

高职院校 英语语篇教学中的 词汇衔接生态研究

LEXICAL COHESION IN ENGLISH TEXTUAL TEACHING IN
VOCATIONAL COLLEGES FROM ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

肖付良◎著

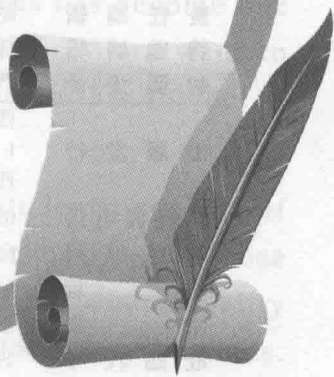


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Preface

The idea of writing this book came into being 2 years ago, which is based on my teaching experience in vocational colleges for many years and study of ecology study recently. It will present the problems and solutions of lexical cohesion in English textual teaching with the guide of lexical cohesion theory and ecological approach.

Lexis is the only type of cohesion that regularly forms multiple relationships. Lexical cohesion, as one of the most important components of a text, is the most important one of the various cohesive devices. Therefore, in most cases the study of textual cohesion is that of lexical cohesion. How to learn a text through lexical cohesive devices has become one of the problems that language experts and scholars want to solve, but we can find few researches made on this subject in higher vocational colleges.

Most of the higher vocational college students consist of graduates from secondary vocational schools and those performing poorly in the entrance examination, whose quality is relatively poor compared with that of university students. Even worse, vocational college students have a poor English background. Since there exist special features in higher vocational colleges, the students only achieve low efficiency in English textual teaching such as lack of cohesion and coherence in their writing, reading and lexis learning in isolation irrespective of context. It is a hard nut for English

teachers in vocational colleges to crack. Therefore, the writer of this book is one of the researchers who try their hard to research on higher vocational college students' problems of lexical cohesion in English textual teaching and their solutions.

This book is made up of four major parts.

Chapter One is the literature review that presents the researches done at home and abroad in the field of textual analysis. It introduces coherence and cohesion, different scholars' study of lexical cohesion such as definitions and types, and study of ecological approach including different definitions and its theoretical basis.

Chapter Two mainly shows the theoretical basis for this study, lexical cohesion and ecological approach. After comparing Halliday & Hasan's *Cohesion in English* with Hoey's *Patterns of Lexis in Text*, a conclusion is made that the former one can be applied more widely and it is also easier for students to understand. It can be used to guide English textual teaching more successfully. Therefore, mainly based on the result of Halliday's research, together with some of Hoey's views, the current book offers a lexical cohesion pattern including lexical repetition and lexical collocation. Ecological approach mainly includes educational ecology and eco-linguistics.

Chapter Three is a survey on vocational college students' problems of lexical cohesion in English textual learning. On the basis of researches on the present situation of vocational college students' English textual learning and by analyzing the results of tests consisting of an argumentative writing, a

cloze test and a guessing words test by context clues, we find out that there exist some problems as below: Students' writing quality is fairly low because in writing students pay little attention to applying appropriately and efficiently such lexical cohesive devices as complex repetition, synonyms, antonyms, superordinate/hyponyms, general words, collocation, which are important to raise writing quality, especially synonyms and antonyms, the most important ones. But simple repetition, which has a negative effect on writing quality, is overused. Their reading level is quite low because they do not apply various lexical cohesive devices to reading texts of different kinds properly. When they learn lexis, they also lack the appropriate application of lexical cohesive devices except for simple repetition and general word, thus leading to low efficiency. Through a questionnaire we find the causes of the problems, namely, students have poor knowledge of lexical cohesion and its functions in a text, and they don't know how to apply different lexical cohesive devices to English textual learning including writing, reading and lexis learning appropriately and efficiently as well.

Chapter Four discusses systematically the solutions to lexical cohesion problems in English textual teaching in higher vocational colleges according to the causes. The countermeasures are illustrated as below: Firstly, students must learn knowledge of lexical cohesion and its functions systematically. It is obviously useful to learners, so in English teaching we should lead the students to make it part of the program. To testify their efficiency and practice, a passage is analyzed by using lexical cohesive patterns offered

in the book. Secondly, the teachers should tell the students how to apply appropriate lexical cohesive devices and ecological approach to writing, reading and lexis learning to improve their textual learning efficiency. In writing students should learn to apply complex repetition, such as synonyms, antonyms, superordinate/hyponyms, general words and collocation, which have an important effect on writing quality. Especially synonyms and antonyms, the most important ones, are necessary to be used most often but simple repetition should be avoided. Students also should learn to apply different lexical cohesive devices to reading texts of various kinds appropriately and accurately. When learning lexis, students should learn to apply lexical cohesive devices such as complex repetition, synonyms, antonyms, superordinate/ hyponyms and lexical collocation properly. Finally a conclusion is drawn: The appropriate and accurate application of lexical cohesion in English textual teaching is obviously quite useful to students' English textual learning, which is one of the practicable and efficient teaching means. Teachers should teach students how to use the lexical cohesion in English textual teaching. It can help students improve their ability and efficiency of writing, reading and lexis learning at textual level.

It is hoped that this book not only offers students an efficient means to learn a text well, but also provides a new and practical way to teach English for English teachers in vocational colleges.

The Author

March 10, 2016

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Chapter 1

Literature Review

1.1 ENGLISH TEXT

Different language experts and scholars have different ideas of the concept of text or discourse. To avoid confusion, in this book we'll adopt the term text instead of discourse to refer to any connected stretch of written or spoken language.

The word text is used in linguistics to refer to "any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole"(Halliday & Hasan, 1976). It may be anything from a single proverb to a whole play, from a momentary cry for help to an all-day discussion on a committee. It may be of considerable length, e.g. a fairy tale, a novel, or a sermon; or it may consists of only one word, e.g. FIRE on the warning sign. A text does not consist of sentences, but is a unit of language in use. It is not a grammatical unit, like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size. A text is sometimes envisaged to be some kind of super-sentence, a grammatical unit that is larger than a sentence but is related to a sentence in the same way that a sentence is related to a clause, a clause to a group and so on: by CONSITUENCY, the composition of

larger units out of smaller ones. But this is misleading. A text is not something that is like a sentence, only bigger; it is something that differs from a sentence in kind. A text is best regarded as a SEMANTIC unit: a unit not of form but of meaning. Thus it is related to a clause or sentence not by size but by REALIZATION, the coding of one symbolic system in another. A text does not consist of sentences; and it is realized by, or encoded in, sentences. If we understand it in this way, we shall not expect to find the same kind of structural integration among the parts of a text as we find among the parts of a sentence or clause.

In Halliday & Hasan's view, the primary determinant of whether a set of sentences do or do not constitute a text depends on cohesive relationships within and between the sentences, which create texture — the property of “being a text” to distinguish it from something that is not a text. The texture is provided by the cohesive relation (1976:2).

The terms text and discourse in English are often used in a confused way. Different scholars have different views of the concept of these two, among which a few are sorted out as follows:

(1) Enkvist (1978) defines discourse as “text and its situational context” and text as “discourse without context”.

(2) Van Dijk (1980) thinks the difference between text and discourse exists in that the former is a theoretical conception related to a language user's competence while the latter is a notion realistically perceived and also related to the user's

performance.

(3) Brown and Yule (1983) holds that text is “the verbal record of a communicative act”.

(4) McCarthy (1991) uses the term discourse analysis to refer to the study of both text and discourse.

(5) Nunan (1993) states that text is “any written record of a communicative event,” on the contrary discourse is “the representation of the communicative event in context”.

(6) Cook (1994) uses text to mean “the linguistic forms in a stretch of language, and those interpretations of them which do not vary with context” while discourse as opposed to text “is a stretch of language in use perceived to be purposeful, meaningful, and connected”.

(7) Hu Zhuanglin (1994) has suggested that text analysis comes from European traditions and discourse analysis from Anglo-American traditions but they are doing more or less the same thing. Some prefer to employ the term text analysis to refer to the study of written discourse and the term discourse analysis to denote the study of spoken discourse. He is inclined to adopt the term discourse.

In this book, the author tries to avoid getting involved in the dispute over the definitions of the two terms and will use the word text to refer to any connected stretch of written or spoken language that is woven together so that it forms a unified whole.

1.2 COHESION AND COHERENCE

1.2.1 Definitions of Cohesion

Different scholars have different ideas of cohesion.

Halliday & Hasan (1976) think cohesion is a semantic concept, which refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text. Cohesion itself is “part of the text-forming component in the linguistic system”. It occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. They emphasize the semantic nature of cohesion and use the term *cohesive tie* to describe the individual instance of cohesion. Although academic opinion is not in agreement with that in its entirety, it is fairly united as to the definition of cohesion itself. Cohesion is realized through the lexicogrammatical system; and it is at this point that the distinction can be drawn. Some forms of cohesion are realized through the grammar and others through the vocabulary. Lexical cohesion refers to the cohesion achieved by the vocabulary.

Another of these studies, by Gutwinski (1976), attempts to root cohesion in a stratificational framework; its focus on the potential stylistic applications of cohesive studies has provided a starting-point for some studies in stylistics.

Hoey (1991) states that cohesion can be defined as “the way certain words or grammatical features of a sentence can connect that sentence to its predecessors (and successors) in a text.” A text is in part organized, in part created by the