immediate text or the context of situation; a study of other contemporary literature or of Greek semantics is of little or no help.

General lexical relationships originate from the language system

itself; thus, they are shared by a group of language users. General co-extensions take five forms: reiteration, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy. *Reiteration* occurs when both members of the cohesive tie consist of the same lexical item. This is one of the more obvious forms of cohesive ties. However, the simple repetition of a lexical item does not imply total synonymy nor does it leave out the possibility that the same (spoken or written) lexical items have two quite different meanings with the same spelling (a monetary 'bank' or a river 'bank') and/or pronunciation ('meet' and 'meat'). Furthermore, the repetition of some words, such as the article *ὁ*, does not necessarily indicate cohesiveness. That is, repetition is not a phenomenon of the code itself but of the code as it is used by a speaker/author; hence, its presence in discourse as a cohesive device must be argued for by the interpreter, not simply asserted (this is an important point for debates over literary integrity of New Testament texts). *Synonymy* refers to cohesive ties created by lexical items sharing similar meanings (but not necessarily totally synonymous), that is, words from the same semantic domain. *Antonymy* refers to cohesive ties created by lexical items opposite in meaning. It is not that antonyms are unrelated in meaning but that the antonyms differ in one or more semantic features but share others—there is negativity and similarity. Thus 'dog' and 'kite' are not antonyms, because they do not share anything in common that would allow the listener to recognize a semantic tie between the two. But a cohesive tie might be intended between 'hot' and 'cold' (when used in the same text) because they share the semantic notion of temperature. *Hyponymy* refers to cohesive ties created by an inclusive semantic relationship between lexical items. One lexical item is included in the total semantic range of another item (but not vice-versa). This allows for a hierarchy of meanings in lexical systems. For example, 'Labrador' is a hyponym of 'dog', 'dog' is a hyponym of 'animal', 'animal' is a hyponym of 'living beings', and so on. Similarly, *ὄψις* is a hyponym of *μέλος*. The one is included in the semantic range of another, which in turn is included in the semantic range of another, and so on. Hyponymy may be further distinguished according to contracting types (e.g. 'People got on and off. At the news-stand *businesspersons*, returning to Paris, bought that day's papers.') and expanding types ('*Tulips* are cheap even in January. But then, *flowers* seem to be necessary to Scandinavians during the darkest season.'). *Meronymy* refers to part-whole relationships between lexical items. For example,

the word 'fur' is a meronym of 'dog' or 'cat'. Similarly, *κόμη* is a meronym of *κεφαλή*. The one is a part of the other. Because it is part of the other, it may be used to create a semantic relationship between the words.

Through the analysis of co-referential ties (e.g. pronouns, demonstratives), co-classificational ties (e.g. substitution, ellipsis), and co-extensional ties of both instantial (i.e. those tied to the situational context) and general types (repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy), the discourse analyst is able to demonstrate a major component of textual cohesiveness. As seen above, co-reference and co-classification are primarily expressed by *grammatical* networks in the language and co-extension is primarily expressed by *lexical* networks.

A nagging question remains: What makes one text seemingly more cohesive than another? Or, for the New Testament interpreter: What criteria may be used to discuss the relative cohesiveness of a New Testament text? The notion of *semantic chains*, primarily discussed in systemic-functional linguistics, provides a reasonable set of criteria for such questions. A chain is formed by a set of discourse lexemes, each of which is related to the others by a semantic relation of co-reference, co-classification and/or co-extension. If a text, for example, contains a discourse participant who is identified using pronouns ('he preached...'), demonstratives ('that one healed...'), or the person's name ('Jesus said...'), then these elements form a chain of co-reference. There are two types of chains: identity chains and similarity chains. *Identity chains* are expressed by co-referential ties and *similarity chains* are expressed by co-classificational and co-extensional ties. Exposing the identity and similarity chains of a text, nevertheless, proves less than adequate when attempting to speak about the relative cohesiveness of a text. In order to determine relative textual cohesiveness, the discourse analyst should differentiate between peripheral, relevant, and central tokens. *Peripheral tokens* include those linguistic items which do not take part in a chain. This happens, for example, when a topic is brought up in a clause and then subsequently dropped from the discussion. It is isolated from other chains and, hence, is peripheral to the author's larger argument. *Relevant tokens* include all linguistic items in the text which are part of one or more chains. It should not be concluded, however, that a high proportion of relevant tokens to peripheral tokens necessitates greater textual cohesiveness (although it may play some role). *Textual*

cohesiveness is primarily occasioned by central tokens. Central tokens refer to linguistic items in chains that interact with linguistic items in other chains. If the two chains interact in more than one part of the text (especially in close contexts), it is likely that the author is 'on about' a similar topic, thus creating cohesiveness and potential coherence in the text. He is establishing a thread in the discourse, and using language in an organizing manner.

The minimum requirement for chain interaction can be phrased as follows: for two chains x and y to interact, at least two members of x should stand in the same relation to two members of y' (Halliday and Hasan 1980: 57). In other words, two lexical items (the same or different) of the same chain must be used in conjunction with at least two other lexical items (the same or different) of another chain.²⁵ Typically, chain interaction involves a chain of *participants* (e.g. 'the Philippian Christians') and a chain of *events* (e.g. 'think...'); however, chain interaction may occur when one chain of participants interacts repeatedly with another chain of participants (e.g. 'Paul' says, hopes, sends 'the Philippians...'). The theory of cohesive ties is based on the view that a key factor for creating coherence lies in similarity. Chain interaction is a theory of similarity in texts—the view that cohesiveness is created by speakers saying similar kinds of things (e.g. chain 1) about similar kinds of phenomena (e.g. chain 2). In non-technical terms, chain interaction is the speaker's *being 'on about' similar kinds of things*. This understanding of language use is closely related to the principle of linguistic *redundancy*, that is, texts will typically transmit less information than the sum of their linguistic parts. Redundancy 'serves to reduce the likelihood of an error in the reception of the message resulting from the loss of information during the transmission'.²⁶ By repeating certain semantic content, the author better enables the reader to correctly understand the intent of the discourse.

²⁵ To limit chain interaction to 'two' may seem arbitrary, but it is the necessary lowest boundary since if only 'one' chain interaction were required then every clause of discourse would necessarily be a central token—a problematic conclusion. Admittedly, Halliday and Hasan are after a relative (scalar), not absolute, set of criteria for speaking about the cohesiveness of discourse.

²⁶ J. Caron, *An Introduction to Psycholinguistics* (trans. T. Pownall, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p. 5.

CONCLUSION

The tenth anniversary issue of the journal *Text* (1990), volume eleven of *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (1990), and the International Congress of Linguists in Berlin (1987)—where discourse analysts formed the largest contingent—all testify to this model's popularity among both theoretical and applied linguists. In 1989, W.A. Beardslee prophesied about the potential alliance between discourse analysis and biblical studies,

It may well turn out to be the case that another type of linguistic interpretation [discourse analysis], making much less extensive hermeneutical claims, will come to be even more fruitful for actual exegesis than structuralism or Gütgemann's generative poetics (Beardslee 1989: 188).

Despite such promising words, it can hardly be claimed that discourse analysis has presently been established as a widespread hermeneutic in mainstream biblical scholarship. Its reputation is, however, growing. If it is to be as successful in biblical studies as it has been in linguistics, we need more New Testament exegetes to set forth clearly defined methods of discourse analysis which are then applied to New Testament texts. Furthermore, if modern linguistics is to have a lasting impact on New Testament studies, there will need to be a revival of interest in grammatical study. And, although Greek grammar still requires further study with respect to morphology or its formal units of meaning (e.g. verbal aspect and tense-forms), it surely requires even more research with respect to the discourse functions of the language. Although the present study is decidedly cursory in scope, an attempt has been made to provide an overall map which may guide the reader into further study and prompt thoughtful interaction especially with modern linguistic theory.²⁷

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²⁷ A more detailed discussion of this model of New Testament discourse analysis may be found in Reed 1997: 16–122.

Textlinguistik/Research in Text Linguistics (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter)
Several biblical studies journals which often include works on discourse theory include *Bible Translator*, *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation*, *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* (formerly *Occasional Papers in Translation and Textlinguistics*), *Notes on Translation, Neotestamentica*, *Filologia Neotestamentaria* and *Linguistica Biblica*.

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