PRAGMATIC APPROACH ON EXPLORING COHESION AND COHERENCE

Saidova Mukhayyo Umedilloevna
Bukhara State University
E-mail: m.u.saidova@buxdu.uz

Abstract: This article explores the pragmatic approach to cohesion and coherence in discourse analysis. Unlike structural or purely linguistic methods, pragmatics emphasizes the dynamic interaction between text, speaker intentions, and reader interpretation. The study examines how cohesion extends beyond lexical and grammatical links to include pragmatic markers, deixis, and implicatures. It also highlights coherence as a cognitive process based on inferencing, shared knowledge, and communicative intent. By analyzing cohesion and coherence in both conversational and literary discourse, the article demonstrates how pragmatic elements contribute to textual unity and meaningful interpretation.

Keywords: pragmatics, cohesion, coherence, discourse analysis, deixis, implicature, inferencing, contextual relevance, speech acts, literary discourse.

Cohesion and coherence are viewed as dynamic, context-dependent aspects of discourse that contribute to overall text meaning. Unlike structural or purely linguistic approaches, pragmatics considers how cohesion and coherence emerge from the interaction between text, speaker intentions and listener/reader interpretation.

Cohesion refers to the explicit linguistic means that create connections between sentences and clauses, ensuring textual unity. However, from a pragmatic standpoint, cohesion is not just a grammatical or lexical phenomenon but also involves pragmatic markers, deixis and implicatures that signal relationships between discourse elements.

Halliday & Hasan's (1976) cohesion framework is expanded in pragmatics through several theories. *Relevance Theory* by Sperber & Wilson (1986) defines cohesion devices trigger contextual inferences by guiding cognitive effort in meaning interpretation. The next is *Speech Act Theory* by Austin (1962), later it was redefined by Searle (1969) identifies cohesive markers also signal illocutionary force (e.g., *so* can indicate a conclusion in argumentation). *Conversational Implicature* by Grice (1975) is another theoretical theoretical basis and it states that cohesion is sometimes implicit through implicatures, requiring inference (e.g., ellipsis in "Coming?" depends on context). Below we can highlight some key concepts.

reference and deixis: pronouns, demonstratives and definite noun phrases guide the reader by pointing to discourse entities (e.g., "this argument" referring back to a previously mentioned point);

ellipsis and substitution: contextual gaps that rely on inferencing (e.g., "John bought apples, and Mary did too" → inference of *buying apples*);

conjunctions and discourse markers: pragmatic connectors like *so*, *but*, *after all*, *anyway* guide coherence by signaling logical, contrastive, or causal relations;

lexical cohesion: repetition, synonymy and collocations contribute to meaning continuity. Pragmatics considers *intentional lexical choices* that align with discourse goals.

Coherence is the interpretability of a text as a meaningful whole, based on pragmatic inferencing rather than formal markers alone. It arises when discourse elements are logically and

contextually connected in a way that aligns with the speaker's intentions and the listener's cognitive and situational knowledge. Coherence depends heavily on shared knowledge, expectations and assumptions among the speaker and listener. It investigates how inferences such as implicature contribute to making a text coherent and how contextual factors shape these connections. Some key concepts referring to coherence:

*contextual relevance***:** text coherence depends on shared knowledge, discourse context and communicative intent rather than explicit linguistic links;

inferencing & mental models: readers construct coherence through inferences, schema activation by Bartlett (1932) and mental representations of discourse explored by van Dijk & Kintsch (1983);

speech acts & discourse moves: coherence is ensured when speech acts follow logical progressions (e.g., question → answer, request → response);

global vs. local coherence, local coherence: relations between adjacent sentences (e.g., cause-effect, contrast) and g*lobal coherence:* thematic unity across the entire discourse (e.g., argumentative structure).

Example in a conversation: *A: "Can you help me with the report?"* **B***: "I'm a bit busy right now." A: "Okay, maybe later then."*

Here we can see that cohesion is established through the shared context and response structure. The conversational coherence depends not only on the explicit utterances but on the shared understanding (e.g., "busy" implies inability to help immediately. The pragmatic approach focuses on how context and speaker intentions shape language use. Here, cohesion is not just based on grammar but also on shared knowledge, context, and social roles.

The pragmatic approach to analyzing cohesion in literary discourse emphasizes how contextual, interactive and interpretive elements contribute to creating meaningful links within a text. In literary works, cohesion extends beyond linguistic devices to include the interplay of the author's intentions, the reader's interpretations and the broader situational or cultural context. Pragmatics focuses on how these elements guide the reader in constructing cohesive meaning. By applying the pragmatic approach, cohesion in literary discourse is understood as a dynamic interaction between text, context and reader. This method allows for a deeper appreciation of how literary texts achieve unity and resonance, even when their cohesive elements are subtle, implicit, or contextually dependent.

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