

Peoples' Democratic Republic of Algeria  
الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية  
Ministry of Higher education and Scientific Research  
وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي  
Mentouri University-Constantine  
جامعة منتوري- قسنطينة  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
كلية الآداب و اللغات  
Department of Foreign Languages  
قسم اللغات الأجنبية

**The Importance of Knowledge about Cohesive  
Markers in the Comprehension of Reading Extracts**

Thesis submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages  
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Presented by:

**Legrid Chahinez**

Supervised by:

**Dr Hacène Hamada**

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## **Dedication**

To the memory of my mother- the only source of my happiness and success, who left before seeing this work...

May she rest in peace and be blessed now and forever, amen!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I thank God, the almighty who strengthened me and provided me with help and courage to fulfil this work.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The present dissertation aims at, first, describing the different cohesive ties next to their ways of occurrence in discourse with illuminating examples. Second, the study shows how knowledge about these explicit textual markers helps in the understanding of different reading extracts that first year students of English may come across. All this is to be sustained by an appropriate methodology. The general objective is to investigate whether first year students who come from the secondary school with an intermediate level have knowledge about the different meanings of cohesive ties and whether this knowledge helps or hinders the students' comprehension of reading extracts. The practical part was designed with the intention to investigate the different types of cohesive markers that exist within the texts taken from the syllabus of first years and to check through a test administration the effect of knowing different cohesive ties on comprehension. The results obtained from the test showed the students tendency in answering the test's questions, and revealed the level of their knowledge about different cohesive markers which was the reason of their comprehension of most of the test questions.

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## **Introduction**

### **1. Statement of the problem**

The understanding of the sentences which build the texture of reading extracts is not only based on knowing the vocabulary and the characters' emotions and points of view, but also on knowing and understanding the exact meaning of cohesive devices and the effect imposed on the sentence during the different uses of these grammatical links. What is already known by native speakers of English is in most cases ignored by foreign learners who may not be familiar with the meaning of the cohesive ties.

### **2. Rationale**

There are two main aims of this study: first to determine and distinguish those cohesive devices which are more or less problematic to students' comprehension of sentences that build reading extracts, and second, to determine whether cohesive devices help or hinder learners' comprehension.

### **3. Research questions**

1/ what are the most frequently found cohesive devices in reading extracts?

2/ to what extent does knowledge and understanding of cohesive devices affect the comprehension of sentences that build the reading extracts?

3/ Does knowledge about cohesive devices help or hinder students' comprehension of reading extracts?

#### **4. Hypothesis**

Knowledge about cohesive devices and understanding of their different meaning - which impose shifts in meaning at the level of sentences-, is an essential step in the comprehension of reading extracts.

#### **5. Research methods and tools**

This research is a descriptive and analytic study. The theoretical framework consists of a description of cohesion and cohesive devices according to some linguists. Its practical part is of an empirical nature as it uses two analytical tools: the first one is a discourse textual discourse analysis of literary samples from reading extracts given to first year students of English, and the second one is a reading test which evaluates the learners' comprehension while relying on cohesive ties.

#### **6. Structure of the study**

The present research consists of three basic chapters.

The first chapter of this study sheds light on the different explicit textual markers - known as cohesive ties- with several examples for illustration. It describes the notion of text since it provides an area where textual markers exist.

The second chapter provides a description of the reading skill in general and reading comprehension in particular, in order to shed light on the important role of cohesive markers in the development of reading comprehension.

In chapter three, there is a descriptive analysis of the randomly selected reading extracts taken from three different subjects: 'written expression', 'linguistics' and 'civilization' to show the frequency rates of the different cohesive ties that exist within

them. Then, the obtained results from the analysis are presented and discussed according to the importance of knowledge about cohesive ties and their role in the learners' comprehension of reading extracts. The results will either confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis built within this research.

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## CHAPTER I SENTENCE AND TEXT COHESION

### Introduction

The present chapter attempts to explore the fundamental issues of two related aspects of written texts: grammatical and lexical cohesion. They will be discussed in details with regard to their conditions and ways of occurrence throughout chains of sentences. In this respect, a wide array of examples will be used for illustration during the several definitions of cohesive ties. This chapter seeks also to define the two notions: *sentence* and *text*, next to a brief view about the different text genres. It also sheds light on the existence of cohesion within a text, and the way cohesive relations are built across sentences.

### 1. Semantics and the nature of cohesion

Semantics can be viewed to be the scientific study of meaning, Palmer (1976) describes it in his introductory survey “Semantics” as: “*the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning*” (1976:1). He adds:

*“semantics is a component or a level of linguistics of the same kind as phonetics or grammar... nearly all linguists have, explicitly or implicitly, accepted a linguistic model in which semantics is at one end and phonetics at the other, with grammar some where in the middle.”* (1976:5).

Semantics first occurred in the English language in the seventeenth century under the name of “semantic philosophy” and similarly it appeared in the French language as “*semantique*”. In this era, in both languages, semantics was all about the change and development of meaning; i.e.; the historical changes of meanings within languages. Then, in 1923 came Ogden and Richards with their book “The Meaning of Meaning” which was more than ideas about historical changes of meaning; it was based on many linguists’ and anthropologists’ views, as well as on “reputable scholars”. It could bring semantics closer and more popular by changing its traditional complex sense to a simpler one. At this time, the term

“semantics” started to be used in the popular language, like in newspapers, and got rather interested in the manipulation of language and the choice of words; this is how monolingual and bilingual dictionaries started to be widely used.

With time, semantics got more specific and its scope got narrowed down into precise semantic analyses, such as, the “naming theory” in which semanticists attempt to study the meaning of words and relate these words and names to entities and things in the real world. For this respect, George Yule (1996) describes semantics as: “the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and entities in the world, that is, how words literally connect to things” (1996:04). This means that semantics did not restrict its attention to words that are only linked to visible objects in the world around us, but also to invisible ones which exist in the form of concepts in our minds. This view occurred twice in the form of theories about concepts. First in “the sign” theory of De Saussure which is based on the signifier and signified notions, and second in the “semiotic triangle” of Richards and Ogden in which there is a relation between three labels: The symbol (the linguistic element), the referent (the entity in the real world) and the reference (the thought or concept in the mind). Richards and Ogden (1923) explain in this triangular relation that there is no direct link between the symbol (the name) and the entity which resembles it in the real world, and that the thought or concept of this object is the intermediate between the language and the real world, because when we read or hear a word, the first thing that comes to our minds is the thought or concept of this thing.

Semantics is no less an important branch as well as is the case for other linguistic branches. It has a relation with a number of different disciplines and since its scope goes round studies of meaning and analyses of meaning relationships, it forms a good basis for different investigations in the field of linguistics. This is why it got interested in sentence meaning and

all those relationships that exist within sentences and those that hold between the different parts of a text such as coherence and cohesive relationships. So, cohesion and semantics do have a strong relationship and they go together since both are about meaning and meaning relationships within sentences or across texts.

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to fully review semantics and deeply investigate its historical development next to all the recent additions and changes and that were brought to it, however, a brief look at it serves as an entrance to the concept of cohesion and helps to tackle the fundamental tenet of this research work which is about cohesion, cohesive relations and their importance in comprehension.

Let us now tackle the **concept of cohesion** and shed light on its different aspects since it is the main concern of this research work.

One of the good definitions is made by Christopher Tribble (1996) who describes it as:

*“(...) the grammatical and lexical relationships that exist between the different elements of a text. These can include the direct types of relationships which exist between subjects and verbs, or the less direct relationships between, for example, pronouns and the words or phrases to which they refer.” (1996:157).*

One of the most workable definitions is the one made by Halliday and Hassan (1976) and is considered as the standard text of such an area. They describe the concept of cohesion as a semantic one since it is about the relations of meaning which exist within a text. They say that: *“cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it” (1976:8).* Again they explain that:

*“Cohesion occurs where **the interpretation** of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one **presupposes** the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text.” (1976:4).*

These two definitions contain essential key words such as- decoding, interpretation, recourse to...etc. Both view cohesion as a concept which accounts for relations in discourse; that is, all the possible ways of linking some thing with what has gone before. The process of linking itself is a semantic one since it is achieved through relations of meaning. So, the interpretation of any piece of written discourse is dependent on the degree to which the sentences interrelate in meaning. That is the more elements in a text are interpreted by presupposition and reference to each other, the more this gives a texture to the text and makes it cohesive; and this enables its semantic function as a text.

Moreover, McCarthy (1991) claims that:

*“basically most texts display links from sentence to sentence in terms of grammatical features such as pronominalisation, ellipsis (the omission of otherwise expected elements because they are retrievable from the previous text or context), and conjunction various kinds. (1991:25).*

By this he points to the surface features that display links across sentences and bind parts of the text together. He did not give a direct definition of cohesion, but rather pointed at it and insisted on its importance, for he says:

*“markers of various kinds, i.e. the linguistic signals of semantic and discourse functions are very much concerned with the surface of the text...they create links across sentence boundaries and pair and chain together items that are related ( e.g. by referring to the same entity).” (ibid.1991:26-27).*

From his part, Hatch (1992) claims that cohesion is a guide to coherence. He explains that the latter is a general text marker through which the connections between the different parts of the discourse are most of the time not clear enough especially for non-native speakers. However, cohesive ties and deictic markers make the relations between clauses and sentences of the discourse more explicit, and this is what facilitates the understanding. He says that: “much of the meaning can only be understood by looking at linguistic markers that have a “pointing function “in a given context.” (Hatch.1992: 209).

Similarly, Blum-Kulka (1981: 17) considers coherence as a covert (implicit) relationship among parts of the text, because it is a complex concept which requires cultural knowledge of the language. However, she believes that cohesion is an overt (explicit) relationship that holds between the sentences of a text. She says that: “*cohesion...will be considered as an overt relationship holding between parts of the text, expressed by language specific markers.*” (ibid.1981:17). In other words, this definition reveals the fact that the cohesive relationship is explicit because it is built through grammatical markers, otherwise known as surface markers, which can be seen at the level of sentences, and which participate to a great extent in creating the meaning.

## **2. Cohesive ties**

In the previous section, we saw a definition of the concept of cohesion and its relation to semantics. Now we will have a detailed discussion of the two types of cohesion, grammatical and lexical. The standard source in this area is that of Halliday and Hassan (1976). Their book “Cohesion in English” provided a detailed discussion of both grammatical and lexical cohesion with illuminating examples.

## **3. Grammatical Cohesion**

In any language, sentences which seem to hang together contain surely some clues known as text-forming devices. These build relationships across sentence boundaries, and serve to tie the sentences of a text together. Halliday and Hassan (1976) classify grammatical cohesion into four types: reference, substitution ellipsis and conjunction.

### 3.1. Reference

Reference means that items in a text are interpreted by reference to something else in the same text. These items in English are pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives.

Reference as a cohesive tie includes *exophoric versus endophoric reference, and anaphoric versus cataphoric reference*.

#### a. Exophoric reference versus Endophoric reference

Exophoric reference has relation with the context of situation. Halliday and Hassan (1976) say that “*it is a form of context-dependence since without the context we cannot interpret what is said*”. (1976:34-35). McCarthy (1991) claims that “*exophoric reference directs the receiver ‘out of’ the text and into an assumed shared world... built up by sender and receiver*”. (1991:41). The example he gives is:

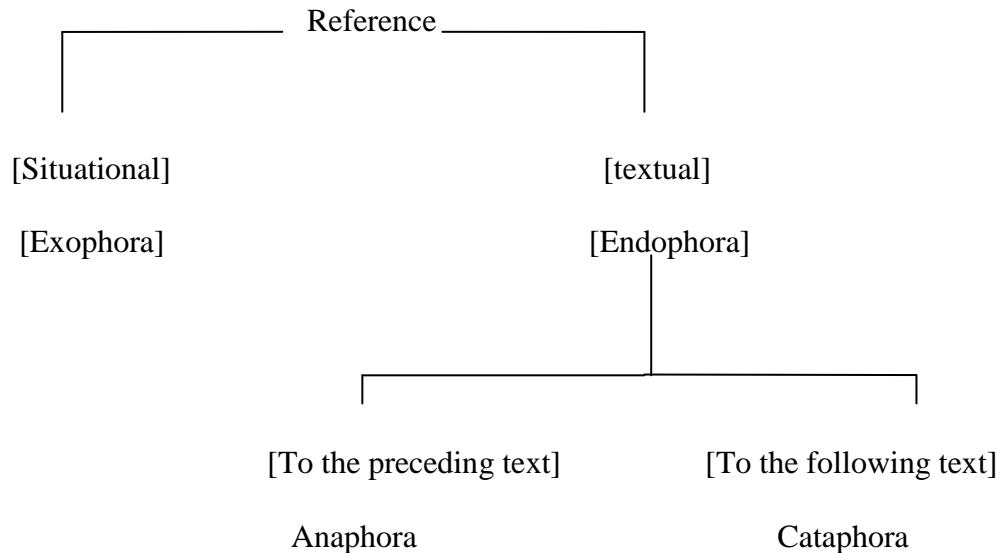
-She was using one of *those trimmers* to get rid of the weeds. (McCarthy 1991:41).

The use of ‘those’ emphasizes on the fact that the referents of the exophoric reference are necessarily part of the world shared between the speaker and hearer, for this is a necessary condition to interpret them.

From this definition it is clear that exophoric reference has more to do with the spoken discourse in which the context and situation are present next to all their features.

Evelyn Hatch (2000) also emphasizes on the importance of the shared world between the speaker and hearer. He explains that sometimes the connections that hold between parts of the discourse are not so apparent, and need some exophoric reference to explain them, and the way to realize that is by use of deictic markers, for this he says: “*much of the meaning can only be understood by looking at linguistic markers that have a ‘pointing’ function in a given discourse*” (2000: 209). He claims that these work in parallel with cohesive ties and help to make sentences and clauses of the discourse more explicit. These are known by Halliday and Hassan (1976) as “demonstratives” and which serve to point via language.

On the other hand, endophoric reference is rather textual; it is classified into anaphoric reference and cataphoric reference. To make the point clearer, let's examine Halliday and Hassan's (1976) diagram of the two broad types of reference:



(1976: 33)

Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that endophoric reference is the norm, because it is the form which plays part of cohesion, and is the one which is more concerned with the written discourse. Endophoric reference as shown in the diagram above is of two types: anaphoric reference and cataphoric reference.

### **b. Anaphoric reference versus Cataphoric reference**

David Nunan (1993) explains in his book: "Introducing Discourse Analysis" that there are two ways in which reference items can be expressed within a text. They can function in an anaphoric way or in a cataphoric way. He points out that: "*anaphoric reference points the reader or listener backwards to a previously mentioned entity, process or state of affairs*" (1993: 22). Let's consider the following example given by Halliday and Hassan (1976):

a. It rained day and night for two weeks. The basement flooded and everything was underwater. **It** spoilt all our calculations. (ibid.1976: 52).

The pronoun ‘it’ here refers back to the heavy rains and flooding; that is, the whole event destroyed our planning.

b. Wash and core six cooking apples. Put **them** into a fire proof dish. (ibid.1976:2)

Again, the pronoun “them” is anaphoric to the six cooking apples previously mentioned. This anaphoric function gives cohesion to the two sentences. Thus they are interpreted by being part of the same text.

On the other hand, cataphoric reference as explained by David Nunan (1993) “*points the reader or listener forward – it draws us further into the text in order to identify the elements to which the reference items refer.*” (ibid.1993: 22). So, unlike anaphoric reference which refers backwards, cataphoric reference encourages the reader to go forwards in the text to discover the referents and this is what enables the interpretation of a whole text. Let’s consider this example provided by McCarthy:

- **They** pressed round him in ragged fashion to take their money. Andy, Dane, Phill, Stephen, Bob. (1991: 35)

In this example, the reader is first given an idea about the referents, and then he is given their identities in the second sentence. “They” has a cataphoric function, because it refers forwards; the reader is driven to read further to identify who the referents are.

Here is another example:

-**It** has become the plague of the age. Extremism reigns all over the world.

Similarly, “it” refers forwards to extremism. The second sentence explains to the reader what is meant by “it”.



### 3.1.1. Personal Reference

Halliday and Hassa (1976) explain that *“the category of personals includes the three classes of personal pronouns, possessive determiners and possessive pronouns”* (1976:43). This view joins that of David Nunan (1993: 23) who points out: *“Personal reference items (...) are expressed through pronouns and determiners. They serve to identify individuals and objects that are named at some other points in the text.”*

Let's examine these examples:

a) Mikhail Gorbachev did not have to change the world. **He** could have chosen to rule much as **his** predecessors did. (ibid.1993: 23).

Both personal pronouns “he” and “his” refer back to Mikhail Gorbachev; so, they are anaphoric.

b) Recognizing that his country had to change, Gorbachev could have become a cautious modernizer. (ibid.1993:23).

Here, the personal pronoun “his” refers forward to Gorbachev, so it is cataphoric.

c) Ann said: ‘the dog you see there is mine.’

Here, the possessive pronoun ‘mine’ is an anaphoric reference to the speaker ‘Ann’.

### 3.1.2. Demonstrative reference

David Nunan (1993) explains that the demonstrative reference can be expressed through determiners and adverbs represented either by a single word or a phrase. This type can either exist in one part of the paragraph or can extend through the whole text or even several pages.

Halliday and Hassan (1976) point out that: *“demonstrative reference is essentially a form of verbal pointing. The speaker identifies the referent by locating it on a scale of proximity.”*(1976: 57). According this definition, it would be logical to assume that demonstrative reference is exophoric since it refers to something within the context of situation.

It has then a deictic function and is known by Halliday and Hassen (1976) as “co-reference”, the kind of nominal demonstratives which express this type are: “this, that, these, those”, and adverbs like “here, there, now, later...etc.” Here are some examples:

a-Pick **these** up! (ibid.1976:58)

b-How would you like a cruise in **that** yacht? (ibid.1976:58)

“These” and “that” serve to point out, they are exophoric in the these examples, however, sometimes they may be used to express an endophoric reference as in this example given by Nunan (1993):

- Recognizing that his country had to change, Gorbachev could have become a cautious modernizer in the Chinese fashion, promoting economic reform and sponsoring new technology while holding firm against political change. **This** did not happen (1993: 23).

The demonstrative “this” refers backward to all what Gorbachev could have done. Generally speaking, “this, these and here” imply a kind of proximity to the speaker; while “that,” those” and “there” imply a kind of distance from him. This implies in turn a kind of either proximity or distance to the addressee depending on the context of situation.

Let’s examine this example: A: Is she still **there**?

B: Yes, she is **here** waiting for you.

“There” implies a distance from the person who asked, and “here” means a proximity to the responder.

### 3.1.3. Comparative reference

David Nunan (1993) points out: “*comparative reference is expressed through adjectives and adverbs and serves to compare items within a text in terms of identity or similarity.*” (ibid.1993:24). This kind of reference is unlike the two others which serve to identify or demonstrate, it is rather used to compare between items such as: big/small, near/far..., or to

identify the similarities using adjectives such as: same, identical, equal, similar...etc. Here is an example given by Nunan (ibid.):

A: Would you like these seats?

B: No, as a matter of fact, I would like *the other* seats. (ibid.1993:24).

In this example, the term “the other” is used to express the difference; the answer reveals that this person wants the seats which are different from those proposed to him. Halliday and Hassan (1976) divide the comparative reference into two types: general and particular.

### **-General Comparison**

This type express **likeness** between items using adjectives such as: same, equal ...etc and adverbs such as identically, similarly, likewise...etc, and also **difference** between items using adjectives like: other, different, else... etc, and adverbs like: differently, otherwise...Here are some examples:

-It is *the same* cat as the one we saw yesterday?

-It is **a different** cat from the one we saw yesterday. (ibid.1976:78)

Both “the same” and “a different” are cataphoric references to “the cat”.

### **-Particular Comparison**

This type is slightly different from the first one, because it does not express likeness or difference between items. “*Particular comparison expresses comparability between things in respect of a particular property. The property in question may be a matter of quantity or quality*” (ibid.1976: 80). This type of reference is expressed through enumeratives such as: more, fewer, less, further, additional, so... as, so many, so much... etc, in addition to comparatives and adverbs such as: better, less equal, more... than, ... etc. Example:

- ‘Take some **more** tea’, the March Hair said to Alice, very earnestly. ‘I have had nothing yet,’ Alice replied in an offended tone, ‘so, I cannot take **more**.’ (ibid.1976:81)

In particular comparison there must be a standard of reference to which something is said to be inferior, equal or superior in quality or quantity. In this example, the standard of reference is the quality of tea that Alice has already had, and to which some more is to be added. So, “more” in Alice’s response refers back to the tea; that is, presumable quantity she has already taken.

### **3.2. Substitution**

The second type of the cohesive relations and which takes another different form is known as substitution and ellipsis. Both are processes within the text. “*Substitution is the replacement of one item by another and ellipsis is the omission of an item*”. (ibid.1976:88).

Unlike reference which is semantic relation, substitution is rather a grammatical one, because the later is subject strong grammatical conditions, one of which lies in the fact that the substitute must have the same structural function, as well as, the same grammatical class as the item for which it substitutes. Example:

-My *axe* is too blunt. I must get a sharper *one*. (ibid.1976:89).

Both ‘axe’ as a noun, and ‘one’ as a pronoun are of the same grammatical class. Hence ‘one’ could substitute for ‘axe’. All this does not apply to reference, because “*substitution is a relation in the wording rather than in the meaning*”. (ibid.1976:88). It is “*a relation between linguistic items, such as words or phrases, whereas reference is a relation between meaning*.” (ibid.1976:88). It is classified into: nominal, verbal and clausal substitution.

#### **3.2.1. Nominal Substitution**

This type enables all the categories of nominal groups (phrases, nouns and pronouns). Halliday and Hassan (1976) distinguish between two kinds of substitutes: “one” and “same”.

### 3.2.1.1. Substitutes one/ones

This substitute may replace either a noun or a nominal group, as it maybe implicit or explicit as in:

a) Which *blouse* you think fits me more, the red or the white? - I would say the white **one**.  
“one” here substitutes for the noun “blouse”.

b) I shoot the hippopotamus with *bullets made of platinum*, because if I use leaden **ones**, his hide is sure to flatten them. (ibid.1976:91).

The nominal group “leaden ones” substitutes for “bullets made of platinum” which is a nominal group.

### 3.2.1.2. Substitute ‘same’

Another kind of nominal substitution is the term “same”. Though it functions as a comparative reference as it was mentioned before, it may also function as a substitute for a noun or a phrase. The condition of this function lies in the fact that the term ‘same’ must be accompanied by the definite article ‘the’, because ‘the same’ presupposes an entire nominal group including any modifying elements. Here is an example provided by Halliday and Hassan (1976):

A: I will have two poached eggs on toast, please.

B: I will have **the same**. (ibid.1976: 105)

Halliday and Hassan (1976) add that the presupposed item is almost always non-human, and cannot be a proper name. It can be a noun, a nominal group as in the example above, or an attribute; that is, an adjective. Example:

A: john sounded rather regretful

B: yes, Mary sounded **the same**. (ibid.1976:108).

In this example, it is the adjective which is substituted by the term ‘the same’.

This substitute may often be combined with the verb ‘do’ as a substitute for the process of certain types of clauses ‘do the same’ has often an alternative form; ‘do likewise’. Examples:

a) They started shouting. So, I **did the same**.

b) My bank manager bought shares in the canal company. Why don’t you **do likewise**? (ibid.1976:108)

‘did the same’ and ‘do likewise’ are forms of nominal substitution, and the verb ‘do’ here has nothing to do with the verbal substitution – which will be discussed next – it is just the general lexical verb as in – I have got nothing **to do**.

Again the substitute ‘the same’ may be combined with the auxiliary ‘to be’; ‘be the same’.

Example:

-Charles is now an actor. Given half a chance I would **have been the same**.

(ibid.1976: 109)

### 3.2.2 Verbal substitution

This type of substitution in English is expressed by ‘do’ which occurs in the place of the lexical verb generally to avoid repetition. The verbal substitute ‘do’ is parallel to the nominal substitute “one” though the structures of the nominal group and that of the verbal group are different. In verbal substitution the presupposed item may either be in the same sentence or extend across sentence boundaries. Examples:

a. ...the words did not come the same as they used to **do**

b. I don’t know the meaning of half those long words, and what’s more, I don’t believe you **do** either. (ibid.1976: 112)

In example ‘a’ *do* substitutes for the verb ‘come’, while in example ‘b’ *do* substitutes for ‘know’. In both examples the presupposed item is in the same sentence; however it can extend through the text as in:

- b. He never really succeeded in his ambitions. He might have *done*, one felt, had it not been for the restlessness of his nature. (ibid.1976:113)

In this example, *done* substitutes for the verbal group ‘succeeded in his ambitions’, and so serves to link the two sentences by anaphora. Halliday and Hassan (1976) add that the verbal substitute follows the same tense of the lexical verb. Examples:

- a. Has anybody fed the cat? Somebody must **have done**  
b. Did anybody feed the cat? Somebody **did** (ibid.1976: 115)

When the sentences consist of lexical verbs accompanied with models as: can/ could, may/ might, will/ would, shall/ should, the model becomes the substitute as in:

- a. Can lions climb trees?  
No, but leopards **can**.  
Can lions kill with their tails?  
No, but they **can** with their paws. (ibid.1976: 119)

### 3.2.3. Clausal Substitution

The third and last type of substitution comes in the form of an entire clause unlike the two other types in which the substitute is one element from the clause or the verbal group. Halliday and Hasan (1976) affirm that the most generally used terms to express this type are ‘so’ and ‘not’. Examples:

- a. Is there going to be an earthquake?  
It says so. (ibid.1976: 130)

Here the word ‘so’ presupposes the whole of the clause: ‘there is going to be an earthquake’ and hence substitutes it.

- b. Is it going to rain?

I think *so*. (1993: 24)

Here in David Nunan's example 'so' similarly substitutes for 'it is going to rain'.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that the clausal substitution takes place in three environments: report, condition and modality. In addition, these can be positive or negative; the positive is expressed by 'so' and the negative is expressed by 'not'. Here are the examples they propose:

### 3.2.3.1. Report

a. Mary said that John was late

Mary said *so*. (ibid.1976: 132)

b. Has everybody gone home?

I hope *not*. (ibid.1976:133)

In example "a" 'so' substitutes for the report made by Mary, and it is a positive substitution. In example "b" 'not' is a negative substitution for the question 'has everybody gone home' which is considered as a kind of report, because its answer will bring a new information.

### 3.2.3.2. Condition

a. '... if you have seen them so often, of course you know what they are like'

- 'I believe *so*', Alice replied thoughtfully. (ibid.1976: 131)

'So' substitutes for the conditional clause, and is a positive substitute.

a. You have to make sure that you are coming, if *not*, please let me know in advance.

'Not' is a negative substitute of the presumed negative condition 'if you are *not* sure you are coming'



Halliday and Hassan (1976) add that some other forms of the negative conditional substitution require other forms such as: assuming not, suppose not... etc. example:

- b. We should recognize the place when we come to it. Yes, but *supposing not* then what do we do? (ibid.1976: 134)

‘Supposing not’ expresses the negative form of the conditional clause stated in the first part of the previous example.

### 3.2.3.3. Modality

Similarly, ‘so’ and ‘not’ occur as substitutes expressing modality using modal verbs like: shall/ will/ would/ can/ could/ may/ might/ must/ should/ ought to), and modal adverbs like (perhaps, possibly, probably, certainly, surely). Examples:

- a. ‘Oh, I beg your pardon!’ cried Alice hastily, afraid that she had hurt the poor animal’s feelings.

‘I quite forget that you didn’t like cats.’ ‘Not like cats!’ cried the mouse, in a shrill, passionate voice.

‘Would you like cats if you were me?’ ‘Well, *perhaps not*’ said Alice in a soothing tone... (ibid.1976: 134)

- b. ‘May I use the phone?’ asked the student while having an exam.

-‘**Certainly not**’ replied the teacher in a grim way.

‘Perhaps not’ and ‘certainly not’ in both examples are modal verbs which substitute for modals, and both are in the negative form.

### 3.3. Ellipsis

The break between substitution and ellipsis is an unnatural one, because they are very similar. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 142) define ellipsis as ‘*a substitution by zero*’. David Nunan

(1993: 25) as well says that “*ellipsis occurs when some essential structural element is omitted from a sentence or a clause and can only be recovered by referring to an element in the preceding text.*” Like substitution, ellipsis has three types: nominal, verbal and clausal.

### 3.3.1. Nominal Ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis means ellipsis within the nominal group. For example:

-Which last longer, the curved rods or the straight rods?

- The straight (0) are less likely to break. (Halliday and Hasan.1976: 148)

The term ‘straight’ is the elliptical nominal group. It functions as a modifier in the question but as a subject in the response.

-How did you enjoy the paintings?

- A lot (0) were very good, though not all. (ibid.1976: 149)

The elliptical nominal group in this example is ‘a lot of the paintings’. David Nunan (1993: 25) also gives the example:

a. Sylvia: I like the blue hat.

-Mary: I prefer the green (0).

b. The men got back at midnight. **All** were tired out. (opcit.1976: 155)

‘All’ in this example refers back to ‘the men’ and is at the same time an elliptical form of this nominal group.

c. Smith and Jones are on holiday. I wonder if **either** has left an address. (opcit.1976: 158)

‘Either’ is an elliptical form of ‘Smith’ and ‘Jones’.

Halliday and Hasan (opcit) explain that like substitution, ellipsis is a relation within the text, and that in most instances the presupposed item is present in the preceding text and this is what gives this relation an anaphoric aspect.

### 3.3.2. Verbal Ellipsis

Verbal ellipsis means ellipsis within the verbal group; Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that an elliptical verbal group presupposes one or more words from a previous verbal group.

Let's examine this example:

a. Have you been **swimming**?

Yes I have (0).

b. What **have you been doing**?

(0) Swimming.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) affirm that both answers are instances of verbal ellipsis and both stand for 'have been swimming' and there is no possibility of 'filling out' with any other items. They add that verbal ellipsis differs from nominal ellipsis in that the elliptical verbal group does not represent fully the structure of the verbal group in all its systemic features. If we consider example 'b' above, only the lexical element was present in the response while the second half of the verbal group which consists of the operator was elliptical. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify two types of the verbal ellipsis: lexical ellipsis and operator ellipsis.

#### a. Lexical ellipsis

Lexical ellipsis means the omission of the lexical verb. Examples:

-Have you been swimming? Yes, I have (0). Here, only the verbal operator remained.

-*I haven't finished* it yet. I hope you are **going to have** (0) by tomorrow. (ibid 1976: 171)

-. I'd better see him. I don't really want to. (ibid.1976: 173)

#### b. Operator ellipsis

This type is the opposite of the first one. Operator ellipsis involves the omission of operators, whereas the lexical verb remains intact. Examples:

-What have you been doing? – (0) Swimming. (ibid.1976: 167)

The verbal operator 'have' is omitted and replaced by a lexical verb.

In operator ellipsis, in addition to the omission of the verbal operator, the subject is always omitted from the clause and must be presupposed as in:

-Has she been crying? -No, laughing. (ibid1976: 175)

Here, both the operator 'has been' plus subject 'she' are omitted.

### 3.3.3. Clausal ellipsis

Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that the clause in English is considered as the expression of various speech functions such as statement, question, response... etc, and that is made of two-part structure; that is, divided into two structural parts one of which is called *the modal element*, and the other *the propositional element*. To clarify the point, let's examine this sentence:

The Duke was		going to plant a row of poplars in the park
(Modal element)		(Propositional element) (ibid.1976: 197)

-What was the Duke going to do?

- (0) Plant a row of poplars in the park. (ibid.1976: 197)

-Who was going to plant a row of poplars in the park?

- That Duke was. (ibid.1976: 198)

In example 'a', 'the modal element' is omitted; that is, the subject and the operator 'was'. Hence, this is a modal ellipsis, and this may also be considered as operator ellipsis of the verbal group. In example 'b' the complement and the adjunct and the lexical verb 'plant' are omitted, hence it is a propositional ellipsis and this equals the lexical ellipsis in verbal ellipsis. So, verbal ellipsis and clausal ellipsis go together, and Halliday and Hassan (1976) add that it would be quite logical to consider that the verbal ellipsis is in most cases included in the clausal

ellipsis. Here are some other examples:

a. Leave me alone

- I won't (0). (ibid .1976: 208)

b. It is going to rain.

- Yes, it is (0). (ibid .1976: 208)

These consist of propositional ellipsis, since the propositional part of the sentence is omitted.

### **3.4. Conjunction**

The last type of the cohesive relations related to grammar is that of conjunction. Halliday and Hassan (1976) classify conjunction into four categories different in function: additive, adversative, causal and temporal.

#### **3.4. 1. Additive**

Additive conjunctions are in origin coordinating conjunctions. However, since the coordinate relation is a structural one, and because cohesion is known to be a non-structural relation; Halliday and Hassan (1976) derived from it another relation less structural, which they call 'additive' and which has a cohesive effect on the sentences. Example:

‘ ... I was very nearly opening the window, and putting you out into the snow! **And** you'd have deserved it...' (1976: 245).

The first 'and' is a coordinator, but the second is an additive conjunction. The cohesive force lies in the fact of joining the two separate sentences though they express different ideas, and in presupposing something from the previous sentence. In their work of (1976) Halliday and Hassan divide the additive conjunction into five types: additive, negative, alternative, comparative and appositive.

### a. Additive

Halliday and Hassan (1976) affirm that “additive” may be expressed by use of conjunctions such as: and, and also, and...too, etc. examples:

a. “I said you looked like an egg, sir” Alice gently explained.” **And** some eggs are very pretty, you know...” she added. (ibid .1976: 245).

b“...who in the world am I? Ah, that’s the great puzzle! **And** she began thinking over all the children she knew that were of the same age as her self, to see if she could have been changed for any of them. (ibid .1976:245).

In both examples ‘and’ is an “additive “it serves to add some information to what has been said previously.

Other complex additive relations may be expressed by: further (more), moreover, additionally, besides that, add to this, in addition, and another thing...etc. Examples:

a. My client says he does not know this witness. Further, he denies having seen her or spoken to her. (ibid .1976:246).

b. I don’t really want to go. Besides, it’s too late now.

### b. Negative

Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that the negative form of the additive relation is expressed simply by use of the term “nor”, or other composite expressions such as: and...not, not...either, and...not exither, and...neither. All of them serve to add some additional information about something which did not occur or has not been done. Example:

**-I couldn’t** send all the horses, yon know, because two of them are wanted in the game. **And** I haven’t sent the two messengers either. (ibid .1976:246).

The use of ‘and’ in the second sentence is not in the positive form; it is rather used to express an additional negation.

**c. Alternative:**

This type as explained by Halliday and Hassan (1976) serves to express the choice using the conjunction ‘or’ this type is largely confined to questions, permissions, requests and predications. Examples:

**a-** “shall we try another figure of the Lobster Quadrille?” the gryphon went on. “**Or** would you like the mock turtle to sing you a song? (ibid .1976:246).

Here two alternatives are expressed by “or” in the form of a question, and one of them has to be selected.

**b-** Perhaps she missed her train. **Or** else she’s changed her mind and isn’t coming. (ibid 1976:247).

This example may be viewed as a possible explanation or predication.

**d. Comparative:**

Halliday and Hassan (1976) affirm that comparative relations may either be positive or negative. By positive is meant ‘similarly ’and by negative is meant ‘dissimilarly’. Examples:

**a.** Treating people as responsible citizens brings out the best in them; they behave as such. **In the same way** if you treat them as criminals they will soon begin to act like criminals. (ibid. 1976:247).

**b.** Our garden didn’t do very well this year.

**By contrast**, the orchard is looking very healthy. (ibid .1976:247).

**e. Appositive:**

The last sub-category of the additive is used to express, either exposition or exemplification. Examples:

- a. I wonder whether that statement can be backed up by adequate evidence. **In other words**, you don't believe me. (ibid.1976: 248).
- b. He is a local government administrator; **that is** a civil servant.

Both 'in other words' and 'that is' are appositives which serve to emphasize on the idea and express it differently.

a. What sort of things do you remember best? Alice ventured to ask. "Oh, things that happened the week after next", the Queen replied in a careless tone. "**For instance**, now" she went on... "There's the king's messenger. He's in prison now, being punished and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday". (ibid .1976:248)

### 3.4. 2. Adversative:

Adversative relations explain Halliday and Hassan (1976) refer to: "*contrary to expectation, the expectation may be derived from the content of what is being said; or from the communication process.*" (1976:250). This type is expressed by: yet, although, only, but, however, as a matter of fact, actually, rather, either case, either way, any how ...etc. Examples:

a. All the figures were correct; they'd been checked. **Yet** the total came out wrong. (1976:250).

b. I'd love to join in. **Only** I don't know how to play. -1976:251).

c. She failed. **However**, she's tried her best. (1976:252).

In this example however "has the sense of: "as against the fact that she's tried her best, she failed."

d. "I suppose you'll be staying longer, then? "**As a matter of fact** I'll leave tomorrow."

e. We went to a multi-service restaurant. **Actually**, the food was not all that expensive.



f. We may be back tonight; I'm not sure. **Either way**, just make yourselves at home. (ibid.1976:254).

In this example the use of "either way" shows that there are two alternatives, and just one of the two will happen.

g. "I say, this isn't fair! "Cried the unicorn, as Alice sat with the knife in her hand, very much puzzled how to begin. "The monster, has given the lion twice as much as me! "She kept none for herself, **any how**, said the lion." (ibid .1976:255)

### 3.4. 3. Causal

Causal relations, as explained by Halliday and Hassan (1976), include reason; result, purpose, and conditional.

#### a. Reason:

This type is expressed by: for this reason, on account of this, because of this, on this basis...etc. Examples:

a. Every time he looked at her, he seemed to be laughing. **For this reason**; the girl doubted about him and didn't feel at ease.

b. Break fast allows blood sugar to be either low or high in the morning and may either increase or decrease the level of cheerfulness and efficiency during the day. **On this basis**, it is said that the selection of food at break fast can either prevent or produce fatigue throughout the day. (ibid.1976:257).

#### b- Result:

This is expressed by: as a result of this, in consequence of this, consequently, from this it appears that, arising out of this, so, hence, there fore...etc. Examples:

a- She wouldn't have heard it all, if it hadn't come quite close to her ear. **The consequence of this** was that it tickled her ear very much and quite took off her thoughts from the unhappiness of the poor little creature. (ibid .1976:257)

b- She felt that there was no time to be lost, as she was shrinking rapidly; **so** she got to work at once to eat some of the other bit. (ibid .1976:256).

**c- Purpose:**

This is expressed by use of: for this purpose, with this in mind, with this intention...etc.

Example:

Mohamed didn't want to lose time when he stopped to buy his daily newspaper. **For this purpose**; he hurried to the plat form, then got back running till he caught his train.

**d- Conditional:**

Conditional relations are expressed by use of: "if...Then"... , in that case, that being the case, in such an event, under those circumstances, in this respect, with regard to this, here...etc.

Example:

a. "And what does it live on?"

"Weak tea with cream in it"

A new difficulty came into Alice's head

"**Supposing** it couldn't find any? She suggested.

"**Then** it would die of course". (ibid.1976: 258).

b. "Let's go back to the last remark but one". "I'm afraid

I can't quite remember it" Alice said very politely.

"**In that case**, we may start afresh, said Humpty Dumpty. (ibid.1976: 272)

A lot of criteria were taken into consideration in the selection of Doctorate candidates.

**In this respect**, successful candidates are really lucky.

#### 3.4. 4. Temporal

The last type of conjunction is concerned with the succession of time expressed throughout sentences in a text. It is expressed by the different conjunctions which are concerned with describing actions that took place in a given period of time.

These are: *(and) then, next, afterwards, after that, subsequently, at the same time; simultaneously, before that, previously, earlier, finally at last, at the end, in conclusion, eventually, as a final point, up to now, until then, at this point, from now on, hence for ward...etc.* Here are some examples:

**a-** Alice began by taking the little golden key, and unlocking the door that led into the garden. **Then**, she set to work nibbling at the mushroom... (ibid .1976:261)

**b-** ....she heard a little shriek and a fall; and a crash of broken glass, from which she concluded that it was just possible it had fallen into a cucumber- frame, or some thing of the sort. **Next**, came an angry voice- the rabbit's- Pat! Pat! Where are you? And then a voice she had never heard before... (ibid .1976:261).

**c-** "It's simple", he explained to his brothers. "At nine o'clock the staff enters and at 10 o'clock the applications are admitted. **Just before ten**; the hall-porter goes to the nearby cafeteria for a cup of coffee, after unlocking but not opening the main public door. (Weaver.1971:21)

**d-** He wondered if he should take her silence as an attempt to attract him but even though she had not spoken, he did not notice she was angry with him. **Finally**, the lights were on the conductor came the orchestra pit, bowed, and was warmly greeted. (Ibid.1971:04).

**d-** **At first** there was only a confused noise. **Then** a woman's voice cut in. "Is that the white bungalow?" (Ibid .1971: 09).

**e-** The weather cleared just as the party approached the summit. Until then they had seen nothing of the panorama around then. (Halliday and Hasan.1976:263).

**f-** The Middle Ages have become the Renaissance, and a new world has come into being: "our world"? **At this point** we run into some difficulty. (1976:264).

**g-** The teacher looked angrily at her students. "**From now on**, no one will be aloud in after I get into the classroom", she remarked to them.

Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that the cohesive effect of these temporal relations lies in the time relations that join these sentences together. For example, an expression like *now* or *up to now* relates what is being said in the present situation to some thing that has gone before.

#### **4. Lexical Cohesion**

In the previous section the various types of grammatical cohesion reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction have been thoroughly described. In order to complete the picture of cohesive relation it is necessary to throw the light on the second half which is about lexical cohesion. In Halliday and Hassan's work (1976) which is considered as the standard text in such an area, lexical cohesion is divided into two major kinds: Reiteration and collocation.

##### **4.1. Reiteration**

Halliday and Hassan (1976) affirm:

*'Reiteration is a form of lexical cohesion which involves the repetition of a lexical item at one end of the scale; the use of a general word to refer back to a lexical item, at the other end of the scale; and a number of things in between –the use of a synonym, near- synonym, or super ordinate.'* (1976:278)

Similarly, Hoey (1991) explains that lexical cohesion is basically created by repetition (reiteration) of the same lexeme, or by use of a general noun like “public transports” to other lexemes sharing the same semantic features also called hyponyms, like : the bus, the subway, the tramway,...etc.

Also, Nunan (1993) joins the same views and affirms

*‘Reiteration means either restating an item in a later part of the discourse by direct repetition or else reasserting its meaning by exploiting lexical relation. Lexical relations are the stable semantic relationships that exist between words and which are the basis of descriptions given in dictionaries and thesauri.’* (1993:65)

He further illustrates the point with an example: *rose* and *flower* are related by hyponymy: *rose*. Eggplant and aubergine are related by synonymy. (ibid.1993:65).

From all these points of view about lexical reiteration, it is quite logical to consider that reiteration fulfils a similar semantic function to cohesive reference since its cohesive force lies in the presupposition of items or nouns already stated in the previous sentence or text. Halliday and Hassan (1976) classify reiteration into four categories: Repetition of the same lexeme, synonymy, superordinate and use of a general word.

#### **4.1.1. Repetition**

Lexical repetition is a significant feature in texts. As it was explained above it means restating an item in a later part of the discourse, by direct repetition of the same lexeme. Here are some examples:

- a- There was a larger mushroom growing near her, about the same height as herself; and when she had looked under it, it occurred to her that she might as well look and see what was on the top of it. She stretched herself up on tiptoe and peeped over the edge of the mushroom... (ibid.1976:278)

b- There's a boy climbing the tree. The boy is going to fall if he doesn't take care.

(ibid.1976:279)

In both examples the same lexeme is repeated. Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that the cohesive force in the sentences lies in the use of the anaphoric reference item "the" which signals the existence of a presupposed item.

#### **4.1.2. Synonym or near-synonym**

The second type of the lexical relations is concerned with the achievement of a cohesive relation between sentences by use of a synonym or a near synonym. In other words this means reasserting the same meaning by exploiting a different lexical item. Here are some examples:

a-The meeting commenced at six thirty. But from the moment it began, it was clear that all was not well. (McCarthy .1991:65)

In McCarthy's example, "commence" and "begin" are used in separate sentences and they express the same meaning. Hence the meaning relationship is expressed by means of synonymy.

Another example belongs to David Nunan (1993: 29):

You could try reversing the car up the slop. The incline isn't all that steep.

Similarly here, "slope" and "incline" are synonyms since they refer to the same thing.

Here is an example of a near-synonym

-Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And leaping down the ridges lightly, plung'd

Among the bulrush beds and clutch'd the sword

And lightly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made light'nings in the splendour of the moon... (Halliday and Hassan.1976:278]

Here, in this piece of poem, Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that “brand” refers back to “sword” of which is a near-synonym, because the two terms donot have exactly the same meaning; these are just near-synonyms.

However, in most cases the cut between a synonym and a near-synonym is not a clear one, this is why a lexical relation by synonymy is of ten used rather than near-synonymy.

### **4.1.3. Superordinate**

McCathy (1991) views that a suserordinate can be a word in the family tree of a particular word, as it can be a general word in this family tree.

Similarly, Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that a superordinate is a name for a more general class (e.g. vehicle is a superordinate of car, spoon of a teaspoon, cut of pare, and so on.). They add that superordinates are similar to a general word and have approximately the same cohesive effect. The only difference in the degree of generality, Examples:

a- Henry’s bought himself a new Jaguar. He practicky lives in the car. [1976:278]

In this example car is a superordinate of Jaguar.

b- Pneumonia\_has arrived with the cold and wet conditions.

The illness is striking everyone from infants to the elderly. [1993:29]

Similarly in Nunan’s example the noun illness is superordinate and a general noun in the family tree of

c- There was fine old rocking-chair that his father used to sit in, a desk where he wrote letters, a nest of small tables and a dark, imposing bookcase. Now all this furniture was to be sold, and with it his own past. (1991:66)

Again in McCarthy’s example, furniture as a superordinate is the general class under which all the nouns stated be fore can be classified since they belong to it. So, to put it differently, a superordinate is a general class of a particular word in the same family tree.

#### **4.1.4. General word**

As it was explained above, a superordinate and a general word are to some extent similar since both tend to provide the general class of a particular word. The cut between the two is only in the level/ degree of generality. Halliday and Hassan (1976) explain that the class of “general word” is a small set of nouns having a generalized reference within the major noun classes such as person, man, women, creature, object, thing, stuff, affair, matter, business, move, idea, place,...etc. To illustrate the point here are the examples provided:

**a-**Didn't everyone made it clear they expected the minister to resign? -They did, but it seems to have no impression on the man. (ibid.1976:275)

**b-**Alice caught the baby with some difficulty, as it was a queer shaped little creature, and held out its arms and legs in all directions,' Just like a star-fish', thought Alice. The poor little thing was snorting like a steam-engine when she caught it... (ibid.1976:276).

#### **4.2. Collocation**

The most problematical part of lexical cohesion as Halliday and Hassan (1976) describe it is that of collocation. Baker (1992) views collocation as a sub-class of lexical cohesion which covers any instance involving a pair of lexical items that associated with each other in the language. In other words, collocation operates with lexical chains of words that run through a text and are linked to each other in various ways; for example, belonging to the same field or register. The most important collocational patterns that Halliday and Hassan (1976) describe are:

##### **4.2.1. Relations of ordered sets**

If 'Tuesday' occurs in one sentence and 'Thursday' in another sentence, the effect will be cohesive and collocational. The same thing applies for: August/December; Dollar/Cent;...etc.



#### 4.2.2. Relations of unordered sets

They are part-whole relations such as: car/brake; body/arm; bicycle/wheel; box/lid...etc

-Part-part relations: mouth/chin; verse/refrain; ...etc.

-Co-hyponyms: red/green (colour); chair/table (furniture).

#### 4.2.3. Oppositeness in meaning

They are opposite relations of meaning correlations that may collocate such as: Boy/girl, love/hate,...etc

#### 4.2.4. Collocational patterns

There are words which go together and may be part of the same subject matter, such as: "rain, pouring, torrential, and wet"; "hair, comb, curl, wave, etc". To illustrate these points here is a short passage:

"I first met Hugh Fraser in (1977). Charming, rather hesitant, *a heavy smoker and a heavy gambler*, he had made such headway. Through his fortune that he had decided *to sell* his last major *asset* the controlling *shares* in the *business* which his father has built up and named *Scottish and Universal Investments*. *Scottish and Universal* had among *its assets* 10% of the British *stores, group*, House of Fraser. Lanrho *bought* 26% of Scottish and Universal." (Baker, 1991:204)

In this example (Baker, *ibid*) the two types of lexical cohesion exist. There are instances of lexical repetition in "Scottish and Universal" and "assets". There is also a super-ordinate – hyponym relation between assets/shares. On the other hand, collocation appears in oppositeness in meaning: Sell/bought, and also hyponyms; smoker/gambler (these belong to behaviour).

Most important of all, there is a collocational chain that maintains the subject: shares, assets, business, stores group ...etc.

However, though the different types of collocation introduced seem to be easy, collocation is still viewed as a problematical part of the lexical cohesion. Within this scope of difficulty, David Nunan (1993: 29) states that:

*"Collocation can cause major problems for discourse analysis, because it includes all those items in a text that are semantically related. In some cases this makes it difficult to decide whether a cohesive relationship exists or not."* (1993:29).

He adds that many lexical relationships have the property of context-bound relation; in other words, phrases and sentences may be related in one text and may not be related in another because all depends on the context. Hence, this creates a problematical issue for foreign learners since the majority of them do not have much background cultural knowledge in English.

Nunan (1993: 30) confirms this view when he says that: *"Collocational patterns will only be perceived by someone who knows something about the subject at hand."* So, collocation is the most difficult and complex type since it involves a kind of sharing of the cultural knowledge of the topic.

## **5. Sentence and text cohesion**

So far, we have considered in detailed the two explicit terms related to textual aspects known as grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. In addition to this, we have seen their ways of occurrence in discourse which appears within texts. Before we go on to discuss the notion of text, we shall first define in this section, the minimal notion of sentence which is considered as the means of realizing a whole text.

## **5.1. Notion of sentence**

Hogue (2003) defines the sentence as: “*a group of words that has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought*”. (2003:21).

He adds that a sentence has two main parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject is the part which contains the noun or the pronoun and announces half of the information. The predicate is the verb and its objects next to the complements or modifiers, and it completes the second half of the missing information in the sentence.

Another definition which still has some force though old, belongs to Jespersen (1924) who declares: “*a sentence is a relatively complete and independent human utterance.*”(1924:307). He explains that its completeness and independence can be seen in its capacity of standing alone and forming a meaning full whole.

## **5.2. Kinds of sentences**

Hogue (2003) classifies sentences in English into four different kinds: Simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences and compound complex sentences.

### **5.2.1. Simple sentence**

A simple sentence is made up of one independent clause.

Example: A sports teacher invented the game of basket ball about 100 years ago. (ibid. 2003: 27).

### **5.2.2. Compound sentence**

A compound sentence is made up of two independent clauses that are joined together with or without a connector.

Examples:

- The game of basketball was invented in the United States, but it is now popular all over the world.

- Basketball was invented in the United States; it is now popular all over the world. (ibid. 2003:27).

### 5.2.3. Complex sentence

A complex sentence is made up of one independent clause and one dependent clause.

Example:

A sports teacher invented the game, because he wanted his students to have

Independent clause

Dependent clause

A sport that they could play indoors during the cold months of winter. (ibid. 2003:27)

### 5.2.4. Compound complex sentence:

A compound complex sentence is made up of two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. Example:

The first baskets were peach baskets, which were attached to the school

Independent clause

Dependent clause

Gymnasium and the first basket balls were soccer balls.

Independent clause

(ibid. 2003: 27)

### 5.3. Notion of text:

We have proceeded with a brief and simple account of what constitutes a text: sentences we will then go on to consider the central point, in this section, which concerns texts. Broun and Yule (1983) view the text as the verbal record of a communicative event. They explain that generally a text communicates some thing to the reader, and that natural sequences of events are explicitly pointed by use of formal markers. This structures the

fundamental relation between parts of a text and provides the lexical continuity of meaning within it. Hence, the reader is forced towards a given interpretation to this text.

From their part, Halliday and Hassan (1976: 1-2) explain that: “*the word text is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does from a unified whole*”. They also add: “*a text is a unit of language in use... and is not defined by its size... a text is best regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning.*”

#### **5.4. Text types and genres**

The way in which a text is written next to its style and features that keep it different from another text give rise to a number of different classifications. The type and genre of a text are different, however they work together. By type is meant the theme of a text and the way in which it is written in addition to the communicative effect it has on the reader.

McCarthy (1991:148) introduces some of the most found text types that he describes as: “the mainstream” text types that most people read in the world:

- Instruction leaflets.
- Letter to/ from a friend.
- Public notice.
- Product label.
- Newspapers.
- Poems.
- Academic article.
- Small ads.
- Postcards.
- Business letters.

McCarthy (1991) explains that it is difficult to define precisely what types of written texts are most used, because this depends on the interests and activities of people. Genres on the other hand are meant to be the components of the communicative event, in other words, the organization and the structure of discourse which specify the overall form of a text. Evelyn Hatch (1992) affirms that there are four text genres most frequently found in language arts and foreign text books. These are: narrative, descriptive, procedural, and argumentative text genres.

#### **5.4.1. Narrative text**

*“Narrative is thought to be the most universal genre, because all cultures have story telling traditions.”* (ibid. 1992:165).

According to Hatch (1992) narration is often related to story telling. Campbell (1938), as well, explains that by narrative is meant a novel or event in which there is a description of things happening one after another.

#### **5.4.2. Descriptive text**

A descriptive text is rather concerned with the description of events or things. Description may be general; concerned with only overall characteristics, or specific in which all the small details of the task in hand are given; such as, description of an apartment, description of a day in country, a day at school,...etc.

Here is an extract of an apartment description presented by Hatch (1992): “My apartment is on the third floor. It has a bedroom, a bathroom, and a living room together with a kitchen in one single room...” (ibid. 1992:177).

### 5.4.3. Procedural text

The third genre has to do with the word process. Hatch (1992) explains that it is a genre of 'how to' which is often used to accomplish some task that people ask advice for. It consists of a set of procedures of how to set up some thing. In most cases procedural texts come in the imperative with temporal orders, that is, each instruction is mentioned in the order and time which it is to be carried out. For example:

- If you want to catch a leprochaum you must go to a dark wood. Plant a mousetrap. Put hay over it. Then he will get caught in the trap. (ibid.1992:182).

### 5.4.4. Argumentative text

According to Hatch (1992), "*argumentation has often been defined as the process of supporting or weakening another statement whose validity is questionable or contentions.*" (ibid.1992: 185). He adds that this genre is more flexible than the rhetorical modes presented above, because it deals with personal opinions, and one is free to support one's ideas in the way that suits him. According to him; the structure of this genre includes: "*Introduction, explanation of the case under consideration, outline of the argument, proof, refutation and conclusion.*" (ibid.1992:185).

### 5.5. Cohesion within a text

A major concern in this section is the way cohesion occurs within a text. We know now that a text is not just a string of sentences, neither is simply a large grammatical unit. In this respect Williams (1984: 74) affirms that: "*a normal passage is not a random collection of sentences. A passage that communicates successfully has a unity and the parts that make it up-sentences, groups of sentences and paragraphs-are related in a meaningful way to each other.*"

Widdowson (1973) also joins the same view and explains: “*sentences combine to form texts and the relations between sentences are aspects of grammatical cohesion...*” (cited in Coulthard.1977:10). To put this clear, a text is realized through sentences that are related to each other and function as a unity with respect to their environment, and the overall meaning of the text is derived from the relations expressed between its sentences and the way they are put forward. Hence, the role of cohesion is embodied in creating relationships between sentence boundaries and shaping the overall meaning of the text.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter we explored the two related explicit textual markers, and explained how cohesive relations are created throughout a text by use of multiple cohesive ties, either grammatical or lexical. We also had a look at the notion of text, since the latter is the source and area where cohesive relations are built. This led at the end, to a description of how cohesion exists within a text, and how it participates in shaping the meaning of this text, and giving it a texture.



## CHAPTER II: READING COMPREHENSION AND READING SKILLS

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## **Chapter II: READING COMPREHENSION AND READING SKILLS.**

### **Introduction**

Reading is that complex process which involves both cognitive and linguistic abilities. It is a kind of interaction between the reader and the text within which understanding depends as much on what the writer puts into the text as on what the reader brings to it. Reading as a language skill has different approaches as well as different strategies which are different and used according to the purpose from reading. Reading comprehension on the other hand, can be described as an aimed reading activity within which the learner should be able to extract the necessary information from the text through examination and analysis of the cohesive relations that join sentences and shape to some extent the overall meaning of the text. This chapter is about all this; it seeks to shed light on the different approaches and strategies of reading, as well as, discuss reading comprehension and the role of the reader's ability in understanding reading extracts.

### **1. Definition of reading**

Generally speaking, the reading skill can be viewed to be the act of decoding graphic symbols. Many linguists are convinced that it is a cognitive process which involves strategies. Williams (1984: 02) defines reading as: *“the process whereby one looks at and understands what has been written”*. He explains that the key word in this definition is “understands”; because understanding or comprehension is the central point in reading. This does not mean that understanding is an “all or nothing” process during the act of reading; the reader has to select only the part that he is concerned with to obtain meaning. So, Williams (ibid) relates the cognitive process of reading to the metacognitive act of understanding or comprehension.

On the other hand, Widdowson (1979: 56) views the reading process as:

*“Not simply a matter of extracting information from the text. Rather, it is one in which the reading activates a range of knowledge with the reader’s mind that... may be refined and extended by the new information supplied by the text. (1979:56).*

Reading is then, as described by Widdowson (ibid), a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text, and during the reading process there is a kind of interaction between them. This definition focuses more on the role of the pre-existing knowledge (schemata) in the reader’s mind, which can be useful and helpful to extract meaning while reading a new text. So the first definition regards reading as a cognitive activity which implies a certain amount of thinking from the part of the reader, while the second extends further away to view the reading act as a metacognitive activity which implies the reader’s schemata to get the meaning out and hence creates a kind of interaction between the reader and the text.

## **2. The process and product of reading**

It is important to make a distinction between the process of reading, and the result of that process: the product.

### **2.1. The process of reading**

Alderson (2000) affirms: *“the process is what we mean by ‘reading proper’: the interaction between a reader and a text”*. According to him, during this cognitive activity many operations may happen, including looking at print, deciphering the marks, recognizing the words and deciding what their meaning can be and how they are related to each other, as well as, how they are related to the context in which they occur. Alderson (2000) adds also that the process of reading is silent, internal and private, and at the same time is dynamic, variable and different not only for the same reader on different texts at different times, but also for different readers, on different texts at different times and with different purposes.

## **2.2. The product of reading**

The product of reading refers to the comprehension, or the understanding that the reader has achieved from the text. In other words, it is the result of the reading process. Alderson (2000) explains that different readers will develop some what different understandings of what a text means, because, first the text does not have a fixed meaning waiting to be discovered by a mighty reader, second the result of the interaction between the reader and a text will highly be influenced by the different schemata and experiences that readers may have. In other words, the understanding is affected by what the reader brings to the text. As a consequence, the products of reading will necessarily differ.

## **3. Approaches to Reading**

Views about the nature of the reading process with regard to the text- variables like vocabulary, syntax and rhetorical structure, as well as, reader-based variables like cognitive development, background knowledge and purpose from reading resulted in three approaches: bottom-up approach, top-down approach , and interactive approach to reading.

### **3.1. Bottom-up approach to reading**

According to this approach, as explained by Carell et al (1988), reading is seen as a decoding process within which the reader comes to identify first the letters on the page; i.e. deciphering the smallest linguistic units, then the syntactic features of the sentences, and so identifying the different cohesive ties next to their functions across sentences. The reader's aim from this sequential decoding of the text is to identify the textual meaning and achieve a good comprehension from the piece of the written discourse.

So, within the bottom-up approach, reading is referred to as the ability to decode written words, which includes essentially the mechanics of reading such as visual processing, eye movements, letter shape, and perception of meaning through preliminary units and relationships between sentences.

### **3.2. Top-down approach to reading**

Carell (1988) explains that this approach is rather a psycho-linguistic one in which reading is regarded as a guessing game. As a matter of fact, the reader does not decode in a sequential way, and he pays little attention to the textual input. The reader rather infers meaning by expectations and predications based on his background knowledge. To put it differently, the reader anticipates what he is reading by forming hypotheses from the information displayed in the text, and combining it with his pre-existing knowledge to construct at the end a coherent structure of meaning and achieves a textual comprehension.

### **3.3. The interactive approach to reading**

Stanovitch (1980) affirms:

“an interactive model of reading appears to provide a more accurate conceptualisation of reading performance than do strictly top-down and bottom up models. They provide a better account of the existing data on the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers.”(1980:31).

According to this approach, the bottom- up and top-down models can work together interactively as parts of the reading process. The reader can make use of the textual clues on the page as he can rely on his pre-existing linguistic knowledge, otherwise known as schemata. Hence, reading in this approach, as explained by Alderson (2000), means that the reader is able to “*synthesize a final hypothesis from the text from multiple knowledge sources interacting continuously and simultaneously.*” (2000: 18)

#### **4. Reading strategies**

Reading strategies are used generally for the purpose of extracting information. They are different and used according to the purpose from reading, but sometimes they are combined to get the required information. They are skimming, scanning, intensive reading and extensive reading.

##### **4.1. Skimming versus scanning.**

Skimming as defined by Grellet (1981) is *“quickly running one’s eyes over a text to get the gist of it.”* (1981:04). It is a reading process in which one looks for the main idea of a passage without examining the text thoroughly. The reader achieves this by glancing at the text and setting his eyes over the beginning and end of paragraphs where information is generally summarized. Skimming may also occur when the reader looks quickly at the chapter headings and sub-headings to have an idea about the contents, and this may be known as previewing.

Scanning on the other hand is *“quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information”* (ibid: 04). Scanning is similar to skimming in the fact of being a fast reading going through a selection, however, the difference between the two is that in scanning the reader goes through a text quickly to locate specific information of a particular interest to him, such as, a date or a name. So, in this type the reader already knows the content of the text, but is rather interested in a particular piece of data, and as a matter of fact, he throws away any information which does not meet his aims. Hence, skimming is general but scanning is specific.

##### **4.2. Intensive versus Extensive reading**

Intensive reading, also called study reading is concerned with *“reading shorter texts, to extract specific information. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail”*

(*ibid*: 04). This type involves a close study of the text and a careful and thorough analysis of each sentence, next to the role of cohesive ties in shaping meaning. As a result of this, the reading speed is reduced to make room for a critical reading though which students are supposed to give their own interpretation of the texts and make judgements about them as well. This type may also be called reading between the lines, because students in this type try to infer the hidden meaning of the sentences, which serve to reveal the writer's intention.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, is different from intensive reading. As explained in Grellet (1981); it is concerned with: "*reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding.*" (*ibid*: 04). In this type, the learner reads for his own pleasure to broaden his knowledge and reinforce previously learnt items. So, this type takes more time and does not require a careful attention at every detail.

## **5. Definition of reading comprehension**

Grellet (1981) explains that reading comprehension means understanding a written text and being able to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible. Swan (1988) joins this view and affirms that reading comprehension means that reader "*can read accurately and efficiently, so as to get the maximum information from a text with the minimum of misunderstanding.*" (1988: 1). Reading comprehension is then a reading skill which looks like an aimed task within which the learner deals with a text and tries his best to synthesize a general idea about it.

From his part, Greenal et al (1988) describes reading comprehension as an effective reading in which the reader is able to accurately and efficiently understand a passage, and to successfully discuss its main ideas or write a summary. Similarly, Richard, T Vacca et al (2006) identify reading comprehension as "*one of the essential components of an effective reading*

*program*". (2006:289). They explain that it is the role of the teacher to develop students' comprehension abilities, and this is via considering multiple levels of reading instructions including decoding skills, vocabulary development and contextual clues, as well as, instructions about comprehension strategies based on what skilled readers do when they read, in this respect, Pressley (2000, cited in Richard et al 2006) explains that good readers use an array of strategies in order to comprehend, such as, visualizing, marking connections, inferring, synthesizing information and asking questions during the reading. Swan (1988) adds to all what has been said that, as a sign of comprehension, the reader has to show that he is able to re-express the content of a text, and this may be achieved by writing sentences or paragraphs as answers to comprehension questions or by writing a summary of the text.

### **5.1. Factors affecting the reading comprehension**

Nunan (1993) points that most native speakers have no trouble in comprehending the grammatical structures and vocabulary items they meet in the texts they read. However, they may have a great deal of trouble in understanding what a text is about. Similarly some foreign students may speak and write English very well, but they may be bad at comprehension. Hence, language is not the only source of a successful comprehension. In fact, reading comprehension may be hindered by many factors, Dunn (1984, cited in Williams 1984) considers that some of the problems that young English language learners may encounter lie in the fact that these foreign learners do not know the words in the texts they read, and therefore cannot recognize them. As a result, their comprehension is hindered.

However, Swan (1988) explains that some reasons for failure in comprehension are connected rather with defective reading habits. As a matter of fact, not all students read efficiently, even in their own language, and several things can go wrong during their readings. Some of the reasons may be that some students read slowly and carefully, paying lots of



attention at non-important details, but without succeeding in getting a clear good idea about the text. At the same time others read quickly, paying less attention to details and they may get a good idea about the general meaning of the text, but misunderstand particular points which may be very important such as a negation, a conjunction, a modal verb...etc. As a consequence, the impression they get about the text's meaning may be false, and their comprehension will be hindered as well.

Swan (1988) adds that other problems for failure in comprehension arise from the text itself. The way a writer expresses his ideas may be implicit, because some writers favour a wordy and repetitive style using long and complicated sentences with usually difficult words. A foreign student who does not know how to guess the meaning of unknown words by simply studying the context will be confused about the text's whole meaning, and will not *"be able to see through the words" the very simple ideas which underlie them*".(Swan. 1988: 01).

## **5.2. The role of cohesive ties in reading comprehension:**

As it was explained in the previous sections, a text is not just a string of unrelated sentences, and sentences within this piece of written discourse are not just written randomly without any connections. For sentences to make sense and form a logical whole, they must be linked in an explicit way that ensures the propositional development of discourse and enables the reader to synthesize an idea about the text's overall meaning. Since the relationships between sentences shape the overall text's meaning, then, they play an important role in guiding the reader towards a given interpretation of the text. In this respect, Williams (1984) affirms : *" connectives are important because they act as "signposts" and "help the reader to anticipate and find his way through a text...it is therefore worth drawing the learner's attention to different connectives that occur particularly in written texts "*.(1984: 75-76).

Similarly, Hoey (1991) explains that cohesion can form relational patterns in a text, in a way that links sentences to create an overall meaning. He adds that the understanding of how the sentences are linked helps the reader to identify the central information, and allows judgments on what the text is about. To put it brief, the comprehension of a reading extract, is highly affected by the way textual markers are put forward, because these latter strongly shape the overall text's meaning.

### **Conclusion:**

In this chapter we discussed the reading process in general and the reading comprehension skill in particular. Several reading strategies, involved in the reading process, were discussed, in addition to clear discussions about the reading approaches set by different linguists. Though the aim of this dissertation is to explore reading comprehension, and show the role and effect of cohesive ties on it, we started first by a consistent discussion of the reading process as a whole, because reading comprehension is necessarily an integral part of it. At the end, we showed and explained the role of cohesive ties in reading comprehension; that is how they guide the reader towards a given interpretation of the text.

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## **CHAPTER III: FIELD WORK AND EMPIRICAL STUDY**

### **Introduction**

Due to their limited knowledge about different meaning of cohesive devices, such as various kinds of conjunctions and various kinds of the lexical relations as part of cohesion, first year students may encounter problems while comprehending a text. As a matter of fact, when students are handed out reading extracts in different subjects, they fail most of the time to decode the meaning discussed in these passages. One of the assumptions might relate this difficulty in comprehension to the students' lack of the vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. However, sometimes the sentences in the passages are simple, easy and explicitly linked, but still the students cannot grasp the inside meaning. It is hypothesized, in this research, that the learners lack knowledge about surface markers -to understand reading extracts, which are generally known as cohesive ties. Hence, it is assumed that understanding of any passage starts first by decoding the meaning at the level of sentences, by distinguishing the different meanings of the explicit text markers, then the message of the whole text will be conveyed. The way of confirming or infirming the hypothesis was through designing a test for first year students of English.

### **1. Situation Analysis**

#### **1.1. Aim of the test**

The aim of the test is to provide a text analysis and shed light on the students' real level of knowledge about cohesive ties. The reason behind choosing a text analysis over a questionnaire lies in the fact that a questionnaire will not serve the purpose of the study. It will not provide us with the necessary information which is relative to knowledge about cohesive markers. When

they addressed through a questionnaire, the students may not tell their weakness or lack of knowledge. However, when they are provided with a text followed by questions of comprehension- containing cohesive markers as key words- the test's objective will be achieved. Hence a test is more appropriate than a questionnaire.

## **1.2. Test design**

The test was selected from Alexander's book *Fluency in English*, for this book consists of different texts followed by a series of comprehension activities related to cohesive devices. However the original source of the text belongs to Fielden Hughes as an author; the text was published in the Listener's magazine. The text is easy, simple and suitable to the students' level because it is devoted to intermediate learners like them. Even the topic is familiar to most of them as it talks about "youth" and the sentences therein are neither long nor complex; they are simple with few difficult words which have been explained.

The overall sense and view of the text are easy to get and the type of cohesive markers that reign through the text are not so difficult. Almost all of the cohesive ties are known indirectly for the students such as reference and referents: pronouns and relative pronouns, demonstratives, substitution, conjunctions which express addition, contradiction, causality...etc. Though the students have not yet studied them in detail at university, they may understand sentences which contain these ties which have already been covered earlier at secondary school.

The text was followed by a series of three activities, each with a specific purpose. The first activity is divided into three parts. The first part consists of WH- direct questions which have more to do with the comprehension of the text. The second part consists of multiple-choice-

questions (M.C.Q) which have also to do with the comprehension of the text; the purpose of this exercise is to test the students' ability in guessing and inferring from the text. The third part consists of true or false questions (T-F). This exercise has another type of mental process as an aim; it is to test the students' ability of evaluating and judging their own comprehension of the reading extract.

The second activity consists of indirect questions through which students' ability of understanding deep meaning is assessed; that is implicit meaning will be tested. This activity consists of inference questions where the students will derive the answers from the ability of reading between the lines, using their own words, and hence this requires the application of what they have learnt as grammatical rules to extract the content which exists in the text.

The third and last activity consists of a cloze procedure exercise with different cohesive markers. In this exercise, students have to anticipate their background knowledge about cohesive markers with all their different meanings. Though, it is an important exercise, the students were given only six sentences with seven gaps to fill, and this is because of the short duration that was allocated to the test.

The general principle of designing these activities is to consider cohesive markers as a key solution to the items of these activities. In other words, the learners cannot answer the items unless they understand the explicit or implicit meaning of the cohesive ties which occur in the text. Hence, the questions or items are all biased towards the understanding of cohesive ties.

### **1.3. Description of the population**

The number of the intermediate students on whom this test was carried out is fifty (50) students. In fact, there is a huge population of the first year students of English; there are twenty

(20) groups each with more than fifty (50) students. Because of time constraints, and regarding the lengthy period and effort required to fulfill a complete study of a big population, a sample of just fifty students was chosen.

The sample consists of first year students from the department of English, aged between nineteen and twenty-nine. Their educational back ground is to some extent similar, with slight differences; almost all of them spent four to six years learning English in their earlier educational stages, in almost similar conditions using similar input. Their educational level and schemata of English are distinct, this is what explains the fact that some of them are motivated for learning English; their reasons are then motivational. Some other students are oriented to study English because they need it in other domains of studies; their studies are then instrumental motivation. All students generally have English classes for about 22 hours/ week. They take different subjects which are efficient and interrelated, where they are provided with reading extracts that contain necessarily several kinds of cohesive markers: grammatical and lexical.

#### **1.4. Test administration**

After being told about it a week before, the reading comprehension test was administered to the students in the classroom; during the afternoon session of E.S.P. I only teach them in the afternoons, and they have no spare time in the morning, otherwise, the test would have taken place in the morning when their memories are still fresh. The time allocated to the test was not more than one hour and a half; starting at two o'clock p.m. till half past three o'clock (14.00-15.30h): it was a sufficient duration, for the test was not so long.

In order to get factual responses, a good atmosphere was provided during the administering of the test, and we made sure that the students did not copy from each other. However I could

not control all the other factors that might have affected the test and its results. These are known as the unwanted variables and which cannot be controlled. For example, not all students are in a good psychological state to pass the test successfully, because, as a matter of fact, some of them might be ill, others might be bored, others might be tired,...etc. in addition to this, since we are in the summer season, the students might be affected by heat, and this may weaken their concentration. Finally, I cannot in one way or another, guarantee that no student cheated while answering, especially weak ones. However, and in spite of all these factors, the test's results will not be affected to a great extent. The test has still got some force and its results will reveal some facts and phenomena about these students. Hence, the hypothesis will either be confirmed or disconfirmed.

## **2. Data Analysis**

In the sections, below, we will provide an analysis of the data collected from the analysis of the texts (see appendix 2) which are considered as samples of reading extracts and we will present test results of students' reading comprehension.

### **2.1. The rate of cohesive ties in the studied texts.**

This first section is concerned with the analysis of samples (reading extracts) randomly selected from the different subjects that first year students study. The reason behind this analysis is to see the rate of cohesive ties within these texts. The analysis is done in terms of grammatical and lexical cohesion, with separate tables for each cohesive tie.

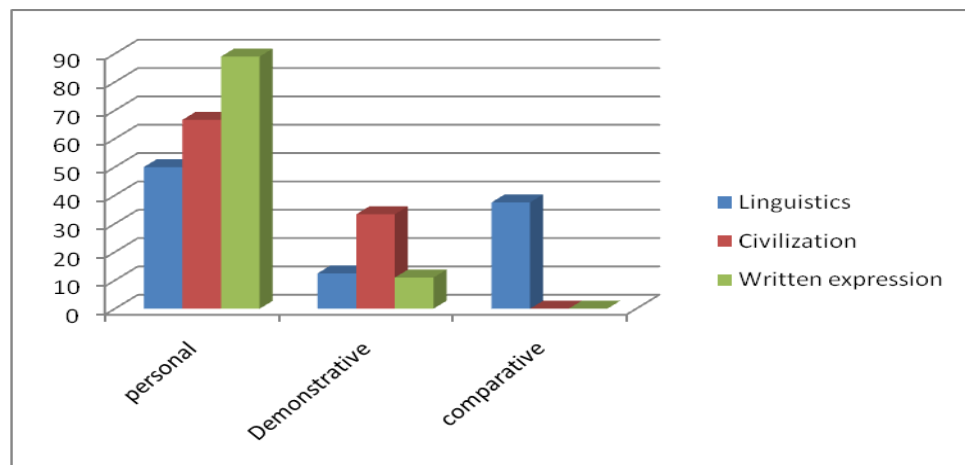


## 2.1.1. Grammatical cohesion:

### 2.1.1.1. Reference

Reference types texts	personal		Demonstrative		comparative		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5	8	100
Civilization	4	66.66	2	33.33	-	-	6	100
Written expression	8	89	1	11	-	-	9	100

**Table 1. The rate of reference items per text.**



**Figure1. The rate of reference items per text.**

Considering reference as the first cohesive tie, we may deduce that the personal reference occupied higher rates in written expression (89%) followed by (66.66%) in civilization and (50%) in written expression (Table 1 and Figure 1 above). At times, demonstrative reference occupied (33.33%) in civilization, and (12.5%) in linguistics followed by (11%) in written expression. However; comparative reference occupied lower rates (37.5%) in linguistics and none in civilization and written expression.

### 2.1.1.2. Substitution

texts \ ellipsis	Nominal		verbal		Clausal		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Civilization	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Written expression	-	-	-	100%	-	-	1	100

**Table 2. The rate of substitutes per text**

As it is shown in table 2 above, verbal substitution was the only existing item in the written expression text (100%), while a remarkable absence was recorded for the other types in the three texts.

### 2.1.1.3. Ellipsis

texts \ ellipsis	Nominal		verbal		Clausal		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Civilization	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Written expression	2	100%	-	-	-	-	1	100

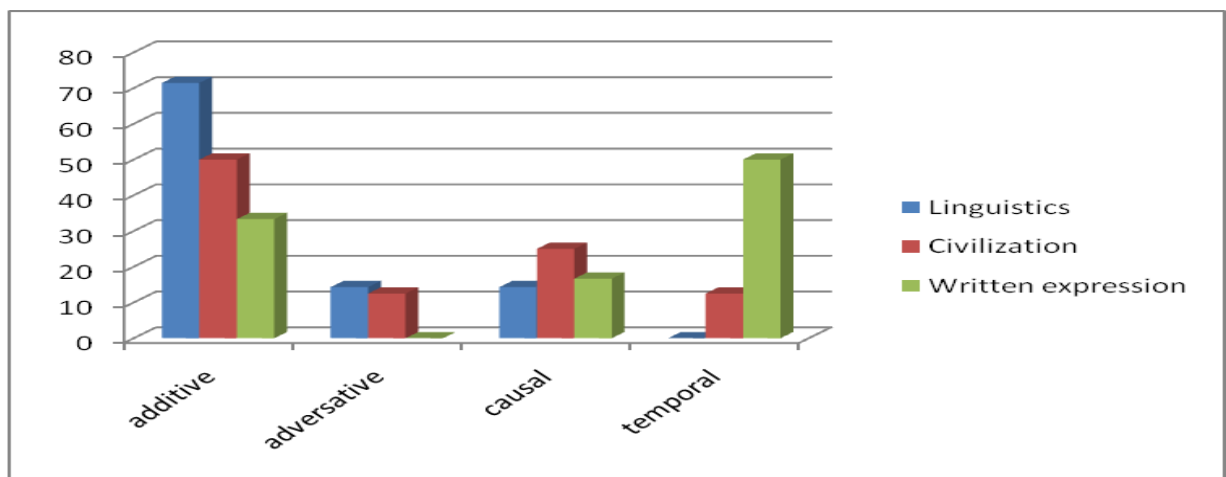
**Table 3. The rate of elliptical items per text**

Similarly, in this table 3, only the written expression text consisted of a single instance of nominal ellipsis. Generally, substitution and ellipsis are to be more found in instances of questions and answers, this explains their lack in these reading extracts.

### 2.1.1.4. Conjunction

Conjunction texts	additive		adversative		causal		temporal		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	5	71.42	1	14.29	1	14.29	-	-	7	100
Civilization	4	50	1	12.5	2	25	1	12.5	8	100
Written expression	2	33.33	-	-	1	16.67	3	50	6	100

**Table 4. The rate of conjunction types within text**



**Figure 2. The rate of conjunction types within text**

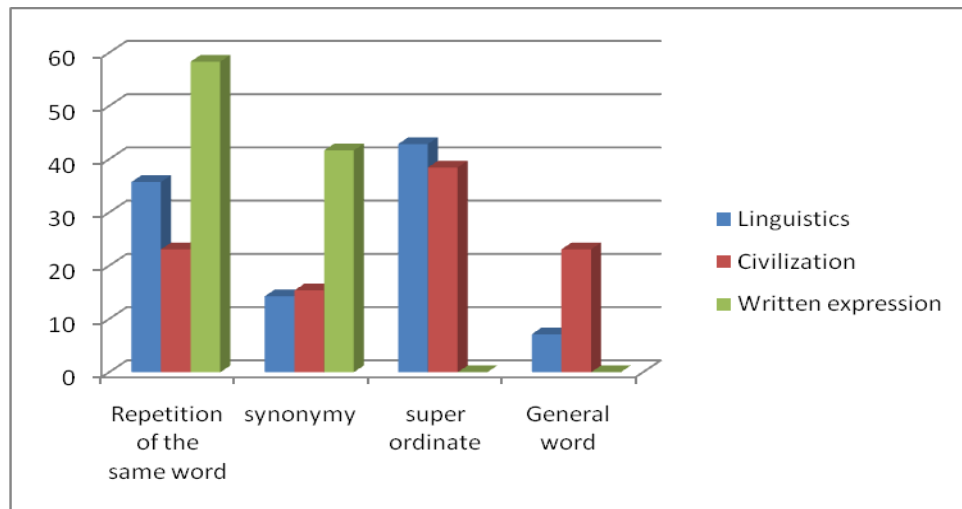
As shown in table 4 and figure 2 above, additive conjunction occupied the highest rates especially in linguistics (71.42%), followed by civilization (50%), and then written expression (33.33%). Causal conjunction occupied good rates in linguistics (14.29%) and (25%) in civilization but only (16.67%) in written expression. For the two remaining types (adversative and temporal), the rates occupied were significant especially in written expression (50%) in temporal, and only (12.5%) in civilization of the same type. The adversative type however, occupied only (14.29%) and (12.50%) in linguistics and civilization respectively. This may be due to the nature of both subjects which do not contain contradictions.

## 2.1.2. Lexical cohesion

### 2.1.2.1. Reiteration

Reiteration texts	Repetition of the same word		synonymy		super ordinate		General word		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	5	35.72	2	14.28	6	42.86	1	7.14	14	100
Civilization	3	23.08	2	15.38	5	38.46	3	23.08	13	100
Written expression	7	58.33	5	41.66	-	-	-	-	12	100

**Table 5. The rate of lexical ties per text.**



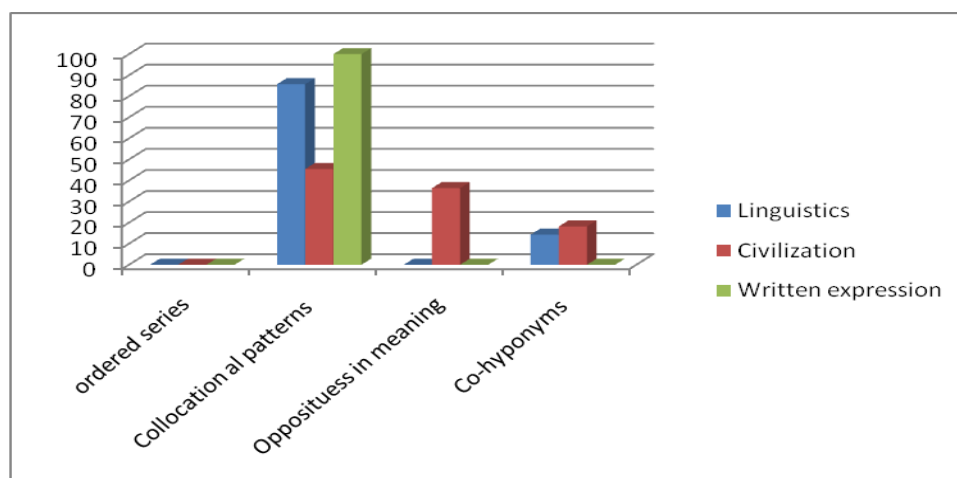
**Figure 3. The rate of lexical ties per text.**

As shown in table 5 and figure 3, the lexical cohesion occupied higher rates in the three texts in comparison with the grammatical cohesion. The highest rate of repetition existed in written expression (58.33%) in comparison with (35.72%) in linguistics and only (23.08%) in civilization. Similarly, synonymy occupied higher rates in written expression with (41.66%), but only (15.38%) and (14.28%) in civilization and linguistics respectively. As to superordinates, high rates were recorded in both linguistics (42.86%) and civilization (38.46%), while for the written expression text nothing was recorded (0%) either in superordinates or general word. This may be due to the nature and length of the selected text.

### 2.1.2.2. Collocation

texts	ordered series		Collocational patterns		Oppositeness in meaning		Co-hyponyms		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Linguistics	-	-	6	85.71	-	-	1	14.28	7	100
Civilization	-	-	5	45.45	4	36.36	2	18.18	11	100
Written expression	-	-	4	100	-	-	-	-	4	100

**Table 6. The rate of collocation items per text.**



**Figure 4. Rate of collocation items per text.**

Considering collocation as the last cohesive tie, we notice (see table 6 and figure 4 above) that collocation items occupied higher rates in the civilization text, (45.45%), (36.36%) and (18.18%); followed by the linguistics text (85.71%) and (14.28%) in collocation and co-hyponyms. However for the written expression text, only one collocation item existed at a very low rate (100%), this may be explained by the nature of the text selected which was a kind of short story that contains more reference items rather than collocation patterns (see appendix 1.)

In view of the results obtained, we may deduce that cohesion -whether grammatical or lexical- is present in the three texts selected but at different rates. Reference, occupies higher

rates in all the texts, especially the personal reference, followed by the demonstrative. This is quite natural because these texts are not scientific; they are rather accorded high rates of agency. As to substitution and ellipsis, only one occurrence of both is found in written expression at a very low rate. The reason for this may be explained by the fact that these texts “linguistics” and “civilization” are not areas where a lot of question and answer sequences are present with high rates of substitution and ellipsis. These are rather descriptive texts which serve to present information in the most fluent and possible way. Considering conjunction, it occupies high rates in all the texts with slight differences. This is quite logical, because conjunctive items are necessary in all types of texts, since they function as indicators in the sentence. At times almost all types of reiteration are present at high rates in the three texts, because they are literary; and this type of texts represents usually a wordy style with a lot of lexical repetitions, use of synonymy and so on. As far as collocation is considered, high rates are recorded in both linguistics and civilization texts, especially in collocation patterns and co-hyponyms, because each text discusses one single theme. However, for the written expression text, only one occurrence is recorded.

## **2.2. Analysis of the test results**

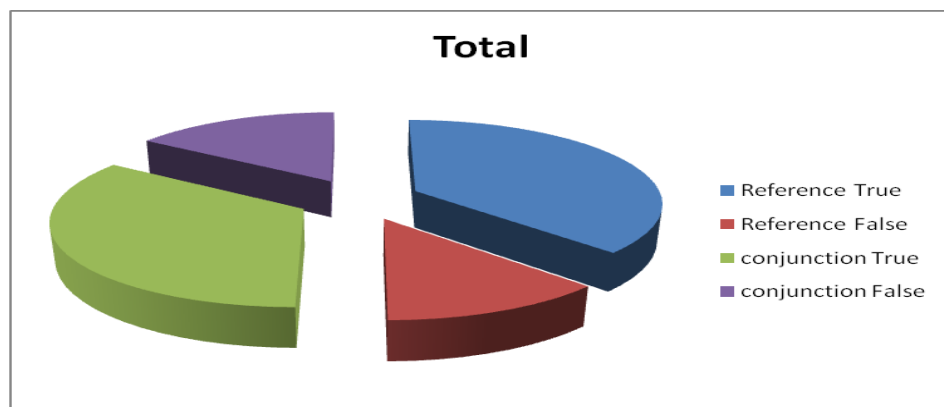
After being familiar with the type of cohesive ties that usually exists within the texts studied by first year students, the second part of this chapter will rather investigate the rate of students’ response to these textual markers, and will so check whether knowledge about cohesive ties facilitates or hinders the students’ comprehension of the texts they come across.

It is also worth to note that due to the text’s nature, not all types of cohesive ties were present in it; and even the questions in the three activities were raised and biased according to the most existing types of markers.

### 2.2.1. Activity one

**Table 7 - Activity 1: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**

Q	Ref				conj				TOTAL	
	T		F		T		F			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	-	-	-	-	32	64	18	36	50	100
2	41	82	9	18	-	-	-	-	50	100
3	46	92	4	8	-	-	-	-	50	100
4	-	-	-	-	44	88	6	12	50	100
5	25	50	25	50	-	-	-	-	50	100
6	48	96	2	4	-	-	-	-	50	100
7	-	-	-	-	41	82	9	18	50	100
8	45	90	5	10	-	-	-	-	50	100
9	20	40	30	60	-	-	-	-	50	100
10	-	-	-	-	15	30	35	70	50	100
11	33	66	17	34	-	-	-	-	50	100
12	30	60	20	40	-	-	-	-	50	100
13	-	-	-	-	40	80	10	20	50	100
14	40	80	10	20	-	-	-	-	50	100
15	45	90	5	10	-	-	-	-	50	100
<b>total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>100</b>



**Figure 5. Activity 1: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**

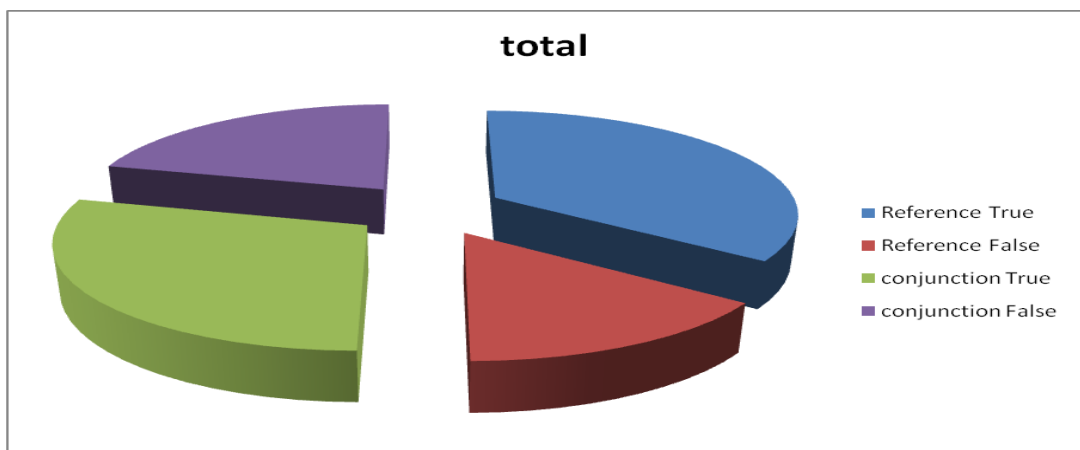
The questions of this activity presented a mixture of reference and conjunction. As table 7 and figure 5 show, the rate of good answers was higher than that of wrong ones in both types (reference and- conjunction). As a matter of fact, the good answers' rate in reference was

(74.6%) in comparison with (25.4%) of the wrong ones. Similarly, (68.8%) of good answers was recorded about conjunction, in comparison with (31.2%) of the wrong ones. This may be explained by the fact that the comprehension questions were direct and their answers were obvious.

### 2.2.2. Activity two

	Ref				conj				TOTAL	
	T		F		T		F			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	38	76	12	24	-	-	-	-	50	100
2	32	64	18	36	-	-	-	-	50	100
3	-	-	-		35	70	15	30	50	100
4	-	-	-		18	36	32	64	50	100
5	-	-	-		34	68	16	32	50	100
total	70	70	30	30	87	58	63	42	250	100

**Table 8 Activity 2: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**



**Figure 6. Activity 2: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**

The questions of this activity were based on inference from the text, and like in the first activity only reference and conjunction were present. As table 8 and figure 6 show, the rate of

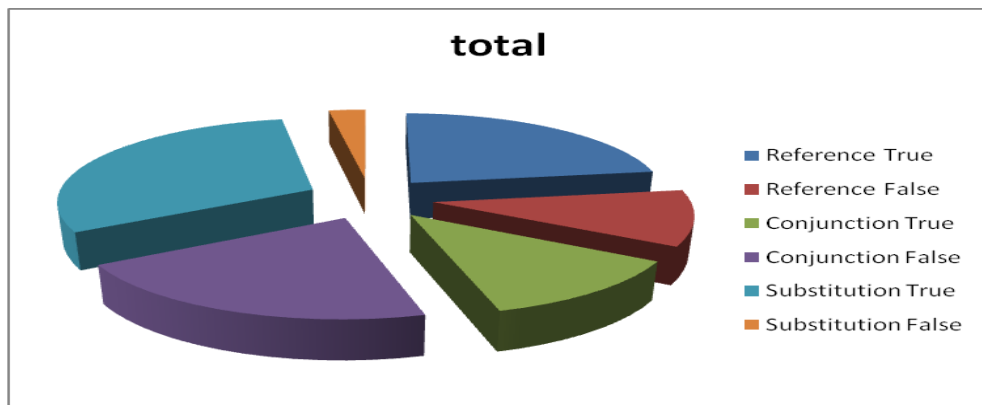


good answers in reference (70%) is higher than that of wrong ones (30%). The same applies for conjunction; the good answers occupied (58%) in comparison with (42%) of the wrong one.

### 2.2.3. Activity three

Qs	Ref				conj				substitution				TOTAL	
	T		F		T		F		T		F			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	49	98	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	100
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	92	4	8	50	100
3	19	38	31	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	100
4	-	-	-	-	28	56	22	44	-	-	-	-	50	100
5	-	-	-	-	12	24	38	76	-	-	-	-	50	100
6	-	-	-	-	15	30	35	70	-	-	-	-	50	100
total	68	68	32	32	55	36.66	95	63.33	46	92	4	8	300	100

**Table 9. Activity 3: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**



**Figure 7. Activity 3: The rate of the students' good and bad answers.**

As shown in table 9 and figure 7, three items were present in this activity. Similar to the previous activities, the rate of good answers in reference was higher than that of wrong ones; (68%) vs. (32%). The same thing applies for substitution; (92%) of good answers were recorded compared with (8%) of wrong ones. However for conjunction; it was the opposite, hence

(63.33%) of wrong answers were recorded in comparison with only (36.66%) of the good ones. This implies that most of the students misused the conjunctions while filling the gaps of the sentences.

### **3. Summary of findings and conclusion**

On the basis of the results obtained, it is clear that the student's levels of knowledge and understanding are not the same. Some of the students could grasp the overall meaning of the text and could hence answer most of the questions, while some could not comprehend all the lines of the passage, and so, were unable to answer all the questions.

As far as activities one and two are concerned and since both are about reference and conjunction, it is worth to note that the student's tendency to answer reference questions in both activities is higher than that of conjunction questions. Hence the rates recorded are (74.6%) in activity one, and (70%) in activity two about reference, in comparison with (68%) and (58%) in activities one and two respectively in conjunction. The only one assumption to be made here is that discovering reference items and agents in a text is an easy task for students, because these are most of the time obvious and direct, while conjunction items are sometimes less direct and ambiguous.

As to the third activity, good answers in both reference and substitution occupied high rates in comparison with wrong answers. However this was not the case for conjunction. Since it is not easy to unambiguously clarify what factors led to the student's misuse of the conjunctions while filling the gaps, it remains to make some logical assumptions. One logical explanation might relate this to the student's lack of vocabulary which led to a misunderstanding of the contextual meaning. Or, this may return to the

student's lack of knowledge about the different meaning of conjunction next to the different functions they may have in the sentence depending on the context. However, as a general view, the student's comprehension of the text was good for the majority of them, only few of them could not answer all the questions correctly in comparison with the general rate of the students' good answers of the whole test. This reveals that these intermediate students have a reliable level of knowledge about cohesive ties.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

The present study has been devoted three chapters to achieve the first aim of shedding light on the different types of cohesive ties. This was realized by use of several examples to illustrate and clarify ambiguous points about the first chapter's explanations. Second, it aims also at describing and defining the meta-cognitive activity of reading comprehension which is considered as an integral part of the reading process as a whole.

The basic view adopted in this dissertation is about the importance of being familiar with different types of cohesive ties, and mastering their use across sentences. In fact, knowing the different meanings of cohesive markers plays an important role in the reading activity; this facilitates the comprehension of a reading extract since cohesive ties are considered to be like signposts which guide the reader throughout a text towards a given interpretation. Hence, knowing each textual tie in relation to its context helps the learner to avoid the misunderstanding of the intended meaning of the text.

The results in the third chapter showed -through a collection and analysis of the students' data, a significant effect of having a good knowledge about cohesive markers upon the students' understanding of reading extracts. In the light of the results obtained from this limited study, one can say that the suggested perspective in this research revealed to be true. Thus, the hypothesis built within this research is confirmed. However this statement is not to be generalized until further studies are carried out on a larger use of cohesive markers by a larger sample of population.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix # 1 Texts analyzed

#### Text one: Linguistics

Linguistics is the study of human language. A linguist who becomes interested in a particular language attempts to take it apart to see how it works, just as a mechanic may, purely out of curiosity, take apart an unfamiliar motor. A mechanic who has taken a motor apart will probably put it back together again; since a linguist takes a language apart only figuratively, his subsequent task is not of reassembly, but rather one of description. A linguistic description of some language is called a grammar of that language. A grammar, then, is a set of statements saying how a language works. It includes, for example, a description of the principles for combining words to form grammatical sentences.

The linguistic description of languages is often undertaken with no ultimate practical goal in mind. **Descriptive linguistics**, in other words, is akin to pure science. A physicist is likely to investigate some aspect of the physical world that interests him with no intention whatsoever of turning the results of his research to practical application; he investigates it because it intrigues him, because he wishes to contribute to human language. Similarly, linguists are interested in one particular aspect of psychological reality, namely the psychological phenomenon we call language. The desire to know more about this phenomenon is ample justification for investigating it.

Descriptive linguistics involves the description of a language at one point in time. **Historical linguistics**, on the other hand, is the study of language history. Historical linguists study the changes that occur in a language through time (and all living languages change through time, however imperceptibly), seeking to reconstruct earlier stages of it where written records are not available and to determine precisely what changes have

taken place in the course of its historical development. Other branches of linguistics include **anthropological linguistics**, the investigation of languages as part of the investigation of their associated cultures; **psycholinguistics**, the study of language acquisition and linguistic behaviour, as well as the psychological mechanisms responsible for them; **sociolinguistics**, which is concerned with the functioning of language in society; **phonetics**, the analysis of speech sounds with respect to their articulation, acoustic properties, and perception; and **applied linguistics**, the attempt to put the insights resulting from linguistic research to practical uses, particularly in the area of language teaching. (Extract from Crystal (1985): **Linguistics**).

## **Text two**

A clerk who worked in a small office in a factory discovered that there were so many files in his room that there was not room for any more. Also each file was so full that it was impossible to add any more papers to it.

“Well,” he thought, “every week I have to find room for several hundred letters, so something will have to be done about this”.

He thought and thought, and then decided to send a note to his manager explaining what had happened and asking him for his permission to go through the old files and to take out and destroy all letters which were no longer of any use.

The next day he received a note from the manager in answer to his. It said, all right, you have permission to do as you suggest, but you must make copies of all letters before destroying them.

(Extract from Hill, L.A. (1977). Intermediate stories for reproduction 2).



### **Text three: Democracy in Action**

American democracy is based on the principle of majority rule. In a democratic legislative body, decisions are made by voting. In the U.S. voting is not just a tool for selecting political leaders and passing laws it is also a way of making decision in the business world, in social groups, in schools, and even within the family. American children are introduced to the ideas of majority rule and representative government at a very early age. Many families hold weekly meetings to determine household rules and activities. Most schools have student councils with elected representatives so that students can voice their opinions about school regulations and activities. In the adult world, all kinds of organizations (unions, religious groups, etc) elect officers and make decisions by voting in publicly owned companies. Stockholders elect the directors.

"All men are created equal". Says the declaration of independence, this statement does not mean that all human being are equal in ability or ambition it means that all people should be treated equally before the law and given equal privileges and opportunities. Equal opportunity means (among other things) an equal chance for a good education and a good job.

The American commitment to equality of opportunity inspires what is commonly called the American dream- the belief that anyone can achieve success though honesty and hard work. For many immigrant Americans, this dream became reality. Financial success has often beet the result of taking a risk of quitting a salaried position and starting one's own new business. Social mobility- movement from one social class to another- has always been characteristic of the U.S. it is usually achieved by improving one's educational level, occupation and/or income. (Extract from Tiersky, E. and Tiersky, M. (2001). *The USA: Customs and Institution*).

**Appendix # 2 The students' test**

People are always talking about ‘the problem of youth’. If there is one-which I take leave to doubt-then it is older who create it, not the young themselves.

Let us get down to fundamentals and agree that the young are after all human beings-people just like their elders. There is only one difference between an old man and a young one: the young man has a glorious future before him and the old one has a splendid future behind him: and maybe that is where the rub is.

When I was a teenager, I felt that I was just young and uncertain-that I was a new boy in a huge school, and I would have been very pleased to be regarded as something so interesting as a problem. For one thing, being a problem gives you a certain identity, and that is one of the things the young are busily engaged in seeking.

I find young people exciting. They have an air of freedom, and they have not a dreary commitment to mean ambitions or love of comfort. They are not anxious social climbers, and they have no devotion to material things. All this seems to me to link them with life, and the origins of things. It’s as if they were in some sense cosmic beings in violent and lovely contrast with us suburban creatures.

All that is in my mind when I meet a young person. He may be conceited, ill-mannered, presumptuous or fatuous, but I do not turn for protection to dreary clichés about respect for elders-as if mere age were a reason for respect. I accept that we are equals, and I will argue with him, as an equal, if I think he is wrong.

FILDEN HUGHES from *Out of the Air, The Listener*.

Activity one:

**I.** Answer the following questions referring to the text.

A) What is the best period of life according to the writer?

.....  
.....  
.....

B) Who are those who regard youth as a problem?

.....  
.....

C) What is, according to the writer, the one difference between an old man and a young one?

.....  
.....

D) Why would the writer have been pleased to be regarded as a problem when he was young?

.....  
.....

E) How does the author deal with a young person?

.....  
.....

**II. Select the correct alternative.**

1. The writer felt just young and uncertain when,

- a. He was a little child.
- b. He was a teenager.
- c. He became old.

2. The writer admires teenagers because,

- a. They are shy and respectful.
- b. They have an air of freedom and are much conceited.
- c. They have a devotion to material things.

3. The sentence "all that is in my mind when I was a young person" refers to:

- a. All the descriptions he gave about young people.
- b. Only the fact that they have an air of freedom and have no dreary commitment to mean ambitions or love of comfort.
- c. What old people think about young ones.

4. The sentence "that is one of the things the young are busily engaged in seeking" refers to,

- a. The fact of being a problem.
- b. The fact of being something so interesting.
- c. The wish of having an identity which distinguishes them from others.

5. The writer felt that he was just young and uncertain because,

- a. He was a teenager.
- b. He was a new boy in a huge school, and wanted to be regarded as something interesting by being a problem.
- c. He was a new boy in a huge school.

**III.** Say whether these statements are true or false.

1. Both young and old peoples consider youth as a problem (...).
2. Youth, for the writer, is good and bad (...).
3. Young people are exciting because they behave freely (...).
4. Meeting a young person reminds the author of his youth (...).
5. There is no precise age as a reason for respect (...).

Activity two:

Answer the following questions briefly using your own words.

1. Name three qualities in young people which the author particularly admires.

.....  
.....  
.....

2. What is the secret which links young people to life?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Why do most people consider youth as a problem?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Why would the author argue with a teenager as an equal?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Is the author for or against the idea of respect only for elders?

.....  
.....  
.....

Activity three:

Fill in the gaps using the following items: " Who, which, while, because, unlike, so, however".

1. It is the older people.....create the problem of youth, not the young themselves.
2. The writer thinks that young people are exciting, but not all the people think.....
3. A young man has a glorious future before him; .....an old man has a splendid future behind him.
4. ....young people have an air of freedom, I find them exciting.
5. There are many differences between young and old people; one of ..... is that young people have a glorious future before them, ..... old ones have a splendid past.
6. Most people think that the young are a source of problem, ..... this is not true.

## **Résumé**

L'objectif de ce travail de recherche est de décrire les conjonctions et leurs implications dans la compréhension du discours. L'étude montre l'importance de la connaissance de ces conjonctions qui détermine les degrés de compréhension des extraits textuels par les étudiants de première année Anglais. L'aspect pratique et méthodologique de cette étude consiste en l'analyse des échantillons de textes pour déterminer le type et la fréquence des conjonctions rencontrées par les étudiants; un test de lecture et compréhension basé sur l'importance de connaître ces conjonctions, est administré aux étudiants pour déterminer les degrés de compréhensions. Les résultats obtenus démontrent que plus les étudiants connaissent et utilisent les conjonctions, plus ils arrivent à une meilleure compréhension.

## ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة أدوات الربط و توضيح دورها في فهم النصوص لدى طلاب السنة الأولى انجليزية - إن معرفة معنى أدوات الربط و دورها في نسج الخطاب من طرف الطلاب تؤدي إلى تحسين قدرتهم على فهم النصوص، كما يتطرق البحث في جانبه الميداني إلى تحليل النصوص لتحديد عدد أدوات الربط و نوعية الأدوار التي تقوم بها في مختلف النصوص التي يواجهها الطلاب، بالإضافة إلى ذلك يعتمد البحث على قياس مدى معرفة الطلاب بهذه الأدوات و مدى استعمالها في فهم النصوص عن طريق اختبار قدراتهم في القراءة. تظهر النتائج أن مستوى الطلبة في القراءة و الفهم مرتبط بمدى قدراتهم على فهم و استعمال أدوات الربط.