Bezhanyan Alina Alventovna

**EPIGRAPH: LEXICAL COHESION IN A POETIC DISCOURSE**

Статья опубликована в авторской редакции и отражает точку зрения автора(ов) по рассматриваемому вопросу.

Источник

**Альманах современной науки и образования**
Адрес журнала: [www.gramota.net/editions/1.html](http://www.gramota.net/editions/1.html)

© Издательство "Грамота"

Информация о возможности публикации статей в журнале размещена на Интернет сайте издательства: [www.gramota.net](http://www.gramota.net)
Вопросы, связанные с публикациями научных материалов, редакция просит направлять на адрес: almanac@gramota.net
The purpose of this article is to analyze lexical cohesive devices (their distribution and frequency) as a means of connecting an epigraph with a poetic text.

There is no unanimous description of the nature of poetry since it avoids any norms which confine it to a single interpretation. P. Verdonk defines a poem's discourse as a contextual and interpersonal activity with the purpose of transmitting a literary message from the author to the reader. In other words, the poet's text, especially with the presence of epigraph, becomes a meaningful discourse when the reader reads it and builds up an interpersonal and sociocultural context around it. In the dynamic communicative process between the reader and the poet, linguistic structures act as impulses which fulfill or frustrate the reader's expectations so that the reader's emotions continuously change [5].

Being a unity of linguistic items, any text, as a semantic whole, is the source for the realization of such text categories as cohesion and coherence. These concepts work together, rather than independently, in helping the reader to understand the ways in which a text makes sense. According to Widdowson [Ibidem] coherence resides in discourse which is interactive, while cohesion resides in text, which is static.

In the framework of this article we will concentrate on cohesion and lexical cohesive devices as major explicit means of connecting an epigraph with a poetic text taking into account that the major function of cohesion is text formation or organization.

Tallackson [12] defines epigraph as a small part of text, usually borrowed from another writer, which gives a reader a clue to hold in mind as the poem is read. Unlike a typical quotation, which dwells in the midst of the text, illuminating one point in the argument, the epigraph's unique positioning prior to the body of the text highlights particular ideas, words, or images and thereby guides the reading of the entire text. In essence, its shadow falls across and affects the reading of the text it precedes. This is not only the influence of the epigraph but also the scholar, philosopher, or poet, and textual source from which it is taken. Like all citations, epigraph creates an intertextuality and dialogic relations with another author and the text following it mainly by means of cohesive devices.

Cohesion is one part of the study of texture, which considers the interaction of cohesion with other aspects of text organization. Texture, in turn, is one aspect of the study of coherence, which takes the social context of texture into consideration. The goal of discourse analysis in this tradition is to build a model that places texts in their social contexts and looks comprehensively at the resources which both integrate and situate them. In this respect cohesion can be defined as the set of resources for constructing relations in discourse which transcend grammatical structure [7].

The term cohesion itself was introduced by Halliday and Hassan [6] who consider it as one of the most significant techniques in text analysis. Cohesion refers to the ways in which phonological, lexical and syntactic features connect within and between sentences in a text. According to James [7] cohesion involves formal linguistic links between sections of a text - things which can be listed, pointed at, classified. Baker has defined cohesion as a set of connections between lexical, grammatical, and other relations which join various parts of a text to each other by means of cohesive devices [1, p. 202]. Thus, cohesion is a surface feature as it can be recognized immediately.

Any occurrence of repetition or relatedness by sense relation can potentially form a cohesive tie. Martin states that the relationship between a cohesive item and the item it presupposed in a text is referred to as a cohesive tie [9]. Cohesive devices or ties hold the text together not only because of the relationships between the ideas or events, which are represented through lexis, semantics or syntactic structures, but through connecting forms in the lexis and syntactic structures themselves [15].

According to Richards and Schmit [7] the concept of cohesion refers to “the grammatical and/or lexical relationship between the different elements of the text”. This definition leads to the classification introduced by Halliday and Hassan [6]. They distinguish between two types of cohesive devices: lexical (reiteration and collocation) and grammatical (reference, ellipsis, substitution and conjunctions). The presence of these cohesive devices helps a text to be stable and adequately understood.

Of this list of resources for creating texture, that is, for binding sentences into text through surface-structural ties, the only one that extends across texts is what many linguists call “lexical cohesion” or common vocabulary. This is one of the means of achieving cohesion in a discourse and contributing to “maximal coherence” of a poetic text.

Lexical cohesion is commonly viewed as the central device for making texts hang together experientially, denying the aboutness of a text [Ibidem]. Along with reference, ellipsis/substitution and conjunctive relations, lexical
cohesion is said to formally realize the semantic coherence of texts, where lexical cohesion typically makes the most substantive contribution [4].

Bloor and Bloor argue that: “lexical cohesion refers to the cohesive effect of the use of lexical item in discourse where the choice of an item relates to the choices that have gone before” [2, p. 100]. Baker defines this tie from another angle: “lexical cohesion refers the role played by the selection of vocabulary in organizing relation within a text” [1, p. 202].

In text, lexical cohesion is realized by means of chains of related words that contribute to the continuity of lexical meaning which can be observed in texts with epigraphs too, which, however, have relative independence. Morris states “these lexical chains are a direct result of units of text, being “about the same thing”, and finding text structure involves finding units of text that are about the same thing” [10].

The simplest type of lexical cohesion connecting an epigraph with a poetic text is repetition. It is either simple string repetition or repetition by means of intentional and derivational variants of the word with or without an alternation contracting a cohesive tie [4]. For example, were writing is a lexical repetition of write. Repetition is one of the widely used devices, which tends to give a logical emphasis necessary to fix the attention of the reader on the key words of the text in order to reinforce descriptions and emotional effect [Ibidem].

Following Hoey [Ibidem], the second type of repetition is complex lexical repetition occurring when two lexical items share a lexical morpheme, but are not formally identical, or when they are formally identical but have different grammatical functions. For example, drug and drugging, or human (n) and human (adj) [Ibidem].

In this article all the mentioned types of repetitions are grouped under one general type of repetition best illustrated in the following examples.

e. g. Epigraph: He comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure (Isa. xl. 12).
Thou givest them tears to drink in a measure (Ps. lxxx. 5).
Browning El. B. The Measure [3, p. 322].

In this example two epigraphs are connected with each other and with the following text by means of repetitions. We observed that nearly all the words in the epigraphs are repeated in the poem: the word measure, present in both epigraphs, occurs twice in the text, the word dust occurs three times, the word tears is used twice, while earth and thou are mentioned once.

In the same poem we found two cases of repetition of the root morpheme, such as dust (epigraph) - dusty (text), tears (epigraph) - tearful (text) and one case of a phrase repetition without the definite article, e.g. the dust of the earth (epigraph) - the dust of earth (text).

It should be mentioned that if an epigraph consists of just one sentence in the form of a question it is usually repeated without any changes at least once, being either the first or the last line of the poem.

e. g. Epigraph:
“WHY MARRY OGRE
JUST TO GET HUBBY?” - Headline in the Boston Herald.
Updike J. Marriage Council [13, p. 118].
This question is repeated without an alternation once at the beginning of the poem, while the part of it “why marry Ogre” at the end.

e.g. Text:
Why marry ogre
Just to get hubby?

O harpy, why marry
Ogre? I wonder.

Another example of this type is found in the poem “L.E.L.’S Last Question” by E. B. Browning [3, p. 218], where the author repeats the question five times as it is in the epigraph and five times with slight changes, thus, giving the poem a rhetoric colouring.

e.g. Epigraph: “Do you think of me as I think of you?”
From her poem written during the voyage to the Cape.

Text: “Do you think of me as I think of you,
My friends, my friends?” - She said it from the sea.

IV
She asked not, “Do you praise me, O my land?” -
But, “Think ye of me, friends, as I of you?”

As Morris noted, the identification of lexical cohesion in text has been done so far by linguists with particular points of view [6; 9], and research on types of lexical semantic relations has proceeded largely out of the context of text, with the exception of the original work of Halliday and Hasan (1976), where any semantically “recognizable” relation between words in text was used in forming word groups [10].
Lexical semantic relations are classified into classical (synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and meronymy (a term used to denote metonymical relation together with metonymy)) or non-classical. Classical types are grouped under reiteration, while non-classical are considered as collocations by Halliday and Hasan.

Lakoff gives the name "classical" to categories that are related because their members all share the same common properties [Ibidem]. Morris states that this comes from the classical views of Aristotle, that these common properties will be necessary and sufficient for category definition. According to Morris classical relations are restricted in that they only deal with similarity relations between words in the same grammatical class [Ibidem].

The commonly used type of classical relations synonymy is understood rather widely to include the repetition of a synonym, near synonym, or the use of a general word [6]. The class of general nouns is a small set of nouns having generalized reference, e.g. person, thing, stuff, etc. Hyponymic repetition includes the use of superordinate, which can be illustrated by the following example: Brazil, ..., was even more severely hit by the Depression than other Latin American states and the country was on the verge of complete collapse (an example by Salkie) [15]. The word Brasil is the hyponym of the word country - its superordinate. Meronymy describes pairs of lexical items related as part to whole (metonymical relations) wool-sheep (Halliday and Hasan) [6], while antonymy - pairs of opposites [4].

The following example best illustrates synonymic repetition of lexical items close - shut.

  e.g. Epigraph: "If the Perceptive Organs close, their Objects seem to close also".
Blake: Jerusalem
Text:
  ...but the blinds are down over my windows,
My doors are shut.
Levertov D. The Closed Window [8, p. 212].
The poem "Rillons, Rillettes" is a vivid example of hyponymy. The words rillons and rillettes are the names of dishes, so they become hyponyms for the word dishes mentioned in the poem.
  e.g. Epigraph:

RILLETTES: Hors d’oeuvre made up of a mash of pigmeat, usually highly seasoned. Also used for making sandwiches. The Rillettes enjoying the greatest popularity are the Rillettes and Rillons de Tours, but there are Rillettes made in many other parts of France.

RILLONS: Another name for the Rillettes, a pigmeat hors d’oeuvre. The most popular Rillons are those of Blois (A Concise Encyclopedia of Gastronomy / edited by Andre L. Simon).

Text: The dishes are the same, and yet While Tours provides the best Rillettes,
The best Rillons are made in Blois.
Wilbur R. Rillons, Rillettes [14, p. 92].

Every lexical item, according to Cummings and Simmons (1983), contributes to produce images in poetry, either directly or in an oblique manner. Once an image has been established in a poem, all lexical items in the poem may probably be applied to it by extending their meaning metaphorically [5]. So the value of every lexical item cannot be specified without referring to its neighboring words which create the context of the poem through their association with each other. The above mentioned non-classical relations are “associative relations”, operationalized as word associations, which are either known as collocations. The term collocation was suggested by Firth expressing expectancy relations between lexical items (e.g., the mutual predictability of strong and tea, but not powerful and tea) [9]. These relations appear to be somehow located within the system of the world, not the system of language, and are one of the commonly used types in poetry. However, we include in this group all kinds of associative relations.

In the poem “A Bitter Life” by J. Updike [13, p. 69] we found a combination of four types of lexical cohesion: simple repetition, collocation, meronymy, hyponymy.
  e.g. Epigraph: Dr. Ycas [of the Quartermaster Research and Development Centre, in a report to the National Academy of Sciences] holds that the ocean itself was alive. There were no living creatures in it (New York Times).
  1. Repetition: The word ocean is repeated in the poem three times without any alternation, Dr. Ycas once, while Yca, meaning a sea, once “Yca’s sea”.
  2. Hyponymy: There are 22 hyponyms for the word creatures mentioned in the epigraph which are introduced as monsters (new and all) in the poem:
  e.g. All monsters pale beside the new:
The Hydra, Hap, Garuda, Ra, Italapas, Seb, Hua-hu Tiao, …
These are the names of ancient Egyptian Gods, people-like creatures, evil spirits and saints, having both positive and negative characteristics. For example Hua-hu Tiao is a Protean snake or white rat, which has the power to assume the shape of a man-eating elephant with wings, while Seb is an Egyptian divine goose.
3. Meronymy: Another example of a classical lexical relation in this poem is meronymy. We observed the following chains of words for creatures: sinews, veins, eyes, tails, bones, fists, shoulders, heads, mouths, feet, fingers, pate, toes.

4. Collocation: This poem is rich in examples of non-classical lexical relations. The following chains of associations or words sharing the same semantic field can be distinguished:
   1. creature - monsters;
   2. ocean - sea, straits, channelways, islands, rivers, reefs, bays, arctic, Antarctic;
   3. alive - viable, young.

It should be noted that sometimes synonymy is understood in the wider scope. For instance Buitkiene in this group includes such lexical items the cohesive effect of which depends not so much on any systematic relationship as on their tendency to share the same lexical environment, situation, or to occur in collocations with one another, that is associations: candle - flicker, beach - sunshine, hair - comb, etc. She calls them situation-dependent ties as they could not be synonyms in another context [4].

Our analysis showed that collocations also can be divided into synonyms and antonyms from the point of view of the idea expressed. We will call them associative synonyms and associative antonyms which are present only within a particular context.

e.g. Epigraph: “The more I write, the more the silence seems to be eating away at me” (C. K. Williams).
   a) Associative synonyms, e.g. silence - saying nothing, death, shock, mouth.
   Text: …and white plants
   …………………
   pushing out their rubbery tongues
   but saying nothing.
   ……………………..
   The silence is death.
   It comes each day with its shock
   b) Associative antonyms, e.g. silence - words, zinging.
   Text: I am zinging words out in the air.

From the examples analyzed above it is obvious that certain parts of speech may be more likely to contract lexical cohesive ties than others, e.g., nouns may be more likely to participate in substantive cohesive ties than verbs.

In a study conducted by Buitkiene [4] on variability of cohesive devices across registers, it was found that the distribution of different types of cohesive devices within the general framework is affected by register. The distribution and frequency of cohesive devices depend directly on the degree of “openness” of the text, i.e. the more open the register, the more various cohesive devices are being employed and vice-versa [Ibidem].

We can assume that according to Buitkiene’s approach a poetic text is an open text, while epigraphs at the same time may belong to different registers where cohesive patterns differ due to the type of text (register, genre). Lexical cohesive devices are the most extensively used ties in texts belonging to different registers. They constitute the major part of cohesive ties in all the varieties of texts. Analyzing mostly poems the epigraphs of which belong to poetic or prosaic, scientific texts or newspaper articles, we concluded that repetition and collocation generally appear to be the dominant means in all registers. The relative frequency of more complex relations, such as hyponymy, meronymy, synonymy and antonymy may depend on the type of the text and the author’s intentions.

References
12. Tallakson P. Epigraph: Citation as Authorial Guide [Electronic resource]. URL: http://www.technorhetoric.net /3.1/coverweb/…/epichite.htm