

## PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE WEB OF DISCOURSE

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**Summary:** The discursive web is enabled by the very nature of the PU: cohesion of its base form. Signals of phraseological presence work like a cohesive framework. Instantial use may provide cohesion across not only sentences and paragraphs, but also larger stretches of text. The PU, some part or separate constituents of it, cannot be interpreted without the complete extent of instantial use. The structure of discourse depends on a balance between all base and instantial elements interlinked by phraseological ties. Any change in the PU, for instance, replacement of one instantial pattern by another, let alone replacement of instantial use by core use, would change the entire network of relationships and hence meaning. Phraseological cohesion is central to interpretation of a stretch of discourse.

**Key words:** repetition, reiteration, phraseological reiteration, anaphoric reiteration.

### **Repetition:**

In traditional rhetoric, repetition is generally seen as a fundamental if primitive device of intensification, especially in affective situations, states of extreme emotional tension, or for the sake of emphasis. In the history of stylistics these devices have received an elaborate classification; thus rhetorical tradition has handed down a large number of technical names for various kinds of verbal repetition and repetitive effects (Leech [1969] 1993: 73–83). Figures of repetition were, for instance, particularly common in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, when the vogue for the art of rhetoric was at its height (Wales [1989] 1995: 342). Interestingly, in each period the role of repetition varies depending on the purport of the message and the style of the work. Likewise, each school of analysis has brought out some other valuable feature or aspect of repetition.

In psychology, repetition is one of the laws of association: it secures links and adds coherence by enabling associations. In discourse analysis, another role of repetition is revealed: that of creating relationships and new meanings in a discourse world. Tannen, for instance, views repetition as “a limitless resource for individual creativity and interpersonal involvement” (Tannen 1989: 37) and hence as a key aspect of discourse. She believes that repetition is a central resource in language use.

In contrast to the conventional approach, when repetition is often seen as inefficient or inappropriate and is often deliberately avoided or replaced by synonymy, discourse analysis treats repetition as a phenomenon that performs certain functions in discourse. It explores the nature of repetition and its role in creating deeper levels of meaning and reinforcing particular meanings in various types of texts (McCarthy and Carter [1994] 1995: 145–149). Verdonk offers a pragmatic and socio-cognitive view of lexical repetition as an element of meaning production in literary discourse which may contribute to a highly emphatic or emotionally charged style (Verdonk 1995: 7–31).

***Reiteration:***

A reiterated item may be a repetition, a synonym or near--synonym, a superordinate, or a general word commonly used with cohesive force.<sup>1</sup> However, it is not only reiterated phonological and lexical items that reinforce particular meanings across sentence boundaries. Pus are also involved in creating discourse meanings through reiteration, performing a cohesive function.

***Phraseological reiteration:***

Phraseological reiteration is a form of cohesion. It may involve repetition of the whole PU, its parts, or isolated constituents that refer back to it. It may be coupled with any of the techniques of instantial stylistic use of Pus such as extended metaphor, pun, or allusion. The closeness of the semantic and stylistic relationship between the isolated phraseological constituents and the PU determines the cohesive effect of the PU in discourse. The greater the distance, the more difficult it is for the reader, listener, or translator to recognise and identify phraseological links, so that increased awareness would be needed to meet the challenge. Both literary and non-literary discourse offer ample illustration of cases when a PU pervades the text, when it is reiterated fully or in parts, or when separate constituents are used in isolation over larger stretches of text, sustaining a continuum of reiterative cohesive elements. All these cases call for an enhanced level of identification and interpretation skills. They do not, however, constitute insurmountable difficulties if students are adequately trained. A higher degree of discourse awareness is needed to analyse the stylistic discursual use of Pus. It is helpful to be aware of the effect of reiterated items on perception and memory. According to the psychological law of repetition, the more often a response is made, the more resistant to extinction it becomes (Reber [1985] 1995: 299). Realising the cognitive value of reiteration will help identify its

cohesive function and recognise its role in the sustainability of phraseological image, which reflects figurative thought.

***Anaphoric reiteration:***

Another type of partial reiteration is anaphoric reiteration of a separate notional constituent, usually closely followed by the PU. In the next example it is a simile, which is a more powerful tool than an adjective alone. Thus the elements appear “in an ascending order of importance” (Wales [1989] 1995: 58) with each next reiterated item sounding more powerful and creating a kind of climax as a dramatic

Means of persuasion:

(as) fit as a fiddle

How could it have happened? He seemed so f it.He was f I t . As fit as a fiddle.

H. Pinter, The Basement.

**THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE:**

- 1.Reiteration is a form of lexical cohesion which involves the repetition of a lexical item, at one end of the scale; the use general word to refer back to a lexical item, at the other end of the scale; and a number of things in between – the use of a synonym, near-synonym or superordinate” (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 278).
2. For phraseological reiteration as a form of cohesion and its translation, see Naciscione (1997a).
- 3.Halliday and Hasan introduce two terms: tight texture and loose texture. If two items occur in adjacent sentences, they exert a very strong cohesive force: this would be progressively weaker the greater the textual distance between them. The fewer the cohesive ties and the further they are located from each other, the looser cohesion will be (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 290–296).
- 4.The PU to take care is polysemous: (1) to see that something suffers no harm; (2) to take the responsibility for something (Longman Dictionary of English Idioms 1979: 47). Cf.: Kunin’s dictionary records four meanings of this PU (Kunin 1967a: 142–143).
- 5.Kunin gives the following meaning of the PU under someone’s roof: in someone’s home, making use of someone’s hospitality (Kunin 1967a: 771).
- 6.For the workings of metonymic conceptualisation, see Gibbs’ The Poetics of Mind, which contains an interesting chapter on lexical metonymy: Gibbs ([1994] 1999: 313–358). See also Dirven 1993; Barcelona 2000a; Steen ([2007] 2009: 57–61).