

THE MERITS AND DEMERITS OF HOEY'S MATCHING PATTERNS

Prof. Lubna Riyadh Abdul Jabbar, PhD
Asst. Prof. Sarab Khalil Hameed, PhD

Abstract

Within the realm of the linguistic description of text, Hoey has adopted the approach that sees text as possessing *organization*, that is, describable in terms of patterns of organization. Accordingly, organizational statements of text describe what is done by accounting for probabilities. In such an approach, no linguistic combination is impossible, but some are decidedly improbable. Hoey claims that the structural description of text cannot attain perfection in any area of language study, and that the formation of structural principles forces the linguist to consider the exceptions, and thus to discover new regularities through the process of matching patterns. The present study shed some light on the merit and demerits of such an approach and the possibility of applying it in the analysis of texts.

The Matching Patterns

In his work *Patterns of Lexis in Text*, Hoey (1991) introduces a detailed model of how the cohesive features combine to affect the organization of text. He believes (ibid.: 11) that any description of cohesion gives rise to an important trio of questions:

1. How does the presence of cohesion contribute to the coherence of a text?
2. How does the presence of cohesion affect the ways in which sentences are perceived to be related to each other *as complete propositions*?
3. Does cohesion contribute to creating the large *organization* of a text?

The *first* question presupposes that coherence is not synonymous with *cohesion*. Hoey states that coherence could only be determined by the addressee's evaluation and assessment, whereas cohesion is a property of text. In other words, cohesion is an objective feature inherent in the text,

while coherence is a relative and subjective *feature* which is dependent on the addressee's interpretation of the text; and as such is subject to the external factor of the addressee's response. Consequently, there could be only one *type* of cohesion in a text, but potentially many varying kinds of coherence (ibid.: 12).

; but sometimes, for texts in which there is a great number of repetitions, the threshold may be four links or more. It is claimed that bonded pairs of sentences are semantically related and, often, intelligible together.

(ibid.: 265)

To answer the *third* question previously raised, Hoey suggests two ways for the interpretation of the term *text*:

Firstly, it refers to a piece of continuous language from a single source that is available for linguistic analysis. It may be spoken or written and have one originator, or several...

Secondly, it refers to the linguistic level between grammar and interaction. In this sense, the text level converts and combines grammatical strings into usable (part of) interaction.

(ibid.: 269)

With respect to the first interpretation of the term *text*, Hoey explains that two major approaches avail in the theories of the linguistic description of text. The first approach views text to be structured; that is, capable of being described in predictive terms. Consequently, structural statements of text indicate what is *possible* and what is impossible (ibid.: 193). The second approach sees text as possessing *organization*, that is, describable in terms of patterns of organization. Accordingly, organizational statements of text describe what is done by accounting for probabilities (ibid.: 194). In such an approach, no linguistic combination is impossible, but some are decidedly improbable. Hoey adopts the second approach, claiming that the structural description of text cannot attain perfection in any area of language study, and that the formation of structural principles forces the linguist to consider the exceptions, and thus to discover new regularities (ibid.).

In addition to being a continuous piece of language, text in Hoey's model refers to the linguistic level between *grammar* and *interaction* as shown in the following map of language:

Types of the Matching Patterns

Hoey's model (1983: 107) considers *repetition* in text to be the governing principle that forms *the matching pattern of any text*. Nine types of matching patterns are recognized in the following descending order of relative weight importance:

- simple lexical repetition (*sr*)
- Complex lexical repetition (*cr*)
- Simple partial paraphrase (*spp*)
- Simple mutual paraphrase (*smp*)
- Complex partial paraphrase (*cpp*)
- Complex mutual paraphrase (*cmp*)
- Substitution (*s*)
- Co-reference (*co-ref*)
- Ellipsis (*e*)

Simple repetition is the straightforward reiteration of a lexical item that has appeared earlier in a given text. The only alterations allowed in simple repetition are those explained by grammatical paradigms such as: *bear – bears* or *fluctuation – fluctuations*. For this reason, simple repetition may not constitute in total repetition, but a partial one as is the case when the pronoun *we* is partially repeated as *I*.

Complex lexical repetition involves a reiteration of a lexical item which cannot be explained in terms of grammatical paradigms in that it often entails a change in the grammatical class of the item such as: *danced* (v) and *dance* (n).

Paraphrase can be seen as another form of repetition since here one lexical item is made replaceable by another without any change in meaning such as: *wage – pay*. If the sort of replacement is unidirectional (i.e., functions one-way only), it is termed simple partial paraphrase, as is the case with the pair of lexical items: *volume* and *book* where the first item is replaceable by the second, not the vice versa. If the replaceability of one lexical item by another works both ways (i.e., is multi-directional), it is termed simple mutual paraphrase. The example of *wage* and *pay* given above is one instance of this type of paraphrase.

Complex paraphrase occurs when one of the lexical items in a text can be paraphrased within a context in a way that includes the other. An example of such paraphrase is shown by the two lexical items: *subsequently* and *afterwards* which are morphologically unrelated with each other. Complex paraphrase is partial, as shown in the example

above, or complex. In complex mutual paraphrase there is an antonymous relation between the two lexical items as in *big* and *little* since each one of them is paraphrasable by negating the other.

Substitution can be viewed as a subclass of repetition where a lexical item is substituted by a personal pronoun (he, she, it, they, one, etc), a demonstrative (this, that, etc), a demonstrative adverb (there, then...etc) or the proverb do *with* or without so . For instance, the item *action* is substitutable by the pronominal *it* (ibid.: 109).

Ellipsis means the deletion of a sentential structure that is recoverable from a sentence appearing earlier in the same text. Hoey (1983: 110) offers this example:

Example (1):

A: What would you do if you learnt you had won a thousand pounds?

B: Ø Think about it a lot.

Where the symbol Ø refers to the deleted sentential elements *I* and *would* mentioned in A but not in B.

Finally, co-reference is the term used by Hoey for that type of repetition where two morphologically unrelated lexical items are treated as having identical referents such as *Augustus* and *the Emperor* (Hoey, 1991: 70).

Thus priority is given to the *lexical* links involving repetition and paraphrase over the *grammatical* links: substitution, co-reference, and ellipsis. According to Hoey lexical links interconnect with a high degree of complexity, while the interconnections among the grammatical links are relatively less complicated.

The complexity of the contextual criterion as a tool in determining the function of repetition is in direct proportion to the *length* of the text under analysis. For the convenience of the analytical process, Hoey (ibid.: 57) suggests that if a lexical item appears for the *third* (or more) time, then the establishment of its link with one of its previous occurrence guarantees its link with the rest.

To illustrate the decision-making process for the identification of lexical items as being *simple* or *complex*, repetition into either *chance*

repetition or *text-forming* repetition. The former is taken to be that type of repetition where the only common ground is the choice of a lexical item. As a result, it fails to be integrated within the cluster of links. Chance repetition is illustrated by Hoey (ibid.: 108) in the following example:

Example (2):

*No faculty of the mind is more worthy of development than the **reason**. It alone renders the other faculties worth having. The **reason** for this simple ...*

The repetition of the lexical item *reason* in (2) is considered a chance repetition, and, therefore, no lexical link can be formed between them. In contrast, text-forming repetition involves a certain lexical relation and establishes cohesive links within the text.

Hoey (1991:57) states that the context can help the reader in distinguishing chance repetition from text-forming repetition. The questions to be asked about any pair of lexical items for the purpose of determining the type of repetition are

- a. Do they have common or related contexts? or
- b. Do the items share common relationships with neighboring lexical items? or
- c. Is there whole or partial parallelism between the contexts of the items?

Results and Conclusions

The previous summary allows drawing the following conclusions about Hoey's (1991) model of the matching patterns in text:

1. In its precept that much of the coherence and cohesion of text is created by the lexical ties of individual words with each other, the model is essentially based on Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Hasan (1984). The latter's notion of chain reaction is statistically tightened up to pinpoint *topical* sentences in texts. While the model's procedural apparatus may well prove to be workable in the analysis of relatively short texts, it is too complex to be implementable in the analysis of longer texts, or even very short texts comprised of a few sentences, which may not offer ample space for the minimum of three lexical links each.

2. The model does not take into consideration the structural divisibility of the text. Rather, it helps in identifying all the links and bonds among the sentences regardless of whether or not they occur in the same or in different structural parts or sections of the text. The approach may therefore prove effective only in texts that lack structural sections.
3. One other limitation of this model is that while it is of direct practical relevance in summarizing certain texts, it does *not* actually help in exploring the *general* thematic organization of whole texts.
4. To use this model a researcher needs to draw on the potentiality of the objective statistical apparatus offered in this model, and, at the same time, should bypass its limitation by drawing on the analytical procedures of other relevant models of discourse analysis which have a wider *global* orientation.

Bibliography

- Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. (1976) *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman
- Hasan, R. (1984) "Coherence and cohesion harmony", in Flood, J. (ed.) *Understanding Reading Comprehension: Cognition, Language and the Structure of Prose*. New York: International Reading Association
- Hoey, M. P. (1979) *Signalling in Discourse*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
- (1982) "Viewing discourse as an aid to English teaching". *Aspect* 5, 2, 17-35.
- (1983) *On the Surface of Discourse*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- (1984) "The place of clause relational analysis in linguistic description". *English Language Research Journal* 4, 1-32.
- (1986) "Overlapping patterns of discourse organization and their implications for clause relational analysis of problem-solution texts", in Cooper, C. R. and Greenbaum, S. (eds.)

Studying Writing: Linguistic Approaches. London: Sage Publications.

- (1988a) "The clustering of lexical cohesion in non-narrative text". *Trondheim Papers in Applied Linguistics* 4, 154-180.
- (1988b) "Writing to meet the reader's needs: text patterning and reading strategies". *Trondheim Papers in Applied Linguistics* 4, 51-73.
- (1991a.) *Patterns of Lexis in Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- (1991b.) "Another perspective on coherence and cohesion harmony", in Ventola, E. (ed.) *Functional and Systemic Linguistics: Approaches and Uses*. Mouton: The Hague.
- (1993) "A common signal in discourse: how the word reason is used in texts", in Sinclair, J. M., Hoey, M. and Fox, G. (eds.) *Techniques of Description: Spoken and Written Discourse*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- (1994) "Signalling in discourse: a functional analysis of a common discourse pattern in written and spoken English", in Coulthard, M. (ed.) *Advances in Written Text Analysis*. London: Routledge.
- (1996) "Cohesive words: a paper of consequences" in *KVHAA Konferencer* 36: 71-90. Stockholm.
- Hoey, M. P. and E. O. Winter (1986) "Clause relations and the writer's communicative task", in Barbara, C. (ed.) *Functional Approaches to Writing*. London: S.R.P.Ltd.

مزايا وعيوب نموذج هوي لانماط المطابقة

المستخلص

في نطاق الوصف اللغوي للنص، اعتمد هوي النهج الذي يرى النص على انه تركيب منظم، والذي يمكن وصفه من خلال انماط التنظيمية . وفقا لذلك، يمكن الحصول على البيانات التنظيمية في نص ما من خلال احصاء الاحتمالات الناتجة من تمازج هذه الأنماط. وفي مثل هذا النهج، يمكن ايجاد اي تركيب لغوية ، ولكن بعضها غير محتمل بالتأكيد وبالاتفاق. يدعي هوي انه لا يمكن تحقيق الكمال في وصف هيكلية النص في أي مجال من مجالات دراسة اللغة، وان تشكيل مبادئ الهيكلية في اللغة يفرض على اللغوي النظر في الاستثناءات، وبالتالي اكتشاف انماط جديدة و متكررة من خلال الانتظام في عملية تمازج الأنماط .

تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على محاسن و عيوب مثل هذا النهج وإمكانية تطبيقه في تحليل النصوص