

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
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NGUYỄN QUỐC THỊNH

**A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF OPENING
SPEECHES BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE
ENGLISH SPEAKERS AT SHANGRI-LA
DIALOGUES**

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Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyễn Văn Long

Examiner 1: Dr. Nguyễn Quang Ngoạn

Examiner 2: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lưu Quý Phương

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- Information Resource Center, the University of Da Nang
- The Library of University of Foreign Language Studies,
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Giving speech plays an extremely important role not only in a daily conversation but also in an international forum expanding bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the integration period with regard to sensitive issues including politics, society and especially security.

As far as I'm concerned, speeches used in a daily conversation are different from those of a political forum. Thus, in order to have effective and successful speeches at Plenary Sessions at International Institute for Strategic Studies Shangri-La Dialogue, the speakers have to provide clear and relevant messages. In addition, their intellect, understanding, political stance and consistency need to be performed. Besides, the speaker's attitude also plays an essential part in making the speech more effectively, vividly and persuasively. Not only that the goal of persuasion, the messages are more persuasively and powerfully delivered. Moreover, confirming their rapidly political stance, rejecting allegations, avoiding making conflicts among regional nations as well as making clear some misunderstandings are integral parts of English speeches used at Shangri-La Dialogue. Apart from these above-mentioned issues, these pieces of speech are mainly used to convey messages about foreign policies and strategies contributing to the promotion of peace, friendship and progress in the region and the world.

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

I realize that there are so many interesting things that need to be studied in speeches used in Shangri-La dialogues. There has been no research so far in Vietnam, to my knowledge, offering a discourse analysis of speeches in Shangri-La dialogues. From these factors, I have decided to choose “*A discourse analysis of opening speeches by native and non-native English speakers at Shangri-La dialogues*” as the topic of my M.A thesis because of its importance and significance. This thesis is carried out with the hope that the research will be a contribution to present linguistic knowledge and provide Vietnamese learners of English, especially students in the press and diplomatic fields with some useful information about the linguistic features of speeches in political forums.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 Aims

This study aims at carrying out a discourse analysis of speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue in terms of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices.

1.2.2 Objectives

This paper is designed to aim at the following objectives:

- To examine the discourse features of speeches in terms of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices used in Shangri-La Dialogue.
- To suggest some implications for teaching English to

Vietnamese learners especially students of the diplomacy and press fields.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to achieve the above – mentioned aims and objectives, the research will seek the answers to the following questions:

- What are the discourse features of English speeches used at Shangri-La Dialogue in terms of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices?
- What are the solutions for the use of English speeches in dialogue and forums?

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As implied by the title of the study, the scope of study is just limited to the analysis of English speeches delivered by representatives and officials on behalf of each nation at plenary sessions at International Institute for Strategic Studies Shangri-La Dialogue. Like all other linguistic phenomena, speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue can be examined in different aspects including the generic structure, functional grammar perspective, cohesive devices, pragmatic features, intonation and so on. Thus, they can't be dealt with thoroughly in such a scope of this study. Within the scope of this thesis, the study will not cover all of them but focus on the issues in reference to their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices.

1.4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is carried to make a small contribution to

practical applications in general as well as the lexical choice, stylistic devices and cohesive devices of prefaces in English speeches on linguistics, in particular.

1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The thesis is composed of five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Chapter 3 – Methodology and Procedure

Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5 Conclusion

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Discourse Analysis (DA) is a modern linguistic discipline that covers a wide variety of different fields. Discourse analysis examines language in use both written texts of all kinds and spoken data from conversation to highly institutionalized forms of talk. Analysis of discourse looks not only at the basic level of what is said, but takes into consideration the contexts which it is used. Thus, discourse analysts not only study language use 'beyond the sentence boundary', but also analyze 'naturally occurring' language use. It means that discourse analysis is one of the aspects which attract the interest of many linguists and researchers all over the world. Under the heading of discourse analysis, there have been a lot of studies dealing with a wide range of its subfields such as coherence, cohesion, context, conversation analysis, information structure, speech act theory and theme-rhyme. Up to present, many foreign scholars including Halliday and Hasan [32], Brown and Yule [18], Cook [21], Hatch [35], Nunan [48]... have made great contributions to the field in different approaches and methods. These publications focused on one or another aspect of discourse analysis theory which gave us an overall picture of theoretical background to examine how language is in use.

2.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Concepts of text

The term "text" is defined differently in many different

viewpoints by many linguists. The word “text” interpreted in linguistics as a type of linguistic unit beyond a sentence and happens in the form of talking or writing, listening or reading. There are some viewpoints of text by different linguists as follows:

Brown and Yule [18] saw Text as a technical term referring to “the verbal record of communicative act” or Widdowson [60] as “the linguistic product of a communicative process”

Halliday and Hasan [32] define “The word text is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole”. There are some certain features that are characteristics of texts and not found in others. Additionally, they suggest that “a text is a unit of language in use. It is not a grammatical unit like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size” and “a text is best regard as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning”.

Nunan [48] considers text as a written record of a communicative event which conveys a complete message and the size of the texts can “vary from single word to books spreading to hundreds of pages”.

Cook [21] mentions text as a stretch of language which can be interpreted in its form, out the context perceived to be meaning, unified and purposive.

2.2.2 Discourse and Discourse Analysis

a. Concepts of Discourse

There are different ways of understanding and defining discourse. Halliday [30] defines “Discourse is a

multidimensional process”

Crystal [22] states that “Discourse is a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative.”

Cook [21] claims that “Discourse is stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified and purposive.”

All the above definitions of discourse pay attention to the actual operation of language. In this paper, the term “discourse” is basically understood as a human language in use for communication.

b. Concepts of Discourse Analysis

In this part, we review some definitions related to discourse of the linguists.

Brown and Yule [18] defined that “discourse analysis is the study of the language use with reference to the social psychological factors that influence communication”

Cook [21] explained discourse analysis as “examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social and psychological context, become meaningful and unified for their users”

I view discourse analysis as the study of how and for what purposes language is used in a certain context and the linguistic means to carry out these purposes.

2.2.3. Cohesion and Coherence

a. Coherence

Coherence is the semantic, implicit relation inside the text itself. It is also the factor leading us to distinguish connected texts

that make sense from those that do not. Therefore, it is like the spirit of a text. The term coherence is discussed in various ways by linguists.

Hatch [35, p.223] claims, “Without coherence, a text is not properly a text.” According to him, coherence has been seen as one of the basic characteristics or conditions of a text.

b. Cohesion

Yule [63] considers cohesion as “the ties and connections that exist within texts”. In his opinion, it is the analysis of these cohesive ties within a text that gives us an insight into how writers structure what they want to say.

Nunan [48] states that a coherent text cannot miss text-forming devices, words and phrases that enable the writer or speaker to establish relationships across sentence or utterance boundaries and help to tie the sentences in a text together.

Additionally, Halliday and Hasan [32] clearly states, “The concept of cohesion is a semantic one; it refers to the relations of meaning that exist within the text and that define it as a text”. In their view, cohesion is expressed partly through the grammar and partly through the vocabulary. Therefore, they refer to grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Moreover, they classify cohesion into five distinct categories of cohesive devices: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction (grammatical cohesion) and lexical cohesion including collocation and reiteration.

In this thesis, I take Halliday and Hasan’s view in their book entitled “Cohesion in English”. The reasons for this choice are that in this book cohesion is presented in a systematic and

detailed way and concepts of cohesion are clearly explained

2.2.4. Syntactic and Semantic Features

a. Syntactic Features

Syntactic features are special characteristics involving the rules governing the structure of a language such as the form of words, the structure of phrases, clauses and sentences and the transformation of word order, verb pattern, voice in expressing a language and collocation...

b. Semantic Features

Semantics is the study of the relationship between linguistic form and entities in the world; that is how words literally connect to things. Semantic analysis also attempts to establish the relationships between verbal description and states of affairs in the world as accurate (true) or not, regardless of who produces that description.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1. RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive seems to be the most popular tool in doing any linguistic research since linguistics is by nature a descriptive science and the analytic method is typically used to clarify and justify their features. As mentioned above, the aim of this study was to describe and analyze speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue. Descriptive and qualitative methods were used to give a detailed description of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices of speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue. Quantitative information was also collected to show the frequency of the discourse features of speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue along with qualitative information about the discourse features of speeches.

3.2. RESEARCH PROCETURES

The research was conducted with the procedures as follows:

- Identifying the research topic to study by reviewing the previous studies thoroughly.
- Collecting documents related to the research in the library and other sources from the Internet.
- Collecting samples of speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue from the Internet.
- Presenting, describing and analyzing the data in order to

find out discourse feature of speeches.

- Suggesting some implications for language users.

3.3. SAMPLINGS

In this study, more than 30 samples of speeches used in Shangri-La dialogues selected for the analysis are in the form of written texts in the sources provided. After collecting these samples of answer, they are analyzed in terms of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices.

Table 3. Speeches used in Shangri-La dialogues by native and non-native speakers

Order	Date of Opening Dialogues	Speaker	Length
1 st	30 May 2003	Lee Kun Yew	1388
2 nd	30 May 2003	Lee Kun Yew	1447
3 rd	4 June 2004	Goh Chok Tong	1321
4 th	3 June 2005	Lee Hsien Loong	1445
5 th	2 June 2006	Lee Hsien Loong	1043
6 th	1 June 2007	Lee Hsien Loong	1198
7 th	30 May 2008	Lee Hsien Loong	1220
8 th	29 May 2009	Kevin Rudd	1410
9 th	4 June 2010	Lee Myung-Bak	1344
10 th	3 June 2011	John Chipman	1059
11 th	1 June 2012	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono	1120

12 th	31 May 2013	Nguyen Tan Dung	1645
13 th	30 May 2014	John Chipman	1553
14 th	29 May 2015	Lee Hsien Loong	1052

3.4. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.4.1. Data Collection

The data of the study appeared in the form of transcripts of Shangri-la Dialogue on the Internet. They were selected mainly from the following website :

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-s-la-s-dialogue/speeches>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/sld12-43d9>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2013-c890>

<http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2011-4eac>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2010-0a26>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2009-99ea>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2008-2906>

<http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-diaogue-2007-d1ee>

<https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2006-f1a5>

3.4.2. Data Analysis

In this study, 30 samples of speeches used at Shangri-La Dialogue selected for the analysis are in the form of written texts in the sources provided. After collecting these samples of speeches, they are analyzed in terms of their lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices.

In terms of the lexical choice, the research examined not only the use of intensifiers including very, pretty, quite and really expressing extreme meaning but also the use of cognition verbs, modal verbs and distinctive structures.

With reference to the cohesive devices, we concentrated on lexical and grammatical cohesion based on Halliday and Hassan's view.

With respect to stylistic devices, we focused on repetition and parallelism.

3.5. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In terms of reliability, the source selected to be analyzed is derived from the Internet in English. Therefore, the data source is highly reliable.

Regarding validity, this study meets all required criteria. In order to answer the three formulated research questions, the observation and investigation techniques have been chosen to be the main instruments for data collection. The samples are taken from famous English political speeches by a large number of prominent representatives of each nation. The supporting instruments such as calculation, statistics, tables, numeration are appropriately employed to eliminate irrelevant and unstable data. Hence, the degree of explicitness is definitely high.

Moreover, the patterns from the data collection are always compared with the results from theoretical background to guarantee the quality of the research.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. LEXICAL CHOICE USED IN SPEECHES BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

4.1.1. Intensifiers in English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue

Intensifier is a linguistic term referring to a type of modifiers that supplement the meaning of the lexical item that it modifies. Words like "very," "quite," "really" "extremely," etc. ... are examples of this type. Although no contribution can be made to the propositional meaning of a clause by an intensifier, this type of modifier can enhance and sometimes provides additional emotional context to the lexical item it modifies. Intensifiers belong to the category of grammatical expletives, which are also referred to as expletive attributive, or expressive attributive, due to their function as semantically vacuous supplement.

4.1.2. Most popular adverbs in English speeches

Table 4.1. Most popular adverbs in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Adverbs	Occurrence	Rate
Clearly	163	35%
Surely	146	31,3%
Obviously	157	33,7%
Total	466	100%

4.1.3. Structures used by cognition verbs

Table 4.2. The use of cognition verbs in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

The structure of cognition verbs	Occurrence	Rate
I think + (that) clause	325	58.7%
I believe + (that) clause	229	41.3%
Total	554	100%

4.1.4. Structures used by modal verbs

Table 4.3. Distribution of Modal Verbs in the English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Modal Verbs	Occurrence	Rate
will	275	46.8%
would	137	23.3%
can(not)	93	15.8%
should	32	5.4%
need to	25	4.3%
must	17	2.9%
may	9	1.5%
Total	588	100%

4.1.5. Distinctive structures of English speeches used in Shangri-la Dialogue

a. Passive voice

Table 4.4. Passive voice in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Passive	Occurrence	Rate
With actor/agent	32	25,2%
Without actor/agent	95	74,8%
Total	127	100%

b. Emphatic “Do”

The use of the emphatic *do* (occurring 45 times) is to add emphasis to an affirmative sentence for the purpose of making the listeners pay attention to or focus on the messages which the speakers are mentioning.

4.2. COHESIVE DEVICES USED IN SPEECHES BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

4.2.1. Grammatical cohesion of English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue

a. Reference in English speeches

Reference is a device which allows the reader or hearer to trace participants, entities, events, etc. in a text. In any discourse, reference help trace back the development of a proposition or an idea. Therefore, a full acquisition of reference in English is of vital importance for using of English. The use of reference as a cohesive device is tabulated in the table below:

Table 4.5. Reference in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Types of Reference	Occurrence	Rate
Personal	20	9,2%
Demonstrative	115	52,8%
Comparative	83	38%
Total of Reference	218	100%

Also in Halliday and Hasan’s view, personal reference is categorized into three types: personal pronoun, possessive pronoun and possessive determiner. From the data collected, we found that personal pronoun and possessive pronoun are more

commonly used than possessive determiner with the lowest frequency only 20 times, as illustrated in the following example: (4.45) When I was on the Iraq Study Group and visited Baghdad in September 2006, I met with *the senior CIA officer* and asked *him* how the cooperation between the CIA and the military was going, and *he* said, perhaps without thinking through exactly what *he* was saying, ‘Sir, it is so much better than when you were director.’ But what we have seen, in no small part because of our engagements in both Iraq and Afghanistan, is a dramatic improvement in the sharing of intelligence within our government.

[John Chipman, 13th Dialogue, 2014]

b. Conjunction in English speeches

Table 4.6. Conjunctions in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Types of Conjunctions	Occurrence	Rate
Additive: And, Also, Plus	473	45.7%
Adversative: But, However	286	27.6%
Causal: Because	179	17.3%
Temporal: Then, now	97	9.4%
Total	1035	100%

4.2.2. Lexical cohesion of English speeches used in Shangri-la Dialogue

Table 4.7. Cohesive Devices in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

Cohesive Devices	Occurrence	Rate
Grammatical Cohesion	1253	94.1%
Lexical cohesion	79	5.9%
Total	1332	100%

4.3. STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN SPEECHES BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

4.3.1. Repetition in English speeches

Repetition is a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer. As a rhetorical device, it could be a word, a phrase or a full sentence repeated to emphasize its significance in the entire text. Repetition is not distinguished solely as a figure of speech but more as a rhetorical device.

4.3.2. Parallelism in English speeches

Table 4.8. Parallelism in English speeches by native and non-native speakers

	Types	Occurrence	Rate
Parallelism	Part of speech level	95	19.2%
	Phrasal level	207	41.8%
	Sentential level	193	39%
Total		495	100%

4.4. SUMMARY

In this chapter, English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue are introduced, discussed and analyzed to find out their typical discourse characteristics in terms of lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices. In political speeches in Shangri-La Dialogue, they have the same purposes: to emphasize and confirm the speaker's stance, as well as to persuade or appeal to participants to come to certain decision or action. Besides, the findings about some stylistic devices including repetition and parallelism makes political speeches more interesting, convincing, emotional, memorable, and pleasing to the ear

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter reviews the development of this study. Then it discusses a number of implications for practical solutions. Following these implications is the limitation of the study and at the end of the chapter several suggestions for future research are put forward.

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

In order to meet the aims and objectives that have been set in chapter 1, we have planned out the study in details. By using a descriptive, qualitative and quantitative we have collected, read and chosen the relating data and then have classified, analyzed them in terms of the lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices. The findings gained from the analysis of English speeches allow the researcher to come to the following remarks.

In the field of lexical choice, choosing words or lexical for speeches, especially English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue is really important. The aim of choosing words is to make the speech more powerful, persuasive and memorable, to attract the listeners' attention to the new information to be conveyed, try to convince the participants of their opinion as well as show their involvement. As regard to the lexical feature, intensifier *very* and some adverbs such as *clearly*, *surely* and *obviously* are used frequently in English speeches. With regard to distinctive structures, the study focuses on mainly two types

of sentence consisting of passive form and emphatic Do.

With respect to cohesion analysis, this study has shown what principles exist that creates semantic links between sentence and paragraph boundaries. Cohesion in speeches creates one kind of texture through the ties that coordinate ideas and experiences. The most often cited types of grammatical cohesion are conjunction and reference. Another type of cohesion which functions to create texture, is lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion is one of the central devices for making speeches hang together experientially. Therefore, the findings prove that cohesion is an important aspect for creating meaning speeches.

Finally, in terms of stylistic devices, all political speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue use parallelism and repetition with the same purposes of making a bridge between the speaker and the audience, catching listeners' attention, making appeals, making things memorable, making emotional effects, reinforcing belief, showing emphasis, showing determination, showing confirmation, showing persuasion, showing promises, showing duty, showing urge, and showing clarification.

In chapter five, we present the conclusion and suggest the implication for language teaching and learning. To bring the study to an end, we state the limitation of the research and suggest unsolved problems for deeper research.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

As it has been mentioned in the introduction, the study does not only aim at theoretical findings, but more importantly, it is hoped to utilize these results to apply in reality.

It can be seen that any of the linguistic thesis is directed to

pedagogical implications. Thus, the findings may be beneficial to Vietnamese learners as well as Vietnamese teachers of English. The discourse analysis will offer them a good insight to get involved in linguistic features of English speeches. In reality, this thesis helps English learners to learn and know more about English speeches in general and especially in Shangri-La Dialogue.

First of all, with the hope that this thesis not only makes a benefit for writing persuasive and successful answers or speeches but also contributes a small part to the field of teaching and learning English to Vietnamese learners as a foreign language. What's more, it is the findings that help us to discover some of the features of English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue, which are very important for the understanding of using them.

Second, this knowledge is extremely helpful in helping students develop their language skills, especially those of reading and writing, which involve a good understanding of logical relation between elements in an answer discourse, and more broadly, in a political speech. Besides, mastering some discourse features of English speeches helps students be more aware of writing a coherent text.

Third, the awareness of the elements in English speeches undoubtedly helps English learners to avoid making mistakes in use.

5.3. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

Although great efforts have been made, this research paper certainly cannot avoid shortcomings and still leaves much to be

desired. In reality, the thesis may not have been thoroughly analyzed as it should have been owing to the limitation of time.

In addition, the materials supporting the thesis are rather limited, which makes a challenge for the researcher to reach a much more convincing conclusion.

Finally, the limited personal ability of the researcher can also account for another constraint of the research.

For these above limitations, I would highly appreciate any comments from teachers, friends and all those who are interested in this thesis in order to make it more convincing and useful.

This thesis has focused on Discourse analysis of English speeches in terms of lexical choice, cohesive devices and stylistic devices. However, within the scope of an M.A. thesis, the author cannot cover all the domains of *English speeches*. So far there have still been many other interesting aspects that have not been touched. For the sake of making further investigation into English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue, the following suggestions therefore should be taken into consideration for further research:

We would have a deeper and more comprehensive interpretation of the English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue if it were considered from the perspectives of Theme, Mood, and Transitivity.

A Study on pragmatic features of English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue.

An investigation into syntactic features of English speeches used in Shangri-La Dialogue.