

COHESION

The concept of cohesion is a semantic one; it refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text and that define it as a text. Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text.

We can refer to GRAMMATICAL COHESION and LEXICAL COHESION. In the example

Wash and core six cooking apples. Put the apples into a fireproof dish.

one of the ties was grammatical (reference, expressed by *the*), the other lexical (reiteration., expressed by *apples*). **Reference, Substitution and Ellipsis** are grammatical types of cohesion; while **repetitions, synonyms, superordinates and general terms** are lexical ones. **Conjunction** is on the borderline of the two; mainly grammatical, but with a lexical component in it. The distinction between grammatical and lexical is really only one of degree. It is important to stress, however, that when we talk of cohesion as being grammatical or lexical, we do not imply that it is a purely formal relation, in which meaning is not involved. Cohesion is a semantic relation. But, like all components of the semantic system, it is realized through the lexico-grammatical system; and it is at this point that the distinction can be drawn. **Some forms of cohesion are realized through the grammar and others through the vocabulary.**

A. Types of grammatical cohesion:

Reference

Reference: an act in which a speaker uses linguistic forms to enable the hearer to identify something.

The linguistic forms are known as *referring expressions*.

The entity being referred to is known as *the referent*.

Exophoric reference is dependent on the context outside the text.

If the referring expression points to the referent in the context (whether the interlocutors can see it or not) it is known as **deixis**

There are three types of deixis

1. Person deixis: when expressions point to a person → personal pronouns
2. Spatial or place deixis: words are used to point to a location → there, here, demonstrative adjs and pronouns this, that, these, those
3. Time deixis: when expressions point to a time → next day, then, now, etc.

When the referring expressions point to entities *inside the text* → **endophoric reference**

Two types of **endophora**

Anaphora - links back to something that went before in the preceeding text

E.g. *Michael Briggs was a great author. He had conquered the entire literary world with his book.*

In this sentence *Michael Briggs* is the referent, while *he* and *his* are the referring expressions. As you can see, they refer back to a referent that has already been mentioned previously in the text.

Cataphora - links forward to a referent in the text that follows

E.g. *She is the only person able to help us. With her generosity and her beautiful smile, mother is the woman of the hour.*

In this sentence, *mother* is the referent, while *she*, and *her*, are the referring expressions. The referring expressions refer forward, to a referent that will be subsequently mentioned in the text.

Substitution:

- the replacement of one item by another

Types of substitution

- Nominal: one, ones, same

1) **My axe** is too blunt. I must get a sharper **one**.

2) She did not hear **the story** as many women have heard **the same**.

- Verbal: do, did, etc.

Do you think Joan already **knows**? - I think everybody **does**.

- Clausal substitution: so, not

(1)... if you've seen them so often. of course **you know what they're like**'.

I believe **so**,' Alice replied thoughtfully. (Halliday and Hasan 1976)

(2) Do you think **that the assignment is due this week**?

I hope **not**! I haven't written anything!

Ellipsis:

- a form of substitution in which the item is replaced by nothing

3 types of **ellipsis**

- Nominal:

(1) **They** did not like it, yet (they) said nothing.

(2) How did you enjoy **the exhibition**?

A lot (of the exhibition) was very good though not all.

- Verbal ellipsis:

Have you been swimming?

Yes, I have (been swimming).

- Clausal ellipsis:

Who was playing the piano? – John was.

I hear Smith is having an operation? – He has.

B. Conjunctions /Connectives

Conjunction refers to a specification of the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what went before in the preceding text. Conjunctions usually structure a text/discourse in a precise way and bring the presented elements into a logical order.

In Halliday and Hasan four types of conjunctions are mentioned: additive, adversative, causal and temporal:

- a. additive: and, or, furthermore, similarly, in addition
- b. adversative: but, however, on the other hand, nevertheless
- c. causal: so, consequently, for this reason, it follows from this
- d. temporal: then, after that, an hour later, finally, at last

C. Types of Lexical Cohesion

Repetition- The most common of all lexical cohesive devices

It is simply repeated words or word phrases, threading through the text:

Algy met a bear. The bear was bulgy.

Substitution and ellipsis avoid repetition;

Lexical repetition sometimes exploits its stylistic effects:

The child put the pale chrysanthemums to her lips, murmuring:

‘Don’t they smell beautiful!’

Her mother gave a short laugh.

‘No,’ she said, ‘not to me. It was chrysanthemums when I married him, and chrysanthemums when you were born, and the first time they ever brought him home drunk, he’d got brown chrysanthemums in his button-hole.’

(D.H.Lawrence, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*)

Synonymy

Synonym is used to mean ‘sameness of meaning’ (Palmer, 1981: 88). Lexical cohesion results from the choice of a lexical item that is in some sense synonymous with a preceding one; for example *sound* with *noise*, *cavalry* with *horses*:

*He was just wondering which road to take when he was started by a **noise** from behind him. It was the **noise** of trotting horses . . . He dismounted and led his horse as quickly as he could along the right-hand road. The **sound** of the cavalary grew rapidly nearer ...*

Superordinates

Superordinate – an umbrella term/hypernym/blanket term

The word *flower*, for instance, is a **hypernym**. *Chrysanthemum*, *tulip*, *pansy* are **hyponyms**.

*Henry’s bought himself a new **Jaguar**. He practically lives in the **car***

General words

A **general word** is a sort of higher level superordinate

E.g. I turned to *the ascent* of the peak

The ascent	is perfectly easy .
The climb	
The task	
The thing	
It	

There is a boy climbig that tree.

.....is going to fall	If he doesn't take care
.....is going to fall	
.....is going to fall	
.....is going to fall	

There is a **boy** climbing that tree.

The boy is going to fall	if he doesn't take care.
The lad is going to fall	
The child is going to fall	
The idiot is going to fall	

There is a boy climbing an old elm

That elm	is not very safe.
That tree	
That old thing	

There is a boy climbing along **the rafters**

Those rafters	are not safe.
Those beams	
Those timbers	
Those things	

It is typical for general words, especially those referring to people, to carry a connotation of attitude on the part of the speaker, usually one of familiarity.