

TEXT COHERENCE AND COHESION AS LINGUISTIC CATEGORIES

*Росенко Л.В., старший викладач кафедри іноземних мов
Київський національний університет технологій та дизайну*

Due to the complex of linguistic categories discourse is a well-ordered structure. The text unity, close interconnection between its constituents has been called text coherence. Text unity is not only notional aspect. It appears simultaneously in the form of structural, notional and communicative unity which correlates to form, content and function.

The aim of the given article is to study and examine such linguistic categories as text coherence and text cohesion.

According to the aim the following tasks have been identified: consider and analyse the existing points of view relevant to the given problem, explain and specify the term “text coherence” and “text cohesion”.

This problem occupies an important place in the works of national and foreign linguists, as cohesion and coherence are very important categories of the text. It is necessary to indicate that this problem has not been studied well enough because it has not been finally decided if there is difference between such categories of the text as coherence, cohesion and text unity.

The theoretical basis for the article has been given by the studies of such famous linguists as Halliday M.A.K. and Hasan R., Beaugrande R.De, W. Dressler, Van Dijk T., Tannen D., Connor U., Halperin I. R., Turaieva Z. Y., Lukin V. A., Kukhareenko V. A., Leontiev A. A., Troshyn M. M. and others.

The term “coherence” has been under investigation since 1970-s.

Coherence concerns the ways in which the components of the textual world, i.e., the configuration of concepts and relations which underlie the surface text, are mutually accessible and relevant. [2; c.167] A concept is definable as a configuration of knowledge (cognitive content) which can be recovered or activated with more or less unity and consistency in the mind. Relations are the links between concepts

which appear together in a textual world: each link would bear a designation of the concept it connects to. Thus coherence will be envisioned as the outcome of combining concepts and relations into a network imposed of knowledge space centered around main topics.

Most readers are aware that some texts, whatever their content, seem to "hang together" better than others and are therefore easier to read. In part this is a function of how they conform to expectations about text types (rhetorical organisation) but is mainly a function of how they "cohere".

First of all we have to accept Kukhareno's assertion that cohesion is not coherence. Few would now dispute that: "cohesion relates only to the interconnectedness of the 'components of the SURFACE TEXT' while coherence relates to 'how the configuration of CONCEPTS and RELATIONS which underlie the surface text, are mutually accessible and relevant' " [1; c.145].

Similar distinctions are made by Hoover and Sanders. For the purposes of this discussion, a distinction can be made between cohesive devices operating on a surface, textual level, and discourse relations which may or may not be explicitly signalled.

Due to the limitations of the use of cohesive ties to analyse texts as coherent and well-written, Hasan formulated a new theory to account for the fact that cohesion contributes to coherence. In her new approach, coherence is not determined by the type and quantity of cohesive ties that appear in a text, but it is mainly characterized by the degree and frequency with which these ties interact with each other. According to this theory, there are two cohesive ties which can interact with each other: those that form identity chains, expressed through the use of pronominal cohesion and those that form similarity strings, expressed through substitution, ellipsis, repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy.

A text can be cohesive through the use of the following devices:

1. Repetition. In sentence B (the second of any two sentences), repeat a word from sentence A.
2. Synonymy. If direct repetition is too obvious, use a synonym of the word you wish to repeat. This strategy is called 'elegant variation.'

3. **Antonymy.** Using the 'opposite' word, an antonym, can also create sentence cohesion, since in language antonyms actually share more elements of meaning than you might imagine.

4. **Parallelism.** Repeat a sentence structure. This technique is the oldest, most overlooked, but probably the most elegant method of creating cohesion.

5. **Transitions.** Use a conjunction or conjunctive adverb to link sentences with particular logical relationships. There are many kinds of transitions.

A text may be cohesive without necessarily being coherent: Cohesion does not spawn coherence. Cohesion is determined by lexically and grammatically overt intersentential relationships, whereas coherence is based on semantic relationships.

Many researchers have looked at logical relations and conjunctions in investigating text comprehension. The Kintsch & Van Dijk model of the reading process involves making inferences about how propositions are linked, the Just & Carpenter model provides for "interclause integrations", Meyer, Winter have all investigated the effects of signalling of relations on the perception of the organisational structure of texts.

Analysis of coherence relations would seem to offer insights into the difficulty of text because "coherence relations are ultimately cognitive relations". Winter and Hoey have made the same point:

"A clause relation is the cognitive process whereby we interpret the meaning of a sentence or group of sentences in the light of its adjoining sentence or group of sentences." "A clause relation is also the cognitive process whereby the choices we make from grammar, lexis and intonation in the creation of a sentence or a group of sentences are made in the light of its adjoining sentence or group of sentences." [2; c.125]

Coherence may be treated as a "semantic property of discourses, based on the interpretation each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences" [4; c.93]. Coherence between sentences, in van Dijk's point of view, is "based not only on the sequential relation between expressed and interpolated propositions, but also on the topic of discourse of a particular passage". Cohesion does not lead to coherence, but coherence does not suffice to make a text coherent

while there must be some additional linguistic property (like cohesion) that makes a text coherent. The two levels of coherence include micro-coherence, which is the linear or sequential relations between propositions, and the macro-coherence, the global or overall coherence of a discourse in terms of hierarchical topic progression.

The term coherence refers to the text working as a whole. When speaking to someone, we can count on tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language to give us more information; because there are no non-verbal cues in writing, we must depend entirely on the words. When checking your text's coherence, have a look at these things:

- Logic: does your text follow a logical path? If your logic was used in another situation, would the outcome be the same?
- Organization: is your paragraph ordered in a way which would make sense to your reader? Does it follow a pattern: a, b, c; first, second, third; smallest to largest; most important to least important?
- Paragraph unity: do your paragraphs work together, or do they look like they come from different texts?
- Sentence cohesion: do your sentences follow grammatically correct patterns? Do they transition smoothly?
- Repetition of key words: can your subject matter be found several times in each paragraph, or is it only mentioned at the beginning of the text?
- Consistency: is everything the same throughout the text? Do all your points support your thesis? Have you changed tone or verb tense or point of view?
- Concise: have you written exactly what you mean? Are there any extra words which can be removed?

Johns divides coherence into two types: text-based and reader-based. By her definition, text-based coherence refers to an inherent feature of the text, which involves cohesion and unity. This type of coherence involves how sentences are linked and how text is unified. Reader-based coherence, on the other hand, requires successful interaction between the reader and the text. In this type, coherence is based on the degree of compatibility between the reader's expectations and the intended meaning through the underlying structure of a text.

Connor and Johns describe coherent text “as text in which the expectations of the reader are fulfilled”. [3; c.75]

The reader uses his or her knowledge of the world to interpret a text, expecting that his or her knowledge will correspond to the organisation and argument of a text. The reader relies on this kind of knowledge to anticipate information that will be subsequently presented. Interacting with the reader, a coherent text accommodates the reader’s expectation of sequential logical ideas, contributing to the reader’s comprehension and the clear meaning of a text. By the same token, as logical ideas are presented through well connected words and sentences, the writer helps the reader interpret and process information in a text more easily [5; c.124].

So, the essential features of a well-written text are the unity and connectednesses, making the individual sentences in the text “hang” together and relate to one another. This textual relationship is partially a result of coherent organisation of the propositions and ideas presented in writing. In addition, this relationship significantly depends on the painstaking process the writer goes through in order to create formal and grammatical cohesion among paragraphs and among sentences in each paragraph. Therefore, the writer can strengthen coherence, and create global and local unity by employing various devices.

REFERENCES

1. Кухаренко В. А. Интерпретация текста. – Одесса:Ластар, 2002. – 292с.
2. Beaugrande R.De & W. Dressler Introduction to Text Linguistics. London: Longman, 2002.
3. Connor U., and Johns A.M. Coherence in Writing. VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1990.
4. Van Dijk, T. Coherence. Text and Context: Exploration in the Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse. London: Longman, 1977. - pp. 93–129.
5. Tannen D. Coherence in Spoken and Written Discourse. NJ:Ablex., 1984.