Discourse Structure of Discourse Connectives as Anaphoric Presupposition

The discourse connectives *for example* and *otherwise* have been described as anaphoric presupposition by Webber (1999). Not only that but they seem to be able to refer to non-recent parts of discourse. Discourses, strings of utterances in sequence, are known to have structural properties (Grosz, Sidner 1986). These structural properties hold when the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic meaning of the utterances within the discourse are joined together. Current attempts to model discourse structure by Asher (2003) using discourse representation theory (DRT) and segmented discourse representation theory (SDRT) are insufficient in that they require a notion of adjacency to resolve anaphoric reference. That is, anaphora must reference something relatively recent in the discourse in order to be resolved by that system. The SDRT model is a dynamic one that can handle anaphoric reference using defeasible consequence but it is unclear whether or not it can handle discourse connectives. In this paper I will explore the behaviour of discourse connectives in the data and show whether SDRT is sufficiently powerful to resolve the anaphoric references of *for example* and *otherwise*. The initial answer is yes: most discourse connectives have recent enough referents and can be represented by SDRT.