

Dontcheva-Navratilova, O. – Povolná, R. (eds) (2009) *Coherence and Cohesion in Spoken and Written Discourse*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. 204 pp.

Although coherence and cohesion have been studied in discourse analysis and text linguistics for several decades, both notions still seem to offer enough space for new theoretical frameworks within which researchers concentrate on miscellaneous features that contribute to the perception of coherence and cohesion. In comparison with the terminological apparatus of some other levels of language representation (e.g. morphology, lexis), which is well established and shared by the international community of linguists, both coherence and cohesion, despite the ongoing discussion, still remain terms associated with a variety of conceptualizations and the consequent definitions, with the latter being more established than the former. Originally, coherence and cohesion were studied in written texts, and later in spoken language; recently even these two notions – written and spoken language – seem to have lost the characteristics of opposites with clearly delimited features and we are witnessing their change into two ends of a scale with new forms of communication carrying features of both in different proportions.

The present volume is a contribution to a new perception of coherence based on a dynamic conceptualization stressing the move from the original static text-based formal approach. The authors share the theoretical assumption that coherence is not inherent to a text but that it is a concept derived from a text in the process of interaction, a concept of interpretative understanding, potentially variable cooperative and context-dependent achievement, which, unlike cohesion, is considered a property of a text realized by various grammatical and lexical devices.

The book presents the essence of the theoretical framework in its introduction, together with a specification of the contents; the studies are organized into two basic parts based on the traditional distinction between spoken and written discourse. Within the former part, impromptu, academic and political discourse are explored, while the latter comprises studies based on media, academic and fictional discourse. There were eleven linguists from nine universities and five countries contributing to this volume on coherence and cohesion and their relationship based on the combination of theoretical insights with practical analyses. What is a very pleasant fact is that six of them come from the Czech Republic. The majority of the authors work with authentic English language data used by native speakers; while only one of the contributors based her analysis on

English as a lingua franca, two authors added a comparison with other languages, namely Czech and Slovak.

The first part of the book, *Spoken Discourse*, comprises three chapters, each containing two studies.

Chapter One, *Impromptu Discourse*, is introduced by the paper of Karin Aijmer, who studies the pragmatic marker *well* in various types of texts, concentrating on its different functions – namely the deliberative (speaker-oriented) and the intersubjective (hearer-oriented). Rather than trying to force *well* and its uses into a straitjacket of clearly marked boxes, the author studies its frequency of occurrence and its behaviour in various registers, taking into account the phonological and prosodic features. The second author of this chapter, Julia Hüttner, concentrates on English as a lingua franca (ELF) and aims at finding all the features that should be present in order for the usage of ELF to be characterized as fluent. After an overview of background reading the author analyses a sample conversation to show what features the lay raters participating in her research considered important.

Chapter Two, *Academic Spoken Discourse*, also contains two contributions. Markéta Malá studies participial adverbial clauses in academic lectures (oral) and compares the outcomes of her research with academic prose (written), commenting on the ways in which, and the reasons why, participial clauses are used in the two communicative channels. Renata Povolná concentrates on spoken academic discourse, specifically interactive discourse markers, which she first defines in order to exemplify their pragmatic functions, showing the ways in which these expressions, despite their seeming content emptiness, contribute to the coherence of the discourse.

Chapter Three is devoted to political discourse. Piotr Cap analyses American presidential addresses in two phases of the Iraq war from the point of view of the Spatial-Temporal-Axiological model of proximization. First, the individual aspects of the model are explained; then the author concentrates on the axiological aspect and its compensatory function within his model. Olga Dontcheva-Navratilova investigates referential strategies in political speeches, namely diplomatic communication within UNESCO, and the role self- and other-representation plays in building coherence in multilayered discourse.

Part Two, *Written Discourse*, also contains three chapters, which are based on media, academic and fictional discourse. Jan Chovanec focuses on the specific world of sports fans, who, together with official commentators, build coherent live text sports commentaries. The author analyses online match commentaries from *The Guardian* and characterizes this genre and its two layers – with the primary layer related and the secondary layer unrelated to the game. Renáta

Tomášková analyses women's lifestyle magazines to exemplify the elements of orality in mass media. These elements, according to the author, can be found not only on the level of grammar and lexis but also in the overall structure of articles, as well as the magazine as a whole.

Chapter Five, *Academic Written Discourse*, begins with the contribution of Milena Krhutová, who investigates English for Electrical Engineering. She concentrates on cohesion and coherence in this particular type of professional language, applying the Gricean cooperative principle and listing the characteristic features required for both the production and adequate interpretation of scientific texts. The author also shows the way the original English terms are incorporated into Czech electrotechnical texts. Josef Schmied introduces a corpus of specialized and popular academic texts in English called SPACE. By qualitative and quantitative analysis of sentence adverbs on the basis of the corpus data, the author finds its applicability in (a) characterizing the two types of academic texts, i.e. specialized and popular, and (b) in teaching academic writing to university students.

Chapter Six, *Fictional Discourse*, introduces the comparative study of Gabriela Miššiková, who, by a comparison of an original English text and its Slovak translation, studies information processing and hedging devices related to Gricean conversational maxims.

All the contributions whose authors adopt various approaches to the study of language have in fact one common denominator: to explain how the notions of coherence and cohesion are reflected in a wide range of human communication. For other linguists, researchers, teachers and students this book can be an inspiring source for their own inquiry.

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