

# **FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

## **Chapter I.**

### **Introduction to Text Study**

# OBJECTIVES

*Students will be able to have deep insights of text:*

1. Definition, concept of text
2. The general characteristics of the texts
3. The specific characteristics of the texts
4. Types of the texts
5. Linguistic elements in the text

# I. Definition & Types of Texts

## 1. Concept of text

- When communicating, people create text
- Text is a tool to convey ideas & emotions
  - > Text is both a product & a means of communication

## 2. Concept & Definitions of text

The concept of text is understood in a broad & narrow sense.

+ In a broad sense, *a text is the product of linguistic communication in spoken & written form;*

+ In a narrow sense, *a text is only a product of linguistic communication in written form*

> *A text - a complete product of communication activities, mainly existing in written form, usually a set of sentences that are closely linked, complete in content & in form, & independent in communication & has a certain intention.*

**In other word:** *A text - a product of linguistic communication created by the connection of sentences & paragraphs, forming a complete unit of content & form, with independence.*

## 3. General characteristics of text

### 3.1. Completeness in content, & in form.

- **In terms of content**, a text is a unit of speech with complete information content: making others understand an event, an idea or a feeling, that is, the text is consistent on topic.

- **In terms of form**, the text has a complete structure, including title, introduction, development & ending; There are linking signs (phonetics, vocabulary, grammar...) that indicate the interconnections between the elements in the text.

## 3.2. Cohesion & Coherence

- A text coherence is relation of all sentences or utterances in a text to a single global proposition.

*- A text cohesive if its elements are linked together*

### 3.3. Target/Purpose of the texts

- Each text aims at a certain purpose.

**Persuasive purpose:** Thanks to the text, the listener/reader can change their state of consciousness.

**Inspirational target**

**Action target**

*> Depending on each type of text, it targets different goals.*



- The purpose of the text can be revealed directly (explicit) & indirectly (implicit)

> They govern the way the text is organized: the choice & way of organizing content materials & linguistic means.

# Specific Characteristics of texts

*Text- a verbal record/ representation of a communicative act*

**A written text** is represented in many ways:

+ *Different type-face/font family;*

+ *On different size of paper, in one or 2 columns, serving various purposes of the writer;*

+ *Available are titles, headings, subdivision used to indicate to the reader how the author intends to organize his ideas.*

# Specific characteristics of texts

Face to text with limited reciprocity between author & reader; Expository- like; Idea-oriented; Argument-oriented; Explanatory; Future & Past; Not space-or time –Bound; Artificial communication; Objective & Distanced; Planned; No common context;

**Language characteristics:** Highly structured; Cohesion through lexical cues; Succinctness; Complex hierarchical structures; Multiple levels of subordinations; Conscious & Restructured.

# 4. Text classification

**3 perspectives on text classification:** Based on *existing form/structure* & *Functional style* & *Level of use*

## 1. Based on existing form

2 types of text: *spoken text* & *written text*

\* **Spoken text** includes: daily conversations, negotiations, discussions, lectures, & opinions

+ **Linguistic characteristics:** brevity, simplicity, slurred speech, vividness, non-linguistic elements, natural intonation, colloquialism of words & sentences

\* **Written texts:** documents written & printed on flat materials & on computers...

+ **Language features:** academic vocabulary, use of linguistic means of connection....

## 2. Based on functional style

### Types of texts:

- Administrative texts,
- Scientific texts,
- Political texts,
- Journalistic texts,
- Artistic texts....

### **3. Based on the level of use**

#### **> Types of texts:**

- Administrative texts (forms, notices, official dispatches, contracts, diplomas, certificates...),
- Scientific text (textbooks, coursebooks), reference materials, theses, exams...)

# Relationship of text

Text relation - a network of content relationships between elements in a text expressed through certain forms of connection, & is also a relationship between the text & extra-textual factors.

## 1. Representation of text cohesion

The relation of the text is shown in 2 aspects:

- + Content relation between elements in the text (**internal relations**).
- + Relationships between text & extra-text factors (**external relations**).



# Internal relationship

## Content relationship of text

Text is a semantic organization, including many content & meaning elements. These parts of content must be linked together to express the content of the entire text.

Content relation in text include two most important links: topic links & logical links.

## **Topic relation**

Theme is the main basic issue posed & raised by the writer through the specific content of the text. Thematic linking is a way of making parts of a text point towards a common topic.

There are 2 ways to cohesive topics:

+ Maintain the topic.

+ Topic development.

## **Logical relation**

Logic is correct rationality, not in conflict with objective laws & human thinking.

## *Logical relation in text are shown:*

- + In a sentence, the subject must agree with the predicate, & the complement must agree with the central verb.
- + The organization of sentences & paragraphs must be consistent with the content & not contradict each other.
- + Organize & arrange sections in a reasonable order.
- + Logical connection is also shown in the way of reasoning in a paragraph. When there are arguments & evidence, conclusions must be drawn, & oppositely, if you want a conclusion, you must analyze & prove it.

# Formal cohesion

## 1. Concatenation

Transitional words; Conjunctions; Adverbs

## 2. Reference

+ Reference is the phenomenon in which the listener can identify what is being mentioned in this sentence with what is being mentioned in another sentence.

+ 3 types of reference: Reference refers to the person; Indicative reference; Comparative reference.

**3. Ellipsis:** a situation in which a word, a phrase can be omitted/left out of the sentence, but the sentence is understood.

#### **4. Substitution**

Is the use of the substitution pronouns that, here, there, so, that, that in one sentence to replace the corresponding nouns, verbs, and adjectives present in another sentence.

#### **5. Lexical conjunction**

Lexical conjunction refers to the issue of choosing words that are somehow related to words in previous sentences, including:

+ *Repeat words*. Use words that are synonymous, near-synonymous, & antonyms

+ *Words with close meaning*: Near-synonym words are expressed in two types of relationships: type-level relationships & whole-part relationships.

+ *Word collocation*: using words that are different from the given word in some association.

# External relationship of text

- External relation - relationships between text & extra-text factors.

- External relation aspects:

Text – author; Text & recipient; Text & context; Text & other texts (intertextual relationships); Multiple texts by the same author; Texts in a collection; Texts with the same topic, same trend.

# *Linguistic elements in text*

## *Cohesion*

The grammatical & logical, lexical linking (cohesive ties/connections) within a text or sentence that holds a text together & gives it meaning.



## TYPES OF COHESION

- **Grammatical cohesion**: based on structural content
- **Lexical cohesion**: based on lexical content & background knowledge.
- **Logical cohesion**: Cohesion refers to the logical flow & connection in a written text

\* 5 general categories of cohesive devices creating coherence in texts: Reference, Ellipsis (word omission/), Substitution (word/phrase replacement), Lexical cohesion (lexical items) & Conjunction /connectors.

## Ex. Grammatical cohesion devices

**Substitution**: a device showing the relationship between sentences *avoiding repetition*;

**Ellipsis**: the omission of elements which the speaker/writer assumes are obvious from the context;

**Structural parallelism**: 2 or more sentences have identical structure, serving as a means of connecting sentences.

## Examples:

### \* **Pro-form for nouns (pronouns).**

Pronouns are frequently used where nouns are not repeated.

Ex. - *The **guys** applied for a scholarship.*

*Unfortunately, **they** were all rejected.*

- *When did he arrive? Probably (he arrived) yesterday.* (ellipsis)

- *Wherever there's despair, we bring hope./-*

*Wherever there's fear, we bring confidence. (Structural parallelism)*

## Ex. Logical cohesive devices

*Sentence connectors demonstrating the logical relationships between sentences.*

**Enumeration:** *first, second...next; finally, to begin with, for one thing;*

**Addition:** Additive conjuncts: *also, too, furthermore, moreover, then, in addition, above all, neither, nor.....; with reference to, with regard to, by the way...;*

**Summation:** *then, all in all, in conclusion, to sum up, in a nutshell...;*

**Apposition:** used to refer back to the previous sentence: *namely (viz), in other words, for example, that is (i.e./ie), for instance...etc...*

## Ex. Lexical cohesive devices

+ **Reiteration**: lexical equivalent as result of repetition

+ **Synonyms**: Lexical equivalent- frequent use in English.

+ **Antonym**: a word that has the opposite meaning of another word.

+ **Association**: defined as that existing between 2 or more words of one or the same field, possessing some common semantic properties.

# COHERENCE

\* In a composition/message, **coherence** - a **literary technique** that refers to **logical connections**, which listeners or readers perceive in an **oral or written text**.

> Coherence - A **written text** must be **consistent & logical, unified & meaningful**.

# Information structure

\* Information is arranged within sentences & between sentences so that when they are put together, a text achieves coherence.

\* Brown & Yule: *Information Structure - the smallest units (at the level of phrases or clauses) of discourse structure.*

\* We can analyze information propositions according to two types of structures: a) *thematic structure*, b) *information structure*.



## **Given (old) & New Information**

\* The given-before-new principle is that speakers & writers tend to express known information (the "given/old") before previously unknown information (the "new") in their messages.

\* **Given (or old) information:** *Information the reader is already aware of because it has been mentioned previously in the same text.*

*This is sometimes called the theme of a sentence.*

**> Given/old information - Theme**

\* **New information:** *Information that has not been mentioned previously in the same text. (often adds detail, or new aspects of the given information.*

*This is sometimes called the rheme of a sentence.*

**New information - Rheme**

# Summary

Texts are seen as language units which have a definable communicative function, characterized by such principles as cohesion, coherence & informativeness, which can be used to provide a formal definition of what constitutes their textuality or texture.

# TEXT STRUCTURE - GENRE

\* Text structure known as **genre/style**

A **genre** - a particular type of literature, painting, music, film, or other art form which people consider as a class because it has special characteristics.

\* Types of text structure:

*Narrative, Descriptive, Procedural, Argumentative*

# Revision

1. What is a text?

2. What are general and specific

characteristics of texts? Illustrate with examples

3. What are types of texts?

4. What are elements of texts? Illustrate

with examples.