SEPARATION AND COHESION: COGNITIVE PLANE OF STUDY (ON THE MATERIAL OF FRENCH SYNTAX)

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Abstract. This article focuses on the problem of syntactic separation and cohesion in the new focus of researches: in terms of cognitive analysis. The mechanisms of formation, perception and interpretation of knowledge based on two opposite, by their essence, syntactic categories like separation and cohesion, were investigated on the material of modern French language.

It was established that cohesion represents the syntactic structures of classic syntax that exist on the mental level as independent grammatical integrities, as integrated integrities, as schematic models. Based on the principles of logic, normativity, syntactic hierarchy, they form primarily analytical thinking of recipients.

Separation, representing syntactic structures of actualizing syntax, is characterized by non-standard syntactic constructions, high expression of utterance, expansion of its informative borders. Based on the principle of language economy, separation is an effective means of information’s assimilation. Separate structures develop not only mental, but also emotional sphere of perception and interpretation of utterance by the speaker.

We proved that cohesive or separate syntactic structures are activated depending on the cultural and historical period, and in their synthesis, they are the significant factors in the organization, development and evaluation of semantic space of the text in cognitive plane.

Keywords: classic syntax, cohesion, actualizing syntax, separation, syntactic structure, emotionality of utterance, syntax of spoken language, cognitive aspect of the analysis, the cognitive process of the recipient, perception, structuring, interpretation of information, logical thinking, sensual and imaginative perception, syntactic synthesis of cohesion and separation.

Introduction

At the present stage of scientific knowledge development, there is an increased interest to the study of those aspects of language that are connected with thinking, processes of learning the world and interpretation of knowledge about the world. In other words, it is connected with the study of language in its cognitive function. Actually a cognitive function explains the mechanisms of knowledge’s transfer by means of language, analyzes linguistic facts and phenomena in terms of how they reflect the vision and perception of the world by the speaker, the means of knowledge interpretation in different types of discourse and so on (Kubryakova, 2004, p. 57-79).

In the basis of the cognitive approach of language learning, the determining factor is anthropocentric one, according to which in the process of knowledge formation, a human plays a special role as the bearer of language that has some experience. It is the speaker who explores the world and gets knowledge, is able to construct the meaning of linguistic units; the speaker deliberately selects linguistic means of expression to describe a particular situation (Tesnière, 1965, p. 345). This affirmation provides the basis for language learning in close relationship with a person, his/her intelligence, thinking processes and cognitive mechanisms.

In keeping with the cognitive approach, the problem of knowledge interpretation at the syntax level remains the object of study for linguists. Currently, the issues of syntactic means, structural syntactic patterns, features of their use in the formation and transfer of knowledge had not found their final solution and therefore require thorough study. In the field of cognitive science there are many important researches of V. Admoni, M. Boldyrev, L. Furs, G. Grays, E. Kubryakova, A. Pokrovskaya, B. Russell, O. Khomska and others. Their achievements serve as the basis, the foundation of our research. The syntax of French language is presented by the significant scientific works of A. Andrievska, Ch. Bally, M. Cohen, V. Gak, E. Referovska, L. Tesnière, N. Shyharevska etc.
In the context of the abovementioned problem, on the material of the modern French language, we aimed to analyze, in the cognitive plane, these two opposite inherently syntactic categories as cohesion and separation. The objective of our exploration was to find out how cohesion and separation can form, transfer knowledge, express subjective assessment and emotional perception of utterance.

In our view, the syntactic structure of language is directly correlated with the ways of the worldview, the world perception which are determined by the influence of historical, social, cultural processes taking place in the society. National information of the certain stage of cultural development appears on the syntactic level through formal means – the structure of the text and its component units. Activation of certain syntactic structures in certain historical periods, the emergence of new ways of structuring thoughts can be explained by the influence of social and cultural factors on language (Grays, 1985, p. 217-230). Thus, the text, and therefore syntax reflect the specific state of the language and the culture at a certain stage of their development, so they determine linguistic and cultural situation.

We share the opinion of A. Pokrovska (2001, p. 105-107), who is the author of the conception of linguistic and cultural syntax description. According to this conception, social dynamics of culture appears with the change of cultural paradigms – anthropocentric (civilization) and bio-cosmic (anti civilization).

Logic, morality, ordering, proportion, harmony are inherent to the first paradigm. In the language it is characterized by classically correct phrases, complete syntactic structures, hierarchical organization of language units, normativity, stylistic differentiation (the phenomena of classic syntax).

The second paradigm is characterized by chaotic nature, fragmentarity, nonsystem, disharmony, disparity, variation that appear at the level of language’s syntactic structure in the violation of the hierarchical organization of syntactic units, and grammatical differences between the grammatical and actual division of the sentence, in noncompliance of syntactic coherence (the phenomena of actualizing syntax).

Taking as a basis the definite conception, it can be assumed that cohesion as a syntactic category is typical for anthropocentric cultural paradigm, and separation represents a bio-cosmic paradigm. It is necessary to consider in more detail the features of the structure and functional load of these syntactic structures of modern French language within cognitive search.

Cohesion is a syntactic relationship that provides grammatical connectivity of sentences, content integrity, structural completeness and adequate interpretation of superphrasal unity. Usually, cohesion (from lat. word cohaesus, which means “to be connected, linked, adjacent”) is a structural and grammatical variety of text coherence.

Regarding the syntactic means of cohesion expression in French, it must be said that they are quite numerous and varied; the main means are pronouns and their antecedents, anaforic links, articles, deixis, conjunctions, repetitions, word order, ellipsis, co-ordinate and subordinate syntactic relations, temporal relation connectors, connectors that mark the spatial relationships and many others. For example, examine the following passage:

1. Le lendemain, comme nous prenions ensemble notre café après le déjeuner, Mme Villier téléphona à Philippe. 2. Je compris, par les réponses, qu’elle avait parlé à son mari, qu’il approuvait ce projet et que tous deux viendraient en Suisse avec nous. 3. Je constatai que Philippe n’insistait pas et qu’il décourageait même les Villier. 4. Mais sa dernière phrase fut : « Eh bien, alors, nous serons ravis de vous retrouver là-bas. » 5. Il raccrocha le récepteur et me regarda, un peu gêné (A. Maurois. Climats, p. 168).

In this case, we can observe cohesion with a chain link, which provides that each successive sentence is dependent on previous one and at the same time it is the main sentence in relation to the following one. In other words, each sentence in the text (except the last one) is both principal, and subordinate. The sentences that are coherent together consistently, link systematically the chain of events of submitted story. These syntactic techniques are considered logical, as they are concluded in the logical-philosophical concept – the concept of sequence, coherence, of temporal, spatial and causal relationship. In terms of cognitive processes, information comes gradually, it is easily decoded and interpreted appropriately by the speaker.

It is known that sentence is a complex sign, which formality is presented by the structural scheme, and content plane is presented by the proposition (sentence). Fixing a certain stereotype for the structure is particularly important for the French language because it is characterized by a fixed, direct word order. Strict fixation of word order in French, such as: subject – predicate – direct complement – indirect complement – an adjunct of place – an adjunct of time, can both simplify and complicate cognitive efforts of the speaker. Structures of classic syntax exist on the mental level as independent grammaticalintégrites, as integrated...
Integrates, as schematic models. Based on the principles of logic, normativity, syntactic hierarchy, they form primarily analytical and creative (visual) thinking of communicators.

In contrast to cohesion, separation is the technique of expressive syntax of the written language. In this way the sentence is divided into separate segments (communicative units) that are graphically and by intonation marked as separate sentences. But they are closely related semantically and as a result they form a new superphrasal unity – separate structure. The feature of separate phrase is that its foundation (basic part) does not reflect the fullness of meaning of the utterance, which is gradually, according to its formation, endowed with new parts, additions, that are specially attached to the previously said and tonally complete sentence (Andrievskaya, 1969, p. 77-83). Separate structures are characterized by certain chaotic, fragmentarity, violation of hierarchical syntactic relations:


Emotional sphere of utterance’s perception penetrates in communicative and cognitive processes. As a result, the nature of usual thinking operations changes, there is redefining of denotative situation, reassessment of proposition. Emotional expression’s aspects form primarily figurative, sensual, abstract thinking of the recipient.

In addition, separation causes language compression, the principle of linguistic economy is implemented. Separate structures contribute to a significant reduction in the size of syntactic structures, laconic presentation of information, accelerate and simplify their perception (Shygarevskaya, 1970, p. 124). Using separation the speaker selects the necessary information, adds semantic accents, stresses on them, strengthens and develops or refines the details of the utterance:


Separate structures have an effect of ease, creating a special narrative rhythm (accelerated, slowed, syncopated etc.) and thus destroy the language standards and templates. In this case, the information comes to the recipient fragmentarily, in portions; cognitive processes structure the thinking according to its accumulation. Separate patterns are typical to slow spoken language, where they penetrate into the literary language usage (Akimova, 1990, p. 34). They are introduced deliberately by writers in fiction and become characteristic traits of modern French syntax. Activation of conversational structures in writing language is caused by both social factors (democratization) and cultural processes (bio-cosmic, anti-civilization paradigm, by A. Pokrovskaya (Pokrovska, 2001, p. 45-53)).

As you can see, these syntactic constructions are structurally incomplete, but semantically they are adequate and full syntactic units that organize utterance and form a common, coherent picture of language. Sharing expression separate phrases structure the opinion of the speaker in the particular way and direct it to update the semantics of certain syntactic units; they provide adequate perception of the text as a whole. Thus, the compression of language tools, compositional reorganization of syntactic constructions, high expressiveness describing separation contribute to effective cognitive processes of the speaker, develop not only his mental, but also the emotional sphere of perception and interpretation of utterance.

Method.

Achieving the purpose of our scientific study and solving set problems have caused using such scientific methods as observation, description, classification, comparative analysis, synthesis, etc. Various methods of linguistic analysis, such as: structural, functional and cognitive analysis, have also been involved in our research. For disclosure functionality of cohesion and separation within cognitive approach, the philosophical principles of consistency, coherence, connectivity, structural hierarchy, the relationship of language and thinking, language and consciousness have been used. Methodological basis of this study is based on the following dominants of modern paradigm of human knowledge as anthropocentrism, functionalism, pragmatism.
Results.

In summary, one can emphasize that separation and cohesion are two opposite, structurally diverse syntactic universals. One of them (cohesion) is used for strengthening, improvement of the structural features of the sentence, provides logical coherence and syntactic integrity of a structure; other universal (separation) destroys the defining characteristics of the utterance, but extends its informativity, affectivity and communicative capabilities.

Latest trends in language development show that these two linguistic units successfully coexist and correlate in French syntax. Separation creates sensual and imaginative perception, emotional mastering of information provided to the recipient. Instead cohesion provides a logical, sequential, systematic mastering of knowledge. Thus, one could argue that separation and cohesion in their synthesis are the significant factors of the organization, interpretation and evaluation of text’s semantic space in cognitive plane.

Discussion.

A conducted linguistic study does not solve fully the set problems but allows to define a new vector of knowledge in cognitive linguistics. Prospects for further researches are associated with the analysis of other linguistic forms of worldview, world perception, understanding of reality and man in it in particular.

References