

KEY CONCEPTS OF INSTANTIAL USE IN DISCOURSE

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Summary: The concept of stability is a cornerstone of phraseological theory. Another key aspect of stylistic use is the involvement of phraseology in semantic and stylistic cohesion of discourse and the stability of these interrelationships as a manifestation of the inherent cohesion of the base form. The theory of stylistic pattern is also one of the fundamental concepts in instantial stylistic use. Pattern is a basic structural element, carrying semantic and stylistic information and serving as a framework for discursal change and sustainability of phraseological image over longer stretches of text.

Key words: phraseological cohesion, cohesion of the base form, cohesion in discourse, cohesion in core.

Phraseological cohesion:

Cohesion is one of the basic theoretical concepts in phraseology at all levels, whether it refers to the base form of the PU or its use in discourse. Thus cohesion is crucial not only to understanding the PU as a decontextualised unit but also to cohesive strategies for its instantial realisation in discourse.

Cohesion is usually understood at the phonological, grammatical, and lexical levels. Halliday and Hasan (1976) give a detailed account of grammatical and lexical cohesion. They describe cohesive links among the choices in grammar that directly relate to creation of text. Syntactic cohesion is also analysed by Fairley (1973). As to lexical cohesion, Halliday and Hasan point out that it is more subtle and difficult to estimate (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 288). Every lexical item may enter into a cohesive relationship, but by itself it carries no indication of whether it functions cohesively or not. That can be established only by reference to the text, which provides a great deal of hidden information relevant to interpretation of the item concerned.

Cohesion of the base form:

Further development of the theory of cohesion is based on the well-known idea expressed by Halliday and Hasan that “cohesion is a semantic relation” (1976: 6) seen as a process in the text. Simpson understands cohesion in literary discourse as semantic links that operate within and across sentences (1997: 198). However,

cohesion is not only a semantic means, providing ties in between and across sentences and linking sentences into larger units. Unlike Halliday and Hassan, who see cohesion as a lexical and semantic relation, I would argue that cohesion is also a stylistic relation. I believe that stylistic features play a role of their own in securing cohesion and coherence. Therefore, cohesion is also a stylistic category. Cohesion is part of the meaning of the base form. Cohesion proceeds from the intricate semantic structure of the PU; it depends on these interrelationships, securing stability. At the same time, semantic cohesion does not contradict the possibilities of variation. Cohesion of the base form enables functioning of the PU in discourse, including both its core use and innumerable stylistic instantiations. Cohesion is one of the distinguishing, categorial features of the meaning of PUs alongside stability and figurativeness. Cohesion facilitates the cognitive process of identification: perception, recognition, comprehension, and interpretation.

Cohesion in discourse:

It is fascinating to explore how phraseological constituents in discourse refer to each other and other elements of the discourse environment. Here, I am interested in the cohesive features of PUs, which have implications for creation of discourse. Linking is achieved through relations in phraseological meaning. Cohesion of the PU is a semantic and stylistic relation between one constituent of the PU and its other constituents, which is crucial to phraseological stability and style (see Ch. 2.1). In discourse, cohesion of the base form is retained and developed. Phraseological ties are carried over from the base form into discourse. The flexibility of PUs is determined by the key properties of the base form, which enable their involvement in the web of semantic and stylistic relationships, and associative links.

Cohesion in core use:

Cohesive relations of the base form are manifest in core use when PUs appear in their most common, essential form and meaning, which is the invariable of the PU. Core use does not create any additional stylistic effect in discourse; changes (if any) are introduced merely to meet the grammatical requirements of the sentence, for example:

The white feather

The earlier attacks (on Britain) from the air were noticeable enough for a naval Officer to be heard saying playfully to another. ‘What! Going to sea, are you?’

So you're showing the white feather!

Cowie, Mackin and McCaig ([1993] 1994b: 588)

Phraseological cohesion is more challenging than lexical cohesion due to the semantic structure of the PU. As an inherent feature of any PU, cohesion of the base form includes all types of cohesion of a language unit: not only grammatical, lexical, and phonological but also stylistic (see Ch. 2.2). These relations are at work at higher levels of language organisation. This is not surprising as PUs are stable reproducible language units, hence they are intrinsically cohesive. Language resources are utilised with the aim of creating text.

THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE:

1. It is not my aim to survey research on stability of PUs in the system of language over recent decades. For an insight, see Baranov and Dobrovolskij, who view stability as a fixed surface structure (1999: 64–65). See also Gläser, who includes syntactical and semantic stability in her definition of PUs (1986b: 42). In German she uses two terms: Festigkeit and Stabilität (1986a: 20). My aim is to ascertain stability of PUs in stylistic use.

2. The idea of stability goes back to Ferdinand de Saussure (1915) although he never used the term himself; see *Cours de linguistique générale* (de Saussure 1995).

3. For the history of exploration of the stability of PUs up to the 1970s and various aspects of stability as one of the fundamental concepts in the theory of phraseology, see Kunin (1964, 1970: 74–137).

4. For a literature review of cohesion and coherence, see Parsons (1991: Ch. 2).

5. For more on Moon's views on cohesion as one of the functions of FEIs alongside informational, evaluative, situational, modalising, organisational, interpersonal, and other functions, see Moon (1998: 217–219, 241–243, 278–286).

6. For cohesive links of instantial stylistic use in discourse, see Naciscione (1976: 56, 183); Zhantlesova (1978); Moshiasvili (1982); Naciscione (1982: 67, 1996, 1997b, 1998, 2002).

7. A stretch of text seems to have become a term as a unit of actual language in use (Cook [1989] 1995: 12; Carter 1997: xiv). A stretch of text is used to denote the part of the text which contains the discourse phenomenon to be observed and analysed.