# PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DISCOURSE CONNECTIVES ANALYSIS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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*The article analyses the historical origin of the most frequent discourse connectives in the English language. Two specific groups of discourse connectives: primary and secondary are studied. Lexically frozen connectives (primary) arose from parts of speech (particles, adverbs and prepositions) or combination of two or more words. Primary connectives were not primary connectives from their origin but they gained this status during their historical development through the process of grammaticalization. They are mainly one-word, lexically frozen, grammatical expressions with primary connecting function, whereas, secondary connectives are multiword structures containing lexical word or words, functioning as sentence elements or even separate sentences. The paper investigates the historical origin of the most common connectives in English and points out that they underwent a similar process to gain a status of present-day discourse connectives.*

***Key words:*** *discourse connectives, discourse relations, primary discourse connectives, secondary discourse connectives, historical origin, grammaticalization.*

*Лисецька Ю.В.*

**Аналіз первинних і вторинних дискурсивних конекторів в історії англійської мови**

*У статті розглядаються найбільш поширені первинні та вторинні дискурсивні конектори в історії англійської мови, їх походження від інших частин мови: часток, прислівників і прийменників або від словосполучень. Стверджується, що первинні дискурсивні конектори набувають цього статусу на одному з етапів процесу граматикалізації. Досліджено, що первинні конектори здебільшого односкладові, лексично сталі граматичні вирази, які виконують з'єднувальну функцію. Встановлено, що вторинні конектори — багатослівні структури, до складу яких входять компоненти, що функціонують як частини речення або як окреме речення.*

***Ключові слова:*** *дискурс, дискурсивні конектори, дискурсивні відношення, первинні дискурсивні конектори, вторинні дискурсивні конектори, історичне походження, граматикалізація.*

*Лисецкая Ю.В.*

**Анализ первичных и вторичных дискурсивных коннекторов в истории английского языка**

*В статье рассматриваются наиболее распространенные первичные и вторичные дискурсивные коннекторы в истории английского языка, их происхождение от других частей речи: частиц, наречий и предлогов или от словосочетаний. Утверждается, что первичные дискурсивные коннекторы приобретают этот статус на определенном этапе процесса грамматикализации. Исследовано, что первичные коннекторы это односложные, лексически устойчивые грамматические выражения, которые выполняют соединительную функцию. Установлено, что вторичные коннекторы — многословные структуры, в состав которых входят компоненты, функционирующие как части предложения или даже как отдельные предложения.*

***Ключевые слова:*** *дискурс, дискурсивные коннекторы, дискурсивные отношения, первичные дискурсивные коннекторы, вторичные дискурсивные коннекторы, историческое происхождение, грамматикализация.*

## Introduction

The linguistic research focuses on creating and analyzing big language data. One of the frequently discussed topics in discourse is the detection of discourse connectives (DC). However, DC are defined very differently in various linguistic approaches, which is mainly due to their complexity and hardly definable boundaries. There are several definitions highlighting various language aspects of DC — concerning their part-of-speech membership, lexical stability, phonological behaviour, position in the sentence etc. The need for a clearly defined

category of discourse connectives arose mainly during the annotation of discourse relations in the discourse pointing out several problematic issues.

**Theoretical background**

Semantic, syntactic and pragmatic properties of DC are analysed in the works of B. Fraser, O. Kotov, G. Redeker, D. Schiffrin. The prototypical connectives are usually defined as monomorphemic, prosodically independent, phonologically short or reduced words [17, 23] that are syntactically separated from the rest of the sentence [15, 46], not integrated into the clause structure [4, 101] and that usually occupy the first position in the sentence [16, 240]. Considering part-of-speech membership, some authors classify connectives as conjunctions (both subordinating and coordinating), prepositional phrases and adverbs [13, 931], others also as particles and nominal phrases [1, 47], others include also some types of idioms (like *all things considered*) [9, 935].

The **goal** of the paper is to analyze present-day primary discourse connectives (*and, if, but*) and secondary discourse connectives (*because, however, therefore*) according to their historical origin through which we see what is happening in discourse in the contemporary language.

The **object** of the paper is primary and secondary DC.

The **subject** of the paper is the formation of primary and secondary DC in the historical perspective.

Theoretical, empirical, linguistic **methods** allow to generalize, systemize the material of the article and illustrate the development of primary and secondary DC in the diachronic aspect.

**Results and Discussions**

DC belong to the category of discourse relational tools which speakers use during a conversation in order to reach the specific goal. These are linguistic elements that point out semantic and rhetorical discourse relations such as reason, result, contrast or even specification. They are typically used at the beginning of the sentence, prosodically highlighted from the context with the help of pauses or intonation and can be monomorphenic isolated from the other parts of the phrase [2, 16].

The most problematic issue is, according to which general criteria, to state the boundaries between connectives and non-connectives as well as between explicitness and implicitness of discourse relations. An explicit discourse relation is usually defined as a relation between two segments of text that is signaled by a particular language expression [14, 12]. However, there are examples of clear discourse relations expressed by explicit language means that signifiantly differed from those typical examples of connectives. Such means included multiword phrases often have the function of sentence elements (*due to this, for this reason, the main condition was, in the same breath*). Therefore, it is necessary to answer the question whether such expressions may be also considered as DC and be important elements of discourse.

Multiword phrases, which consist of several components (*this means, the result was*) are the most difficult to define. Despite the distinct properties of discourse relations in the text, they extremely differ from typical lexically stable connectives (*but* or *and*). DC such as *therefore, in spite of this* are historically multiword. These are so-called stable prepositional phrases raised from the combination of the preposition *for* with the pronoun *this* or the preposition *in spite of* with the pronoun *this* [11, 191].

For the analysis, six most frequent English DC have been chosen and their historical origin have been investigated (*Table 1*):

*Table 1* demonstrates that none of the selected DC was a connective from its origin. All of them arose from other parts of speech or structuring particles, or from combination of several words. The given expressions in certain combinations and in certain forms are begun to be used as connectives and they undergo the process of grammaticalization (in different time period). Sometimes the grammaticalization is not fully completed, which causes the discrepancies within some parts of speech.

*Table 1*

**Historical origin of the most frequent DC in the English language**

| English Present-Day Connectives | Historical Origin |
| --- | --- |
| *and* | From Old English "*and (ond)*", originally meaning "*thereupon, next*" from Proto-Germanic "*unda*" |
| *however* | From Middle English "*hou-ever*" (the combination of adverbs *hou* and *ever*) — not important how, however (late 14th century) |
| *because* | From Middle English "*bi-cause*" (combination of preposition *bi* and and noun *cause*) "*by cause*", often followed by a subordinate clause introduced by *that* or *why*. |
| *if* | From Proto Indo-European pronominal stem "i" Old English "*-if (-yf)*" — if |
| *therefore* | Combination of "there" and a preposition "fore" (an Old English and Middle English collateral form of the preposition) meaning "*in consequence of that*" |
| *but* | Combination of West Germanic "be- "by" and "utana" "out, outside, from without"; not used as conjunction in Old English ("*būtan, būton*" — except, if not; Middle English — "*but*", "*buten*", "*boute*", "*bouten*") |

A special place in the study of the historical origin of the DC belongs to the primary connectives. According to the structure, these are conjunctions, particles and one-word parts of speech. Primary connectives are synsemantic or functional words, so they are not part of the sentence structure as its elements [10, 47]. Primary connectives pass all stages of the grammaticalization process. They arise from other parts of the language: *by cause → because, for the reason that → for, never the less → nevertheless* etc. But in the process of the historical development they turn into a one-word expression [14, 23].

Thus, a change in the lexical value of the DC occurs and their new form and function are fixed. They fulfill their most important initial function in the discourse — combine parts of the text.

At the same time, primary connectives are not a strictly closed class of expressions. They are rather a scale mapping the process of their grammaticalization. This process is sometimes not fully completed so the primary connectives do not have to fulfill all the characteristics stated above. Some of the primary connectives are still written as two words (*as if, so that*). The main argument here is that they fulfill most of the aspects and that their primary function in discourse is to connect two pieces of a text [8, p.140].

Another specific group among DC may be distinguished — the secondary connectives. Not only the primary connectors are expressions that signal the discourse relations. There are also multiword phrases like *this is the reason why, generally speaking, the result is, it was caused by, this means that* etc. These phrases also convey the discourse relations in discourse. But they are significantly different from the primary connectives with the feature of the formation of the inflected forms (*for this reason — for these reasons*) or modifications (*the main / important / only condition is*). Secondary connectives are phrases that include the lexical component or components. They function as sentence elements (*due to this*) and as a separate sentence (*the result was clear*) [14, 24]. In terms of relation to parts of speech, secondary connectives are considered to be a heterogeneous group of expressions. They often include:

— nouns — *difference, reason, condition, cause, exception, result, consequence, conclusion*;
— verbs — *to mean, to contrast, to explain, to cause, to justify, to precede, to follow*;
— prepositions — *due to, because of, in spite of, in addition to, unlike, on the basis of*.

Thus, the secondary connectives did not pass all stages of the grammaticalization process, although they reflect some of its characteristics (gradual stabilization or preference of one form or gradual weakening of the original lexical meaning) [18, 289].

The historical forms of the most common primary DC (*and, if, but*) and secondary DC (*however, because, therefore*) are recognized in the English discourse and exemplified below:

(1)
þenden wordum wēold wine Scyldinga;
*lēof landfruma lange āhte.*
*Þǣr æt hȳðe stōd hringedstefna*
*īsiġ **ond** ūtfūs æþelinges fær*

[3, lines 30–33].

In the sentence (1) Old English form ***ond*** is used as a conjunction. This primary DC performs a conjugating function and has the meaning "and": "…and ready to set out, a prince's ship".

(2)
***And*** *weddede the queene Ypolita,*
***And*** *broghte hir hoom with hym in his contree,*
*With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee,*
***And*** *eek hir yonge suster Emelye.*
***And*** *thus with victorie **and** with melodye* [7, The Knight's Tale lines 10–14].

Example (2) illustrates primary DC ***and*** in the Middle English discourse. It is used for enumeration of homogeneous parts of the sentence. The frequent DC usage is typical in the Middle English period.

(3)
***And*** *then at last, when homeward I shall drive,*
*Rich with the spoils of nature, to my hive,*
*There will I sit, like that industrious fly,*
*Buzzing thy praises; which shall never die*
*Till death abrupts them, **and** succeeding glory*
*Bid me go on in a more lasting story* [6, sect. 13].

In Early Modern English, the primary DC ***and*** remains in the same form. Examples (2) – (3) even represent the same meaning. It is noticed that DC ***and*** can join the parts of the complex sentence.

Another example (4) presents the usage of the secondary DC ***however***. Thus, there is just the beginning of the development of this DC in Middle English as it is the combination of adverbs *hou* and *ever*. It preserves the meaning of "however". Having analyzed sentence (4), we see that the author gives the condition in the request and using the secondary DC ***however*** signals the contrast of the relationships in the utterance.

(4)
*If there be a common nature, that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all?* ***However,*** *I am sure there is a common spirit, that plays within us, yet makes no part in us* [6, sect. 32].

Secondary present-day DC ***because*** has the same historical formation (combination of preposition *bi* and and noun *cause*). The first examples are also found in Middle English:

(5)
*This eclipse procedeth **bicause** of defaulte of light / and it happeth in this manere* [12].

In the sentence (5) **bicause** explains the reason of the eclipse that results into the default. We can observe cause-and-effect relationship which is conveyed with the help of secondary DC **bicause**. In Early Modern English DC **because** is used in the meaning of "because of what":

(6)
*A great obscurity herein, **because** no medal or emperor's coin enclosed, which might denote the date of their interments* [5, chapt. 2].

In the sentence (6) **because** as a secondary DC demonstrates that a great obscurity is caused by the enclosure of any medal or emperor's coin. This DC shows the cause of the phenomenon.

Primary DC **if** has different forms in the process of its development:

(7)
*Bēowulf maðelode, bēotwordum spræc*
*nīehstan sīðe: "Ić ġenēðde fela*
*gūða on ġeogoðe; ġȳt ić wylle,*
*frōd folces weard, fǣhðe sēċan,*
*mǣrðu fremman, **ġif** mec se mansceaða* [3, lines 2510–2014].

Old English form **ġif** used in the example (7), indicates the condition under which Beowulf will defend his folk and meets with the enemy. In Middle English we meet the form **if** with the same meaning:

(8)
*And **if** ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,*
*Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere*
*That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere* [7, The Knight's Tale, lines 1396–1399].

In the example (8) the knight underlines the condition using the primary DC **if** applying to his lady and stresses on his further actions.

(9)
*If there be a common nature, that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all?* [6, sect. 32]

Example (9) demonstrates the usage of the DC **if**, indicating the real condition under which scattered and divided individuals can be united and tied, emphasizing the common nature.

In the sentence (10) the Middle English form **þere-fore** of the secondary present-day DC **therefore** is used:

(10)
*As it haþe bue in olde time ʒore*
*And erkeneþ what þis auctor seiþ **þere-fore***
*This storie is seide not for þat wyues scholde*
*Folowen Crisilde as in humilite* [7, The Clerk's Tale, lines 1140–1143].

Combination of "there" and a preposition "fore" convey the meaning "in consequence of that". In Early Modern English **þere-fore** changes into **therefore** (11) as the result of the grammaticalization process:

(11)
*Whilst, **therefore**, they direct their devotions to her, I offered mine to God* [6, sect. 3].

DC **therefore** explicates the meaning "as a consequence" in example (11) and is used to sum up a statement. The speaker suggests his devotions to God not to the girl (woman) using DC **therefore** to stress on cause-and-effect relationship.

In example (12) primary connective **būton** is used as a preposition, but not a conjunction. It has the value "except" and divides another statement which explains difference of the sword from regular man weapon. DC **būton** provides additional information:

(12)
***būton** hit wæs māre ðonne ǣniġ mon ōðer*
*tō beadulāce ætberan meahte,*
*gōd ond ġeatoliċ ġīganta ġeweorc.*
*Hē ġefēng þā fetelhilt freca Scyldinga*
*hrēoh ond heorogrim hringmǣl ġebrægd...* [3, lines 1560–1564].

Example (13) demonstrates the usage of DC **but** in the Middle English discourse as a coordinating conjunction and shows the contrast between author's desirable action and obligation ("*he must endure*"):

(13)
***But** since that he was fallen in the snare,*
*He must endure (as other folk) his care* [7, The Miller's tale, lines 123–124].

In example (14) DC **but** has the value "but", indicating the opposition of related proposals. It contradicts the author's opinion about the church:

(14)
***But**, to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle; there is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason...* [6, Sect. 5].

*Table 1* and examples (1) – (14) confirm that connectives of the English language come from other parts of speech, mostly from the combination

of conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions, or from other phrases.

Many of them (not only presented in Table 1 have a prepositional origin: *but, if, therefore, because.* The rest comes from phrases consisting of two or more components, such as a combination of the adverb and pronoun (*how-ever*) or adverb and preposition (*there-fore*).

However, there are many other English DC with a similar structure, which are formed in a similar way: *thereafter, thereupon, therein, thereby, thereof, thereto* and others that arise in the Middle English period.

**Conclusions**

The paper introduced the analysis of historical formation of DC in the English language. It supports the idea that present-day lexically frozen connectives (primary) arise from other parts of speech (especially from particles, adverbs and prepositions) or combinations of two or more words. In other words, primary connectives are not primary connectives from their origin but they gain this status during their historical development — through the process of grammaticalization. At the same time, there are two specific groups of DC: primary and secondary. They differ mainly in the fact in which place on the scale they occur and whether the process of grammaticalization is already completed (or is in its final phase) or whether this process has just started. In this respect, primary connectives are mainly one-word, lexically frozen, grammatical expressions with primary connecting function and secondary connectives are mainly multiword structures containing lexical (autosemantic) word or words, functioning as sentence elements, clause modifiers or even separate sentences. Both primary and secondary connectives are defined on the basis of their context independency (on their suitability to function as connectives for given semantic relation in many various contexts).

So, it may be observed that the present-day secondary connectives have very similar structures as the former ones and that the process of connective formation repeats across the historical development. In very simple terms, the secondary connectives often become primary through the long process of grammaticalization. Simultaneously, some new secondary connectives are rising, as some old primary connectives are disappearing. These expressions gradually lose their position in the English language and then completely disappeared. In this respect, DC represent a dynamic complex or a set of expressions with a stable centre (containing grammaticalized primary connectives) and variable periphery (containing non-grammaticalized secondary connectives).

Since the present-day primary connectives arise from similar phrases or parts of speech like secondary connectives (and very often from combination of several words that gradually merged together — with some possible losses), we look at the secondary connectives as at the potential primary connectives in the future. In contrast to secondary connectives primary connectives pass all the stages of the grammaticalization process.

Taking everything into consideration, the paper contributes to discussions on DC and investigates them from the diachronic point of view. It argues that the historical development of discourse connectives may point out many things about general tendencies in present-day structuring of discourse.

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