Chapter Five

COHESION WITHOUT THE 'CONNECTIVES': EXAMPLES FROM IGBO

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Abstract

Cohesion is the grammatical and/or lexical relationship between the different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence (Richards et al, 86). Evident here is that the connectives, also referred to as conjunctions (Richards et al op cit: 108), are cohesive devices. However, there are cases of cohesion which are devoid of the connectives. This paper exemplifies the cases using Igbo poetry.

Introduction

Words are put together to form sentences (Kuiper and Allan 213). The word, 'together' provides information about some overt or covert links between the words that form a sentence. The links culminate into what is referred to as cohesion. May it be noted that beyond the sentence (whatever type) the links are evident, that is, in any instance of discourse, a term used in linguistics to refer to a continuous stretch of … language larger than a sentence (Crystal 141).

Links that are overt are ordinarily referred to as connectives or conjunctions (Richards et al 86). They include English *and, or, but* or conjunctives like *so that, as long as, as if* and conjunctive adverbs like *however, nevertheless, moreover* etc. Subordinators like *when, because, unless* are also analyzed to mark such links.

In contrast, links that are covert manifest semantic computation that is irregular or not hosted by any lexical items. Such links may be subsumed under zero connectors. (1-3) has been used to illustrate zero connectors by Crystal (97 & 507)
(1) was happy
(2) stayed quiet
(3) He said he was coming.

(1) & (2) are exocentric constructions (constructions without a head): according to Crystal, each of the first elements is the connector while the second is a predicative attribute. That is, the connector links the attribute to an entity represented in grammatical analysis as subject:

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(4) Ada was happy.
(5) Ibe stayed quiet.

This provides the corroboration for the classification of some verbs as copular (also copulative) or linking verbs (verbs that connect a subject with its complement, which may be an adjective or noun (Wehmeier (ed)).

We note that 'was' and 'stayed' are connectors not by their categorial status in the lexicon but by their syntactic function vis-à-vis the semantic computation of the relation between the subject and the complement in the sentence they appear. In other words, they are irregular hosts of the links between the different parts of the sentences.

Obviously (3) has a link (connecting its parts) that is not hosted by any lexical item. However, the link is understood to be the elided complementizer, 'that'.

What is more, Richards et al (25) identify anaphoric relation as a marker of cohesion, that is, anaphor (a word or phrase that refers back to another word or phrase) achieves cohesion:
(6) Tom likes ice cream but Bill can't eat it.

'It' refers back to 'ice cream'. The link realized by the reference connects the two clausal parts of (6). This is even clearer if the conjunction 'but' is removed:
(7) Tom likes ice cream; Bill can't eat it.

In other words, the deletion of 'but' does not badly affect the cohesion between the structures.
Besides, Richards et al demonstrate that some verbs may be anaphoric:
(8) Mary works hard and so does Doris.

According to them, 'does' is the substitute for 'works' in the same way 'it' is for 'ice cream' in (6) & (7). Indeed, the identical reference between the two provides cohesion with or without the conjunctive, 'and so':
(9) Mary works hard; Doris does.

Furthermore, Richards et al have the position that there is a link marked by 'Jenny' and 'is … coming' in (10a) and 'she' and 'is' in (10b):
(10) a. Is Jenny coming to the party?
      b. Yes, she is.

And, (11) has a link marked by 'London' and 'there':

(11) If you are going to London, I can give you the address of a good hotel there.

We analyze (10) & (11) as describing other uncommon dimensions of anaphoric relations.

May we note that the analysis of an advertisement copy on 'Nylon' by Cook (151) shows cohesive devices like the ones exemplified above and others:

(12) In 1930s one man touched the lives of women
    He wasn't a film star or a singer but a scientist
    He invented nylon
    Yet two years later, beset with doubt, he took his own life
    Wallace Carothers dedicated his life to women
    Nylon by Wallace Carothers
    Nylon by Pretty Polly.

For Cook, the repetition of 'women' in lines 1 & 5, 'life' in lines 4 & 5 and 'Wallace Carothers' in lines 5 & 6 makes co-reference in the copy clear, thereby enhancing cohesion. Again, relatedness of sense marks cohesion. This is illustrated by 'man' (line 1) and 'film star', 'singer', and 'scientist' (line 2): they have a single component of meaning, 'human'. Furthermore, 'he …'; he …'; he …' in lines 2, 3 and 4 anaphorically refer to 'one man' (line 1) and cataphorically to 'Wallace Carothers' (lines 5 & 6): a cross-referential relation marking cohesion.

Ellipsis occurs in lines 2 & 4. The elided items in line 2 are '∅HE ∅WAS' while the elided items in line 4 are '∅THAN ∅THE ∅TIME ∅HE ∅INVENTED ∅NYLON'. These elided items could be explicitly or implicitly recovered. For instance, '∅HE ∅WAS' are explicitly recovered from the same line 2:

(13) He wasn't a film star or a singer but ∅ ∅ a scientist

'∅THAN ∅THE ∅TIME ∅HE ∅INVENTED ∅NYLON' are implicitly recovered from line 3. Cook's position is that there is an automatic link between elided items and their copies (wherever they are recovered). Worthy of mention is that the ellipsis illustrated here is some form of repetition distinguished however by occurrence of covert copies.

Observe that conventional connectives appear in lines 2 & 3: 'but' and 'yet' respectively. However, what is interesting in the foregoing is that there are cohesive devices that exclude them (the conventional connectives). The cohesive devices are anaphoric and cataphoric relation; repetition; ellipsis; and sense inclusion. Below, these devices are exemplified in selected Igbo poems with the purpose of providing evidence for universal phenomena characteristic of language use.

The Selected Igbo Poems

Two Igbo poems are handled in this work. The poems have been selected from *Echiche* by Ezeuko and Anowai (1989). They are *Akpị* and *Ọnwụ*. Brevity is the criterion applied in their selection. May we point out that the poems have been included as an appendix and have been presented as they appear in the source text. Hence, they are not tone marked and the associated capitalization style maintained. However, the title of each poem has been considered to be the first line of the poem to ensure a logical flow. Again, expressions from the poems used for illustration in the analysis below are glossed the first time but not the second time.

The Analysis

I 'you' in lines 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14 and 15 of *Akpị* anaphorically refers to *Akpị* 'scorpion'. This applies to gị 'you' in lines 5, 11 and 20. Almost all the lines in the poem cohere, occasioned by the anaphoric reference to akpi expressed by the pronouns, ị and gị, which occur in the lines. Similarly, anaphoric reference is evident in *Ọnwụ* 'death'. Ị in lines 6 and 7 refers to ndị 'some (of people)' in lines 4 and 5 respectively. In the same way, gị in 6 and 7 refers to ị in the same lines. Observe that the number distinction between ị and ndị is not a barrier in the reference. This is explained by the repetition of achị ọchị [laugh laugh] 'laughing' of line 4 in line 6 and ebe akwa [cry cry] 'crying' of line 5 in line 7. More importantly, it clarifies further the position of Mbagwu that ị and gị in an advertisement copy have an implication for the feature, 'plural'. Good enough advertisement copies share features with poems (cf. Cook 10). Moreover, it has been argued that English 'we' may be inclusive or exclusive. It is inclusive when it refers to 'I' in addition to one or more other persons who include the hearers. On the contrary, it is exclusive when it refers to 'I' and one or more other persons who do not include hearers (cf. Lyons 277). The argument here is relevant in considering the referential relation between ndị and ị. Ndị includes ị, hence ị could subsequently govern the repeated verb form, achị. The deviation characterizing the relation is different only in the grammatical category, 'person': we and I are first person while ndị and ị are third, and second person respectively.

Note that there is a strong indication that ndị of 4 and 5 refers to mmadụ 'human being(s)' of line 2. In fact, it unarguably pre-modifies mmadx covertly:

(14) a. Ndị $\varnothing^1$mmadx achị ọchị 'some $\varnothing$people laugh'

   b. Ndị $\varnothing$mmadụ ebe akwa 'some $\varnothing$people cry'

All the lines of stanza 1 and 2 of *Ọnwụ* cohere via a cross-referential relation between ị, gị and mmadụ. The lines of stanza 3 are not disconnected from the lines of stanza 1 and 2. Anyị 'we' in line 1 of the stanza marks the connection by contextually including ndị and ị.

Repetition has been classified into two: anaphora and anadiplosis. While anaphora is the repetition of a word or phrase in successive clauses, anadiplosis involves the repetition of an important word (cf. Mbagwu). No matter what type of repetition, the repeated expressions automatically connect with each other, conjoining the lines hosting them.

In *Akpị*, i nweghi [you have-not] 'you don't have' is repeated in line 2 and 3, binding the two lines. Ji 'hold' occurs in lines 8 and 10; na-agba 'Aux[2]-stinging' of line 12 is repeated in line 13; similarly gbaa 'sting' in line 14 is repeated in line 15; ya na 'him/her and' is repeated in those same lines and nwee 'own' is repeated in lines 17, 18 and 19. Observe that we have not considered the occurrence of enyi 'elephant' in lines 6 and 7 as a case of repetition. This is because enyi in line 6 is semantically different from enyi in line 7. In other words, repetition is marked by sameness in form and meaning. Particularly, the pre-modifiers nkenke 'short' and igwe 'herd' mark a semantic difference. Another difference is marked by the relation between enyi and ị in line 6. The relation implicates singularity in contradistinction to the plurality igwe expresses in line 7. It is important to note that the relation is cataphoric.

In *Ọnwụ*, ewu 'goat' is repeated in lines 2 and 3; achị ọchị, line 6; ebe akwa, line 7; ọ bụ gị ka ọ kara (mma/njọ) [it be you that it be-(better/worse)] 'Is it you it is better/worse for? (gloss in the context of the source text)', line 7; bụ, lines 6, 7, 9 and 10; and Chukwu 'God', lines 2 and 9.

Ellipsis, as pointed out earlier, describes repetition especially when expressions elided are recoverable. In such a case, the elided expressions and their overt copies relate and by the relation serve to connect lines involved. This is evident in lines 2, 4 and 5 of *Ọnwụ*. In lines 4 and 5 mmadụ is elided as illustrated by (14). It is recovered in line 2. Similarly, na is elided in lines 4 and 5 and is recovered in lines 6 and 7.

Sense inclusion in lexical semantics is referred to as hyponymy, which involves different words having meanings that are included in the meaning of a word. The different words are co-hyponyms while the incorporating word is the hypernym (cf. Ndimele115). Naturally, there would be a relation between any words and the word that includes their meanings and if they are hosted in different lines of a text, they will serve to cohere the lines.

May we note that in handling sense inclusion, we considered not only words but also larger expressions.An instance of sense inclusion is demonstrated by lines 2, 3 and 4 of *Akpị*. Line 4 is the superordinate or hypernymous expression which includes the meanings of lines 2 and 3:

(15) I nweghi enyi[3] 'You don't have a friend'

I nweghi ikwu na ibe 'You don't have kinfolk'

Ị bụ ọkpa nnaa ya [You be walking only him] 'You live alone'

Another instance is in lines 13, 14 and 15 of *Akpị*. Mmadụ of line 15 includes the meaning of nwata 'child' and okenye 'elderly person'. Evidently, the relation of sense inclusion marks cohesion.

Conclusion

We have exemplified devices of cohesion (which excludes connectives) in Igbo poetry. They are anaphoric and cataphoric relation; repetition; ellipsis and sense inclusion. In our opinion, these non-grammatical devices of cohesion provide aesthetic cohesion while their grammatical counterparts provide conventional cohesion.

Aesthetic cohesion distinguishes conventional cohesion in being characterized by logical relations or occasioned by interpretive networks. Conventional cohesion relies on structure hence it involves items that describe connection and consequently designated connectives. We believe that many poets and other writers are not versed in matters concerning aesthetic cohesion (cohesion without connectives). Hence, when it manifests, it is accidental. This paper therefore provides the awareness for writers to consciously utilize the options provided by aesthetic cohesion. This will most likely improve the stylistic quality of written English, Igbo or any other language in the country.

Notes

1.   The symbol $\varnothing$ marks a deleted item.

2.   Aux is the abbreviation of auxiliary. That is, na in na-(verb form) is an auxiliary or a helping item.

3.   With tone marking enyi may mean elephant or friend: ényí 'elephant' and ényì 'friend'.

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Appendix

Akpị
I nweghi enyi
I nweghi ikwu na ibe
Ị bụ qkpa nnaa ya
Iwe juru gi obi

Ị bụ nkenke enyi
na-achụ igwe enyi ọsọ
Ihe agụ ji eme ire
Dị ya na mbọ
Ihe I ji eme ire
Dị gị n'ọdụdụ
Ọgwụ ị na-agba
Na-agba mmadụ gharaghara
Ị gba nwata, ya na akwa
Ị gba okenye, ya na ude

Akpị biko
Nwee enyi
Nwee ụmụnna
Nwee agbataobi
Ka a mara ma iwe ga-ezelata gị

Ọnwụ
Mmadụ nọ n'ụwa bụ ewu Chukwu
Mgbe Chukwu chọrọ ewu ya ọ kpụrụ
Ndị achị ọchị
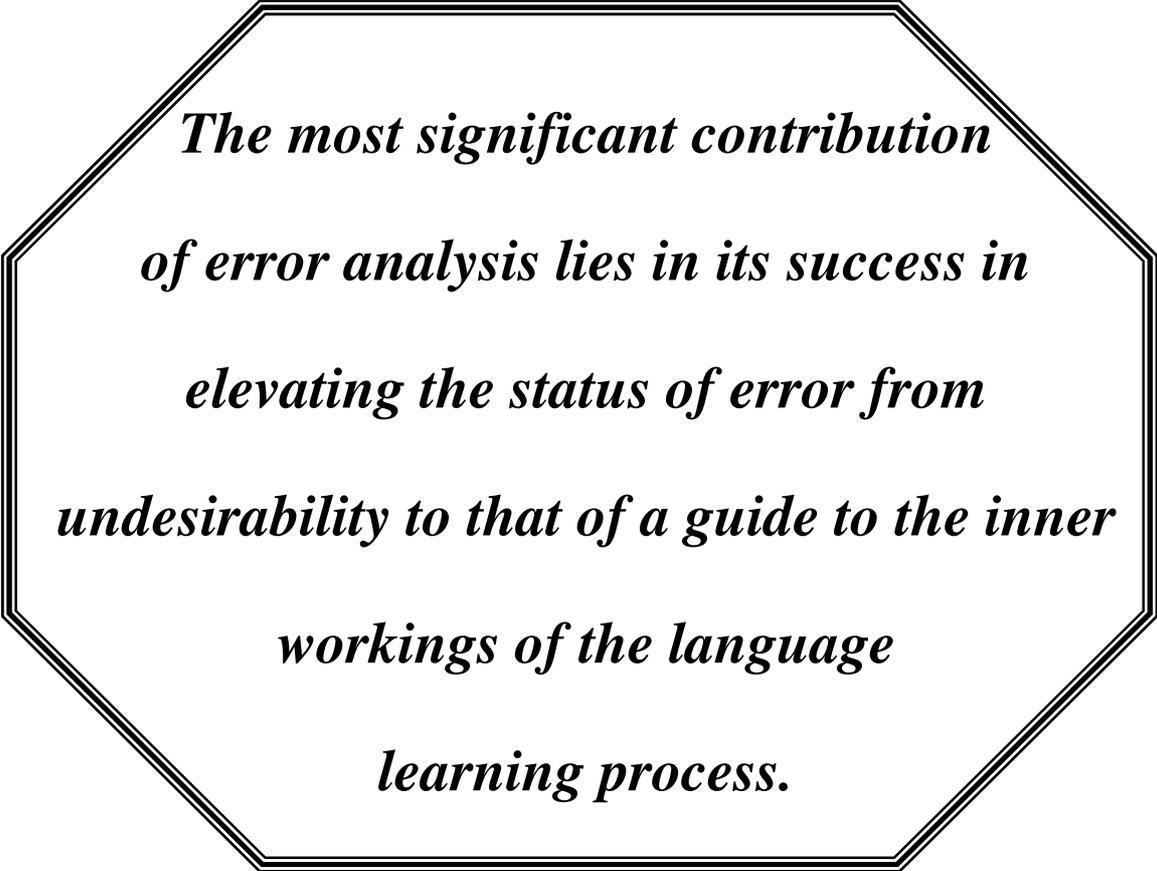Ndị ebe akwa n'ụwa

Ị na-achị ọchị ọ bụ gị ka ọ kara mma
Ị na-ebe akwa ọ bụ gị ka ọ kara njọ

Anyị elokata ililo agwụ anyị na mmụọ
Akwa ọkụkụ bụ ọjị Chukwu
Ọkpụkpa aja bụ abọ mmụọ
Ụwa ntọọ

The most significant contribution

of error analysis lies in its success in

elevating the status of error from

undesirability to that of a guide to the inner

workings of the language

learning process.