

Concept of cohesion in Cohesion linguistics

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Summary: This article compares and contrasts two key concepts in text cohesion. That is cohesion concept of two famous linguists M.A.K Halliday and R. Hasan in *Cohesion in English* and Tran Ngoc Them's text cohesion concept in *Vietnamese Cohesion System* (1985), which aims to help learners understand more deeply about text cohesion, easily visualize, compare, and explain the commonalities and differences in the area of cohesive means of different methods. The methods are based on the two previously mentioned text cohesion concepts.

Keywords: cohesion, text, Tran Ngoc Them, Halliday M A K & R.Hasan.

Question: Text linguistics, particularly cohesion, are issues that have received little attention in Vietnamese linguistics. There are different interpretations of what a text cohesion is, which leads to an assessment of its importance, and the classification of cohesive devices is also inconsistent. In general, there are two major concepts of cohesion in Vietnam today. These two ideas produce two outcomes that have to be mentioned in this context. M.A.K Halliday, R. Hasan, and Tran Ngoc Them are the delegates who advocated for these two points of view.

1. Tran Ngoc Them's understanding of cohesion in the Vietnamese Text Cohesion System (1985)

Tran Ngoc Them's concept of cohesion first appeared in the 1960s and 1970s, when he considered cohesion to be in the structural aspect of language. Cohesion is used in two ways here: form and meaning. Cohesion is understood as the decisive factor that makes a quality linguistic product a text because it takes into account the meaning.

In *Vietnamese Text Cohesion System* (1985), Tran Ngoc Them selectively and creatively presented a text cohesion system on the basis of a complete concept of cohesion system.

Cohesion of a text has two sides because it is derived from linguistic units with two sides of content and form that are as closely related as two sides of a piece of paper. This is the relationship between these two elements: "There is a close dialectical relationship between the two sides: cohesion between context and form is represented by a system of methods of formal link and it is primarily used to express contextual link" [4, p.24]. And cohesion here is also based on meaning. It should be noted that the term "formal link" must be understood as cohering by formal means of language but must be based on the meaning of the elements cohered together. The so-called actual formal link is quite narrow, taking place only with the method of phonetic repetition and grammatical structure repetition.

Thematic link and logical link are the two types of contextual link. The thematic link is in charge of organizing theme of statements and paragraphs in order to generate text themes. Logical link is in charge of organizing rheme of statements and paragraphs to form the theme of the text.

The document must have corresponding methods of cohesion in order to achieve corresponding cohesion. Methods such as lexical repetition, synonymy, pronouns, and phrasal verbs (strong and weak) all help to keep the topic on track. Topics are developed using cohesive devices. Logical relationships are expressed using linear and joint (tight and loose) methods.

Thus, from Tran Ngoc Them's perspective, a text is a closed system itself, consisting of elements that are sentences and between sentences - that element exists relationships that determine the position and the structure.. This comprehension leads to the idea: "The connection is the network of those relationships and relationships" [4, p.22]. Cohesion here is also based on meaning, with formal link accounting for a very small percentage. As a result, the term formal link is simply a common name for the formal means of language used to express meaning relations, and it is distinct from contextual link.

2. Halliday and Hasan's conception of cohesion in Cohesion in English

The concept of cohesion of Halliday and Hasan began in the mid-1970s of the twentieth century and is increasingly widespread. In the book *Cohesion in English* (p.28, 29, first printed in 1976) two authors conceptualize cohesion as a non-structural component. The unique trait of this view, in addition to the unstructured nature as mentioned, is that it only takes into account the formal means of cohesion, on that basis,

the cohesive means are classified. The so-called contextual link is not set to be the object directly and a substantial part of it is considered in coherence.

Two authors examine the subject of texture in regard to cohesion, saying that it "includes more than just the presence of meaning cohesion of the form that we attach to them. Regarding cohesion the interdependence of various factors to explain it. It includes a certain amount of cohesion in the meaning conveyed, not just in the content but also in the language's full range of sources of meaning, such as the various interpersonal (social-expressive-voluntary) components, modes, moods, strengths, and other forms that the speaker crams into the speaking situation. [1] , p.2] .2]

Cohesion can be understood by Nunan's straightforward definition, which reads as follows: "Coherence is not a collection of unrelated sentences and utterances. It is the amount to which discourse is viewed as 'entangled.'" [2]

A discourse or coherent text is one that is oriented at a specific topic and is made up of sentences that are related to one another in meaning. In a discourse or text, sentences are complete grammatical units that are connected to and somewhat dependent on one another in terms of form and content. According to some theorists, cohesion refers to the linguistic characteristics of a group of sentences that bind them together to form a text. The traits are:

- Do they contain expressions that cohesion back to earlier ones retroactively?
- Are there recurring themes in the book that are comparable to or related to each other?

Creating a cohesioned series of sentences is actually doable, but it might not be a text and hence be incoherent.

Example: "A man enters a bar" (1). The bar here offers quality beer (2). It was brewed in Germany (3). Germany and Britain engaged in combat (5).

(Wales. Cohesion and Coherence by Diep Quang Ban)

The example above has four sentences. If we consider each pair of sentences standing next to each other, it is clear that each pair of sentences is cohered together by the method of lexical repetition and each pair of sentences also forms a joint theme. But looking at the whole sentence from (1) to (4), we do not know what the topic - the topic of this series of sentences is. Although there is a formal link, this sequence of sentences cannot be called a text, because it is not coherent. It can be said that this series of sentences illustrates a continuous digression, a topic that has just formed is immediately "forgotten" and "jumped" to another topic, and so on until the end.

The above example is illustrated when Wales - a linguist contrasts coherence with cohesion and thinks that coherence is possible without cohesion, but a text with cohesion without coherence is nonetheless It's also hard to be a text.

The following dialogue has neither the reflection nor the unity of the topic - the subject, at first glance, seems to be fragmented sentences but is still a coherent dialogue.

Statement	Function
Husband: There are guests	Requesting
Wife: I'm taking a shower	Apology
Husband: It's okay	Accepting the apology

The statements above contain no words that demonstrate their similarity in topic, nor are there any connection between the utterances, but the dialogue remains coherent if the speech diagram is reconstructed by speculating. The context of this dialogue can be understood as a visitor comes to visit the wife while she is taking a bath. When the husband says "there are guests," he is informing his wife of the arrival of guests and requesting her to come out to greet them. The wife can refuse the request or accept the request (in this case, she denies the request) by giving the reason "I'm taking a shower". The husband accepts his wife's refusal and accepts to greet visitors for her. As a result, the seemingly disjointed conversation is cohered at the level of language action.

The preceding paragraph can be summarized as follows:

When people ASK you to do something that you are unable to do, it is natural to apologize; once apologized, either accept the apology or continue to ask. Cohesion between utterances is revealed when the functions are identified.

The examples above demonstrate that the connection between active sentences is both broader and narrower than the task of making a sentence sequence become both an actual text and a non-text. In order to

create an actual text, sentence sequences must be coherent. Incoherent sentence sequences are not texts. Cohesion is a form of coherence in some ways; however, cohesion may not provide text in other ways.

Halliday and Hasan define cohesion as follows: 'When the interpretation of any element requires a reference to some elements in the discourse, there is a cohesion.', p.5]. The concept of reference becomes the focal point of the cohesive content with such a definition. This content is based on the interpretation of meaning between two factors that have a referential relationship with each other and the formal means of conveying the meaning of the language. Thus, the concept of cohesion here appears to be very similar to Tran Ngoc Them's concept of formal link.

It is understandable that without considering contextual link and only formal link, formal link cannot be used to determine the texture of a linguistic product. This task belongs to coherence or texture in broader term.

Cohesion system of Halliday and Hasan includes:

- Reference
- Substitution and Ellipsis
- Conjunction
- Lexical cohesion

3. Contrast Halliday and Hasan's concept of cohesion with Tran Ngoc Them's

Although cohesion is a well-known phenomenon, linguists do not all share the same understanding of it. It is clear that Halliday and Hasan have a very different concept of cohesion to Tran Ngoc Them's, the first person to thoroughly investigate the Vietnamese Text Cohesion System (1985).

If Tran Ngoc Them perceives cohesion as a concept belonging to the text's structure that is exploited in both formal and meaningful aspects, because of taking into account the meaning, cohesion is understood as "the most important factor that turns a string of sentences into text", M.A.K Halliday and R. Hasan consider cohesion as a technical concept that belongs to meaning rather than structure and to figurative means and only the formal means of the cohesive language belong to cohesion. These linguistic elements are organized into subsystems from which the user can select. So-called contextual link are ignored in this case. According to this interpretation, cohesion does not determine what "is the text" of a language product. This is a task for cohesion, or more broadly, textuality. As a result, the advantage of this viewpoint is that it is more conducive to discourse analysis.

The main characteristics of the two concepts of cohesion are compared in the table below:

Tran Ngoc Them's concept of cohesion	Halliday and Hasan's concept of cohesion
- Cohesion is structural.	- Cohesion is non-structural.
- Cohesion are exploited in two aspects of form and content	- Cohesion is only exploited in aspect of formality
- Cohesion is the most important factor that turns a string of sentences into text	- Coherence plays a role in determining the "textual" quality of a language product
- Cohesion system: 10 cohesive devices (repetition, opposite, synonym, pronoun, cohesion, linear, weak, strong, loose, tight)	- Cohesion system: 4 cohesive devices (reference, substitution and ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion.

Conclusion:

We have presented the concept of cohesion of M.A.K Halliday - R.Hasan and the concept of cohesion of Tran Ngoc Them, and then created a table comparing the two interpretations of these delegates' cohesion. By contrasting M.A.K Halliday's and R. Hasan's and Tran Ngoc Them's concepts, students will gain a better understanding of text cohesion and be able to easily visualize, compare, and explain the similarities and differences. The distinction between the methods of the two cohesion systems derives from the two concepts of text cohesion mentioned above.

References

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