Introducing SFL

Part 2:

TEXTUAL MEANING

Clause as Message

- To explore clause as the semiotic system to express message

- Principles:
  - Language/clause is linear
  - Message is structured linearly
  - Linear means: *starting* to *end*

- These imply that message is structured with *beginning* and *end.*

Two Points of View

- Readers' and Listeners' Points of View
- Speakers' and Writers' Points of View

Message from Readers' and Listeners' Points of View

- Message is structured from old and new information.

- Message in clause is started from old information and moves to new information.

  Example: ...

My uncle visited me last week.

Old ——————→ New

He stayed in my house for two days.

Old ——————→ New

Message from Speakers' and Writers' Points of View

- Message is structured from theme and rheme.

- Message in clause is started from theme and then developed to rheme.

Example:

<u>My uncle</u> visited me last week.

(Theme)   (Rheme)

<u>For two days</u>, he stayed in my house.

(Theme)   (Rheme)

Types of Theme

Topical

Textual

Interpersonal

Topical Theme

- **Unmarked**: subject
  My uncle visited me last week.
  (Theme: (Rheme)
  Top. Un.)

- **Marked**: other than subject; object, adjunct, predicator, complement
  Last week, my uncle visited me. (Rheme)
  (Theme:
  Top. Marked)

Textual Theme

- To connect, logically, the first and the second clause

- Mostly in the form of conjunction: and, then, after, although, etc

Example:

<u>Although he</u> was sick, he went to school.

(Theme: (Rheme)

Textual Top. Un.)

Interpersonal Theme

- To convey the interpersonal engagement between participants

- The engagement can be giving and demanding information, goods, or services, in the form of WH and finite in WH/polar interrogative

- It can also be to maintain the degree of intimacy between participants, in the form of vocative (grammatical function used to summon)

Example: …

John, will you   be the chairman?
(Theme: (Rheme)
Int.   Int. Top. Un.)

Continued to other sources . . . .

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