CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.0 Introduction

The interest in texts is not a novelty of this century. On the contrary, the roots of modern linguistics (in the countries of European culture) can be traced in ancient Greek language philosophy, where the text occupied a central position, for example, also as the object of rhetoric.

3.1 Early Conceptions Of Contrastive Analysis

Analysis of contrasts is a fundamental method of linguistic description. The necessity of conducting contrastive analysis (CA) for pedagogical purposes has long been recognised and a host of valuable works, both theoretical and practical has been published (Nickel, 1971).

The term contrastive analysis was first used by Benjamin Whorf in an article called 'Language and Logic'. Four years later Charles Fries published his influential book Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language (1945), which together with Weinreich's
Languages In Contact (1953) and Robert Lado's Linguistics Across Cultures played a major role in the rise and development of contrastive linguistics. Both Fries and Lado were convinced that contrastive studies were indispensable tools in language teaching. It has long been recognised that CA can provide valuable insights, pertinent not only in teaching the languages being contrasted but also in machine translation and language topology studies. At the same time it has been felt that CA is not dependent upon any specific linguistic model as long as the two languages in question are described within the same theoretical framework.

In the 1970's and 80's various theoretical frameworks have been utilized in comparing two languages for the purpose of application in teaching or in translating. Thus there exist contrastive studies in the structural framework, traditional frame-work, transformational framework and stratificational. On the other hand certain scholars are more reluctant to see in CA a possible ally in foreign language teaching by saying that the results of CA, that is, spelling out differences and similarities between languages have less bearing upon the results obtained in the process of teaching these languages than error
analysis, which in Corder's opinion provide a more reliable sort of assistance.

Linguists are still of the opinion that CA severely suffers from a lack of theory which would provide not only a conceptual framework to operate within but which would also set forth CA independent of practical applications, that is, not geared towards either machine translation or language teaching. A properly constructed theory of comparing languages will yield results relevant to and applicable in, both translation and language teaching.

3.2 Classical CA

To date even studies conducted within the framework of various variants of transformational grammar remain but taxonomic in nature in so far as they aim at producing inventories of differences and possibly similarities either between parallel places of compared grammatical systems or, at the best, between various kinds of rules operating at various levels of derivation.
3.3 Krzeszowski and CGG

Krzeszowski in advocating the construction of a theory of CA capable of incorporating a set of criteria for deciding what is to be contrasted in the compared languages, suggested that

"equivalent constructions have identical deep structures even if on the surface they are markedly different".

(Krzeszowski, 1971)

She did not conceive deep structure in the same way as Chomsky did. She viewed deep structure as a more abstract level of representation synonymous with semantic representation. To avoid confusion she in fact abandoned the term 'deep structure' and adopted the term 'input structure' which is synonymous with semantic structure.

The identity of semantic structures for equivalent sentences in any two languages explains, at least in part, the bilingual informant's intuitions concerning the decisions as to which two sentences in two languages are equivalent and which are not. The ability to recognise equivalent sentences into languages constitutes a part of a bilingual person's competence.
Krzeszowski proposed the construction of what was called Contrastive Generative Grammar (CGG), a device which enumerates equivalent sentences in the compared languages, and in doing so provides them with structural descriptions and indicates those places of the derivations which are identical and those which are different. CGG assigns the status of equivalence to those sentences only which have identical inputs in the two languages.

Three types of comparisons are distinguishable in classical contrastive analysis:

(1) comparisons of particular equivalent systems across languages, for instance, the system of personal pronouns, of articles, of verbs, etc.

(2) comparisons of equivalent constructions, for instance, interrogative constructions relative clauses, negative constructions, nominal phrases etc.

(3) in contrastive analysis based on transformational generative grammars, comparisons of equivalent rules, for instance, subject raising from the embedded sentences, adjective placement, interrogative inversion etc.
The comparison usually covers such properties of the rules as their obligatory or optional status, their ordering and their presence or absence in the compared languages.

Classical analyses attempt to match equivalent constructions in the compared languages in cases where they are unable to match equivalent systems. This task, however, cannot be adequately performed in a large number of structurally ambiguous or semantically vague constructions in the compared languages without resorting to stretches of text longer than sentence. Classical contrastive analysis, being based upon sentence grammars, are inherently incapable of handling this task. Thus the failure of classical contrastive analysis to find equivalent systems in comparisons of particular constructions.

The literature concerning contrastive analysis is vast. A review of the literature reveals some measure of variety in the conception of what it is and consequently what its value is. Some linguists view it as offering a psycholinguistic projection of what are the likely problems for a second language learner. Others see it as serving to explain mistakes made by second language learners. Still others see it as a tool for the exploration of linguistic
universals. The literature also shows that these different conceptions of CA are not sufficiently integrated to make them complementary. Traditional CA is characterised by the methodological principle that the structure of languages to be contrasted will have to be described first by means of one and the same theoretical model and these descriptions are then contrasted for the specification of similarities and dissimilarities. In most cases the procedure is one of the following five:

(1) the same categories of the two languages are contrasted;

(2) the equivalents for a certain category of the target language are sought in the second language;

(3) rules or hierarchies of rules in the two languages are compared;

(4) the analysis starts from a semantic category whose surface realizations are sought in the languages to be contrasted; or

(5) the analysis starts from various uses of the language.

The procedure that is followed in this study
can be best described as a combination of (1) and (2) above.

3.4 Text Linguistics And Recent Trends In CA

The attempt to tackle issues related to the question of subject matter (meaning) and text structure (context) led in the 70’s to the growth of the field of enquiry known as text linguistics in which the concept of the high-level organization of text (the macro-structure) plays an important role. This is emphasised for example, by van Dijk and Kintsch,

"We distinguish between two different levels of meaning in discourse viz between that of its actual sentences and sequences of sentences, and that of parts of the discourse or of the discourse as a whole. The latter kind of meaning structures will be called macro-structures".

(van Dijk and Kintsch, 1977:67)

and by van Dijk alone.

"It seems to follow that a notion such as topic of discourse cannot simply be explained in terms of semantic relations between successive sentences. Rather each of the sentences may contribute one element such that a certain ‘structure’ of these elements define the topic of that sequence ... These and other observations have led to the assumption that we should postulate an additional level of semantic description viz., that of semantic macro-structures".

(van Dijk, 1977a:6)
Unfortunately however, text linguistics started off on the wrong methodological foot. An early central tenet of the approach was that text can in some sense be accommodated for within the framework of grammatical theory. From the statements of text linguists themselves it is apparent that their basic position entails an extension of the generative grammatical model to encompass sequences of sentences. Rieser in his review of the field states,

"The methodological argument was based on the intuitively justifiable assumption that discourses should be regarded as the 'natural domain' of a grammar rather than sentences".

(Rieser, 1977:11)

The same view is stated in various places by other advocates of text linguistics. (van Dijk, 1973a, Petofi 1973, 1977). Others like Sinclair (1980), Martin Phillips (1985) did not share the view that it was intuitively justifiable to consider text as naturally falling within the explanatory power of grammar. On the contrary, they thought that it was far more likely that the systems established to account for meaning at the level of syntactic structure, and hence concerned with well-formed patterning extending over short sequences of words would prove inadequate to offer any insight into structured texts which may
have no well-formedness constraint governing their composition and containing very long sequences of words. Sinclair called attention to a fundamental theoretical confusion,

"One danger that can be foreseen is that they will assume that the descriptive categories appropriate to sentences (derived from the patterning that Saussure called langue, will be imposed with some ingenuity and much labour, on text (Saussure's parole)."

(Sinclair, 1980)

Sinclair and Coulthard in 1975 postulated with reference to the spoken language organization in which the categories at lower levels are available, unordered for recombination in ways peculiar to the higher levels. In the same vein Halliday and Hasan, for example, claim that the relationship between sentences and text is not one of constituency but of realisation. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976)

Whereas the notion of "text linguistics" was familiar to only a few researchers some ten or fifteen years ago today a substantial expanse of work on the subject exists but the picture that emerges from these works is diffuse and diversified because there was no established methodology that would apply to texts in any way comparable to the unified approaches for conventional linguistic objects like the sentence.
Teun van Dijk (1979a) stresses that "text linguistics" cannot in fact be a designation for a single theory or method. Instead, it designates any work in language devoted to the text as the primary object of inquiry.

3.5 **Texts And Rhetoric**

According to de Beaugrande (1981), the oldest form of preoccupation with texts was rhetoric dating from Ancient Greece and Rome through the Middle Ages right up to the present. Rhetoric as conceived by the ancient consists of the following main areas: **invention**, the discovery of ideas; **disposition**, the arrangement of ideas, **elocution**, the discovery of appropriate expressions for ideas; and **memorization** prior to **delivery** on the actual occasion of speaking.

Indeed, rhetoric have many aspects in common with text linguistics notably,

(a) the accessing and arranging of ideas is open to systematic control;

(b) the transition between ideas and expressions can be subjected to conscious training;

(c) among the various texts which express a given configuration of ideas, some are of higher quality
than others;

(d) judgements of texts can be made in terms of their effects upon the audience of receivers;

(e) texts are vehicles of purposeful interaction.

Widdowson, in particular, has been concerned to show that the underlying discourse structure of much scientific writing, whatever its language, is basically similar, so that an adult learner who is already master of a particular field needs to learn only the more local and relatively superficial aspects of text that are English specific.

Other researchers have begun to push the second language field away from this narrower interest in the surface properties of discourse in its immediate sociolinguistic context to a larger and more rhetorical conception of the place of writing. For the constraints imposed by the English modes of discourse as Kinneavy and his fellow investigators have analysed them, are to some extent culture-specific. This fact is perhaps still clearer if one compares the norms of the English narrative as Bartlett (1981, 1982) analyses them, with the norms of narrative in other cultures.
Insofar as the English modes of discourse are culture specific, those for whom English is a second language have to learn them, and their difficulty in doing so will presumably be all the greater if the tacit constraints imposed on them by the rhetorical norms of their own culture are radically different.

3.6 Contrastive Study Of Rhetorics

A number of studies over the past decade have touched on the English rhetoric of non-English speakers and the rhetoric of other languages. It was Kaplan (1983) who claimed that the contrastive study of rhetorics has been most productive in throwing light both on what happens in English and on the problems that non-native speakers have in acquiring English. He also claimed that, to the extent that courses in English as a second language, at least at the advanced level, continue to stress sentence syntax, such courses do not prepare non-native speakers either to write or to read English texts.

What he is hinting at is that any approach which deals only with linguistic fact is not likely to be enormously successful. His argument smells a little of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. In fact, to him this
notion seemed far more significant at the discourse level than at the level of the sentence.

Contrastive rhetoric is closely related to contrastive linguistics in that it deals with contrasts between languages and it has links with discourse analysis insofar as it concerns itself with the writing process (Houghton, 1980). Kaplan's early articles dealt with the problem of finding an explanatory hypothesis to account for the differences between the writing of students from other countries and the writing of their English-speaking counterparts. The differences he believed are related to rhetorical patterns typical of students' first languages.

Kaplan thinks that focus for example, is culture bound and that it is the factor which creates a tension between the apparent relationship of ideas to topic and the possibly inappropriate realization of focus through intersentential syntax in the written production of the second language learner.

The selection of texts to be studied contrastively is a very difficult problem, as is the linguistic analysis to be employed. Both these factors may contribute to differences or contrasts perceived, and so interpretation of results may be at times unclear or
unsatisfactory. Nonetheless it is a field which has a
great deal to offer, and it will be interesting to
observe developments in the work of linguists in Europe
and America as discourse analysis continues or
overlaps with contrastive rhetorics.

Linguistic research over the last two decades -
divergent as the different standpoints may be - has been
characterised by one recurrent feature: an orientation
towards what is commonly called 'communication'.
Despite the many differences in approach, what all
recent attempts to construct a theory of natural
languages seem to have in common is that they are
communication-oriented, that is to say, they aim to
construct theories which allow the linguist to describe
and explain, within the framework of a homogeneous
theory, the internal structure of sentences and texts as
well as the conditions and rules underlying successful
communication. And in so far as translation is
communication oriented, research and development in
contrastive rhetorics would have implications for
translation studies, a field which holds both practice
and theory.

Thus in the early years, like other areas opening
up for intensive research, discourse linguistics seemed
for some time, a confused, fuzzy, and blurred
discipline. By the early 1980's, however, firmer outlines had emerged. The growth of discourse linguistics may indeed be summed up in terms of four major types of text models and approaches to text: the sentence-based, the predication-based, the cognitive and the interactional.