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Dr. Djemai Aicha¹

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Translation of key terms in text linguistics: Applied models

Dr. Djemai Aicha¹

¹Yahia Fares University, Laboratory of Teaching Arabic Language Higher Normal School of Bouzereah (Algeria).

The E-mail Author: djemai.aicha@univ-medea.dz

Abstract:

Text linguistics is one of the most important branches of linguistics, and every science has its own terminology. However, in linguistic studies, the multiplicity of terms has increased, as the same term may have different translations among Arabic linguists, which has increased ambiguity and difficulty in defining the intended meaning of the term. It has become necessary to first refer to the term in its source language in order to deal with its multiple translations. This article will focus on the translation of cohesive and coherent means according to textual grammarians such as Ahmed Afifi, Mohamed Khattabi and Tamam Hassan, particularly in their translation of Robert de Beaugrande's book "Cohesion in English" and the readings related to Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan's work.

Keywords: Concept, Translation, Text Linguistics, Models, key.

Introduction

Textual linguistics is a branch of cognitive science that takes the text as its basic unit of analysis. Every science is built on its fundamental terms, which serve as keys to different fields of knowledge. This article introduces the most important terms of text linguistics in English and examines their frequency in Arabic literature. The article is structured around the central question:

What are the key terms in text linguistics?

How have these terms been translated by Arab authors? Have their translations varied, or has there been a standardisation whereby each English term corresponds to a single Arabic term? This article will answer these questions through an outline that introduces text linguistics and its scholars.

Section One: Text Linguistics

Text linguistics is a new branch of cognitive science that began with Zellig Harris in the early second half of the 20th century. It later developed under the influence of Teun A. van Dijk (b. 1943), who is considered the founder of text linguistics or syntax of text. The field was further established by the American Robert de Beaugrande¹.

While the sentence has traditionally been the ultimate unit of analysis in linguistic and syntactic studies - considered the basic unit of language through which speakers exchange dialogue and the means by which we acquire language, think and communicate - the text has emerged as the larger linguistic unit in textual studies².

J.M. Adan quotes Bakhtin who said: "Linguistic studies have not revealed the intricacies of larger linguistic forms such as extended speech in everyday life, dialogues, discourses, writings and novels... the structure of larger linguistic forms remains unknown, waiting for someone to discover it. Linguistic studies have not yet gone beyond the compound sentence as the largest linguistic phenomenon"³. This statement clearly calls for moving beyond the sentence, which has been considered the largest unit of analysis and study, and emphasises the importance of

extended speech, dialogue, discourse, writing and novels, collectively referred to as larger linguistic forms, and of exploring their structures.

Saeed Hassan Bahiri noted that the beginnings of research on the text can be traced back to the doctoral thesis of the American researcher I. Nye in 1912. In one chapter of her dissertation, she dealt with the problem of linking sentences (Satzverbindung). She also discussed the phenomena of ellipsis, incompleteness and repetition on a textual basis, describing them as indicators and specific forms of internal relations between different sentences. She sought to discover the nature of these relationships⁴.

The beginnings of textual syntax emerged with Zellig Harris⁵ in the early second half of the 20th century. He was one of the founders of the concept of discourse and established rules for its analysis⁶. Harris attempted to transfer structural-distributive methods of analysis to the level of the text and to organise the sequences realised in explanatory transformations⁷. In 1952, he published an article entitled "Discourse Analysis" in the journal "Language" (vol. 28, pp. 1-30), in which he addressed two questions:

1. The first problem: The restriction of grammatical study to the sentence. The failure to go beyond the sentence as a unit in linguistic analysis is "a customary practice to which researchers have adhered because they have found that what lies beneath the sentence is sufficient to describe all linguistic phenomena"⁸.
2. The second issue: The relationship between language, behaviour and culture⁹. He noted that researchers have not focused on this relationship because it lies outside the realm of language. He stated: "We can imagine discourse analysis starting from two types of questions, which are in fact interrelated. The first is the continuation of the descriptive linguistic study by simultaneously going beyond the boundaries of a single sentence, and the second relates to the relationship between language and culture"¹⁰.

The development of textual linguistics is attributed to Teun van Dijk, who is regarded as the founder of textual syntax through his books "Some Aspects of Text Grammar*" and "Text and Context". Among the topics he dealt with are:

1. The distinction between text and sentences: He states: "It is uncertain, if not unlikely, that a text is merely a segment of sentences... just as a sentence is not a linear sequence of words". So a text is not just a collection of sentences¹¹, and a sentence is not just a collection of words; simply stringing words together does not make a sentence. For example, "He entered. He said." is not a sentence, even though it is a group of words.
2. Subject of the sentence and subject of the text: He mentions: "The subjects of sentences determine the distribution of information throughout the sequence of sentences, while the subjects of discourse convey semantic information and organise it in such a way that the structures of the sequence are arranged as a coherent whole"¹².
3. Microstructure and macrostructure: He defined rules for achieving the microstructure and macrostructure of texts.
4. Types of texts: Van Dijk published a book called 'Macrostructure'.

3.2. Robert de Beaugrande

The validity of text syntax was confirmed by Robert de Beaugrande¹³ through two books, one co-authored with Wolfgang Dressler entitled "Introduction to Text Linguistics" and another translated by Tamam Hassan entitled "Text, Discourse and Process: Towards a Multidisciplinary Science of Texts. The latter book is one of the most important translated works in text linguistics, and its translation was published by Al Alam Al-Kutub in Cairo in 1998. Robert de Beaugrande identifies 1972 as the year in which sociologists, psychologists and computer scientists expressed the inadequacy of sentence syntax to deal with many problems¹⁴. Halliday and Ruqayya Hasan give an example in their book "Cohesion in English".

Wash and core six cooking apples and put them in a fireproof dish.

The word "they" refers to the six cooking apples, creating cohesion between the two sentences, which together form a text. If we remove the pronoun "they", we no longer have a text; in the absence of reference, the text disappears.

In Arabic, pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and relative pronouns serve as referential tools. They do not have an independent meaning, but refer to elements mentioned elsewhere in the discourse; their existence depends on the text¹⁵.

This is one of the issues that necessitated the move from the sentence level to the text level of study, leading to the emergence of textual linguistics. But is it "the science of the text", "textual linguistics" or "the syntax of the text"? Why are there several translations for this field? Are there other translations?

Section Two: Text and Discourse

Among the meanings of "text" in Arabic we find:

- The culmination or goal of something (the thing has reached its text)¹⁶.
- Appearance and prominence, as in the saying of Imru al-Qais:

“And a neck like the neck of a gazelle, not lascivious when she has shown it, nor idle”¹⁷.

The term “text” is derived from the Latin word “textus”, meaning cloth or woven threads, the verb of which is “texere”¹⁸. According to Halliday and Ruqayya Hasan, a text is not just a collection of sentences, so the difference between a text and a sentence is not in size but in nature. A text does not consist of sentences, but is realised through them. In order for it to be realised through propositions, there must be connections between these propositions. Before propositions can be connected, the elements within a single proposition must also be connected. This leads to the concept of “texture”, whereby every text has a texture that distinguishes it from what is not text¹⁹.

From this we conclude:

- A set of sentences forms a text when they are connected, and before that the components of a single sentence must also be connected.

- These connections constitute the concept of texture, which distinguishes text from non-text.

- The linguistic definition of text shares the concept of texture with the terminological definition.

One of the main characteristics of text, according to Robert de Beaugrande, is its use in communication. The term “le texte” comes from the Latin word “textus”, meaning fabric, and its Latin verb “texere”, meaning to weave.

In the dictionary of linguistics, a collection of utterances or sentences, when subjected to analysis, is called a text. It is then defined as “a sample of linguistic behaviour, which may be either written or spoken”²⁰.

The Dictionary of Discourse Analysis describes discourse as “a linguistic unit composed of successive sentences”, which is what Harris meant when he discussed discourse analysis in 1952. Some call it “syntax of discourse”, but today we prefer the term “discourse linguistics”²¹. From this definition we can see that

- Discourse is a linguistic unit, and text is also a linguistic unit.

- The definition requires a sequence, which means that discourse consists of a sequence of sentences.

Paul Ricœur distinguishes between text and discourse by stating: “Let us call a text any discourse that is fixed in writing”. Text differs from discourse in several ways:

- Discourse presupposes a present recipient who receives the text during its production, while the text addresses an absent recipient.

- Discourse is linked to the spoken word, whereas the text is written.

- The text has continuity, whereas discourse consists of sounds that cease to exist once they are produced, and thus lack the quality of continuity.

Van Dijk, in his book *Text and Context*, equates text and discourse, stating: “Spoken utterances must be restructured according to the broadest possible unit, which I mean by text or context. The latter term is used here to imply the abstract theoretical formulation that includes what is usually called discourse”²².

Section Three: Translating terms in textual linguistics

Every science has its terminology, which serves as a key to explore its depths. In linguistics, however, the multiplicity of translations for a single term among Arab linguists has led to ambiguity and difficulty in determining the intended meaning of terms. Thus, it has become necessary to first refer to the term in its source language in order to discuss its various translations.

Translation is defined as “the transfer of words from one language to another”. The first language is called the source language, from which the translation is made into another language called the target language²³. The different types of translation are:

1. Literal translation: In this type, a synonym is found for each term. Its disadvantage is that it may not convey the intended meaning²⁴. For example, in English.

2. Literary translation: This is known as meaning translation, where ideas are conveyed. The translator translates the meaning of the text to be translated²⁵.

There are also machine translation, explanatory translation, abbreviated translation and others.

It cannot be denied that translation is a creative act, with many challenges, whether in grammar or vocabulary. One of the difficulties is to understand some aspects of life and then convey them to the community and language of the translator. Language cannot be separated from its cultural context or linguistic community²⁶.

Tamam Hassan translated the book “Text, Discourse and Process: Towards a Multidisciplinary Science of Texts” by Robert de Beaugrande. If we compare the title of the book in the source language with its title in the target language, we can see that Tamam Hassan translated “text” as “النص”, “discourse” as “الخطاب” and “process” as “الإجراء”.

The book “Cohesion in English” by Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan²⁷ has been translated by Mohamed Anani as “التماسك في اللغة الإنجليزية”²⁸. The book was published in 1976.

Charef Belhout translated the first and second chapters of a master’s thesis entitled “الإحالة: دراسة نظرية مع ترجمة الفصلين” “حسن ورقية Cohesion in English” لـ M. A. K. Halliday، completed at an Algerian university in

2005-2006. It has been widely referenced by specialists in textual linguistics such as Mohamed Khattabi and Ahmed Afifi.

We chose Robert de Beaugrande's book and Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan's book because the source language for both is English, which avoids problems associated with multiple source languages. Both books contain terms related to textual linguistics, including the term "textuality", which has been translated as النصية or النصانية, meaning "rules for text composition"²⁹. Robert de Beaugrande and Dressler identified seven criteria of textuality that must be present in any text. These criteria are cohesion and coherence, which relate to the text itself; intention and acceptability, which relate to the recipients of the text; and informativeness, context and intertextuality, which relate to the material and cultural context surrounding the text³⁰.

Among the terms, we mention the term "cohesion", which is translated as "الاتساق النصي". It refers "to the strong connection between the components of the text, focusing on the linguistic formal means that link the elements constituting part of the discourse or the whole discourse. This includes the observation of pronouns, referential expressions and various linking devices such as conjunctions, substitutions, deletions, comparisons and qualifications, all of which demonstrate that the text forms a whole"^{31,32}.

The Arabic equivalent of the term "cohesion", according to Tamam Hassan, is "السبك", which is one of the "seven criteria of textuality. It represents procedures by which surface elements appear as facts, where the preceding ones lead to the following ones, thus achieving sequential coherence. This refers to the formal or surface structure of the text, including words, sentences, paragraphs and sections". The term has also been translated as "التضام", "which is the same word used by Shukri Ayad to translate the word combination"³³. The table below illustrates the translations of the term:

Term	Translation into Arabic
Cohesion	التماسك، السبك، الاتساق، الربط، الترابط، التضام، الالتئام، الترابط الرصفي

There are nine Arabic terms corresponding to the English term 'cohesion', which leads to terminological confusion. While the English terms may vary, the Arabic translations tend to be one. Therefore, we must remember that one of the rules of translation is that the meaning of a word changes with context, so the context should be taken into account when choosing the appropriate meaning³⁴.

The synonyms for the term "الاتساق" (cohesion) identified by Ahmed Afifi include "الترابط and الاتساق".

The elements that achieve cohesion according to Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan are illustrated in the diagram:

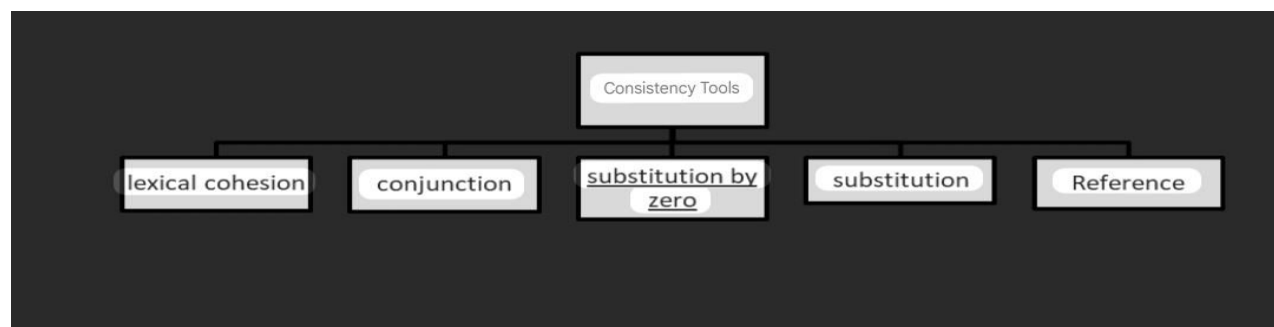


Diagram illustrating the cohesion tools according to Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan³⁵.

Halliday's cohesion tools consist of five tools, while Robert de Beaugrande identifies more.

2. The concept of "reference"

In every language there are linguistic elements of reference, i.e. these elements are not sufficient on their own for interpretation, but refer to something else for their interpretation. These include: pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and comparative pronouns³⁶.

3. The term 'ellipsis' or 'substitution by zero'

Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan use the term "substitution by zero"³⁷ to express deletion, which translates as "الاستبدال". Robert de Beaugrande refers to deletion as "sufficiency of the null structure" "الاكتفاء بالمعنى العدمي". This

leads us to clarify the difference between substitution and deletion. Both deletion and substitution have some key points in common:

- Deletion and substitution are means of textual cohesion.
- Deletion and substitution can be divided into three categories: nominal, verbal and clausal.

1. Nominal ellipsis “الحذف الاسمي”

2. Verbal Ellipsis “الحذف الفعلي”

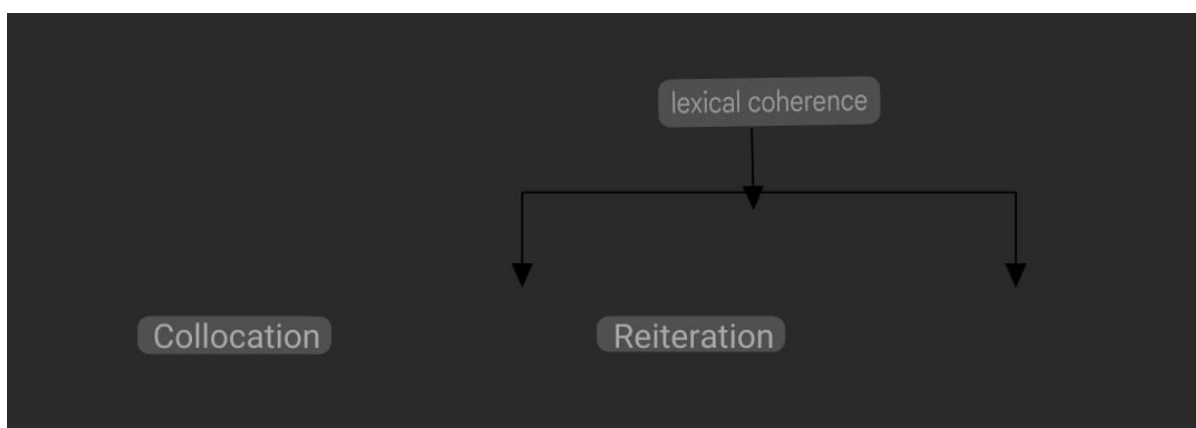
3. Clausal ellipsis “الحذف الحرفي”

4. The term “conjunction

Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan use this term, which has been translated by Muftah Ben Arus as الوصل (al-wasl), explaining: “We preferred to translate ‘conjunction’ as الوصل in reference to what is used in Arabic when discussing relations between sentences in terms of convention, namely separation and connection.” This is the same term used by Omar Abu Khurma³⁸. The conjunctions they mention include: (and, however, because, then).

5. The concept of “lexical cohesion

The concept of “lexical cohesion” according to Halliday and Ruqayya Hassan is defined by two mechanisms which are illustrated in the diagram:”



Miftah Ben Arus referred to them as repetition and collocation. While the first term has been established, the second term has been translated as "cohesive lexicality." It is noteworthy that this second translation may create a problem, manifesting as a confusion³⁹ between the term "تضام" as a synonym for cohesion and the term "تضام" as a synonym for collocation. Therefore, the author added "cohesive lexicality" before the word "تضام" and attached the genitive suffix to "تضام"

Tamam Hassan translated the term “repetition” as “which means the actual repetition of sentences , إعادة اللفظ”⁴⁰.

The term “coherence”: The term “coherence” runs parallel to “cohesion”, but historically the latter has been given precedence⁴¹. Tamam Hassan translated the term “cohesion” as “ is the Arabic equivalent for “الحبك” while “السبك” “coherence.”⁴²

Intent (intentionality):

The term “intentionality” is expressed by “which refers to the intention of the text producer to provide the القصدية” elements of cohesion and coherence in the text ensuring that the text is directed towards a specific goal. According , to Robert de Beaugrande, intention encompasses the attitude of the creator in that a particular linguistic form is intended to be a text that possesses cohesion and coherence. Such a text serves as a means to follow a specific plan to .achieve a specific goal

The term “” is also used to express the English term “intentionality” المقصدية” د . Thus, “ and , “القصدية” د , “القصد” , “القصد” are multiple terms for a single linguistic concept “المقصدية” د

Nauman Boukra links it to the text producer, stating that “intention includes the text producer’s attitude towards creating a coherent and cohesive text, considering the text producer as an active agent in the language, influencing its formation and structure”.

Salah Hassanein describes this criterion as relating to the attitude of the text producer in adopting a set of cohesive and consistent units as a means of achieving the speaker's intention. An example of this is the dissemination of knowledge or the achievement of a goal defined in the light of a particular plan.

Informativité (الإعلامية)

This term appears in text linguistics under other terms such as “ (reporting) or الإخبارية” (newsworthiness) الإخبارية” (informing). Informativité refers to the factor of novelty, which means “الإعلام” “the extent to which recipients find something new and unexpected in the text”⁴³. An example of this is the text “(slow down) written on a traffic تمهل” sign, which has a distinctive shape and colour that makes it recognisable from a distance. This provides a degree of .predictability to keep drivers alert to road conditions

Sometimes the term “” is used as an Arabic equivalent for “الإعلام” informativité”, which refers to “the influencing factor of uncertainty in judging textual facts compared to possible facts”. In reality, every text contains a certain amount of information⁴⁴.

The informativity of a text depends on the novelty of the information and its predictability for the recipient. The more novel and unexpected the information is for the recipient, the greater the informativity of the text. Similarly, the more informative the text, the greater the recipient's interest in it. However, it is important to note that this depends on the recipient's prior knowledge⁴⁵.

Situationality (الموقفية)

The term “situationality”, translated as “includes the factors that make the text ,رعاية الموقف” or “المقامة” ,الموقفية” relevant to a current or recallable situation. This criterion refers to the material and cultural context of the text and .shares this link with the criteria of intertextuality and informativity

Conclusion:

One of the most significant challenges in teaching linguistics is the problem of the multiplicity of linguistic terms, which leaves the Arab recipient confused between a variety of terms, including those that have been Arabised, translated and coined. Among these terms, there is a collection of terms, some of which have been translated into a single Arabic term, while others have several Arabic equivalents.

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