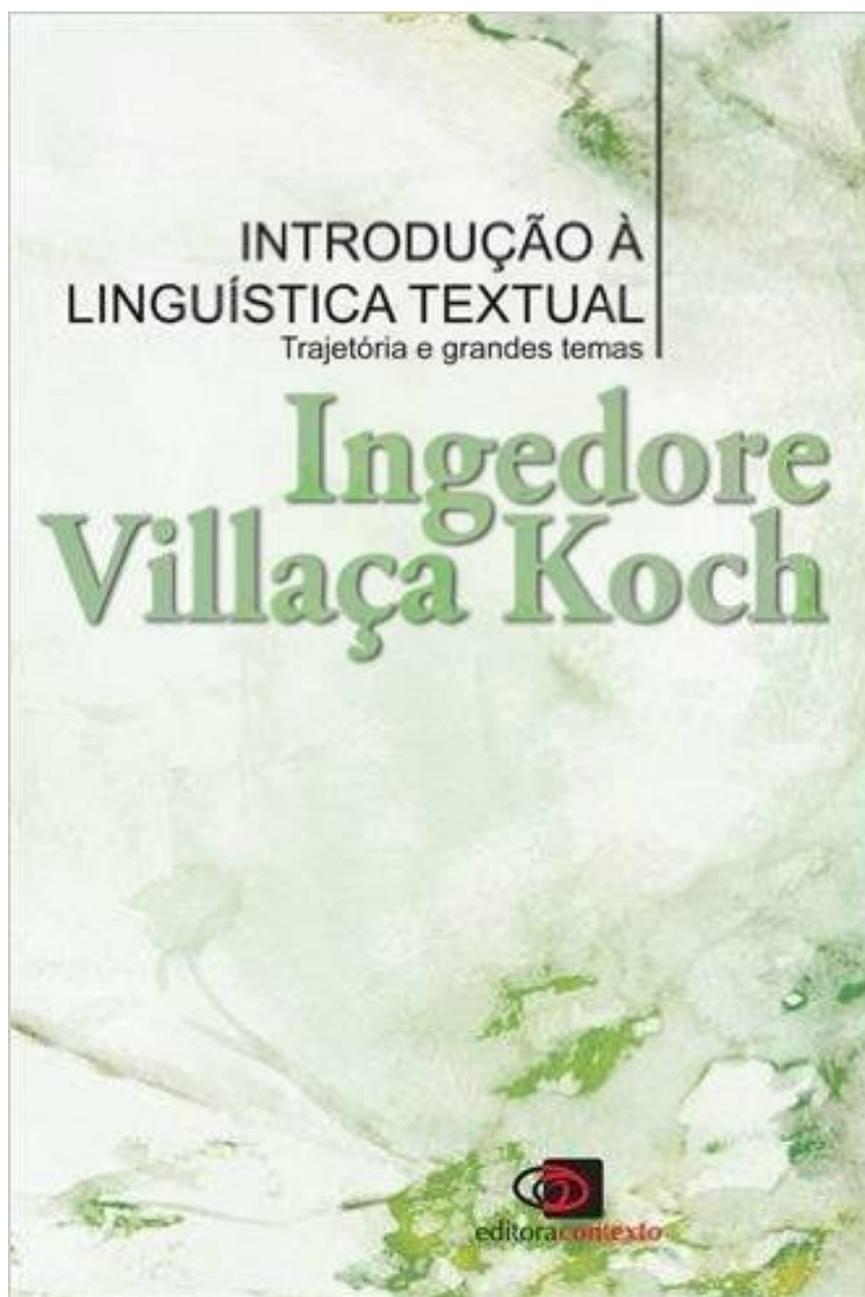


KOCH, Ingedore Villaça (2015). *Introdução à linguística textual: Trajetória e grandes temas* [Introduction to Text Linguistics: Trajectory and Major Themes]. São Paulo: Contexto, 173 p.

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Introdução à linguística textual: trajetória e grandes temas [Introduction to Text Linguistics: Trajectory and Major Themes] is the most recent book by one of the inescapable figures of Brazilian linguistics: Ingedore Villaça Koch. This groundbreaking work was first published in 2004, by Martins Fontes publishing house. The current edition, dated 2015 (and published by Contexto), has been revised and reformulated.

In this book, by adopting a scientific position that is distant from traditional grammars and by scrutinizing, in an innovative way, the contributions of cognitive and social sciences in the establishment of this disciplinary field, the author shares with her vast reading audience her concept of Text Linguistics. Koch summarizes the world's most important works, the pillars of this new science and highlights how, in the past few decades, the concept of text has changed, causing a repercussion in the evolution of this linguistic syllabus, which started from a grammatically-based approach, evolved to a discursive pragmatics approach, and is now anchored in a social cognitivist and interactional dynamics.

The book is divided in two major sections: in the first one, the author outlines the view of Text Linguistics' trajectory, giving special attention to the text's interphrasal and grammatical analysis (namely the pure text grammar approach and the semantics approach) in order to present, in a detailed way, the pragmatic turn it endured, followed, sometime after, by a social cognitivist and interactional turn. In this initial section, the author also approaches the principles of building text comprehension, namely the processes for creating text cohesion and coherence.

In the second section, the linguist presents the main aspects of this subject: referentiation; connectors; text and discourse strategies for the elaboration of meaning; connectors in text progression; intertextuality, and, lastly, speech genres.

These two essential parts of the book are naturally placed between the introduction and the conclusion, sections which also deserve special attention because, unlike most linguistics handbooks, which tend to use those introductory and closing spaces to simply present and synthesize what has been presented, in *Introduction to Text Linguistics: Trajectory and major themes*, that just does not happen.

In the introduction, Koch awakens and captivates our attention by asking some very pertinent questions that vouch for the place and the role of text linguistics, and she

commits herself to clarify, throughout the text, the central role of that science or language theory, which, she forecasts, is in a stage of undeniable consolidation. Following that challenge with which we are faced, the author makes a critical review of several text conceptions that, throughout the times, have been the base for Text Linguistic studies. She lists its evolution by decade, from the start, and notes, at the same time, the top names of European and Brazilian linguists who have contributed to the evolution of the transphrasal and grammatical text analysis in the sociocognitive and interactional based processing.

In part I, Inter-phrasal and grammatical text analysis, the author outlines the initial stage of Text Linguistics, with its initial contributions dating from the second half of 1960s to the 1970s, when attention was primarily given to interphrasal mechanisms of generativist, structuralist and functionalist nature and when the text was looked at as a series of linguistic units formed by an uninterrupted pronominal concatenation. In this respect, the author refers to the contributions of Halliday & Hasan (*Cohesion in Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman, 1976) on the anaphoric and cataphoric coreferential processes and of the German linguists Isenberg (*Der Begriff "Text" in der Sprachtheorie*. Berlin: Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1968). (ASG-Beritch; 8) and Vater (*Determinantien*. Trier: Laut, 1979) on associative anaphors, although limited to bigger or smaller chunks of text, with no attempt for progression. In this hesitant stage of Text Linguistics, there emerged the need for the elaboration of text grammars, such as the already existing sentence grammars, based on the pre-assumption that there exists a text competence beyond the linguistic competence of Chomskian base. The virtuality of that fresh approach was to take the text as a linguistic unit, hierarchically superior (or elevated, in the author's own words). In favor of that perspective, the text grammars of Weinrich (*Tempus: besprochene und ezahtle Welt*. Stuttgart: Koklhammer, 1964. [The 1971 edition is the modified edition of this work.]), Petöfi (Zu einer Grammatischen Theorie spralischer texte. *LiLi*, v. 2, n.5, pp.31-58,1973) and Van Dijk (*Some Aspects of Text Grammars*. The Hague: Mouton,1972) came to be.

To this first stage followed a semantics approach that supported that only text semantics could explain the text's structure of meaning and meaning relations. These assumptions have been largely developed by Dressler (*Einführung in die Textlinguistik*.

Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1972), Charolles (Introduction aux problèmes de la cohérence des textes. *Langue Française*, n. 38, 1978, pp.7-41) who, in 1978, presents the macro-rules of text coherence, and Fillmore (The Case for Case. In: BACH, E.; HARMS, R. (Eds.). *Universals in Linguistic Theory*. New York: Rinehart & Winston, 1968, pp.1-88), among others.

However, from the mid-seventies, the pragmatics perspective manages to impose itself, both from theories of a communicative base and from the postulates of the *acts of speech* and *verbal activity* theories, using that fresh view to highlight the need to look at the text as the product of a more complex activity, as the instrument to perform the communicative and social intents of the speaker, as defended, namely by Heinemann in 1982. The contributions of some European linguists are highlighted: the German linguist Wunderlich, supporter of the verbal activity theory, who has introduced a number of illustrative questions, namely on the concept of *deixis*; Isenberg (Einige Grundbegriffe für eine linguistische Texttherorie. In: DANÉS, F.; VIEHWEGER, D. (Eds.). *Probleme der textgrammatik*. Berlin: Akademik Verlag, 1976, pp.47-146), who defends the importance of text plans and communicational purposes; Schmidt (*Texttheorie: Probleme einer Linguistik der sprachlichen Kommunikation*. München: Fink, 1973), who, in turn, highlights the need to understand the text in its socio-communicative dimension; the ideas defended by Heinemann & Viehweger (*Textlinguistik: eine Einführung*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1991), which are centered in the pragmatics concept of “verbal action” and sustain the idea of text as the result of a communication process; and, lastly, van Dijk, who, in his work *Studies in the Pragmatics of Discourse* (Berlin: Mouton, 1981) and in several after that, defends the need to consider “functional speech relations,” which are in the base of pragmatics coherence.

Following this chronological *démarche*, we are presented with the cognitivist turn, which takes place in the 1980s and sustains that all texts are considered a result of mental operations. To consolidate this idea, it is essential to consider the work of Beaugrande & Dressler (*Einführung in die Textlinguistik*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1981), who present this multiplicity of interconnected cognitive operations that are subjacent to text elaboration and production. The new feature of this approach is the perception that text processing is strategic and dissociable from the speakers’ characteristics and from

the episodic and encyclopedic knowledge that they bring to text construction. The international strategies are reinforced, in that sense, as socioculturally determined, with the purpose of making verbal interaction successful. Highlight falls on the save face strategies, which imply the use of mitigation and politeness formulas, among others.

Following that line and vision, there comes along the socio-cognitive-interactionist perspective, based on the interiorization that cognitive processes are not exclusively individual, but concomitantly social. This idea was widely sustained by Koch in a previous collaborative work (KOCH, I.; LIMA, M. Sócio-cognitivismo. In: MUSSALIN, F.; BENTES, A. *Introdução à linguística: fundamentos epistemológicos, filosóficos e modelos de análise*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2004), which, standing by the interactionist approach, deems the verbal actions as a “commitment” in social contexts, with social purposes and with socially distributed roles, thus reinforcing the socio-interactionist dimension of language.

In the last chapter of Part I, the author makes an accurate review of the principles of text construction of meaning from the work of Beaugrande & Dressler (1981), explaining the concept of text cohesion and illustrating it with meaningful examples of elements that can have a cohesive function in the text. Koch also explains the concepts of coherence, situationality, informativeness, intertextuality, intentionality and acceptability, which are present in Beaugrande & Dressler’s postulations, so that she can question them afterwards, criticizing, for instance, the separation the authors make between text-centered and speaker-centered factors, defending the introduction of other factors.

Based on Marcuschi (*Linguística do texto: o que é e como se faz*. Recife: Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, 1983), she supports the introduction of “contextual factors” that contribute to anchoring the text in certain communication situations. On the other hand, she introduces concepts of consistency and relevancy from the works of Giora (Segmentation and Segment Cohesion: on the Thematic organization of text. *Text*, v. 3, n.2, pp.155-181, 1983) and adds the relevance of the concept of “focalization,” on which the author has worked in a joint study with Travaglia (KOCH; TRAVAGLIA, *A coerência textual*. São Paulo: Contexto, 1987) in order to support that, in the sociocognitive and interactionist approach, coherence should be faced as a “placed” construction of the speakers.

In Part II, the reader finds the detailed explanation of the previously approached concepts, now explained with the clarity and wisdom that result from the long and remarkable teaching experience of Ingedore Villaça Koch, who, with the help of pertinent examples and following the advice of classical rhetoric, aims at capturing the reader's undivided attention.

She first deals with referentiation as a speech activity, a theme that was largely handled by Koch and Marcuschi in several papers and that finds its support in the assumption that the discursiveness or textualization of the world is, in itself, a process of (re)construction of reality. Both for the ways of activating referents in text model and for referent progression, the author clarifies the different referentiation strategies, systematizing and exemplifying with peculiar and updated texts from the Brazilian press.

Systematization is one of the most efficient pedagogical resources used by Koch to distinguish the cognitive-discursive functions from the nominal reference expressions, allowing her to demonstrate that the “referents” are speech objects built and rebuilt continuously in verbal interaction.

To approach text coordination or progression formulas, the author uses her encyclopedic knowledge and presents some examples of verse from the renowned Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa, followed by poems by the *carioca*¹ Olavo Bilac, excerpts from Machado de Assis's and Father António Vieira's work, showing how literary eclecticism can coexist with utterances from our everyday lives, thus confirming that the linguistic processes and strategies are present in all sorts of text.

In this work, the chapter on textual and discursive strategies is of utmost interest. These strategies have a number of cognitive and interactive roles and help understand and decode utterances, therefore aiming at a successful interaction. The examples chosen by the author, as stated before, stand for the diversity of sources and are completed with examples of the spoken language, taken from the NURC project's *corpus*. Utterance strategies such as insertion, repetition, rhetorical paraphrasing and constituents displacing are, therefore, carefully defined and illustrated with enlightening examples (in which we highlight repetition and rhetorical paraphrasing) that, as justified by the linguist, aim at following the Portuguese popular saying “água mole em pedra

¹ TN. *Carioca* is a person from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

dura” [constant dripping wears the stone], as they contribute to reinforce the argumentation.

When the author approaches the metadiscursive strategies, she starts from other authors’ proposals so as to elaborate, in a clearer and simpler way, her classification proposal in three different categories: the meta-formulative, which include corrections, paraphrases and reorganizing repetitions; the modalizing or meta-pragmatic, which aim at saving the speaker’s face and use mainly mitigation and illocutionary unaccountability strategies; and, lastly, the meta-enunciative, in which the speaker comments on his/her own utterance.

For the strategies to be effective, it is naturally necessary the use of text connectors or discursive markers, which is why the author, in that capital moment of the book, pins in the detailed and systematized description of the different kinds of markers, categorizing them according to their functions: propositional, discursive-argumentative, textual and metadiscursive content markers. Because they are carefully defined and exemplified, it will be easier for any student to understand those central issues of Text Linguistics.

At the end of Part II, the author writes a little about two central themes for Text Linguistics: intertextuality and speech genres, themes that have been approached in some of the author’s previous works. She summons the main works of the French linguists to debate matters of implicit intertextuality, clarifying and enhancing the centrality of the notion of “détournement” (GRÉSILLON, A.; MAINGUENEAU, D. *Polyphonie, proverbe et détournement, ou un proverbe peut en cacher un autre. Langages*, v. 19, n. 73, p.112-125, 1984), connecting it with the notion of polyphony, which she defends to be ampler than intertextuality.

The last thought on text genres is a brilliant synthesis of previous works, from Bakhtin’s initial studies to the most recent works of the Geneva school, in which she defends the importance of knowledge and the interiorization of the multiplicity of existing genres, which exist to enable speakers in the acquisition of a better and broader linguistic, communicational and, most of all, interactional competence.

The work ends with a reflection on the future of Text Linguistics. Koch, as one of its main founders in Brazil, theorizes, with competence and authority, on the growing need for Text Linguistics to build bridges, not only with Human Sciences, but also with

other fields of knowledge, aiming for an integrated science, multi- and transdisciplinary, in permanent dialogue with all the other areas whose study object is the social construction of speakers, knowledge and language, i.e., social interaction.

I will conclude by saying that there are works that we should recommend; works that, by their rigor, transparency and conciseness, become, in certain subjects, what we usually call “a bible.” This book is, undoubtedly, the “bible” for all who want to get to know or want to deepen their knowledge of Text Linguistics. Its strong distribution in Brazil and in Portugal is proof of its relevance in all linguistic studies on the Portuguese

Translated by Luísa Santos, to whom I thank for her professional and careful work;

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Received September 02,2015

Accepted March 10,2016