SENTENCE IN THE TEXT. COHESION.

Sentences in continual speech are not used in isolation; they are interconnected both semantically-topically and syntactically. Sentences in speech do come under broad grammatical arrangements, do combine with one another on strictly syntactic lines in the formation of larger stretches of both oral talk and written text.

Textual Categories. Topical Unity and Semantico-Syntactic Cohesion as Basic Textual Categories

- Textual categories appear and function only in the text as a language unit of the highest rank. Textual categories reveal the cardinal and the most general differential features of the text.

- Today the list of textual categories is open: linguists name different textual categories because they approach the text from different angles. To the list of textual categories scholars usually refer cohesion, informativeness, retrospection, modality, causality, implication, the author's image, and some others.

- In spite of the diversity of opinions on the question, most linguists agree that the basic textual categories are topical unity and semantico-syntactic cohesion. It is conditioned by the fact that the general idea of a sequence of sentences forming a text includes these two notions. On the one hand, it presupposes a succession of spoken or written utterances irrespective of their forming or not forming a coherent semantic complex.

- On the other hand, it implies a strictly topical stretch of talk, i.e. a continual succession of sentences centering on a common informative purpose. It is this latter understanding of the text that is syntactically relevant. It is in this latter sense that the text can be interpreted as a lingual entity with its two distinguishing features: first, semantic (topical) unity, second, semantico-syntactic cohesion.

M.A.K. Halliday, R. Hasan Cohesion in English (English Language Series) Routledge; 1 edition (1976)

- Cohesion in English is concerned with a relatively neglected part of the linguistic system: its resources for text construction, the range of meanings that are specifically associated with relating what is being spoken or written to its semantic environment. A principal component of these resources is 'cohesion'. Reference from one to the other, repetition of word meanings, the conjunctive force of but, so, then and the like are considered.

- Cohesion can be defined as the property that distinguishes a sequence of sentences that form a discourse from a random sequence of sentences. It is a series of lexical, grammatical and other relations which provide links between the various parts of a text.

- Halliday and Hasan have identified five kinds of cohesive devices in English:

- Reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion

Reference

- <u>The term *reference*</u> is traditionally used in semantics to define the relationship between a word and what it points to in the real world, but in Halliday and Hasan's model it simply refers to the relationship between two linguistic expressions.

- In the textual sense, though, reference occurs when the reader/listener has to retrieve the identity of what is being talked about by referring to another expression in the same context.

- References to the "shared world" outside a text are called <u>exophoric</u> references.

- References to elements in the text are called <u>endophoric</u> references.

What is exophoric reference?

- Exophoric reference occurs when a word or phrase refers to something **outside** the discourse.
- Here are some examples of exophoric reference:
- *"<u>They</u>'re late again, can you believe it?" "I know! Well, they'd better get here soon or <u>it</u>'ll get cold."*
- **They** refers to some people outside the discourse known to both speakers. **It** also refers to something that both speakers know about (perhaps the dinner).
- The use of exophoric reference requires some shared knowledge between two speakers, or between writer and reader(s).

Another type of reference relation that is not strictly textual is *co-reference.*

- At the level of textual co-reference, there is a continuum of cohesive elements that can be used for referring back to an entity already mentioned. This continuum goes from full repetition to pronominal reference, through synonym, superordinate and general word.

-

- I saw a boy in the garden. The boy (repetition)was climbing a tree. I was worried about the child (superordinate).The poor lad (synonym)was obviously not up to it. The idiot (general word) was going to fall if he (pronoun)didn't take care.

- Superordinate = *Linguistics* A word whose meaning includes the meaning of one or more other words.

- **Each language has general preferences for some patterns of reference as well as specific references according to text type.**

- Functionally speaking, there are three main types of cohesive references: personal, demonstrative, and comparative.

- Personal reference keeps track of function through the speech situation using pronouns like "he, him, she, her", etc. and possessive determiners like "mine, yours, his, hers", etc.

Endophoric referencing can be divided into: anaphoric and cataphoric.

- Anaphoric refers to any reference that "points backwards" to previously mentioned information in text.

- Cataphoric refers to any reference that "points forward" to information that will be presented later in the text.

- Third person pronouns are often used to refer back, and sometimes forward, to a participant that has already been introduced or will be introduced into the discourse.

- The prime minister has resigned. *He* announced his decision this morning.

Demonstrative reference

- Demonstrative reference keeps track of information through location using proximity references like "this, these, that, those, here, there, then".

- I always drink a lot of beer when I am in England. There are many lovely pubs there.

Comparative reference

Comparative reference keeps track of identity and similarity through indirect references using adjectives like "same, equal, similar, different, else, better, more", etc. and adverbs like "so, such, similarly, otherwise, so, more", etc.

A similar view is not acceptable.

We did the same.

So they said.

Substitution and ellipsis

- Whereas referencing functions to link semantic meanings within text, substitution and ellipsis differ in that they operate as a linguistic link at the lexicogrammatical level. Substitution and ellipsis are used when "a speaker or writer wishes to avoid the repetition of a lexical item and draw on one of the grammatical resources of the language to replace the item".

Substitution

- There are three general ways of substituting in a sentence: nominal, verbal, and clausal. In nominal substitution, the most typical substitution words are "one and ones" . In verbal substitution, the most common substitute is the verb "do" which is sometimes used in conjunction with "so" as in "do so".

- *Let's go and see the bears. The polar ones are over on that rock.*

- *Did Mary take that letter? She might have done.*

In clausal substitution, an entire clause is substituted.

If you've seen them so often, you
get to know them very well.
I believe <u>so</u>.

Everyone thinks <u>he's guilty</u>. If <u>so</u>, no doubt he'll resign.

Ellipsis

Ellipsis (zero substitution) is the omission of elements normally required by the grammar which the speaker/writer assumes are obvious from the context and therefore need not be raised.

If substitution is replacing one word with another, ellipsis is the absence of that word, "something left unsaid". Ellipsis requires retrieving specific information that can be found in the preceding text.

There are three types of ellipsis too: nominal, verbal, and clausal.

(a) Do you want to hear another song? I know twelve more [songs]

(b) Sue brought roses and Jackie [brought] lilies.

(c) I ran 5 miles on the first day and 8 on the second

Conjunctions

- A third way of creating cohesion is through conjunctions/discourse markers. Discourse markers are linguistic elements used by the speaker/writer to ease the interpretation of the text, frequently by signalling a relationship between segments of the discourse, which is the specific function of conjunctions. They are not a way of simply joining sentences. Their role in the text is wider that that, because they provide the listener/reader with information for the interpretation of the utterance; that is why some linguists prefer to describe them as discourse markers.

- Conjunctions can be classified according to four main categories: additive, adversative, causal and temporal.

- Additive conjunctions act to structurally coordinate or link by adding to the presupposed item and are signalled through "and, also, too, furthermore, additionally", etc. Additive conjunctions may also act to negate the presupposed item and are signalled by "nor, and...not, either, neither", etc.

- Adversative conjunctions act to indicate "contrary to expectation" and are signalled by "yet, though, only, but, in fact, rather", etc.

- Causal conjunction expresses "result, reason and purpose" and is signalled by "so, then, for, because, for this reason, as a result, in this respect, etc.".

The last most common conjunctive category is temporal and links by signalling sequence or time. Some sample temporal conjunctive signals are "then, next, after that, next day, until then, at the same time, at this point", etc.

The use of a conjunction is not the only device for expressing a temporal or causal relation. For instance, in English a temporal relation may be expressed by means of a verb such as *follow* or *precede*, and a causal relation by verbs such as *cause* and *lead*. Moreover, temporal relations are not restricted to sequence in real time, they may also reflect stages in the text (expressed by *first, second, third, etc.)*

Examples: time-sequence

After the battle, there was a snowstorm.

They fought a battle. Afterwards, it snowed.

The battle was followed by a snowstorm.

Lexical Cohesion

- Lexical cohesion differs from the other cohesive elements in text in that it is non-grammatical. Lexical cohesion refers to the "cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary" We could say that it covers any instance in which the use of a lexical item recalls the sense of an earlier one.

- The two basic categories of lexical cohesion are reiteration and collocation.

- Reiteration is the repetition of an earlier item, a synonym, a near synonym, a superordinate or a general word, but it is not the same as personal reference, because it does not necessarily involve the same identity.

- I saw a boy in the garden. The boy (repetition)was climbing a tree. I was worried about the child (superordinate).The poor lad (synonym)was obviously not up to it. The idiot (general word) was going to fall if he (pronoun)didn't take care.

- We could conclude by saying: "Boys can be so silly". This would be an instance of reiteration, even though the two items would not be referring to the same individual(s)

- Collocation pertains to lexical items that are likely to be found together within the same text. It occurs when a pair of words are not necessarily dependent upon the same semantic relationship but rather they tend to occur within the same lexical environment.

Examples

Opposites (man/woman, love/hate, tall/short).

Pairs of words from the same ordered series (days of the week, months, etc.)

Pairs of words from unordered lexical sets, such as meronyms:

part-whole (body/arm, car/wheel)

part-part (hand/finger, mouth/chin)

- Lexical cohesion is not only a relation between pairs of words. It usually operates by means of lexical chains that run through a text and are linked to each other in various ways.

- *Cohesion* and *coherence* are text-centred notions. Cohesion concerns the ways in which the components of the surface text (the actual words we hear or see) are mutually connected within a sequence. Coherence, on the other hand, concerns the ways in which the components of the textual world, i.e. the concepts and relations which underlie the surface text, are relevant to the situation.