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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

**Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:**

Rzayeva, A. (2023). The Power of Cohesion: Unlocking Informativity in Texts. *Path of Science*, 9(8), 8012-8017. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.95-39>

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# The Power of Cohesion: Unlocking Informativity in Texts

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DOI: [10.22178/pos.95-39](https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.95-39)

LCC Subject Category: PE1001-1693

Received 26.07.2023

Accepted 28.08.2023

Published online 31.08.2023

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**Abstract.** This article delves into the intricacies of literary texts, shedding light on their distinct characteristics. Within this domain, cohesion and coherence are two pivotal components shaping literary works' essence. Literary text and discourse are intricately intertwined, forming a unified entity within language. Furthermore, the concept of informativity assumes a paramount role in the genesis of textual content.

Coherence is a central pillar of literary expression, embodying the seamless integration of logical and semantic elements within the literary text. This harmonious union is primarily facilitated through the application of cohesive ties, which function as the connective threads binding the various facets of the text together. The nuanced deployment of diverse forms of cohesive relations enhances the overall effectiveness and leaves a lasting impression on the reader, thus contributing to the text's literary richness and impact.

**Keywords:** literary texts; cohesion; coherence; informativity; text formation; semantic interrelation.

## INTRODUCTION

The art of effective communication lies in the words we choose and how we structure them to convey meaning. Whether in written form or spoken discourse, the seamless flow of information within a text is a critical element that determines its impact. This article delves into the intricate interplay of cohesion, coherence, and context informativity in text formation.

In the world of language, the quest for informativeness is paramount. When an author presents new knowledge or insights to a reader or listener, the text comes alive with purpose. However, it is not enough for information to be merely novel; it must also be presented in a way that captivates the audience. In this pursuit, the notions of coherence and cohesion emerge as guiding principles.

A text is not merely a collection of grammatical sentences but a semantic construct. Hence, the chosen words and their arrangement must enhance, rather than hinder, the conveyance of information. The journey from grammatical correctness to semantic richness is a fascinating exploration of the depths of language and communication.

This article sheds light on cohesion's critical role in perfecting informativity and delves into the often-overlooked aspect of punctuation and intonation. In both written and spoken forms, these elements play a significant role in structuring information and conveying nuances of meaning. They are the subtle cues that guide readers and listeners through the intricate maze of words.

As we embark on this linguistic journey, we will uncover how cohesion and cohesive ties weave together the fabric of informativity in texts. By the end of this exploration, it will become evident that the power of cohesion goes far beyond the mechanics of language; it is the key to unlocking the true potential of communication in all its forms.

## Literature review

Cohesion, first conceptualised by [7], forms the structural foundation of coherent discourse. The theory posits that cohesive devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunctions connect ideas within a text, creating a logical and fluid progression of thought. The study [8] extended this framework by emphasising cohesion's

pragmatic and functional aspects, highlighting its role in shaping the reader's interpretation of the text [8].

Recent research has explored various facets of cohesion. The author [11] delved into lexical cohesion, emphasising how the choice of words, including synonyms and antonyms, contributes to coherence. Similarly, the author [5] investigated cohesive ties in academic writing, shedding light on the nuances of cohesion in specialised discourse. These studies underscore cohesion's importance in maintaining textual coherence and facilitating comprehension.

Informativity, as a concept, hinges on the idea that a text should not merely convey information but should do so in a manner that adds value to the reader's knowledge. In the realm of linguistics, informativity is often associated with the notion of "given" versus "new" information [12]. Data refers to content familiar to the reader, while new information introduces novel concepts or details. It is this introduction of further information that enhances the informativity of a text [12].

Scholars have explored informativity in various contexts. The author [1] researched how spoken language conveys informativeness through prosody and intonation. They highlighted the role of pitch patterns in signalling new or contrastive information. In computational linguistics, information retrieval studies [13] have focused on extracting and ranking documents based on their informativeness, demonstrating the practical applications of the concept.

The relationship between cohesion and informativity is intricate and symbiotic. Cohesion mechanisms, such as reference and conjunctions, enable the introduction and linking of new information within a text [7]. Lexical cohesion, including synonyms and antonyms, can enhance informativity by adding nuance to familiar concepts [11]. Moreover, the strategic use of cohesive devices can guide readers to recognise the informativeness of specific segments [5].

The literature reviewed here demonstrates that cohesion and informativity are not isolated constructs but deeply intertwined in textuality's fabric. Cohesion provides the structural framework for conveying informativeness, and informativity, in turn, enriches the reader's understanding of the text. By exploring the synergy between these two elements, this article aims to illuminate how

language constructs contribute to effectively communicating ideas across various genres and contexts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several prominent researchers in the 20th century, including [2, 4, 7], conducted extensive research on text and discourse. Their investigations encompassed various dimensions, such as their societal relevance, pragmatic implications, and social significance, leading to the publication of numerous scholarly works in these areas.

A key aspect of their research involved a deep exploration of discourse, which was often chosen as the central subject of their studies. In this context, a text is defined as a collection of interconnected statements where the logical relationship between two or more sentences qualifies them as a cohesive text. While text and discourse share commonalities, it's essential to recognise that they exhibit nuanced differences.

Notably, the author [3] introduced the concept of discourse as the fusion of text and context, underscoring the intricate relationship between the content of a given text and the surrounding contextual factors. This perspective further enriches our understanding of how language functions within society and underscores the significance of holistically studying texts and discourse. Considering this perspective, it becomes evident that discourse encompasses a broader scope than text. This socio-linguistic viewpoint has given rise to a distinct field of study known as sociolinguistics, which explores the intricate relationship between language and society. When categorising discourse, it can be classified into two primary forms: oral and written, depending on the mode of communication employed.

However, not every form of written language, such as ancient inscriptions on rocks, can be categorised as discourse, although it may contain valuable information. As previously emphasised, the fundamental aspect of speech lies in its interrelation or coherence, which serves as its defining feature.

Since discourse represents verbal communication, it often exhibits more effectiveness and poetic expression. For instance, consider the exclamation "Great bunions!" in O. Henry's story "Shoes". In this context, such expressions within

discourse serve as vivid expressions of surprise, adding depth and impact to the narrative [10].

Such exclamatory expressions serve a dual purpose: to captivate the reader's attention and enhance the overall readability of literary texts. In discourse communication, emphasis is placed on its poetic qualities, its inherent logical coherence, and the essential presence of substantive arguments.

Recognising that the length of a text or discourse does not determine its significance or effectiveness is crucial. Even a concise composition of two or more interconnected sentences can constitute various forms of speech. Moreover, it's worth noting that a text can be as brief as a single word, exemplified by road signs like "Stop!"— which, in its brevity, conveys a clear and meaningful message, standing as a self-contained text.

N. Enkvist emphasised the pivotal roles of coherence and cohesion in shaping the structure and composition of a text. These elements are instrumental in ensuring that the content flows logically and seamlessly, ultimately contributing to the overall cohesiveness of the text [3]. This statement highlights the close relationship between discourse and text linguistics and the field of psychology. It underscores how the coherence of a text is intricately tied to various factors, including the actions portrayed within the text and the representation of knowledge, such as age, gender, social status, location, and time frame associated with the context.

Over the past two decades, researchers have shown a growing interest in studying discourse and text, particularly in teaching methodologies. This signifies the evolving importance of understanding how language functions within the broader context of communication and education.

Moreover, the term "discourse" not only pertains to the linguistic form but also delves into the role of the language user or speaker. This highlights the multidimensional nature of discourse analysis, where language is not just a set of words and structures but a dynamic tool individuals use to convey meaning and engage in communication [2]. Teaching discourse encompasses the analysis of language usage within a specific context, considering factors such as the learner's proficiency in the language and the temporal and spatial aspects of the situation. This analysis also intertwines with cognitive linguistics, as dis-

course is closely linked to consciousness and the mental processes of language users.

While some linguists equate discourse with text, it's essential to acknowledge that they share similarities and exhibit distinctive characteristics. A lesson involves the language user's competence and contextual skills in the educational context. Challenges arise in teaching discourse, mainly due to its dependency on place and time situational factors. For instance, individuals must navigate the social dynamics inherent in oral discourse when speaking or communicating in a foreign language.

Another crucial facet of literary text analysis pertains to the concept of the author's intention and the communicative and pragmatic aspects of the text. In recent years, a subfield known as pragmatics linguistics has emerged to explore these dimensions. The notion of "author's intention" was first introduced by J. Austin, a key figure in the development of speech act theory. It refers to the speaker's or writer's communicative purpose, which is discernible in literal and figurative texts.

Within this article, we specifically address the pragmatic aspect of literal text. Like other text types, literal text serves multiple functions, including communication, information dissemination, and aesthetic appeal. Every writer aspires to leave an impression on the reader and exert influence. However, it's crucial to recognise that the reading process is reciprocal, involving the encoding and decoding information. Moreover, understanding the author's intention and decoding of data is contingent on the reader's background knowledge and contextual awareness.

The essence of any form of communication is to capture the recipient's attention and bring focus to a particular situation or topic at hand. This is vividly illustrated in O. Henry's narrative "Mammon and the Archer", where the use of language serves a profound pragmatic purpose. For instance, the strategic inclusion of the colours red, white, and blue subtly alludes to the American flag's hues, symbolising the democratic nature of America. The soap magnate's desire to outdo his aristocratic neighbour underscores the theme of class conflict and rivalry.

Another instance involves the phrase "going over the hundred mark for clothes", signifying spending more than a hundred dollars on clothing. The statement "I bet money on the money every

time" reveals an unwavering belief in the omnipotence of wealth, as the speaker is willing to wager a substantial sum with steadfast confidence in their ability to win, reflecting a fearless attitude toward potential loss [10, p. 125].

Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics that delves into the nuances of contextual meaning [6]. It's concerned with understanding how language functions in communication and exploring concepts like presupposition, reference, and inference. Pragmatics plays a pivotal role in the interpretation of text.

In textual strategy, authors employ various expressive devices, such as metaphor, metonymy, irony, and more, to embellish their written works. These literary tools enhance the depth and richness of the literal text, adding layers of meaning and fostering a deeper connection between the author and the reader. For example, *You've been to college, but she'll overlook that. Henry is "full of unexpectedness", to quote his own words. Therefore, it is quite possible that the word "college" is used in the meaning of "prison" (English slang) [10].* Here, metonymy is used to make the text more colourful.

Two fundamental elements, coherence and cohesion, are occasionally conflated, yet they represent distinct aspects of textual analysis. Diverse groups of researchers approach the study of coherence and cohesion from varying perspectives.

Coherence pertains to a text's logical and semantic structure, focusing on how ideas are interconnected to form a cohesive whole. On the other hand, cohesion primarily addresses the linguistic interrelation within the text or between paragraphs, emphasising the mechanisms that bind the text together. The examination of cohesion received significant attention in 1976 when Halliday and Hasan conducted substantial research in this domain. Coherence, a vital category in textual analysis, is realised through cohesive means or ties.

Cohesion can be categorised into three main groups: grammatical, stylistic, and lexical. Grammatical cohesive means encompass elements like conjunctions (e.g., "or", "nor", "but", "not only...but also") and pronouns (e.g., "what", "whom", "whose", etc.), which serve to establish grammatical relationships within the text.

Logical, cohesive means represent the text's sequence, simultaneity, and cause-and-effect relationships. Keywords like "first", "second", "in the

end", and "first of all" assist in structuring the logical flow of ideas. In some cases, cohesive means can be denoted through letters (e.g., "a, b, c") or numbers (e.g., "1, 2, 3, I, II"), enhancing the organisation and readability of the text.

Halliday and the author [8] categorise grammatical cohesive ties into four distinct types: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Conversely, transitions are pivotal in linking one idea to another, facilitating the reader's comprehension of the progressive flow of ideas. These transitions connect individual words and establish relationships within paragraphs and sentences.

Transitions are typically classified into four primary groups: additive, adversative, causal, and sequential. Adversative conjunctions, for instance, can convey features such as addition, introduction, or similarity to other ideas. Intersections that denote expansion include words like "and", "and also", "either...or", "neither...nor", "not only...but also", "or", and "or else", among others. Introductory conjunctions, such as "for example", "for instance", and "especially", serve to introduce ideas. Reference conjunctions like "as for this", "the fact that", and "about this" help establish connections between concepts. Similarly, words like "similarly", "likewise", "in the same way", and expressions like "I mean" and "that is" aid in clarification and elaboration.

Consider the sentence: *"Mr. Black was rich and noble"*. In this case, adversative conjunctions highlight contrast, conflict, concession, or contradiction. Words like "conversely", "still", "yet", and "though" are used to convey contrast, while expressions like "even more", "above all", and "furthermore" emphasise particular aspects.

Causal conjunctions, which signify cause and effect, reason, or purpose, include terms like "because", "for", "that is why", "in result", "in conclusion", "as", "in order", and "in order to". These conjunctions are employed not only in literary discourse but also in everyday speech.

Lastly, sequential conjunctions are employed to arrange sentences chronologically or logically, playing a crucial role in maintaining the coherence of written texts. These conjunctions ensure that sentences are structured logically and sequentially, preventing readers from becoming a jumble of unrelated statements. Sequential convergences such as "first", "then", "after this", "at last", "finally", and "in the end" enhance the text's fluidity by connecting and interrelating sentences [7].

When examining the concept of cohesive ties, we can identify various linguistic elements used to enhance a text's overall meaning and flow. For instance, consider the following passage: "*One evening at the end of May, a middle-aged man was walking home from Blackmoor. His legs were thin and weak, and he could not walk in a straight line*". Here, the phrase "his legs" serves as a substitution (a form of grammatical cohesion) for "a middle-aged man's legs". The use of pronouns in this context helps avoid redundancy [9].

While grammatical cohesion involves elements like reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction, lexical cohesion is achieved through specific lexical units, such as synonyms. For example, we might use the term "heavy rain" instead of "strong" or "hard". Occasionally, we employ synonyms to add a poetic or literary quality to the text [6, 7].

In addition to the previously mentioned aspects of cohesion, it's essential to recognise that cohesion can also be semantically realised in literary texts. Readers may not immediately notice any explicit cohesion markers in this type of cohesion. Instead, cohesion in such cases relies on the "context of the text". Semantic cohesion is closely tied to the situational context within the text. For example, consider the simple two-member, unextended sentence: "*They repeated*". This sentence remains unclear who "They" refers to and what exactly they "repeated". However, if we expand upon this sentence, creating a more detailed version like "*The Smiths repeated our words*", the meaning becomes more precise and informative. As previously mentioned, this highlights the relationship between the text and the contextual situation.

Elements like coherence, cohesion, and context informativity play vital roles in text formation. When an author presents new information within a text, it is considered informative to the reader or listener. On the other hand, if the information is already common knowledge, the text may lack informativeness. Therefore, the data must be fresh and insightful to be considered informative. A reader is a grammatical construct comprising sentences and a semantic one. Consequently, if we arrange grammatically correct but semantically unrelated words, the result will not be informative but somewhat illogical, incomprehensible, and lacking meaningful discourse.

Texts are interpretable language units, and informativity goes beyond the medium, whether written or oral, genre, or style. Thus, informativity is not solely dependent on the length of a text; even one or two words can constitute an informative text. This is commonly seen in warnings, notices, and signs and can also be observed in literary texts. Cohesion enhances informativity and plays an essential role in textual coherence.

While we have discussed cohesive ties, it's important to note that punctuation also contributes to coding information in a text. In written text, punctuation aids in understanding the complete meaning by logically separating thoughts. In English, intonation patterns are similar to spoken language, categorising sentences based on their communicative function. Each intonation unit or tone group conveys a specific piece of encoded information and contributes to the overall textual process. In spoken discourse, this process enhances the informativity of the text. In the linguistic analysis of literary texts, a significant emphasis is placed on cohesion, cohesive ties, and their role in conveying informativeness.

## CONCLUSIONS

In the intricate landscape of effective communication, the dynamic interplay between cohesion and informativity emerges as a fundamental force. This journey through linguistic cohesion and the richness of informativity reveals how language constructs contribute to our ability to convey ideas, emotions, and knowledge through texts.

As illuminated by [7], cohesion is the unseen threads that weave a text into a coherent whole. The intricate web of cohesive devices, from reference and substitution to ellipsis and conjunctions, orchestrates the symphony of language, guiding the reader through the narrative and ensuring the logical progression of thought. As our exploration has shown, cohesion goes beyond grammatical correctness; the glue binds ideas, sentences, and paragraphs, enabling them to flow seamlessly.

In parallel, informativity, as explored through the lens of [1, 12], presents itself as the lifeblood of communication. The essence of informativity lies in introducing new knowledge, concepts, or insights to the reader. The spark transforms a mere collection of words into a valuable repository of information. Informativity enhances comprehen-

sion and engages readers, igniting their curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

Yet, the true power of textuality is unveiled in the symbiotic relationship between cohesion and informativity. Informativity is transported to the reader through cohesion mechanisms, from lexical choices to grammatical ties. The strategic use of cohesive elements guides the reader's recognition of what is genuinely informative within a text.

As we navigate this terrain, we recognise that cohesion and informativity are not isolated concepts but integral components of successful communication. They transcend genres, from academic papers to everyday conversations, and bridge the gap between written and spoken dis-

course. These linguistic constructs are the architects of effective communication, whether in the cadence of spoken words or the structure of written paragraphs.

In closing, this exploration of cohesion and informativity serves as a reminder of the enduring power of language. It is a testament to the beauty of well-crafted texts and their profound impact on our understanding of the world. As we unravel the intricacies of language, we unlock the potential to engage, inform, and inspire through the written and spoken word. As the silent forces behind effective communication, cohesion and informativity empower us to connect, learn, and share in the collective journey of human expression.

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