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***Functions of Parenthetical Structures in an  
English Newspaper Report***

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This paper examines the functions of parenthetical structures in an English newspaper entitled "Financial Times". The analysis of parenthetical structures as discourse constituents shows that grammatically, they are peripheral, semantically, they are non-truth conditional, i.e. they do not contribute to the propositions of the host sentence. From a pragmatic point of view, they are multifunctional units which signal the textual as well as the interpersonal functions of language. Thus, it is argued here that such expressions cannot be analysed in sentence grammar because they are sensitive to contextual factors rather than grammatical structures. It is only in the framework of pragmatics as a "perspective" that such phenomenon can be safely handled ( e.g. Verschueren 1998 ). It is also argued that the separation of parenthetical structures by graphic or punctuation marks serves further to emphasis that they are highly motivated pragmatic phenomena.

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### ***1- Introduction:***

Parenthetical structures (hereafter PSs) are linguistics expressions, i.e. words, phrases and sentences when occupy a syntactically peripheral position in sentences, and are typically separated from their sentences by punctuation marks ( e.g. commas, brackets or dashes ). In grammar books, PSs constitute one type of included units (Quirk et al. 1985). In sentence grammar, included units or minor structures are regarded as marginal and not worthy of serious study because, unlike other rules of grammar, they are not basic to the construction of clauses and sentences. From a pragmatic point of view, however, rules of grammar are no more than a reflection of structural habits which can be broken in a variety of ways. Hence, practitioners of sentence grammar, discourse analysis, text linguistics, pragmatics, etc. look at the phenomena differently.

Most recent accounts show that PSs can not be analysed in sentence grammar because they are not part of the syntactic structure of the sentence. Consider the following examples:

- 1) John is, I suppose, well off.***
- 2) The other man, David Johnson, refused to leave.***
- 3) Einstein, who failed his university exam, discovered relativity.***

In (1) for example, " I suppose " is not a constituent in the syntactic structure of the sentence, but it is illocutionary-force indicator. This together with the parenthesis of sentence

(2) and the non-restrictive clause can be omitted without affecting the syntactic well- formedness of the sentence within which they occur. Hence, they are grammatically optional.

Similarly, semantics has little to say about PSs because they are non-truth conditional, i.e. not contributing to the propositional contents of the host sentence (cf. Fraser, 1999 and Blackmore 1997). Look at the following example:

4) The trains are, fortunately, still running.

In (4) the sentential adverbial, 'fortunately' has lexical meaning, but this meaning is not important because here the adverbial indicates the writer 's attitude towards the propositional content of the sentence. Thus, it has little semantic value.

However, they are pragmatically obligatory because their absence causes problems of the interpretation. Their presence in discourse implies that they are used to present more information in a simple and clear way. Their separation from their host sentence is a strong candidate for the fact that they are located with pragmatic functions like clarity and precision. This is why PSs cannot be analysed in sentence grammar. They need a broader framework which is now made available by the theory of pragmatic perspective as developed by Verschueren (1999). (see section 3).

In such a framework, PSs are multifunctional units which express simultaneously two functions: textual and interpersonal. On the structural level, PSs contribute to text organization. On the interpersonal level, they are self-referential, i.e. they refer to the voices or participants of

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discourse as well as to the spatial and the temporal dimensions of discourse. The two-fold function of PSs in the textual and interpersonal domains makes them fertile objects for discourse analysis. With these introductory remarks, let us now specify the objectives of the present study.

The aims of the present paper are, therefore, two-fold: firstly, to investigate the pragmatic functions of PSs in connected discourse, and secondly, to propose a new dichotomy of PSs.

### ***2- Types of Parenthetical Structure.***

***Quirk et. al (1985) classify PSs in English into:***

#### ***2-1 Relative Clauses***

In discussing some marginal grammatical forms, Crystal and Davy (1969) argue that relative clauses are excluded from a major complex structure where they state that "Relative clauses operating as post-modifiers in a nominal group do not constitute an element of sentence structure, but only part of such element" (p.48). This quotation supports the claim made in section (2) of this paper that PSs in general occur either outside the syntactic or are loosely attached to it and hence have no clear grammatical values.

Eastwood (2000) classifies relative clauses in English into:

***1) Restrictive Relative Clauses (RRCs)***

***2) Non-Restrictive Relative Clauses (NRRCs)***

In writing type (2) is distinguished from type (1) by comma intonation as in the following examples:

- 5) We 've looking for a pub that serves food. (RRC)  
 6) I shouted to the man, who ran off. (NRRC)

Eastwood further argues that both types can be introduced by relative pronouns like "who", "whom", "which", "that", etc. on this view, NRRCs either add extra information about a noun or simply link the two actions as in (9). RCs on the other hand, perform a number of functions of functions like identification, classification (e.g.8) and emphasis.

## 2-2 *Parenthetical Clauses (PCs)*

Quirk et al. (1985) argue that PCs are the most frequent types of included units. They assume that PSc may be appositive, adverbial or structurally unrelated. According to Quirk et al. PSs are typically separated from their surrounding by pauses (commas, brackets, or dashes). Quirk et al. (1985) argue that one of the punctuation marks be it comma or dash, must precede the parenthetical clause to mark its beginning, while the other follows it to mark its completion. Look at the following example:

- 7) The other man, David Johnson, refused to leave (commas)  
 8) John (or perhaps his wife) will collect the parcel ( brackets)  
 9) David Johnson – I don't know why – refused to leave (dashes )

The punctuation marks imply that PSs are not part of the sentence within which they occur.

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### ***2-3 Appositions***

Like PSs, appositions constitute one type of included units. Also, they may be restrictive and non-restrictive as the following examples:

- 10) Mr. Campbell the lawyer was here last night.  
Mr. Campbell, the lawyer, was here last night.

In (10) the two appositions have the same information value, while those in (11) have different information values (Hussein 1986).

### **3- The System of Analysis**

This paper adopts Verschueren's (1999) pragmatic model of analysis. Verschueren regards pragmatics as a general cognitive, social and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to the usage in terms of human behavior (p: 10).

This implies that pragmatics is a theory of human interaction. Viewed in this broad sense, many grammatical systems and choices seem to be pragmatically motivated.

This means that all components of linguistic theory (e.g. phonology, grammar and semantics) can be said to have pragmatic values. A case in point is the topic under investigation.

In the theory of pragmatic as a perspective the text is looked at as one unit. Behind the text, there is context with its two dimensions: linguistic and non-linguistic (i.e.

communicative). In Verschueren's system of analysis, context is no more than one aspect of adaptability, i.e. a continuous choice of linguistic forms. She claims that contexts are generated in language use and can be restricted in various ways. She further argues that the ultimate goal of introducing context into language is to clarify the phenomena which would otherwise remain implicit (1999: 189).

In this paper it is believed that it is only within such a framework that the functions of PSs can be fully appreciated. In this framework, PSs express two functions simultaneously: textual and interpersonal. In this regard, they function as 'signposts' to discourse cohesion, coherence, relevance, grounding and organization. Having justified the need for a pragmatic account of PSs, let us now have a brief look at previous studies on the topic in order to see how their role has been investigated in text linguistics and discourse analysis both of which belong to the domain of rhetoric and pragmatics.

#### ***4- Previous Works***

Recently, there has been a revived interest in the semantics and pragmatics of parenthetical expression (Hussein 1986; Espinal 1991; Ifantidon-Trouki 1993; Burton –Roberts 1994, and Blakemore 1996 and 1997) among many others.

One of the most detailed descriptive accounts is to be in Hussein (1986), who carries out a contrastive analysis of PSs in some English and Arabic newspaper reports. The main aim of this work is to determine the functional potential of PSs and to solve the problems they cause when translated into Arabic. He

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analyses PSs within the "text-typological" model which he claims to be the most consistent framework for the translation process sine it subsumes all grammatical, semantic, contextual and cultural elements. The analysis has been done a long two parameters or dimensions, text type and functions. Hussein further argues that within such a model, PSs perform a number of contextual functions.

The analysis has shown that PSs have significant contextual values which help the reader and the translator in understanding and interpreting the text. He goes on to say that difficulties in translation occur when the intended contextual function is not fully grasped. Among the functions which he recognizes are foregrounding, down grounding, highlighting, etc. Towards the end of the analysis, the researcher draws the attention of the reader to the relationship between stylistics and PSs. He has heavily relied on the statistical method of counting the frequency of occurrence of PSs in order to establish their significance. Hussein believes that linguistic expression which occur with high frequency seem to have stylistic values.

Indeed, Hussein claims that PSs may be regarded as style markers of the text in which they occur. However, he does not justify this suggestion by giving the criteria for classifying a mode of expression a rhetorical device.

No one can deny the importance of the statistical analysis in establishing the relative frequency or importance of linguistic items but this needs to be justified from cognitive, semantics

and pragmatic viewpoints. The above suggestions motivated us to reassess the value of PSs in order to verify Hussein's claims.

Another research effort is to be found in Burton- Roberts (1994), who investigates one type of PSs which he calls "loose apposition". He suggests that a unified description of such expressions can be given in terms of a theory of discourse, but he does not elaborate on the issue. Instead he maintains that the two frequently cited criteria for apposition are:

- 1-The juxtaposed elements of apposition are referential.
- 2-The appositions have the same syntactic function with regard to the same other elements in sentence structure.

By means of the above criteria, Burton-Roberts distinguished loose appositions from non-parenthetical phenomena as in (12), and from a parenthetical phenomena like the one in (13).

12) The philosopher Locke was born in 1632.

13) Mr. Plod, a tall man, was dressed as a policeman.

In Burton's system of analysis, (12) will be recognized as an example of restrictive apposition. Burton disregards such appositions claiming that they are limited in scope, i.e. their domain is not the whole sentence. On his view, loose apposition operates at sentence level and beyond. Examples of loose apposition include expressions like 'that is to say', "in other words", etc. These may be used in a parenthetical way, but their compositionality is problematic in that they are highly productive and semantically complex. They have also variants

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like "to put it in other words", or "putting it more elegantly", or "to put it more concisely". Burton-Roberts says nothing about the truth-conditionality of such expressions. He simply lists representative examples of loose apposition. Yet, he argues for a pragmatic account of appositions in general.

The last and most recent research efforts are to be found in the works of scholars following Sperber and Wilson's (1987) Relevance Theory (Espinal 1991; Ifontidou-Trouki and Blakemore 1996 and 1997).

In an article entitled "The representation of Disjunct Constituents", Espinal claims that parenthetical constituents are syntactically independent of their host clauses. Her analysis shows that such expressions achieve relevance by commenting

on the relevance of the host sentence. She illustrated this point with the following example:

14) His car is, I suppose, old fashioned.

In (14), the parenthetical verb "I suppose" can be analysed as involving the two discourse units in (14a -b), where (14b) achieved relevance by commenting on a higher level explicature of (14a):

14) a- His car is old fashioned.

b- The speaker supposes this

Espinal's claim that parenthetical constituents are explicatures has been further supported by Ifantidou (1993) who suggests that parenthetical constituents such as the one in (14) can be analysed as contributing to propositions which

have their own relevance, even though they do not contribute to the truth conditions of the whole sentence<sup>(1)</sup>.

This implies that Ifantidou- Trouki argues for a conceptual analysis of the performative verbs when used in a parenthetical way. The parenthetical constituents analysed by her are no more than action verbs which in the theory of pragmatic perspective allow for a maximization of reflexivity in language (Verschueren 1999: 277). Thus, they belong to the interpersonal function of language.

Blakemore, who has recently produced a series of articles on discourse markers and nominal appositions, agrees with Espinal and Ifantidou-Trouki when she states that "parenthetical constituents contribute to a propositional representation with its own truth conditions and relevance, or in other words, they encode conceptual meaning (1996: 316)". On her view, the real value of parenthetical constituents is that they contribute to the interpretation of the propositions provided by the host sentence because they help the reader in inference assignment. Thus, what Blakemore has really in her mind is that parenthetical constituents are instances of logical implicatures or semantic entailments. She also agrees with Sperber and Wilson that such expressions are stylistic devices used for achieving optimal relevance<sup>(2)</sup>.

Sperber and Wilson (1987) argue that parenthetical constituents and nominal appositions can be explained in terms of their contribution to what they call optimal relevance. From their point of view, optimal relevance is achieved because nominal appositions provide extra contextual effects which

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help the reader in utterance interpretation. This point can be illustrated with the following example taken from Burton-Rohets (1994).

15) They ran-sprinted-up the hill.

Following Sperber and Wilson's system of analysis, the extra contextual effect conveyed by this parenthesis is that it draws the attention of the reader to the entry for 'sprint', i.e. some people sprint when they run, while others do not sprint.

This example is different from clause (16) below:

16) They sprinted up the hill.

Sperber and Wilson believe that (16) draws attention to the range of contextual assumptions which distinguish sprinting from ordinary running. Thus (15) receives an emphasis which is not part of the interpretation of (16). Hence, (15) achieves optimal relevance. They conclude their discussion maintaining that parenthetical constituents and nominal appositions are no more than stylistic devices for achieving optimal relevance.

The position taken here is that parenthetical clauses do not contribute directly to an easily identifiable propositional content, but they perform a wide range of textual as well as interpersonal functions (i.e. signaling coherence, cohesion, foregrounding, referring to discourse portions, etc.). in English language, PSs occur in clusters and their occurrence is not random. First of all, they need context and can not be uttered in isolation. Once used in a context, they become sensitive to the

contextualization rules. Their place in discourse is fixed in that they are usually occur medially in sentences.

In our own terms then: Are PSs determined by convention? Or are there any deeper pragmatic constituents involved? Skipping the details of Blakemore's account of parenthetical constituents as stylistic devices for achieving relevance, we believe that they are multifunctional units. They are one type of language resources at the cutting edge between the linguistics of language resources and the linguistics of language use which cannot be handled adequately unless pragmatic perspective is taken into account. Looked upon in this way, PSs are really multifunctional pragmatic units. This is due to the fact that they operate on more than one level of structure. Hence, it is a static view to say that the sole function of Pss is to achieve relevance (cf. Blakemore 1997). Like Burton-Roberts Blakemore does not investigate their role in connected discourse. She simply deals with isolated sentences.

Contrary to Blackemore who relates stylistic choices to optimal relevance, we relate them to coherence, i.e. style as a rhetorical device for generating meaning which is the ultimate goal of language use. PSs are linguistics expression which operate at sentence level and beyond. Here organization and interpretation of discourse are not determined by formal criteria but by meaning that is built up in discourse (i.e. text type, subject matter, level of writing, etc.). this implies that differences in style are made up of systematic sets of choices from sentence building principles which are in themselves sensitive to discourse building principles. The process of

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discourse building is the process of meaning generation. Meaning generation is viewed here as a conglomerate of ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language. PSs are really short cues for more complex and long structures. Instead of a new punctuation mark (e.g. a sentence) writers tend to embed a parenthesis within the host sentence to convey much information in a simple and clear way. In this sense, PSs may be regarded as textual strategies governed by pragmatic constraints. All these factors imply that the occurrence of PSs in discourse is not random but systematic and principle governed (see section 5 below).

### ***5-Towards a Model Classification of PSs.***

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no one has offered a direct functional dichotomy of PSs. To reiterate, Hussein (1986) claims that his work is functional, but unfortunately, he does not classify PSs along language functions or dimensions. He has simply enumerated a list of functions performed by them. Similarly, Sperber & Wilson's followers do not attempt at classifying nominal appositions. Instead, they have focused on their function in achieving relevance. Hence, we felt it is essential to organize the various functions of PSs into well-established and reliable categories. Thus, in this paper, a model classification is proposed by the researcher. The new functional dichotomy is based on Halliday's (1985) three-fold dichotomy of language functions into ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language. PSs seem to contribute mainly to the textual as well as the

interpersonal functions of language. These two functions are expressed by a multifarious category of lexical items and linguistic expressions e.g. particles, modal adjuncts, interjections, perception verbs, urgent tokens, etc. PSs are regarded here as one set of linguistic-expressions whose primary function is to signal textual as well as interpersonal functions which are both pragmatic in nature. PSs can serve a structural role in signaling important aspects of a given topic. They can also serve a variety of interpersonal functions which are writer and reader-oriented.

### ***5-1 Textual Function (TF)***

PSs which signal the TF either express inter-segmental relations or bring into focus particular aspects of the topical structure of discourse. Analysis instances of such PSs in our data, we have found the following two-sub classes:

- A- Focusing PSs. These are used to signal that a particular aspect of a given topic is emphasized.
- B- Cohesive PSs. There are used to signal relationship between parenthetical constituents and host sentences in terms of 'explication', 'contrast', 'anticipation', 'background', temporal linkage, etc<sup>(3)</sup>.

### ***5-2 Interpersonal Function (IF)***

PSs which signal the interpersonal function of language presuppose that coherence is a multidimensional phenomenon. The existence of such expressions in

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written texts relates them to the level of intentionality. In our data, we have found one type of PSs which serves such functions.

**A-** Reflexive PSs. This sub-class refers to the voices of the text; writers and other discourse participants. Verschueren (1999: 238) regards self-referential expressions as marks of metapragmatic-awareness.

### ***6-The Analysis of the Sample:***

#### ***6-1 Introduction***

In this section, we will investigate the functions of PSs in an English newspaper report entitled "Financial Times". The method of analysis is carried out by referring to the types of PSs and their functions.

The analysis is done along three dimensions: the text, types of PSs and their functions. The text with the PSs underlined appear at the left, types of PSs in the middle and their functions at the right-most hand. For ease of reference, we have numbered all instances of PSs in the analysed text. Similarly, we use abbreviations rather than full names because of limits of space. In addition, the beginning of each paragraph is marked by space indentation whether it contains a parenthetical structure or not.

## 6-2 The Analysis

David Goodhart Weighs Up Argyll's Improved Offer for Distillers

	Text and PSs underlined	Types of Clauses	Functions
	<p>The Argyll Camp was feeling rather pleased with itself yesterday as its improved offer for Distillers added a surprise a new twist to the complex and acrimonious bid battle with Guinness. The surprise was not the fact or amount of the increase, but its timing, It had been widely expected in the market and in the Guinness camp that Argyll would not move to raise its offer until the office of Fair Trading had made its recommendation on the Guinness –Distillers merger plan.</p>		
	<p>Three reasons were yesterday being offered for the early move. First, <u>and most</u> .</p>		

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15	<u>Straightforward</u> .Mr. Gulliver has neatly seized the initiative <u>which</u>	Parenthesis	TF: Focusing
16	<u>has been lving</u>		TF:
	<u>with Guinness since their agreed</u>	RRC	specification
	<u>merger was</u>		
20	<u>announced two weeks ago.</u> "We were going		TF:
	to have to increase the offer at some point, <u>so</u>	Parenthesis	Consequence
	<u>we thought we could confer</u> an element of		
	surprise by doing it now", he said yesterday.		
23	Second, <u>Argyll may have</u>	Parenthesis	TF:
	<u>been taking</u>		Background
	<u>advantage of its relative strong</u>		reference to
25	<u>share price</u>		name of
	<u>to underwrite the new offer now,</u>	NRRC	company
	something		TF:
	<u>which might have become more</u>		Anticipation
	<u>difficult if</u>		
29	<u>the Guinness merger plan was</u>		
	<u>cleared.</u> It also	RRC	TF: Temporal
	offers it to buy Distillers shares in the market		reference
	<u>which it did to the tune of</u>		

	<u>6m shares</u> yesterday.		
31	<p>Thirdly, <u>and more Machinvellion</u>, it may be That Argyll is playing to the political / OFT gallery in the hope of shifting the argument a little in favour of a Guinness referral before it is too late. The reasoning is sample enough: before the improved Argelly offer Guinness could argue that if the OFT referred the bid they were denying Distiller's share holders a far better deal.</p>	Parenthesis	TF: Focusing

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69	<p>Mr. Gulliver yesterday repeated that the new Argyll bid remained unconditionally cleared by the OFT. As the structure of the improved offer is not substantially different from the first one, his confidence may be justified. But the fact remains this a new bid and if OFT were looking for an excuse to examine both the Argyll and Guinness bids, <u>it could do so without too obviously venging on a pledge to Argyll.</u></p>	Parenthesis	TF: Background Reference to name of company
	<p>There was much learned talk yesterday about the 1972 precedent of the two-way battle for Glaxo between Beecham and Boots.</p>		
	Argyll yesterday		

<p>dismissed the unfavorable historical precedent as irrelevant anti-quarianism: It said it has anyway been blared by a number of changes to the law since 1972. What must be more worrying is that the OFT might invert the logic of referring both bids, and simply let Guinness through for both companies to battle it out in the market.</p>		
<p>The new terms give Argyll a gearing of per-cent slightly below the Guinness bid gearing-having increased its dept by only £36m from £ 600 m to £ 636m. The vast Bulk of the approximate £400m increase in The bid comes from the issuing of more</p>		

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	<p>Shares. On top of the present 200m Argyll ordinary, the company is progressing to issue 393 m new ordinary shares and 357 m Convertible preference shares.</p>		
	<p>The underwriting of these shares yesterday took an identical form to the innovative success-linked formula for the first Argyll bid at the beginning of December. On that occasion, £ 500m of core underwriting was agreed at a free of only one-eighth of a percent of the deal if the bid was unsuccessful. A further £ 7000m was underwritten at the usual rate of 1.5 percent</p>		

120	<p>Yesterday, the £ 500 m was core underwriting was re-underwritten at the same differential rates as before. Some £ 1.2 bn was underwritten at the conventional 1.5 percent. Because of the size of the bid and the double underwriting costs incurred, <u>the Agryll bid will be the most expensive ever undertaken</u>, and if successful will cost a remarkable £ 88 m including all fees. Advertising costs and underwriting. If unsuccessful it would cost Argyll £ 17 m.</p>	Parenthesis	IF: Background reference to a name of a company (high lighting)
136	<p>Financial point scoring a part. the main battle ground between Arglyly and Guinness now is over <u>which would be better equipped</u></p>	RRC	TF: Anticipation

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	to improve Disttiller's declining share of the international drinks market.		
143 144 149	Mr. Gulliver yesterday took a swipe at Guinness's marketing record and claim to special knowledge of the international scene. He said that since 1982 Argyll has owned Barton Brands, a significant US drinks distributor, which has given it just the experience of drinks distribution in the world's biggest market that can be applied to Disstillers drinks brand. He also pointed out that Barton Beers now sells more than twice as much beer as Guinness sells stout in the US.	Parenthesis RRC  RRC	IF; Reflexive reference to name of a person TF: Highlighting  TF: contrast
	In addition, Mr. Gulliver		

153 157	accused of spending over £ 1.5m a week in advertising over the past few weeks <u>which he said was</u> about eight times the £200.000 <u>being spent</u> by <u>Argyll</u> . This claim was dismissed as absurd by Guinness, <u>who said it showed how little Argyll know about advertising rates.</u>	RRC  NRRC	IF: reference to a person ( highlighting ) IF: reference to person  (Downgrading)
162 163	But most independent analysis conclude that on bid expenses and industrial logic there was probably little to choose between the two sides, <u>with perhaps Mr. Ernest Saunders, the Guinness chief executive, just pipping Mr. Gulliver on track record.</u>	Parenthesis  Parenthesis	IF: Reflexive reference to name IF: Reflexive; reference to position

### 6-3 Discussion

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There are seventeen PSs in the sample. These are either parentheses or relative clauses. There is no instance of appositions. Although this percentage is not high, yet PSs seem to play important textual and interpersonal functions.

As far as the textual function is concerned, PSs seem to occur with topic frames. The sample is about a financial offer. PSs seem to modify the topic of the sample in various ways. The parenthesis "and most straightforward" (line: 15) gives some emphasis to one aspect of the topic of the sample. The domain of the focus is the whole paragraph. The same is also true of the other parenthesis 'and more Machivellio'(1:35), which is here capitalized. This parenthesis also functions as a 'focus marker', which indicates that another aspect of the given topic is also emphasized. The above mentioned two parenthesis have purely textual functions of foregrounding which is here of thematic importance. They are both relevant to the proper comprehension of the given topic.

Conceptually, such parentheses are more accessible because they are used with thematic constituents, i.e. components of the main topic frame. They indicate that what follows is more important. In this way, focusing PSs function cohesively in that they allow easy and smooth flow of information.

Semantically, the two parentheses have lexical meaning. But this meaning is not important. What is more important is the juxtaposition of such expression with listing markers. Here,

the two parenthesis acquire textual functions in signaling important stages of the given topic frame.

The parenthesis in line (15) indicates that the stage of struggle between the two Campus is not problematic and can be easily handled, while the one in line (31) indicates that the last stage of the bid battle is problematic because it is more tricky and dangerous. This last parenthesis opens more rooms for discussion which continuous on to the subsequent discourse units.

Contrary to Blakemore (1996) who believes that parenthesis constituents encode conceptual meaning, we have found that the parenthesis so far analysed have no property of thesis at all. It seems that Blackmore has really in mind is the literal or core-meaning of the parenthetical constituents. But literal meaning is context-independent.

Accordingly, she regards parenthesis constituents as contributing to the propositional content of the host sentences. In our sample, however, PSs seem to have purely text-organization function in that they foreground some textual aspects which are being thematized. Accordingly, it may be argued that some PSs may be regarded as one type of devices used for signaling the foreground and background dichotomy in newspaper reports. This is one aspect of textual organization signaled by PSs.

Another aspect of textual organization indicated by PSs is cohesion. Some PSs express interclausal relationship like 'contrast' 'anticipation', 'explication', etc. Some scholars (e.g.

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Fraser 1999) regard such relations as indicators of local coherence, i.e. coherence at clause or sentence level. Such PSs (instances 16, 25,125,133) function like connectives in that they link discourse units from large structures. The choice of the parenthetical constituents here is sensitive to sentence-building principles mentioned earlier in this paper. As such, PSs may be regarded as the intermediate levels of organization between sentences and paragraphs. Instead of new sentences which are practically and hypotactically related, writes of newspaper use a parenthesis within the sentence to indicate the intended interpretation. This proves the validity of an earlier claim that the use of PSs is determined by the process of meaning generation. Contrary to Blakemore who views parenthetical constituents as instances of logical entailments, we tend to view them as conventional implicatures which indicate different kinds of pragmatic presuppositions. Evidence from our analysis proves the validity of such characterization. The non-restrictive relative clause in line (25) presupposes that it is difficult for Argyll to underwrite the new offer. The same is true of other relative clauses whether restrictive or non-restrictive. Thus, cohesive PSs seem to have a dual function: semantically they signal relationship, while pragmatically, they are instances of pragmatic presuppositions which cannot be pointed out unless both linguistic and non-linguistic context are taken into account. This is why we have argued at the very beginning of this paper that PSs can be safely handled within a pragmatic framework.

PSs have also important interpersonal functions which seem to overlap with the cohesive textual ones. In our data, reflexive PSs refer to names of people in authority. In some instances (162, 163) the proper name is repeated. Similarly some restrictive relative clauses also refer to proper names. These PSs also signal that the monologic text also relates the text to the level of intentionality. Thus, one interpretation of reflexives is that they signal the source of information, the leading voices and their attitudes and beliefs.

Another interpretation is that they provide textual cohesion, i.e. the continuity of the same referent which is textually given. Mr. Gulliver is topical. Moreover, the name is used for analogy here because it has the pragmatic function of highlighting. This is why the newspaper reporter has preferred the full name instead of a pronoun. Thus, proper names have dual function. On the one hand, they signal the writer's intention to indicate the dominating voices in this text type. On the other hand, they provide textual cohesion and maintain topic continuity. The existence of such PSs confirm the fact that the content structure of the text is not only propositional but also textual and interpersonal.

All in all, the present analysis is consistent with the new dichotomy proposed in section five. The result of the analysis have proved that PSs are principles governed. Scholars have long been interested in identifying the linguistic features which make the text coherent. But unfortunately, no one has examined the cohesive functions of PSs. It is hoped that the

## **Functions of Parenthetical Structures in an English Newspaper Report**

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proposed model will be of help to those working in the field of discourse coherence and text organization.

### ***7-conclusions***

It has been argued that PSs signal many pragmatic functions. A close examination of PSs along two dimensions, the textual and the interpersonal, shows that they are highly pragmatically motivated phenomena. Both types of functions are essential to the process of text interpretation. Structural information ensures coherence and prevents an unintended inference, while interpersonal functions provides the overall structure of discourse because it determines the type of materials included in the text. This implies that coherence is not only content based but also related to the sociolinguistics context. The analysis has also shown that PSs constitute a separate category which must be distinguished from other peripheral or superfluous categories like interjections, fillers, routines, etc. which are characteristic of spoken discourse. PSs, however, seem to be characteristics of written discourse in particular in newspaper report. This together with the headlines, the sizes of their letters, paragraphing as well as other graphic markers like capitalization need further research by analysing larger and more varied samples.

However, the analysis lends some credit to Hussein, in matters related to pragmatic functions of PSs. But, there are sharp differences concerning the occurrence of PSs in written text. Whereas Hussein relates the occurrence of PSs to stylistic

values, we relate the occurrence of such expression to their multifunctionality. Indeed, this is exactly what we have tried to prove.

### ***NOTES***

1. Recent findings, however, do not corroborate this approach to parenthetical verbs like ' I suppose ', ' I believe ', etc., which are speech acts. Evidence from up-to-date research shows that speech acts may be looked up as brining a change in the interpersonal relationship between speech participants (Sbia, 2001:1).
2. Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory is based on one of the maxims of Grice's theory of implicatures, i.e. that of relation: be relevant.
3. Verschueren (1999: 188) argues that the temporal dimension provides the raw material for communicative dynamics.

### ***APPENDIX***

List of abbreviations

PSs ( Parenthetical Structure )

PCs ( Parenthetical Clause )

RRC ( Restrictive Relative Clause )

N RRC ( Non- Restrictive Relative Clause )

TF ( Textual Function )

IF ( Interpersonal Function)

## وظائف الجمل الاعتراضية في جريدة إنكليزية

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### المستخلص

يدرس البحث وظائف الجمل الاعتراضية في جريدة انكليزية تسمى بـ (Financial Functions)، وتمّ تحليل تلك الجمل بوصفها عناصر خطابية يبين بأنّها من الناحية النحوية عبارة عن تراكيب ثانوية، ومن الناحية الدلالية غير قابلة للتصديق والكذب، أمّا من الناحية البراغماتية فإنّها تعدّ وحدات متعددة الوظائف فهي تعبّر باختصار عن وظائف نصيّة وتفاعلية كثيرة؛ ولهذا فإنّ البحث الحالي قائم على الجدل القائم بأنّ الجمل الاعتراضية لا يمكن دراستها ضمن علم النحو الجملي؛ لأنّها لا تخضع لقواعد تركيب الجمل بقدر خضوعها لعوامل سياقية؛ ولهذا السبب فإنّ جمل كهذه يمكن معالجتها بشكل وافٍ ضمن الإطار البراغماتي الذي اقترحتّه العالمة اللغوية فيرشيرين 1999، وإنّ عزل الجمل الاعتراضية عن الجمل الرئيسيّة بعلامات تنقيط كالفارزة مثلاً يعدّ دليلاً على أنّها تراكيب محمّلة بوظائف براغماتية.