People's Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Eduction and Scientific Research

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Departmemt of Foreign Languages /English

TEACHING GRAMMATICAL COHESIVE DEVICES **T**O ENHANCE READING COMPREHENSION **T**HE CASE OF **F**IRST **Y**EAR **S**TUDENTS UNIVERSITY OF **L**ARBI **B**EN **M**'HIDI, **O**UM EL BOUAGHI

Dissertation **S**ubmitted in **P**artial **F**ulfillment of the **R**equirements for the **M**agister **D**egree in **A**pplied **L**inguistics

Board of Examiners:

President: Dr. Kaouache Salah   MC   Constantine University

Supervisor: Pr. Moumene Ahmed   Professor   Constantine University

Examiner: Dr. Belouaham Riadh   MC   Constantine University

Presented by: **Supervised by:**
Soraya BECHOUA   Pr. Ahmed MOUMENE

2012

Dedications

I dedicate my dissertation work to my sons, my family, and friends. This dissertation would not have been possible without my husband's help and encouragement. There's no doubt in my mind that without his continued support and counsel, the thesis could not have seen the 'daylight'.

A special affectionate dedication goes toward the 'Last of the Mohicans', Chahine for a mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Ahmed Moumen for his guidance, patience and comments during the long process of writing this dissertation.

I would also like to thank the board of examiners: Dr. Riad BELOUAHEM and Dr. Salah KAOUACHE   for accepting to read this work and for any remarks they would make to refine it.

I am extremely grateful to all my friends and colleagues who helped with references which were otherwise inaccessible, particularly those primary sources used in this dissertation work.

Abstract

This dissertation attempts to examine the effect of teaching grammatical cohesive devices to foreign language learners on the reading comprehension. Being a crucial issue for foreign language students, particularly at the university level where students are required to read as much as they can, reading comprehension is therefore a skill to be mastered in order to achieve a better understanding of reading passages. With the assumption that a thorough teaching of the major grammatical cohesive devices to first year university students, a substantial improvement in students' reading comprehension may be achieved. The reading text becomes therefore easier for the students and understanding can occur. To assess reading comprehension, a two-part test has been proposed to first-year university groups: an experimental group and a control one. The former has been taught the major connective ties whereas the second one has not. On the other hand, the two groups underwent the same tests. The results show that the experimental group could to a great extent answer the two tests, i.e. the cloze procedure and text comprehension test whereas the control group failed. On the basis of these findings, some suggestions have been directed to instructors and to syllabus designers. Students' apprehension of the reading comprehension has to be weakened through an explicit teaching of the connectives ties. Intense practice of the connective ties through cloze procedures, inference and reference questions, multiple choice questions are other activities teachers have to design. Besides the teaching of the grammatical cohesive devices, instructors should also be aware of other important elements to teach such as vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation, in order to realize an effective comprehension of the reading passages.

List of abbreviations

FL	Foreign Language
SL	Second Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
STS	Students
GCD	grammatical cohesive devices
EXP	Experimental
CTR	Control
Nb	Number

List of figures

List of pie charts

List of diagrams

List of tables

CONTENTS

Introduction

Introduction

1. Aim of the Study

There is not the slightest doubt that any piece of writing of whatsoever type or length requires a minimum of cohesion so as the reader (s) may get its meanings, or rather decipher the different connotations involved within it. Thanks to these connective devices or connectors, a piece of writing makes sense and owes its textual validity to these cohesive devices. Meant to link or connect the different parts of speech and meanings, these grammatical means are of outmost importance for readers or learners of foreign/second languages and the comprehension they may get from the different texts they may be exposed to.

Various researches in the fields of linguistics and/or applied linguistics have all come to the same conclusions with regard to the importance of such cohesive devices within either the writing process or the reading one. Foreign or second language educators are urged to teach these cohesive devices at the various phases of their teachings and at the level of the different skills, particularly writing and reading. In fact, comprehension relies greatly on these grammatical elements in the sense that they enable the reader to understand and grasp the various meanings and textual connotations or have a piece of writing semantically, grammatically and lexically correct.

Yet, one should make it clear that the present study does not pretend to investigate all those types of devices that achieve cohesion. This is not possible for two reasons: first, they are numerous; second, one category of the cohesive devices commonly known under the label of semantic/lexical cohesion would be too much demanding on the parts of both the teacher and the students because of the subtleties and the complexities of the devices it involves. This

type of devices, we believe, might be studied at an advanced level. While ours is concerned with first year university students majoring in English bearing in mind that the latter have already been taught a number of these devices in the lycée. The question remains whether these devices have been mastered or not. To this question, we have asked a number of university teachers (principally those teaching grammar and written expression) and they almost unanimously answered that one important field the majoring students of English exhibit when they come to the university is the 'big' lack of the concepts of cohesion and coherence.

Among the very common and basic types of devices that are probably to be studied at this level, i.e. the first year university level, we suggest the followings, which to the best of our knowledge, constitute a solid basis in writing or reading; they are: the grammatical category which includes: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and the conjunctives (including the transitional words or connectors). The teaching of such grammatical elements would also aim at consolidating the students' secondary school acquisitions.

As already mentioned and for the sake of limitation of the study, we objectively think that certain categories of cohesive ties such as the semantic, the lexical as well as the 'logical devices' have to be taught at an advanced level of discourse, particularly when we know that our students' vocabulary stock is so limited and their tendency towards reading (of any sort) is almost nil.

Thus, the present research aims at investigating the importance of teaching such categories of cohesive devices to foreign language university learner so as to lead them and/or enable them to reach a better understanding of a reading (comprehension) text.

2. Statement of the Problem

Considering the Algerian educational context to which I belong as a secondary school teacher with a good deal of teaching experience (more than 14 years), I have come up with three main observations with respect to the object of my study. Firstly, the majority of Algerian foreign language learners (at least at the level of the three forms of the secondary school), fail, to a large extent, to grasp the whole reading text as well as the questions intended for the comprehension; therefore, they fail or find it difficult to do most of the reading comprehension activities designed by their teacher. It's worth noticing that these learners do not succeed in doing those activities or tasks related to (pure) comprehension, particularly those involving meanings related to cohesion and coherence. At times, such words as 'nevertheless', 'however', 'otherwise', 'hence' etc. are clearly misunderstood or not understood at all; a fact which makes us assume that such incapacity of understanding denotes a serious problem of ignorance of such important notions, a fact which affects greatly their comprehension on the whole . As meaning prevails through particular words (particularly cohesive ties and connectors or transitional words) learners have to decode and understand them so as comprehension takes place. This happens very often at the level of the reading comprehension phase where foreign learners (in this case, the Algerian ones) are submitted reading comprehension texts; generally followed by different types of questions, among them those related to comprehension.

Secondly, subsequent to the first aspect of reading comprehension issue, Algerian students find tremendous problems to produce a piece of writing meant to exhibit their previous language acquisitions. How does this happen? In fact, and with the supposition that the learning conditions are favourable, the learners fail to produce a given piece of writing simply because the previous phases such as reading and listening comprehension along with the various activities they have dealt with did not occur properly or did not occur at all. In

other words, if the receptive skills including all those grammatical, lexical, and semantic aspects did not occur; learners would, obviously, be unable to produce, or at least, cannot produce a coherent piece of writing or speech. Their production simply lacks those necessary cohesive ties that give sense to their piece of writing or make it reliable grammatically and semantically.

Thirdly, how does it come that students fail, as mentioned earlier, to produce, or their productions, either oral or written, lack lexical and semantic reliability? The most obvious answer to this question goes in the direction of the teachers or educators in charge of the learners and the programmes.

With two assumptions in mind, we would hold, in the first situation, that these educators, for one reason or another, have neglected these cohesive devices and/or did not give due time to their teaching, we come up with the conclusion that the learners would be, most probably, unable to grasp or produce a reliable piece of speech or writing because of the vagueness of these elements in their minds or their misuse, or forgotten. In the second situation, we assume that these connectors or linkers have not been properly taught, therefore, the students fail to master their use and/or their meanings. A fact which would make of these foreign language learners unable to master these important grammatical and semantic ties that may be found at various levels of a given text.

It is our duty to mention also that a good number of students display a very poor amount of vocabulary. To the best of our knowledge, this would hinder not only their readings as well as writings, but prevent comprehension to take place. Therefore, and being very aware of the importance of the lexical knowledge with regard to either reading or writing, we do believe that this lack of vocabulary knowledge would make it worse when these learners come to read or write or communicate in whatsoever means.

On the basis of these observations, the problem raised in our study stands as follows: does the teaching of cohesive devices help foreign language learners achieve reading comprehension? Asked otherwise, the problem would be formulated this way: would the foreign language readers be able to reach an appreciable understanding /comprehension of a reading passage if they come to be taught adequately these cohesive devices?

3. Hypothesis

It could be assumed that teaching cohesive devices (here the basic ones: the grammatical, the transitional, and the conjunctive ones) to Algerian foreign language learners, the case of first year English university majors, would enable them to achieve reading comprehension. Subsequently, students would be able not only to comprehend and decode the various connotations included in the reading texts, but also be able to produce acceptable and meaningful pieces of writing such as paragraphs or compositions. The latter would look grammatically acceptable and semantically appropriate. They would have used those connectives and linkers so appropriately.

4. Structure of the Dissertation

As a starting point, the dissertation would rely on the data collection gathered from an informal discussion initially organized and preconceived with a few university teachers (05) around certain precise points in ELT such as the teaching of grammar, reading as a process, the notion of comprehension, and the students' performances in the reading skill in relation to the use of grammatical cohesive devices. Yet, we intentionally put focus, during the discussion, on certain notions such as how cohesion is obtained, what are the means to obtain it, what's the output when using these cohesive devices, and to what extent coherence depends on cohesion. When used with care and skill with a precise orientation, such discussions remain an important tool of 'data collection in educational research'. As we are interested in

probing the views of a small number of teachers around particular points, we are adopting a 'key informant debate' through which a deal of data provided by experienced teachers would be discussed and would support our hypothesis.

Secondly, the dissertation required an experimental situation which I undertook when I have been proposed to teach as a 'vacataire' teacher (but postgraduate student) of two groups of first year university students in the English department, university of Oum El Bouaghi. I took this opportunity with the idea to check those observations I made earlier as a secondary school teacher, mainly the problem of reading comprehension which goes in consistency with my Magistere option that is Reading and Writing Convergences. As I was assigned to teach the module of grammar, I decided to undertake an investigation about how to improve students' reading comprehension when teaching them the grammatical cohesive devices since these are part of the general grammar lectures I was supposed to teach during that academic year. So, in addition to the various grammatical points included in the programme I was to teach, I have designed twelve lectures- (some of the more experienced colleagues- in the department advised me to do so) all of them related exclusively to the teaching of the grammatical cohesive devices under various labels (cohesive ties, connectors, linking words, etc. Cf. Appendix 1). Each lecture lasted one hour and half and I taught each group once a week. All lectures would be prepared by the teacher (i.e. me) and designed according to the aims of the study. As a part of the experiment, participants who were assigned randomly to the experimental group attended about 16 hours of explicit teaching of the majority of grammatical devices (i.e. those devices already known to the students did not require much time). The experimental group included thirty-seven (37) students while the control group included thirty-eight (38), both of them first year major university students. A number of appropriate activities and exercises (multiple choice words, fill in the gaps, word completion, inference and reference questions, etc.(Cf. Appendix 2) have followed all those theoretical

aspects taught during a three-month period, and due explanation has been given with adequate exemplification.

As a third phase and after the teaching period of those grammatical cohesive devices, I submitted a selected reading passage of about 400 words under the form of a cloze to the students (both groups, the experimental and the control ones) who have to fill in the gaps the suggested grammatical cohesive devices; three for each gap. This method is thought to be the most suitable one with regard to the level and proficiency of my students who, as previously mentioned, show a really poor lexical stock as well as reading comprehension. After the cloze test, students are also required to answer two other activities which are related to the overall understanding of the text as well as to some details so as to actually full comprehension.

We ought to mention here that the text has been relatively adapted for the requirements of the study and the students' proficiency level. Structurally speaking, the selection of the text is made upon the fact that students are much more familiar with narrative and informational texts since the latter is said to be useful in supporting reading comprehension. And with regard to the purpose of each, "narrative texts are crafted to tell a story and entertain while informational texts are designed to communicate information to the reader so that he or she might learn something" (D. Basaraba et al. 2012: 3). Importantly to mention also is the adoption of the cloze tests as a means of measuring reading comprehension since it is believed that "if the language is too difficult, the task will lead to frustration and an increasing lack of confidence about reading" (Rye, 1982, cited in Guangling, 2006:17). Clozes had been long time ago useful means that aim ultimately at determining whether instruction that had been incorporated, (i.e. in our case for example, the grammatical cohesive devices) have led students to an increase of the comprehension of the reading text. Moreover, cloze procedures have been used not only for their ease of construction, administration, and scoring but in teaching as well for various purposes : (i) as a

measure of readability, that is to say whenever the text is difficult in terms of a 'particular individual's understanding of, and response to, the language structure of the text' (Rye, Ibid. Cited in Guangling, 2006:18) the cloze procedure is therefore required for assessing the difficulty of textbooks, (ii) as a test of language proficiency, that is to say whenever learners are tested for their overall English language proficiency, the cloze test seems the most suitable to measure the students' linguistic competency, and (iii) as a teaching instrument, that is to say learners are taught through the cloze procedure in order to help improve their language ability.

It's worth clarifying here that as I was to teach two groups, one would be the experimental group (EXP) and would be taught those grammatical cohesive ties for a given period (01 term=12 weeks) whereas the second one would be the control group (CTR) and would not be taught, at least during that same period of time, those cohesive items.

The results of this experimental situation would be analysed within the framework of the theories, principles, and points of views of specialists and scholars that have already dealt with this aspect. Our main objective through this experimental case remains, of course, to stand on or draw the evidence that FL learners (may) reach and achieve comprehension while reading a given text or passage provided they are efficiently and appropriately taught the different and necessary connective devices that outline both the cohesive and eventually the coherent aspect of a reading text or passage.

The experiment consisted therefore of teaching two classes or groups of EFL university learners, in our case, first year major students because these are supposed to have acquired a relative 'good' deal of structures, lexis, and meanings and are still on their way to learn more on the intricacies of the English language.

The dissertation includes five chapters. While the first chapter deals with an overview on ELT (English Language Teaching) in Algeria with a particular focus on how grammar

used to be and is taught (types of activities, adopted approaches, methods, etc.) to secondary school students or university students, chapter two consists of a literature review about the reading comprehension skill: a thorough definition of the two terms, reading and comprehension; models of reading; reading strategies; and finally, schema theory and its relation to reading comprehension. Chapter three is devoted to a detailed review of the most common types of connectives and their contextual use as important grammatical items that vehicle particular meanings and give a precise structure to a given text, i.e. coherence. Discourse analysis is also included since it constitutes the frame within which the grammatical cohesive devices are found. The fourth chapter deals with the analysis of the experimental/field work where a detailed account is provided of the various results of the two groups. Finally, the last chapter comprises a series of pedagogical implications based essentially on the analysis of the students' results. These implications and results are going to be followed by a general conclusion and a summary of the most significant results of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

ELT and the Teaching of Grammar in the Algerian Educational System

Introduction

Having gained, after Second World War, a world-wide recognition as an international language, English is now almost vitally required and needed not only in the people's daily life for communicative purposes, but also taught and learnt throughout the world to fulfill utilitarian goals. The growth of world trade, the development of science and technology, and the spread of pop culture gave such an impulse to its diffusion that many dialects have developed: American, British, Canadian, Indian, and Australian, to name a few. The idea that the English language hegemony will not be challenged for years has been stated by Hasman (2000:5) who writes:

> We have still about 100 years before a new language dominates the
> world …It may supplement or co-exist with other languages by allowing
> strangers to communicate across linguistic boundaries. It may become
> one tool that opens windows to the world, unlocks doors to opportunities
> and expands our minds to new ideas.

The use of English for air-traffic control, its use in the different United Nation's bodies and institutions, the telecommunication revolution displayed through the various dominant international media, radio, TV, magazines and newspapers, the reliance of the international pop-music industry on English, gigantic advances in space science and computing technology indisputably imposed English as the "lingua franca" all over the world irrespective of peoples' nationalities and countries' historical events.(Strevens, 1987:57).

Algeria, therefore, could not actually escape this wide effect of the English spread. Despite the fact that the Algerian language situation was relatively different due to particular historical-political and socio-economic factors, and besides the officials' scornful consideration for English as being a former colonial language as well as a language of a

10

former imperialist country, a positive adhesion to its promotion was undertaken by decision-makers for its incontestable utilitarian uses and benefits (Hayane, 1989: 45). Nonetheless a noticeable distinction has to be made as to the status of English in the Algerian educational system as well as to the grammar teaching place in particular.

1.1 English Language Teaching Status in the Algerian Educational System

Considering the fact that English is generally distinguished in the language learning/teaching field as having two statuses: English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL), we would attempt here to clarify and explain these two concepts so as to see which status English occupies in the Algerian educational system.

Actually, the difference is of high importance as far as the two concepts are concerned particularly when these are related to the language learning /teaching of English as Strevens (op. cit. 60) writes:

> It makes a considerable difference, when it comes to the teaching and learning of English, whether the environment is FL or SL: it affects the extent of the learner's prior familiarity with English, it affects the learner's expectations of success, and it affects both the average level of attainment reached by most learners (higher overall in ESL than in EFL countries) and the ultimate norms or goals for success which learners and teachers set (aspiring to L1 like in EFL countries, aspiring rather to an NNS (Non Native Speaker) target in ESL countries.

1.2 English as a Second Language

By English as a Second Language, it is usually meant the sole or major language, among others, used in almost all country's institutions such as government, law, media, business, and education. It is considered by its users as a local language through which communication is established (Richards, 1979). While Christophersen (1973: 30) refers to the definition given by some linguists and educators to 'second language' as being the language

"studied for more utilitarian reasons because of its direct value to the speaker or writer as a citizen of his own country", and that it constitutes an 'alternative' which enables its users to express one's own culture. Ellis (1996), in his turn, writes that since "ESL takes place within an English speaking environment … so the ESL students will have a greater need to communicate". Thus, ESL is seen as having an 'integrative' aspect that will help individuals to function in the community. Contextually, Strevens (op.cit. 60) writes:

> English is a second language when it has special standing such as being acceptable in the courts of law, being the medium of institution in major sectors of the educational administration, being commonly used on radio or television, and where there are major newspapers published in English.

With regard to these definitions given to the term 'ESL', we would assert that this status does not fit the Algerian educational system; therefore the teaching of English has not the status of ESL. What about the second context, that is EFL?

1.3 English as a Foreign Language

English as a foreign language is regarded not only as having 'no special standing' and 'just another language' (Strevens, op. cit. 60), but also as not being the official language of the country. It may, however, have an important role both in schools, as a school subject, and in other fields for utilitarian reasons such as tourism and business (Richards, op.cit. 2). Departing from the Arab world situation, Al Mutawa and Kailani (1989: 3) hold that the FL learning is restricted to the classroom use, out of which there is little or no reinforcement at all. Furthermore, learning English as a FL in a non-English setting "affords a window on the world of advanced technology and industrial development"(C. & M. Alptekin, 1984:15).

Whereas a foreign language is, in some instances, "studied for the insight it affords into the life of another nation" (Christophersen, op. cit. 30); it is, in some other instances "used for the purpose of absorbing the culture of another nation" (Ibid. p.27). In other terms, it

is usually considered as 'a cultural island' (Ellis, op.cit.215) where motivation for learning it emanates either from the teacher's initiative or the student's good will or from both so as to achieve success. Strevens (op.cit.) concludes that considering these two terms together, some of the NNS population of English users are dispatched in EFL countries while others are found in ESL countries. In both situations, however, English is 'chronologically' a second language. Instances of these cases are, for example, Korea, Brazil, China, France, Sweden, Indonesia, Algeria, Morocco, and so on, where English is EFL; and Nigeria, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Fiji and so forth, where English is ESL (Strevens, Ibid.: 60).

Having then the status of a foreign language, English had been, in fact, already adopted under the big influence of the world leading Anglo-Saxon music and songs on the one hand, and under the successive approaches and methods of the 1960's and the 1970's, such as the Grammar Translation Method, the Audio-lingual Method, the Direct Method, and the Structural approach, to name a few. On the other hand, English might also have been promoted in the mid-seventies under the influence of some political and self-interest factors which led to a significant economic and linguistic shifts whereby the French language started losing considerable grounds as stated in the British Council Profile on ELT in Algeria, 1975 (cited in Khelloufi, 1983:56)

> Algeria's interests in the fields of Petroleum, natural gas, iron and steel, electronics, planning, design and construction orientates her increasingly economic interests to the English speaking West, not only the U.S and U.K but Germany, Japan, and other countries of the third world.

To accommodate this situation, the Algerian officials stated through the 1976 National Charter the general objectives of the FL as being " a means to facilitate a constant communication with the world, to have access to modern sciences, modern technologies, and to encourage creativity in its universal dimension"(Syllabuses for English, June 1995:5). This theoretical claim would lead English to gain a relative practical importance comparatively to

the other existing FL bearing in mind the increasing number of teachers trained in the ITE (Teacher Training Institute for Middle Schools) (Khelloufi, op.cit.19). The gradual removal of the other foreign languages such as German, Russian, and Italian from the secondary schools was another significant factor that helped, later on, challenges the 'privileged' status of French as a first foreign language.

1.4 ELT in Algeria from 1962 to 1985

From 1962 to the early 1970's, the Algerian students had had the opportunity to choose one amongst six foreign languages. Nevertheless, English won precedence by the early 1980's over the others since the majority of the learners preferred it. This preference was mainly due to its international status, and also to the availability of a sufficient number of teachers and instructors whose number was higher compared to the other existing foreign languages. This deficiency in number of teachers of other FL such as Russian, Italian, Spanish, and German led the educational authorities to a compulsory orientation of students towards the study of English as a FL, and for which they seemed more motivated as they were "eager to catch up on decades of economic, intellectual and cultural deprivation" (Bensaou, 1988:12); while a minority was oriented to the remaining foreign languages. (Hayane, op.cit.45)

1.5 First Significant Changes in ELT (mid-1980's)

The Algerian educational system was undergoing some substantial changes with the purpose to improve the programmes and the various existing syllabi, including those of the FL. Until the late 1980's, French was still considered as a second language , its status changed to become officially the first foreign language while English occupied the second rank. That era saw the introduction of the first purely designed and produced secondary school textbook, 'New Lines', through which, it was argued learners' linguistic and cultural needs were to be satisfied according to the communicative approach,(Kisserli,1981:8, cited in Cherchalli, 1986:24). At the university level, the degree of B.A (Licence) saw also some changes in terms

of duration. Now, majors of English are required to follow a syllabus of four years instead of three. This experience and others are to be followed by a number of initiatives at both levels: the secondary and the university levels. New programmes and textbooks have been produced for the second and the third secondary classes. This operation obeyed at that time the famous Algerianisation process of the late 1980's. These changes also saw, a few years after, the introduction of the very 'fashionable' Fundamental School, a typical school - model of former Eastern Germany; and the gradual removal of Russian, Italian, Spanish, and German languages from almost all secondary schools. Importantly, besides the relegation of English to the rank of second FL, the officials attributed to English the lowest coefficient: one, in Middle schools and two, in secondary schools for all streams, and a drastic reduction in time allowance: from 5 to 3 hours per week for all streams.

The Algerian educational system has been characterized by a serious instability and the constant changes and reforms brought almost each decade. Hence, after the 1980's reforms and changes, the authorities decided to introduce the very fashionable LMD (Licence, Master, Doctorat) system borrowed this time from the French and the Canadians. In short, it is thought to provide a training of three years for a Licence, a Master after two years, and a Doctorate degree some three years later. In a word, Algeria would gain a doctorate in eight years after the Baccalaureate and thesauruses huge sums of money in the formation of a doctorate. This new system is also meant to go along those changes brought at earlier stages (the Primary, the Middle, and the Secondary stages). As the system is being under experience, both teachers and students who experienced it say it is unsatisfactory and the results or rather those who graduate with a Master Degree do not on the whole reflect actually this degree.

What did not work? To this question, we would humbly admit that the basic conditions of applying such an educational system did and do not actually exist. The basic conditions would be simply: a training of teachers and their sensitization to the new system;

materialistic conditions such as the typing and the printing materials, books, etc.; designing syllabi and programmes; psychological preparation of the students, to name just a few. A good number of university teachers and educationalists raised a lot of deficiencies and weaknesses, but no authority dares responding to all those 'voices' that bore only a total indifference and ingratitude.

1.6 Grammar Teaching within the Algerian ELT Context

Grammar, as an essential component of a language, has never been absent from any teaching/learning syllabus/ curriculum throughout the world including Algeria. What were the teaching methods and approaches used at that time? What were the objectives and the means used for its teaching at the level of Algerian middle and secondary schools? And what developments it took since then; these are a few questions I'm attempting to answer here with the idea to introduce by the end of this chapter the very recent trends and developments of the teaching of grammar. Within the context of discourse analysis, I would then introduce a core point of my dissertation that is the importance of teaching cohesive devices within the Algerian ELT context.

1.6.1 Grammar Through Approaches and Methods

At first, and as the majority of world countries indulged in the teaching of foreign languages, the teaching of this discipline (i.e. grammar) was taught under the scope of the famous Grammar Translation Method (GTM) where the whole focus of the method consisted of translating selected texts from English to a given native/second language or vice versa (in the case of Algeria, it was usually French). The method focused also on the intensive use of grammar and grammatical rules. Learners were supposed to master almost all grammatical and structural aspects of the foreign language that is English. This method and others such as the Audio-Lingual, the Structural-Situational Approach, also known as the Direct Method,

started from the 1950's (at least for Algeria) and went up to the 1970's. These belonged to the classic approach where priority was given to grammatical competence as the basis for language proficiency. The belief was that grammar could be learnt through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetitive practice and drilling. The approach to the teaching of grammar was a deductive one: students are presented with grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice using them. It was assumed that language learning meant building up a large repertoire of sentences and grammatical patterns and learning to produce these accurately and quickly in the appropriate situation. Once a basic command of the language was established through oral drilling and controlled practice, the four skills were introduced, usually in the sequence of speaking, listening, reading and writing. During this period, the best teachers and students were those who showed a great mastery of the English grammatical and structural rules and patterns in both written and oral forms.

This tendency lasted until the emergence of the CLT-the Communicative Language Teaching approach (1970's to early 1990's). This came as a reaction to traditional language teaching approaches; it began and soon spread around the world while older methods such as Audio-lingualism and Situational Language Teaching became old-fashioned. The focus on grammar in language teaching and learning was questioned, since it was argued that language ability involved much more than grammatical competence. While grammatical competence was needed to produce grammatically correct sentences, attention shifted to the knowledge and skills needed to use grammar and other aspects of language appropriately for different communicative purposes such as making requests, giving advice, making suggestions, describing wishes and needs, and so on. What was needed actually was how to use language communicatively. In short, the world of English language teaching needed communicative competence. This notion was developed with the belief that communicative competence, and

not simply grammatical competence, should be the goal of language teaching. Being a broader concept than that of grammatical competence, it essentially consisted of knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants, and their roles and intentions. Communicative language teaching created a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement when it first appeared as a new approach to language teaching in the 1970s and 1980s, and language teachers and teaching institutions all around the world soon began to rethink their teaching, syllabuses, and classroom materials. In planning language courses within a communicative approach, grammar was no longer the starting point. New approaches to language teaching were needed.

1.6.2 Grammar and the Era of Changes

Within this enthusiastic wave of change and by the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties, the Algerian educational authorities decided to initiate some changes at the level of the English syllabi and programmes. These "reforms", introduced over a span of ten years (1985 - 1995) were supposed to accommodate, on the one hand, the constant changes occurring in the ELT field in the world, and on the other hand, to accord ELT with the incessant requirements and needs of both the learners and the country in terms of approaches and methods, and even educational aims. It has been held that "the general aim of the present syllabus is to provide the learners with the language necessary to communicate efficiently in a normal social and/or working situation both orally and in writing." (cf. syllabuses 1992, Ministry of Education)

This era of change and 'reforms' saw a confusingly teaching and learning situation as the very fashionable "Communicative Language Teaching" was neither welcomed nor mastered by the teachers. The Algerian foreign language learners were assumed to use and communicate in the foreign language easily, but were they able to do so? The Algerian

educational authorities, at least theoretically, intended to adopt it despite any inconveniences. A few questions arose therefore with regard to this new situation: What about the teaching of grammar? Have the teachers and instructors been given the right means to apply the so-called communicative approach? Would they be able to adapt their teaching to this approach? Have they been enough prepared for it and be given the necessary pedagogical and instructional tools to teach it? None of that happened. And Both learners and teachers seem lost The situation remained almost the same in that very few teachers were applying or rather dared applying the new requirements of the new approach to the teaching of grammar. And even today, despite the many advances in this field, a great number of teachers are either reluctant to use the CLT or are insufficiently prepared to teach it; therefore they still favour their 'own' methods which are mostly drawn from traditional grammar teaching approaches and methods. In a word, the purpose for including grammar lessons now is still restricted to error correction and error avoidance because as held by (Makey, 1985:43) "the large English language teachers continued to explicitly teach grammar. And on the face of it, many so-called communicative activities were merely dressed up to disguise the fact that grammar was still a focus".

Actually, grammar teaching as prescribed by the modern communicative approach is little or not taught in the Algerian schools in spite of the instructions and guidance of the inspectors. Factors such as teachers' unwillingness, the teaching/learning environment, the status of the ELT (the fact of being a foreign language), the many changes brought from here and there, the socio-economic instability, and the teachers' training and development are all factors that helped the traditional teaching methods of grammar to last until now, not to say the most favoured by both teachers and learners. One should also recognize that some attempts were made to apply the new linguistic and grammatical theories and pedagogies brought and investigated in the fields of discourse analysis and applied linguistics. This aspect

would be dealt with in the next sub-section as the relation of grammar and discourse is so close, but let's first consider the following question: how grammar is taught, or simply put, how grammar ought to be taught and practiced.

1.7 Grammar Teaching and Practice

Grammar teaching has always been one of the most debated and controversial aspect of language teaching/learning among grammarians, educators, and teachers. This sub-section will be devoted to some practical and theoretical issues about how grammar is taught here and there throughout the world and explores a range of other related issues such as the pros and the cons of grammar instruction, the various approaches/methods of grammar teaching, and assessment and testing of grammar within the context of ELT.

1.7.1 Grammar

When a Korean teacher has been challenged to define grammar, he simply responded "I think of grammar as a 'necessary evil' for language contexts. Or something poisonous. If we abuse or misuse it, it will be fatally harmful". I guess this 'harmfulness' would harm both the instructor and the learner. The former would have, on the one hand, all of his teaching grammar-based courses, and on the other hand, he would influence greatly his learners with these grammar-based courses. The learners would be, on their part, 'filled' with grammar, but most probably, with little or no writing competence. The question that arises from such anecdotic situation but so significant is therefore: do instructors / teachers know the abouts of grammar teaching, i.e. what is it? Why teaching it? What approaches/methods to adopt for its teaching? How to test it? Etc.

The Longman Dictionary of contemporary English defines grammar as 'the study and practice of the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentences.' There are two basic elements in this definition: the rules of grammar; and the study and

practice of the rules. Here grammar constitutes a subset of rules relating to word formation (morphology) and sentence formation (syntax).

According to modern linguistics, grammar is a device that specifies the infinite set of well-formed sentences and assigns to each of them one or more structural descriptions. In other words, grammar tells us what the possible sentences of a language are and provides a description of them; i.e. it attempts to explain why some sentences are acceptable whereas others are not. The same modern linguists hold that another meaning might be given for the term 'grammar' in that it is regarded as "the innate capacity which all human beings possess; it allows them to acquire language. In this sense grammar is a property of the human brain, rather than that of any language." (Makey, 1987:27)

In sum, grammar is a theory of language. It consists of a set of rules which combine words and sentences, and besides the correctness and the grammaticality of the sentences, the latter should be appropriate when put in use.

1.7.2 Types of Grammar

Woods (1995) outlines five different types of grammar: prescriptive and descriptive grammar, traditional grammar, phrase structure grammar, transformational- generative grammar and functional-systemic grammar. These five types of grammar illustrate different approaches towards analysis and description of language. Consequently, the different approaches reflected in each type of grammar influence the teaching of grammar.

Prescriptive grammar is when the correct use of language is prescribed by a set of rules. These rules are fixed. Unlike prescriptive grammars, descriptive grammars recognize that language is constantly changing (Quirk et al., 1985)

Traditional grammarians made of syntax rather than semantics a central component of a language. In teaching the syntactic organization of the sentences, they have identified and defined the common eight parts of speech that make up a sentence. In traditional grammar the focus is put on the relationships of words in a sentence such as subject, object, complement, adverbial, etc to show the different clause types. Traditional grammar is descriptive in the sense that it attempts to describe linguistic structures (Quirk et al., Ibid). Language teaching based on the philosophy of traditional grammar will focus on the parts of speech as being a main component of language acquisition/learning.

Phrase- structure grammar has come, on the one hand, to extend and develop the work of traditional grammar, and on the other, to highlight the relationship of words and phrases in a sentence (Cook, 1991). It helps to understand how the structural relationships of words and phrases support the meanings conveyed through language. This relationship is presented graphically using substitution tables, which have been widely used in basic grammar lessons.

If traditional grammar has emphasized the written form, then phrase structure grammar put the focus on the spoken form. Thus, the practice of intensive substitution drills through tables is an attempt to help learners master the structure of the sentence. Although it focuses on structure as it appears in language, the structure is presented without consideration of meaning and communicative function (Woods, 1995, Ibid.)

Like traditional and phrase-structure grammars, transformational-generative grammar emphasized the syntactic aspect of language. In fact, it deals with syntax in greater detail. While phrase-structure grammar shifts the perspective from individual word to the sentence, transformational generative grammarians have been much more interested in explaining how the human mind generates sentences. These Transformational generative grammarians argue that innumerable syntactic combinations can be generated by means of a system of formal rules, such as, transformational rule. These transformational rules, which are based on the

phrase structure and the tree structure transform phrase structures into other forms, like active to passive without altering the meaning.

Chomsky (1965), a proponent of this trend, sees language as a generative system not a close system; a construct, which accounts for understanding and producing infinite number of grammatical sentences. For the same author, grammar should describe a native speakers' intuitive understanding of the language he or she uses. The term 'surface structure' and 'deep structure' are used to describe this intuitive knowledge. This modern linguist established a system of formal rules known as transformational rules that specify how 'deep structure' is to be transformed into 'surface structure'.

Chomsky's transformational grammar offers insights into features of language, which are important for language learning and useful for language teaching. Through transformational generative grammar exercises, which illustrate how the parts of a sentence can be rearranged, combined and substituted, learners can manipulate and play with language at the sentence, phrase, and paragraph level.

Functional-systemic grammar is concerned with making clear interaction between syntax, semantics and pragmatics. These three dimensions are so valued by Halliday (1985) who stressed the importance of the functional aspect while attempting to account for how language is used. Thus, utterances are viewed as some meaning whose expression will vary depending on the situation. Thus the semantics of the intended utterances as well as the relationship between the speaker and listener influence the choice of expressions.

Functional systemic grammar approaches the language from the semantic point of view, precisely the semantic functions of the linguistic forms. If transformational generative linguists are interested in how the human mind distinguishes grammatical from non-grammatical structures, systemic functional linguists are interested in how people use

language to communicate. It is about language in use where the purpose, situation, setting, audience and cultural assumptions create context in the speakers' mind. It does not only deal with how people use language but also looks at how language is structured for use, which is constrained by the social context.

1.7.3 Approaches and Procedures in Teaching Grammar in EFL/ESL Context

Since the 1960's, controversy had raged among English language teachers and even among researchers and experts over the advantages and disadvantages of teaching grammar and how to teach it. The controversy is still present but with less tension since there had been many advances in ELT and applied linguistics which   seem to favour the very recent approaches and procedures or methods such as the communicative, the task-based, and the competency-based approaches, to name a few. Various approaches, methods and procedures have been experienced, suggested or put into practice here and there with different arguments and explanations.

Research and experience show that explicit grammar teaching has decreased over the years and been replaced by implicit grammar teaching and communication exercises. Grammar teaching has been integrated with activities focusing on meaning and is taught more through examples than by using grammatical terminology. Since students frequently come into contact with English, they are not thought to need grammar rules as much, since they learn the language in a native-like way. However, they repeatedly make some mistakes. Each teacher had different methods for dealing with these mistakes, but they seemed to be keeping in mind the students' needs and the curriculum.

So, besides the Grammar Translation Method whose focus was on excessive emphasis on grammatical structures and use of pattern drills through selected reading texts, Audiolingualism and structuralism focused in their turn more on structures and viewed

grammar as a prospective set of rules. So, in a prescriptive (or explicit) grammar learners are expected to know the rules that "they should know" and also the way they should write and speak. It founded the correct way of speaking and writing, i.e., the focus here is on correctness. That's why most of the traditional grammar tasks were focusing on structures, "the focus of instruction rarely moved beyond the sentence level" (Celce-Murcia (1991:460)).

The dissatisfaction with these approaches and methods grew through time as it was noticed that language is not only "a set of rules" to apply. There emerged, therefore, the new communicative trend which broke with the "overt" (explicit) teaching of "uncontextualised" sentences. It was thought that grammatical forms must be taught in relation to a meaning and certain social functions but not in isolation from context. Grammar instructions should be presented both inductively and deductively with taking in consideration many factors, for instance: learner's needs, teaching objectives, educational level, etc.

In brief, grammar in the communicative approach cannot be taught or learned at the sentence level, but it must be considered as an instrument that enables learners to create "comprehension in an oral and written discourse" since it is one element of one's communicative competence. The latter, it should be said, remains one major goal to develop through the process of learning while using activities that promote authentic communication. The impact of such approach has resulted, nowadays, in the evidence that grammar should not be taught separately nor be viewed as a set of mere rules. In other words, teaching grammar should encompass not only language structure or sentence patterns, but also meaning and use.

With regard to the procedures and approaches used here and there in grammar teaching, some educators have developed a number of procedures and approaches that they have put into practice. Among these procedural aspects and approaches, there has been the

incorporation of the notions of practice and consciousness-raising, explicit and implicit knowledge, and deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar (Widodo, 2006:123).

While the practice consists of the presentation of a special grammatical feature where learners are called to put focus on through repetition and performance (caring much about accuracy and fluency), and getting feedback from the teacher if necessary, consciousness-raising calls not only at the learner's attention on a particular grammatical point, but also to an intellectual effort for the understanding of that targeted linguistic point. In Richards and Plat's terms, (cited in Widodo, Ibid. p.124) consciousness-raising is:

> an approach to the teaching of grammar in which instruction in grammar (through drills, grammar explanation, and other form-focused activities) is viewed as a way of raising learner's awareness of grammatical features of the language.

In sum, practice is directed at the acquisition of implicit knowledge of a grammatical structure. That is the sort of tacit knowledge required for applying the structure effortlessly for communication. Consciousness-raising is geared for the formation of explicit knowledge: the kind of intellectual knowledge which we are able to gather about any subject (Ellis, 2002, cited in Widodo, Ibid.).

The notion of explicit knowledge deals with language and the uses to which language can be put. Clearly, it is conscious knowledge of grammatical rules learned through formal classroom instruction. In this respect, a person with explicit knowledge knows about language and the ability to articulate those facts in some way (Brown, 2000, cited in Widodo, Ibid.).

Implicit knowledge, however, is automatic and easily accessed and provides a great contribution to building communicative skills. This kind of knowledge is unconscious,

internalized knowledge of language that is easily accessed during spontaneous language tasks, written or spoken (Brown, op. cit. cited in Widodo, Ibid.). Implicit knowledge has, thus, much similarity with language acquisition in that a person applies a certain grammatical rule in the same way as a child who acquires her/his first language (for example, mother tongue). It is gained in the natural language learning process.

The deductive approach derives from the notion that deductive reasoning works from general to specific. Treatment of the grammatical point is tackled after the presentation or introduction of the grammatical rule or principle or theory has been done. The teacher presents the grammatical rule (s) through examples and explanation, and then invites his learners to apply the rule (s).

The inductive approach derives from inductive reasoning stating that a reasoning progression proceeds from particulars (that is, observations, measurements, or data) to generalities (for example, rules, laws, concepts or theories) (Felder & Henriques, 1995, cited in Widodo, Ibid.). In short, induction comes after observation of a number of specific instances from which a general principle or concept or rule is inferred. In the case of pedagogical grammar, most experts argue that the inductive approach can also be called rule-discovery learning in that a teacher starts presenting some examples of sentences and learners come not only to understand them but infer the rules as well. It is maintained that the approach encourages, on the one hand, a learner to develop her/his own mental set of strategies for dealing with tasks, and on the other hand, it highlights the grammatical rules obtained implicitly while guided by the teacher.

Interviewed on the advantages of the new trends in theory and pedagogy as they oppose the traditional teaching of grammar through the use of the term inert knowledge problem, which refers 'to the fact that students learn things in the classroom that they cannot

later put to their own purposes outside of the classroom', Prof. Diane Larsen-Freeman (cited in Pérez-Llantada, 2007:157), a world-wide teacher, educator, and researcher in applied linguistics and ELT, not only clarified the term, but insisted on the fact that learners are unable to activate their knowledge of the rules while they attempt to communicate during another part of the lesson or in another context. Hence, the inert knowledge problem poses a question of methodology in that learners fail to use appropriately their grammatical knowledge in context.

Prof. Diane Larsen-Freeman (Ibid.) went further by holding that she ' created the term grammaring to convey the idea that grammar is a dynamic system, which needs to be taught as a skill, the fifth skill, rather than as a fixed body of rules.' With such a conception or approach, she assumes that students would therefore use grammatical structures accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately, hence, teachers are providing their students with an opportunity to use grammar structures in meaningful and engaging activities. She also admits that not only students have to be aware of the three dimensions of grammar teaching that are 'form, meaning, and use', but teachers are urged to adopt a context-based approach so as to bring students understand that language is the way it is, i.e. grammatical rules are not always helpful to explain why speakers make the choices they do. The context and other factors would show the students the way that people think in that language, the culture of speakers of that language.

1.8.4 Why Teaching Grammar

As earlier mentioned, grammar teaching or studying has become a 'must' inspite of the reluctance of some and the disbelief in its efficacy or lack of enthusiasm for others. Hence, regardless of which approach or what methods are used, most foreign language students will

find themselves compelled to study grammar whether taught implicitly or explicitly. Here is a short account of how and why grammar is taught.

Traditional teachers of English considered grammar as an integral part of the language curriculum. They felt that it was not possible for a learner to speak or write English correctly if s/he did not know the grammar of English. Hence students were taught all about articles, prepositions, conditional clauses, etc.

In the early years of the communicative approach it was felt that knowledge of grammar may not be necessary for one to communicate in a language. As evidence, the case of a child acquiring its first language is cited. The child is able to speak the language grammatically by the age of five, even though no one has taught him/her the grammar of the language. So, it is argued that a second language learner can also acquire a language without learning grammar. The other arguments given against the teaching of grammar were:

 (i) Much input produces little output. What is learnt is not applied; (ii) grammatical analysis breaks up the unity of thought by its focus on detail and fails to relate the details to the whole;

(iii) grammatical rules may be thoroughly understood and learned and yet not applied in practice, (iv) the best way of imparting even grammatical competence is through use and not usage.

In recent years there has been a re-thinking about grammar teaching. While as a reaction to the structural approach, the learners in a communicative classroom were expected not 'puzzle their heads with grammar', it is being increasingly accepted that "language learning is essentially learning how grammar functions in the achievement of meaning." (Widdowson: 1990:97). But instead of isolated sentences which were mostly used for drill and practice in the structural approach, the emphasis is now on providing suitable contexts to

make the "learners realize the communicative value of grammar in the very achievement of meaning."

In other words, the focus has moved away from the teachers covering grammar to the learners discovering grammar. Learners are first exposed to a new language in a comprehensible context, so that they are able to understand its function and meaning. Only then is their attention turned to examining the grammatical forms that have been used to convey that meaning. The discussion of grammar is explicit, but it is the learners who do most of the discussing or working out of rules, with guidance from the teacher.

What should English teachers do then? Should they teach grammar or not? It is felt by a good number of educators that grammar has an important place in the English curriculum and it has to be taught, for the following reasons: (i) 'Because it is there, the human being is constantly curious about the world we live in, and hence, wish to understand it and master it. Grammar is no different from any other domain of knowledge, in this respect. It is the fundamental organizing principle of language; (ii) while using the language, the individual encounters ambiguity, imprecision, unintelligible speech or writing. To deal with these problems, grammar is needed to work out what went wrong; (iii) after studying grammar, we are more alert to the strength, flexibility and variety of our language, and thus, are in a better position to use it and to evaluate other's use of it; and (iv) an intelligent study of grammar reveals surprising and interesting things about the orderliness of what the child has learned in a disorderly way. Thus there is an intellectual appeal, aside from practical benefits.

In sum, grammar instruction, on the whole, should be tailor-made to meet ultimately the needs of students, and should weave both prescriptive and descriptive practices into relevant, meaningful instruction.

Finally, as grammar is closely related to discourse analysis, not to say they often complement each other, we feel it necessary to deal with the term discourse as well as some of its aspects, mainly cohesion and to a lesser degree coherence. These aspects would constitute the next chapter.

Conclusion

The ELT situation in Algeria witnessed a quite good number of changes that characterized it since the 60's. The present chapter has dealt with the teaching of grammar in parallel with all the methods and approaches it went through, the teaching of grammar as conceived by the various grammarians and schools, and the importance of grammar as a branch that includes one essential part of the study ,that is the connective ties and their role in decoding the reading comprehension meanings .

CHAPTER TWO

Reading and Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Reading is an extraordinary achievement when one considers the number of levels and components that must be mastered. One has to consider what it takes, for example, to read a simple story: the words contain graphemes, phonemes, and morphemes; sentences have syntactic composition, propositions, and stylistic features. In addition, deep comprehension of the sentences requires the construction of referents of nouns, a discourse focus, presuppositions, and plausible inferences. In a word, the reader needs a lot of skills and a good deal of knowledge to distinguish and acknowledge what is new information and what is already known in the text.

These and other subtleties of the reading have made of it one of the primary curricular concerns of second and foreign language teaching. On the other hand, reading plays not only an important role in developing the other language skills such as listening, speaking and writing, but also improving pupils' linguistic and communicative competences. This chapter will survey reading as a skill, a process, and a product; it will also identify the various factors that interfere during the process of reading, therefore influences the reader and, at times, his comprehension. In short, the chapter attempts to shed light on the various aspects of reading and the fundamental requirements that help developing the reader' efficiency in reading as well as in comprehending a given text.

2.1 The Nature of Reading

Reading has usually been an 'enigmatic' skill for different researchers with different perspectives: educationists, psychologists, applied linguists, etc. As such, investigation has never ceased to 'dig' deeper and deeper to identify its nature and its abouts. The findings in this area have come up with various definitions but none would pretend to have completely circumscribed it.

Indeed, to provide a clear cut or accurate agreed on definition of the word, let's first go through the various controversies and arguments of some researchers and experts of 'reading'.

Both of Nutall (1982) and Smith (1985, 2004), two outstanding figures in the field of reading, assert that giving a single specific definition to the term is merely not possible. While the former maintains that assigning reading a unique definition is not an easy task at all because the concept can be expounded by different people in different ways, the second one fears of an 'oversimplification' of such a complex process as reading. Instead, Smith (Ibid., 1985: 100) has been declined towards looking for an 'illustration, description and analysis' of this process rather than an exact explanation. Moreover, he holds that the word has a 'multiplicity of meanings' depending on the context and situation in which the reading event occurs.

Nonetheless, Nutall (Ibid.) has come to categorize definitions people usually yield to the term in three groups: (i). Reading signifies sounding out or vocalising letters and words; i.e. the reader makes use of sounds to utter/pronounce letters and words; (ii) Reading means identifying or recognizing words and their meanings; i.e. the primary task of the reader here is not limited to the recognition of the words or the letters one by one, but he has also to grasp and understand the meaning of those words that make up the sentence; (iii) Reading involves interpreting or making sense of print; i.e. the reader is required here to go one step further, using both the visible information he is reading (visual information on the page) and his background knowledge (the non-visual information in the brain) so as to find any connection, therefore to be able to interpret and assimilate the content he's reading. In short, making use of one's background knowledge during this stage is simply referred to as schemata or 'cognitive structures'. These mental frames of all one's past life experiences stored in memory are called opportunely into play to comprehend new experiences, among them reading. Considering its importance in such field of reading and comprehension, this aspect of schemata or schema theory will be dealt with in due course and more details will be provided to explain the main complex processes that occur during reading as well as its importance in connection with reading.

2.2 Definition of Reading

For the sake of relevance and conciseness, it is suggested a review of the most important definitions provided by researchers and experts of the reading field. Hence, Grellet (1981:3) sees that "understanding a written text means . . . extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible", while Urquhart and Weir (1998: 22) hold that "reading is the process . . . of print". For Koda (2005:4), reading consists of extracting and correlating various information from the text with what the reader already knows; whereas Davies (1995) and Wolf (2007) view that reading is not only a private mental activity requiring from the text processor to comprehend and respond to the message imparted by a writer but it is a 'neuronally and intellectually circuitous act' as well.

Somewhere else, Smith (2004:27) admits that reading is not different from "any other kind of thought, except that with reading; thought is engendered by a written text. Reading might be defined as thought stimulated and directed by written language".

It's worth noticing that the several definitions provided here and there tend to stress recurrently the terms 'print' or (written), 'meaning', 'comprehend' or (understanding', as they are closely related to the term 'reading'; they are in fact, 'uncontroversial'. In addition to that, the diverse characterizations of reading as well as the large variety of definitions given by the plethora of experts and specialists of reading tend also to be complementary. Hence, Hudson (2007) made three assumptions which, we admit, can help us make sense of three competing models. Accordingly, it is held that "reading is meaning-based", secondly, that "the active reader provides a lot of information necessary to comprehend any text" and thirdly, that reading is not synonymous with learning to read or with teaching reading. With regard to the third assumption, Hudson (Ibid.) admitted that reading in this case is not: "(i) the reinforcement of oral skills; (ii) grammatical or discourse analysis; (iii) the acquisition of new vocabulary; (iv) translation practice; (v) answering comprehension questions; (vi) practice to

improve reading ability" despite the fact that these strategies most probably belong to the 'productive' aspect for the acquisition of the reading skills.

Within the scope of language skills, reading has been defined as being a written receptive skill that requires the visual sense as opposed to the oral and productive skills. It has also been described as a private activity or a 'more solitary experience' (Chastain, 1991:3). Simply, it means that the reader, unlike the speaker or the listener, needs no partner while engaged in the process of reading. Nonetheless, others see that the real partner of the reader is the writer of the text being read (Dubin & Bycina cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991). The same source assumes that there exists an idealized dialogue that takes place between the reader and the writer during the process of reading or the reading situation.

By reading situation, it is referred to three elements: what is being read (material) by whom (reader) and especially why or what for (purpose). Somewhere else, Smith (op. Cit.:179-80) draws our attention to the huge range of the things one can read starting from prose (texts, articles, novels, books etc) moving to non-prose (maps, road signs, poetry etc) ending up with non-print (weather, faces, eyes, situations etc). From these givens, it is clear that reading in Smith's vision goes beyond the frontiers of the page to what he calls 'reading the world'. And reading the world, Smith (Ibid.:2) explains, is performed in a smooth and natural way. Everyone tries to 'make sense 'of a present situation by relating it to all that one already knows, i.e. relating what is being read to what one already knows. In fact, the reading script, in this way, is just one facet of reading the world and thus can be described as ' making sense of print….' through activating relevant prior knowledge, asking questions about the material before hand and setting expectations of possible answers (Smith, op. cit.:103).

In fact, reading is not a simple process; it is rather a complex and 'multifaceted' process that "goes beyond a description of any single facet" (Hawkins, 1981:27). While reading, the learner needs a number of secondary skills and abilities altogether with some

specific and general background knowledge in order to understand and decodes the writer's message.

Reading is both 'perceptual' and 'cognitive' as Rumelhart (cited in Davies, 1995:64) argues "reading begins with a flutter of patterns on the retina in a part of the eyes and ends (when successful) with a definite idea about the author's intended message". Mc Donough and Chaw (1993) confirm the same idea when demonstrating that the process of reading involves first, the perception and recognition of the graphic symbols in the written material, second, the interpretation of these symbols to the corresponding sounds, and finally, the extraction of meanings and messages as illustrated by Goodman (1967:113,cited in Al-Mutawa & Kailani,(1989:114).

Graphic ————————▶ Decoding ————————▶ Meaning

Again, when dealing with the reading skill, one should consider both the process and the product because reading is both of them. While the process refers to what the readers do when faced with a written material and interacts with its components, the product refers to what the readers gain from the reading material in terms of information and data; simply the product is the result of the process. According to Sheng (2000) the process of reading deals with language content. In addition, it is believed that the product refers to comprehension which is defined as being another process, but more complex, of negotiation between the reader and the writer to get the various meanings as well as the messages.

On the other hand, Goodman (1967) sees that reading is a "psycholinguistic guessing game." He thinks that in the reading process, the "reader reconstructs, as best as he can, a message which has been encoded by the writer as a graphic display". In 1979, Coady elaborated on this basic psycholinguistic model for reading and suggested a model in which the reader's background knowledge interacts with conceptual abilities and process strategies to produce comprehension. Since then, a top-down approach has been used in second

36

language reading. In the reading process, the reader is an active participant, making predictions and processing information. Background knowledge plays a significant role in promoting the reader to get information in the process. The role of background knowledge in language comprehension has been formalized as the schema theory.

Summarily, reading is not only a so complex process that requires much care on the part of both the learners and the instructors for it deals with cognition, but it is also a so significant skill that calls at other skills to be properly achieved. Let's now move to the other important aspect related to reading that is comprehension as it constitutes the other side of the 'reading medal' and shed some light in order to understand the intricacies of this purely cognitive and mental process that takes place during reading.

2.3 Comprehension and the Process of Reading

At its heart, reading refers to the ability to comprehend or make meaning from written texts/passages. Since reading is closely related to the term comprehension, we shall attempt in this sub-section to clarify the latter, first by providing some definitions, and then by explaining the intricacies of the process (es) it goes through during the reading.

In fact, it was not until the 1990's and the mid-2000's, and after years of reading instruction and research, that reading comprehension became a central issue in the EFL/ESL field in the theorists', practitioners', and researchers' conversations and debates for curricular politics and reading pedagogy. The same field witnessed a good number of reform policies and movements, all designed for the improvement of reading curriculum and instruction. These few introductory lines are to attest here the long history of reading comprehension as well as its practice and the results/outcomes it achieved for both its instruction and its assessment (Israel & Duffy, 2009; Snow, 2003; cited in P.D. Pearson, 2010:279).

2.4 What is Comprehension?

When reading a given text/passage, it is assumed that people would reflect their understanding through some indirect symptoms and artefacts of its occurrence. Several simplistic thoughts and beliefs existed about comprehension and made of it, among others, a natural result of decoding either oral or written language; others thought that by asking students different levels of questions about a given text, they were teaching the learners how to comprehend. This is, in fact a mere way of assessing rather than teaching comprehension.

Defined, at the most, as acquiring meaning from written text – with text being defined as a range of material from traditional books to the computer screen, comprehension, in this context, is believed to be a process where the reader interacts with the print and is involved in making sense of the message. The authors of such belief made it clear when they stated that" readers comprehend text by acquiring meaning, confirming meaning, and creating meaning" (Gambrell et. al in Rand Reading Study Group, 2001:5). In a word, reading comprehension is all about the 'process of making meaning'. It is a 'whole' that consists of the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language; an active, complex, long-term developmental, cognitive process of acquiring knowledge. Above all, it is a process of enhancing understanding, of constructing meaning that involves knowledge, experience, thinking, and teaching; and understanding beyond knowing. At the core of comprehension, it is held, is the individual's ability to 'mentally interconnect' different events in the text and form a coherent representation of what the text is about. (Kendeou et al., 2007: 28-9)

Being definitely not a product of reading, comprehension requires purposeful, thoughtful, and active interactions between the reader, the text, the activity, and the socio-cultural context. On this score, there is almost a total agreement among the many researchers

that reading comprehension is an interactive process that entails these three dimensions: the reader, the text, and the context. All of these dimensions define a phenomenon that occurs within a larger sociocultural context (see figure 1). The latter, it is admitted,

> " shapes and is shaped by the reader, and which infuses each of the three elements, influencing the texts that are available and valued, the activities that are engaged in with those texts, and the identities and the profile of capacities of the readers." (Sweet & Snow, 2002, in RAND Reading Study Group-Education).

In fact, those three elements interconnect to affect how well comprehension occurs. For example, the reader's background knowledge and vocabulary (reader) interact with his or her purposes for reading (e.g., to scan for information, study for a test, or read for pleasure; activity) and the type of text (Internet website, textbook, novel) to contribute to his or her comprehension. Because reading in today's world requires comprehension of a variety of types of texts for many different purposes, teachers must not only attend to these three variables now more than ever, but to attract learners' attention while interacting with texts. (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002).

It is admitted, therefore, that the sociocultural context acts in the interests of students' experiences since the latter influence in turn the context. The sociocultural context mediates students' experiences, just as students' experiences influence the context.
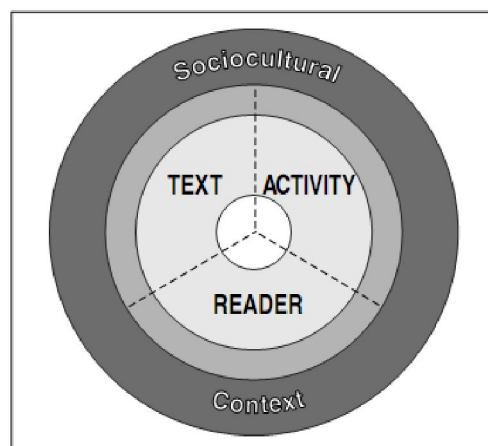
A Heuristic for Thinking About Reading Comprehension

Figure 1: The three dimensions of reading in connection with the sociocultural context.

Within the context of reading comprehension and in order to shed more light on this very crucial aspect of comprehension, three-Level taxonomy of comprehension had been suggested by Clymer (1968, cited in D. Brassell and Rasinski, T. 2008); they are: (i) literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and critical comprehension. The former is said to be the lowest of the three levels; it requires a reader to be able to retell or recall the facts or information presented in a text. The reader may be able to recall, for example, names of characters and details of the setting. The information required for literal comprehension comes largely from the text itself. In responding to literal question, the reader either can recall the information from the text or he or cannot.(ii) Inferential comprehension refers to the ability of a reader to take in information that is inferred or implied within a text. If a text indicates, for example, that a character is carrying an umbrella while walking down a street on a cloudy day, the Inference may be that the character is expecting rain. Inferential comprehension is described as being more sophisticated than literal comprehension because it requires the orchestration and manipulation of information from the text as well as information that resides within the readers—their background knowledge. (iii) The third level, called the critical or evaluative comprehension is described as the highest level in the taxonomy. It involves making critical judgments about the information presented in the text. Moreover, in-depth analysis and critical thinking are necessary to make informed judgments and evaluations. Making use of inferential and critical-level questions dependent highly on the reader's own background, interest, and disposition, a fact which, it is recognized, is not easy.

All three levels of comprehension, it is admitted, are important and need to be fostered. While literal comprehension is within the reach of so many readers, this is not the

case for the inferential and critical comprehension which remain not easy to be achieved for both the teachers and their learners.

To conclude this sub-section, one may venture to say that good teaching is the most powerful means of promoting the development of proficient readers (RAND Reading Study Group, Op. Cit.2002). To achieve good comprehension instruction educators and teachers have to undertake demonstration, explanation, and guidance in how to read. On the other hand, merely reading a lot does not make for better reading; reading more without guidance does not necessarily improve comprehension. Instruction in comprehension can help learners understand what they read, remember what they read, and communicate with others about what they read.

2.5 Types of Reading

Reading varies according to the purpose of the reader, the nature of reading material and the speed of reading required. The first distinction that can be made is whether the reading is oral or silent. Another distinction to be made between silent and reading aloud is that each type differs from the other in terms of purposes. While silent reading requires much of the learner's attention and the teacher's guidance in order to check and reinforce comprehension, (Al Mutawa and Kailani, op. cit.), reading aloud aims rather at developing some oral aspects such as pronunciation, rhythm, stress, intonation,… etc.

Hence, the very common types of reading that one may encounter are intensive and extensive reading to which experts of reading and specialists add two subsequent types that are skimming and scanning reading.

2.5.1 Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is used to teach or practice specific reading strategies or skills. The text is treated as an end in itself. This type of reading, as its label suggests, is sometimes

called "Narrow Reading"; it requires a very careful reading of the text with a focus on details. It may involve students reading selections by the same author or several texts about the same topic. When this occurs, content and grammatical structures repeat themselves and students get many opportunities to understand the meanings of the text. The success of "Narrow Reading" on improving reading comprehension is based on the premise that the more familiar the reader is with the text, either due to the subject matter or having read other works by the same author, the more comprehension is promoted.

Simply put, usually, it is a classroom activity that requires much guidance on the part of the teacher to help his learners acquire lexis, structures, expressions, functions, and cultural insights. Intensive reading is very often directed towards the realization of the objectives set in the syllabus. Long and Richards (1987) hold it is a "detailed in-class" analysis, led by the teacher, of vocabulary and grammar points, in a short passage" whereas Brown (1989) draws an analogy to intensive reading as a "zoom lens" strategy in the sense that the maximum of structural, grammatical, and discourse markers are gathered "for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships, and the like."

2.5.2 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading on the other hand involves reading of large quantities of material, directly and fluently. It is treated as a means to an end. It may include reading simply for pleasure or reading technical, scientific or professional material.

Besides, extensive reading is carried out to achieve a general understanding of a text. Brown (1989:68) identifies extensive reading as "occurring when students read large amounts of high interest material, usually out of class, concentrating on meaning, "reading for gist" and skipping unknown words."

Extensive reading, it is admitted, deals with texts, literary excerpts, novels, etc. just with the purpose of grasping the global meaning. This type of reading is usually done at home or in the classroom as a supplementary reading task.

In short, it's assumed that, ultimately, the aims of extensive reading are not only to build reader confidence and enjoyment but to achieve the comprehension of main ideas, not for specific details as well. Extensive reading is said to be very important in improving the learners' reading skill, enriching their lexis, and reinforcing previously learnt items.

Another distinction is to be made between silent and reading aloud. Each type differs from the other in terms of purposes. While silent reading requires much of the learner's attention and the teacher's guidance in order to check and reinforce comprehension, (Al Mutawa and Kailani, op. cit.), reading aloud aims rather at developing some oral aspects such as pronunciation, rhythm, stress, intonation,… etc.

Two other specific types of reading used in reading comprehension, may be involved in this context, they are scanning and skimming. Skimming and scanning are sometimes referred to as types of reading and at other times, as skills.

Scanning is a quick reading, focusing on locating specific information. It is usually used when a specific piece of information is required while reading a text to find keywords and phrases that are likely to indicate the specific information that the reader is seeking such as a name, date, symbol, formula, or phrase, etc. The reader knows what the item looks like and so, knows when he has located what he was searching for.

Skimming, on the contrary, refers to the process of reading only main ideas within a passage to get an overall impression of the content of a reading selection. It's simply about reading those parts of a text that are most likely to indicate what the author is talking about at different points in order to gain an overview of the content.

A relatively quick and efficient reader here, either on its own or after scanning or skimming, will be very probably able to give a global or general meaning of the passage/text.

2.6 Reading Models

As far as the reading process and language acquisition are concerned, many questions have been raised about information processing, its nature and characteristics. The answer to such issues led to the emergence of two theoretical models that explain what happens when the mind works to extract meanings from the printed page. It is no wonder, then, that a large amount of research has been carried out on this aspect where psychologists have distinguished between two kinds of processing in skilled reading. These models are the 'bottom up' and the 'top down' which would later on lead to the emergence of a third type, the interactive. Bottom-up processes are those that take in stimuli from the outside world -- letters and words, for reading -- and deal with that information with little recourse to higher-level knowledge. With top-down processes, on the other hand, the uptake of information is guided by an individual's prior knowledge and expectations. In most situations, bottom-up and top-down processes work together to ensure the accurate and rapid processing of information. Some more details follow in the next sub-section on these two reading models.

2.6.1 The Bottom -up Model

The main assumption behind the 'bottom-up' model is that reading is the ability to build up words, phrases, sentences, and then meanings from the smallest units. Hence, the model reflects the following sequence of information processing: from letters to sounds, to words, to sentences, and finally to meanings. The 'bottom-up' model is sometimes referred to as 'text-based' or 'outside-in' as the information comes to the reader from the outside and its processing is merely "based on linguistic input from the text" (Silberstein, 1987:31). This way of processing is a product of the behaviouristic and phonemic approaches to the teaching of reading which assume that the recognition of sounds, letters and phonemes is the prerequisite

to learning larger units and getting meanings (Chastain, 1991). Conceived this way, the model has been criticised for teaching passivity rather than reading. Alderson (2000:17) admits that readers who have been exposed to this model are just "passive decoders of sequential graphic-phonemic syntactic systems, in that order".

This will lead scholars in this field to look for another model that would fulfil their expectations; there, consequently, emerged another model known as the top-down model.

2.6.2 The Top-down Model

While the bottom-up theorists (Gough,1972; Laberge and Samuels, 1974) to name a few, were still emphasizing the ability to decode or put into sound what is seen in a text, that is moving from sounds to whole words, sentences, paragraphs, etc., emerged the top-down model of reading which focused on what the reader brings to the process (Goodman,1967, Smith,1973). This model suggests that processing of a text begins in the mind of a reader with meaning-driven processes of prediction or assumption ideas about the meaning of a text based on one's prior knowledge. Simply put, the readers sample the text for information and contrast it with their own knowledge, helping to make sense of what is written. As the focus here is on the readers as he interacts with the text, Goodman (1982 cited in Alderson, op.cit.:19) described it as a 'psycholinguistic guessing game'.

It's worth noting that the prediction comes to be a key element in this model. The same model has also been labelled as 'knowledge-based' or 'inside-out' because the readers base their predictions, to get meanings, on their previous knowledge or schemata.

Since the 'bottom-up' and the 'top-down' are two contrastive models, thus differing on several aspects, speculation and controversy have never stopped about which model to adopt when teaching reading. An amalgamation of the two emerged as another reading alternative best known as the 'interactive model'.

2.6.3 The Interactive Model

The interactive model consists of the integration of the two previous models- the bottom-up and the top-down, where each component involved in the reading process would interact with the other. The interactive model (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich,1980) stressed both what is on the written page and what a reader brings to it using both top-down and bottom-up skills. This idea has been confirmed by the fact that "sometimes it is the individual details that help us understand the whole; sometimes it is an overview that allows us to process the details" (Harmer, 2001: 14). Thus, while the individual sentence leads the reader to grasp the general meaning, the comprehension of the latter leads in its turn to understand individual sentences and words.

Moreover, the interactive models of reading assume that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text (Grabe, 1988). In this model, good readers are both good decoders and good interpreters of the reading passage; their decoding skills become more automatic but no less important as their reading skill develops. (Eskey, 1988). Zhenyu (1997:41) believes that in this precise case, one has to "see both the tree and the forest".

2.7 Reading, Vocabulary, and Schema Theory

No one can deny the importance of vocabulary while individuals are reading a passage, a text, or whatever. Vocabulary would help comprehension to take place and facilitate the reading and make it enjoyable. Thus, vocabulary is of utmost importance for readers. In case, the reader lacks this vocabulary stock, there arise problems of comprehension as well as unease while reading.

2.7.1 Vocabulary: a basic tool for comprehension

In foreign and second language learning contexts, many researchers emphasize the importance of reading to expand learners' vocabulary or to acquire a good deal of lexis a fact

46

which would enable readers to overcome comprehension difficulties while reading. In the first case, Smith (1978: 4), for example, claims that in the process of reading, learners will build up a right vocabulary, they will hypothesize the identity of new words that they meet in print and they will test their hypothesis if it makes sense in the context or not...Thus, learners have to predict from the context the meaning of unfamiliar words. Furthermore, learners will not only have the ability to recognize new words but a good number of actions that have to do with reading such as how to use spelling-to-sound correspondences by using implicit procedures for distinguishing one word from another. Similarly, Nuttall (1982:65) points out that "[a]reading program is the single most effective way of improving both vocabulary and reading skills in general." Indeed, she suggests using the dictionary and materials to be read because increasing reading texts is a useful way to expand one's vocabulary.

It's also a universal truth that learners with larger vocabularies are much better at reading. This remains an important point indeed. Understanding a written passage is so much more than just reading the words; understanding, or comprehension, is directly linked to a child's vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, reading comprehension relies heavily on vocabulary knowledge and metalinguistic awareness. This simply because when an individual learns a new word (adding to his vocabulary) he makes use of his metalinguistic awareness skills. Metalinguistic awareness has been defined as ' the ability to objectify language and dissect it as an arbitrary linguistic code independent of meaning.' (R.F.P. Speece, D.L., and Cooper, D.H. 1999). Since metalinguistic awareness is a skill that educators and instructor can teach, it remains a vital element to help learners to comprehend and build vocabulary knowledge.

As a result of these processes, it follows that learners who have this metalinguistic skill prove to be good readers, and have good comprehension skills. Whereas those learners lacking that skill are consequently prevented from' unlocking' the code of difficult or new language. They may decode the words reasonably well, but not reach to the passage's meaning

– reading failure is the result. They not only fail, therefore, to get the meaning of the reading passage but would also fail to acquire new and difficult words, a fact which would make it difficult to adopt strategies as to construct meaning from unfamiliar text.

One, at last, has to mention also that there exists a close relationship between words and prior knowledge in that when new information are connected to prior knowledge, it is much expected that comprehension takes place. Carrel and Eisterhold (1983:557) express this important aspect as follows "efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to ones' knowledge. Comprehending words, sentences, and entire texts involves more than just relying on one's linguistic knowledge". Considering its great importance in relation with comprehension, we are, therefore, bound to shed some more light on this aspect, commonly known also as schema theory in the next sub-section.

2.7.2 Schema Theory and Reading Comprehension

One of the most universal findings to emerge from research is the marked degree in a learner's prior knowledge of a topic facilitates future comprehension. This prior knowledge or pathway to understanding new ideas, when related to content area assignments, is crucial.

Reading comprehension actually depends on prior knowledge. Prior knowledge is expressed with words. When comprehending, readers might relate what they are reading, i.e. the author's experience, with their own one or at least with something close to theirs. So, they use the words in the text to build a meaning consistent with their past experience with these words. When the meaning of a word is unknown, it means the reader does not have background knowledge or has not had experiences in that area. Without background knowledge—that is, without the vocabulary that comes with various experiences—there is no comprehension.

Hence, in the reading process, the reader becomes an active participant, making predictions and processing information. Background knowledge plays a significant role in promoting the reader to get information in the process. The role of background knowledge in language comprehension has been formalized as the schema theory.

Schemas are mental structures or relationships that represent the readers' background knowledge. Accordingly, a text only provides directions for listeners or readers as how they should retrieve or construct meaning of their own, namely acquired knowledge. This previously acquired knowledge is called the reader's background knowledge. Those previously acquired knowledge structures are called schema theory. Schema Theory, in short, is a theory of how knowledge is acquired, processed, and retrieved. Schema is the technical term used by cognitive scientists to describe how people process, organize, and store information in their heads. Schemas, or schemata, are seen as cognitive constructs by which we organize information in our long-term memory (Widdowson, 1983). They "reflect the experiences, conceptual understanding, attitudes, values, skills, and strategies … [we] bring to a text situation"(Vacca & Vacca, 1998: 15). Schemata, therefore, have been called "the building blocks of cognition" (Rumelhart, 1982) because they represent elaborate networks of information that people use to make sense of new stimuli, events, and situations. Furthermore, the schema theory thinks that comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader' s background knowledge and the text. Comprehension of the text requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. Comprehending words, sentences, and entire texts involves more than just relying on one's linguistic knowledge. As Anderson (1984) points out, "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well. Obviously, the more knowledge of the world one has, the better comprehension he gets about the text". Williams (1984:7) in his turn holds that all readers bring something with

them to a text in terms of general stock of knowledge sometimes labeled as 'knowledge of the world'.

In conclusion, from the schema theory point of view, and on the basis there the reader and text accomplish a dynamic interaction, it is clear that meaning is not fully presented in a text passively waiting to be decoded by the reader. Meaning is reconstructed or created during the reading process through the interaction of text and the reader's background knowledge.

The obvious pedagogical implication one has to draw here is that teachers and instructors should teach their learners to link their prior knowledge with the text. By doing so, the students can better understand the global meaning of the text.

2. 8 What Are Individuals' Reading For?

Commonly, when individuals indulge in reading any printed document, they usually do it for some three general reasons/ purposes: for entertainment (a novel, a poem, etc.), for information-seeking (science or nature stories, biographies, etc.), or for performing a given task (a recipe, directions, instructions, etc.).

In a more academic context, reading experts and specialists provide various reasons and goals they set for either L1 learners or foreign/second language learners. Grellet (1981) says that there are two main reasons for reading: reading for pleasure and reading for information, whereas Nutall (1987:49) holds that "for the FL student, the authentic purposes of reading are often submerged by the purpose of language improvement". Yet she makes the remark that outside the classroom, most of our reading is not done with the same purpose, i.e. for the language improvement. On the other hand, and being aware that the reader's purposes can have 'an influence on the mode of reading adopted', Davies (1995:78) that it has been suggested by Hedge (1991, Cited in Davies. Ibid.) four broad purposes that are: meaning, gist, language acquisition, and/or language acquisition/meaning. Besides, the same author

thinks that the " readers' purposes not only play an important part in the process of reading but they perhaps control or 'drive' it" (Davies,Ibid.:78). In their turn, some other researchers believe that there may not only exist a number of reading purposes but that these reading purposes can be classified under seven headings: (i) reading to search for information, (ii) reading to skim quickly, (iii) reading to learn from texts, (iv) reading to integrate information, (v) reading to write, (vi) reading to critique texts, and (vii) reading for general comprehension Grabe & Stoller, 2002:12).

2.9 Main Problems for EFL/ESL learners in Reading Comprehension

Few would disagree that one of the most important goals of education has always been that all students should learn to read and eventually write with adequate proficiency. It is surprising therefore – given the schooling conditions, the technology advances, skills and resources available to educators and instructors today – that a significant number of learners/students, and even adult readers do not achieve or master those basic goals such as reading and writing. Their failure to cope with the demands of reading and writing has not only an extremely detrimental effect on their self-esteem, confidence, attitude, motivation, and their ability to learn across the curriculum but make of them, once they graduate, unable to accomplish those reading and writing tasks. It has been even observed that without the ability to communicate and learn effectively through reading and writing, individuals are severely disadvantaged for life. On the basis that reading remains one skill upon which almost all formal education depends, researchers now unanimously agree on the fact that a child who doesn't learn the reading basics early is unlikely to learn them at all. And any child who doesn't learn to read early and well will not easily master other skills and knowledge, and 'is unlikely to ever flourish in school or in life'.

More important, some very recent researches and investigations revealed that "the proportion of individuals with literacy [reading] problems seems to increase as students get older" (Westwood, 2008:4). Reports in the same field in the UK and the US state that in disadvantaged secondary schools as well as universities and colleges, for example, the number of students with reading comprehension difficulties can be as high as 58 per cent for the former (Myers & Botting, 2008; Biancrosa & Snow, 2006, cited in Westwood, Ibid.) and some 70 per cent of older readers for the latter.

Considering the above givens in the UK and the US in the area of literacy/reading, it is not therefore surprising at all to imagine what the rates in developing countries – particularly in the Arab world and in Algeria would be. With regard to this point, one would dare to say that in addition to the total absence of any statistics in this domain, almost all learners at all educational levels (primary, middle, secondary and university levels) are lacking the basic literacy skills, a fact which makes of them very poor readers and comprehenders. The problem, actually, in such countries is more than alarming. It's dramatic for when one observes how a university student reads, one comes to the very bitter reality our present educational system is in. In fact this is one of the motifs/drives that led us to undertake the present study under a specific aspect.

Now let's attempt to list some of the major problems EF learners, in general, face when they endeavour in a reading activity with the purpose of comprehending parts of the passage or the whole before tackling the issue proper of our study (i.e. analysis of the experimental work submitted to my first year university students) which will be undertaken in a separate chapter.

To begin the consideration of who is likely to have reading difficulties and how many children confront such problems, researchers and experts in the reading field report that

failure to learn to read adequately and to comprehend what has been read are among the very serious problems of such categories (Nation & Norbury,2005) . In the Arab world, it is admitted that:

> The weakness of English learners in general and English language department majors/graduates more specifically, has been attributed to various factors: lack of pertinent information on the part of school graduates when they join the university, school and university language department curricula, teaching methodology, lack of the target language environment, and the learners' lack of motivation.
>
> (Suleiman, 1983; Mukattash, 1983; Zughul, 1983, 1987; Ibrahim, 1983; cited in Rababah, 2009: 183)

These 'deficits' or problems are likely to be present among children of low social classes in urban zones and in rural areas in particular attending both public and private schools and is much more likely among poor children and nonnative speakers of English either in an EFL or ESL setting. In addition to that, there exists learners (regardless their age) who show reading comprehension 'deficits' such as dyslexia, memory or brain disabilities, and specific impairments. Very frequently, EFL/ESL poor readers and comprehenders are usually concerned with the issues of printed words recognition and/or spelling (i.e. decoding) as well as that of understanding/comprehending. These problems may have actually diverse causes (little opportunity to use the target language, absence of literacy programmes from early years, a non-mastery of the syntactic, grammatical, phonological, and lexical rules of the target language, etc.) and may depend on various variables (socio-economic factors, unsuitable learning environment, etc.). Unable to read and express (orally or in written form) themselves effectively, FL "students' major difficulties" it is argued, "arises from the fact that they cannot use English correctly and appropriately in and out of the classroom when required to do so" (Rababah, op. Cit.).

Moreover, it is believed that poor comprehenders have weaknesses on many language and cognitive tasks that may influence their ability to construct a text's meaning. Some poor comprehenders have weak semantic and syntactic skills, which will presumably affect their ability to construct representations of the meanings of phrases and sentences (Nation, Clarke, Marshall, & Durand, 2004, cited in Cain, 2009: 12). Other groups of poor comprehenders do not show many difficulties with word or sentence processing, but have problems with text processing skills that may lead to difficulties with the construction of the passage's meaning. These skills are integration and inference, comprehension monitoring, and knowledge and use of text structure (Cain & Oakhill, 2007, cited in Cain, Ibid.:12). The same authors explain that while skills are determinant for text meaning and its construction, the second one, i.e. comprehension is monitored by skilled readers when reading. The third skill may help comprehension to take place about overall text in that it provides 'a framework for the identification and integration of important information'. It is, however, admitted that "text comprehension and the skills that support it are dependent on memory. The latter, (short-term memory in particular) enables the reader (or listener) to store and recall short pieces of information. It might be, therefore, useful for processing sentences with long or complex structures" (Cain, Ibid:.13).

In conclusion, showing a considerable lack of reading experience and practice, and in part to lack of effective decoding strategies, weak readers at any age are not skilled at rapid word recognition; they have problems identifying words with irregular spelling patterns (Ricketts et al., 2008, cited in Westwood, 2OO8). Besides, it is believed that these weak students with reading and spelling difficulties have a poor phonological awareness for it is also believed that without this awareness it is almost impossible for a learner to grasp the principle underpinning the alphabetic code, and thus master the phonic decoding skills necessary for identifying unfamiliar words and for spelling (Westwood, Ibid.).

The other sort of reading problems is comprehension. To comprehend, readers must use information they already possess to filter, interpret, organize and reflect upon the incoming information from the page. McCardle et al. (2002, cited in Westwood, op. Cit.:33) suggest that weakness in any of these abilities (vocabulary, recalling background knowledge, sentence processing, verbal reasoning, knowledge of print conventions and working memory) can impair reading comprehension and can cause a student to disengage from the task of interpreting text since comprehension processes draw on many cognitive and linguistic abilities. In short, the same author assumes that in addition to a variety of different factors,

including those intrinsic to the individual and others related to insufficient instruction or to inappropriate materials, there exists some eight most frequently mentioned factors that may cause directly or indirectly a poor comprehension. These are: limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, lack of familiarity with the subject matter, difficulty level of the text (readability), inadequate use of effective reading strategies, weak verbal reasoning, problems with processing information, problems in recalling information after reading,

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter shed light on the various elements that purport reading in general. And being so important for the understanding of most of the abouts of reading and comprehension, one may venture to say that these aspects and characteristics of reading would enable us to engage in the next chapters and give, therefore, consistency, to the practical work, i.e. the study, undertaken in our dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE

Discourse Analysis, Cohesion, and Coherence

Introduction

The following chapter will tackle two important issues that are discourse analysis and cohesion. While the former constitutes the field/discipline (systemic linguistics/functional grammar) which studies and analyses the actual language in use (either spoken or written), as a too wide area of human life, the latter is an aspect of that spoken and written human speech.

Thus, only discourse from the linguistic point of view, and especially applied linguistics, is explained here. Cohesion, however, would be dealt with thoroughly and deeply as it constitutes the core area of the study along with its various aspects mainly the cohesive devices in general, and the grammatical ones in particular. Subsequent points will be also tackled here such as the term 'texture' and coherence as being significant items so closely related to the topic of our dissertation.

3. 1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse is a term becoming increasingly common in a wide range of academic and non-academic contexts. Sometimes it can seem as if each time it is used, it means something different. In addition to this, there is no agreement among linguists as to the use of the term discourse in that some use it in reference to texts, while others claim it denotes speech which is for instance illustrated by the following definition: "Discourse: a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke, or narrative" (Crystal 1992:25). Somewhere else, the terms 'text' and 'discourse' are almost used interchangeably implying that the former refers to the linguistic product, while the latter implies the entire dynamics of the processes (Dakowska

2001:81). According to Cook (1990:7) novels, as well as short conversations or groans might be equally rightfully named discourses.

Said otherwise, discourse is often described as "language-in-use" or "socially situated text and talk", i.e., analysts ask how written, oral and visual texts are used in specific contexts to make meanings, as opposed to analysing language-as-an-abstract-system.

Furthermore, discourse analysis is the examination of language use by members of a speech community. It involves looking at both language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that help us for the interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk. A discourse analysis of written texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences, while an analysis of spoken language might focus on these aspects plus turn taking practices, opening and closing sequences of social encounters, or narrative structure.

Another famous discourse analyst held that discourse analysis might have three dimensions: i) concerned with language use beyond the boundaries of a sentence/utterance, (ii) concerned with the interrelationships between language and society and (iii) as concerned with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication. The same analyst admits that the term discourse analysis is very ambiguous, he, therefore refers to it as:

> the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse. Roughly speaking, it refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. It follows that discourse analysis is also concerned with language use in social contexts, and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers.

(Stubbs 1983:1)

After a historical account on how discourse grew out of various disciplines such as linguistics, semiotics, anthropology, and sociology in the 1960's and 1970's, McCarthy (1991:5) holds that discourse analysis is "concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used." He also draws attention to the role of the discourse analysts while studying language in use. They actually study the various discourses that language may encode: written texts of all kinds and spoken data (conversations, and all forms of talks).

It's worth mentioning here that the study of language in use (i.e. discourse) aims at giving the language its essential function that is communication. With regard to this precise point, Cook (op.cit.) has come to admit that the study of discourse represents the study of language in use, 'for communication'. Thus, within communication, discourse analysis is the study of talk (or text) in context, where researchers (analysts) use excerpts and their analysis as the central means to make a scholarly argument.

Far and wide, the term 'discourse' has been defined in a number of different ways: for example, as language use above the level of the sentence, as language use in context and as real language use. Within these broad features of the term discourse, the term 'communication' is implied since language is primarily used for such a purpose.

Discourse analysts' tasks and preoccupations may vary while studying spoken or written language. While analysis of spoken discourse is sometimes called conversational analysis, some linguists use the term text linguistics for the study of written discourse This language ranges from a focus on any aspect of linguistic behaviour, from the study of particular patterns of pronunciation, through word choice, sentence structure and semantic representation, to the pragmatic analysis of how speech encounters are organized (and any combination of these in spoken and written discourse).

In sum, discourse analysts study larger chunks of language as they flow together; they are thus as concerned (if not more so) to examine the way in which meaning is constructed throughout the text (written or oral), as with the way this is achieved at any one point in the text. In recent studies about cohesion and coherence, the discourse analysis' scope has widened to cover even small bits of language such as 'oh', 'well', and so many other similar linguistic features.

Let's now move a little further to consider those aspects of cohesion and coherence which not only constitute a major aspect within the scope of grammar and discourse analysis but are also central to our study. As long as the topic of our dissertation is concerned, the focus will be much more on cohesion, but this would lead us imperatively to mention the term coherence which is intrinsically related to cohesion.

3. 2 Cohesion

Since the publication of Cohesion in English by Halliday and Hasan (1976), a pioneering effort to describe relationships between and among sentences in text, many researchers have been made in the field of cohesion and coherence in the English texts. Although different ideas concerning their theory exist, its overall description of the situations of cohesion and coherence in English is still worth studying, not to say still controversial/debatable among specialists.

We shall first attempt to provide the different views and standpoints of researchers (linguists, applied linguists, teachers, etc.) about this notion of cohesion as initially conceived and used, and then details would follow since the notion witnessed some developments and criticism.

Broadly speaking, cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which link various parts of a text. These relations or ties organize and, to some extent, create a

text, for instance, by requiring the reader to interpret words and expressions with reference to other words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs. Cohesion refers to the ranges of possibilities that exist for linking one sentence and among other things with the other that has gone before or previously mentioned (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:10). According to these researchers, cohesion is expressed partly through the grammar and partly through the vocabulary. Therefore, the cohesion refers to grammatical cohesion and Lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion consists of reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction while the lexical one consists of reiteration and collocation. Cohesive relations (or devices) relate between two or more elements that are independent of the structure.

Cohesion, for others, refers to the "the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text" (Richard, Platt & Weber 1985:45 cited in Kuo, 1995:48). Such relationships include within-sentence, inter-sentence, and cross-section lexical or structural interdependency. The same author admits that the notion of cohesion is not merely a syntactic but also a semantic one. It is "a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it (Halliday & Hasan 1976:8 cited in Kuo, Ibid.).

Somewhere else, it is held that cohesion refers to the syntactic and semantic connectivity of the linguistic forms on the textual surface. This definition is not actually far from that of Halliday and Hasan. By analogy, Mei-Yun (1993:12) argues that "cohesion holds segments of a text together, making it a semantic edifice, just as mortar does bricks or stones in a building."

Back to Halliday and Hasan (1976) with some more details, they proposed the notion of cohesion whereby explicit linguistic devices relate one element in the text to another and thus create 'texture' through cohesive ties between structurally unrelated propositions. Simply

put, cohesion refers to the categories of ties that connect sentences; these ties are said to be semantic relations which, according to Halliday and Hassan, make the text 'cohere' (Carrell, 1982).

It is worth noting that the present study will adopt Halliday & Hasan's taxonomy and model of cohesion, mostly known as the 'cohesion theory', despite the fact that their work received a good deal of criticism such as that of Carrell (1982) whose work relies on schema theory. Accordingly, it is maintained that " In the schema theoretical view of text processing, what is important is not only the text, its structure and content, but what the reader or listener does with the text" (Ibid. p.482). Meanwhile, before dealing with the different categories of cohesive devices as mentioned by Halliday and Hasan as well as those implied in our study, (i.e. the grammatical ones) it is important to clarify two terms that occur frequently with the term of cohesion, namely 'texture' and ' cohere'. Indeed, these are two key words that not only have to be explained but also would shed light on the term cohesion itself.

3.2.1 Cohesion: the result of texture, text, and cohesive ties

Let's first see what the term 'texture' means and where it comes from as a linguistic term and what it implies. According to Crane (2000) "What makes any length of text meaningful and coherent has been termed texture. Texture is the basis for unity and semantic interdependence within text and a text without texture would just be a group of isolated sentences with no relationship to one another."

Cohesion, a term generally associated with research inspired by Halliday and Hasan in systemic functional linguistics through their canonical work Cohesion in English (1976), is one part of the study of texture, which considers the interaction of cohesion with other aspects of text organization. Texture, in turn, is one aspect of the study of coherence, which takes the social context of texture into consideration.

Although Halliday and Hasan do not propose a theory of text structure or examine how texts are produced by humans, they do attempt to define the concept of text. To them a text is a semantic unit, the parts which are linked together by explicit cohesive ties. Cohesion, therefore, defines a text as text.

For these researchers, a cohesive tie by means of which cohesion is achieved "is a semantic relation between an element in a text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 8, cited in Witte & Faigley, 1981: 189-190). These two elements that are semantically connected can lie within the text or one element can lie outside the text. Halliday and Hasan call within-text cohesive ties endophoric and references to items outside the text exophoric. An example of an exophoric reference is the editorial "we" in a newspaper. Such references are exophoric because no antecedent is recoverable within the text. Exophoric references often help link a text to its situational context; but, as far as Halliday and Hasan are concerned, exophoric references do not contribute to the cohesion of a text.

For Halliday and Hasan, cohesion depends upon lexical and grammatical relationships that allow sentence sequences to be understood as connected discourse rather than as autonomous sentences. Even though within-sentence cohesive ties do occur, the cohesive ties across "sentence boundaries" are those which allow sequences of sentences to be understood as a text.

Accordingly, what makes a text a text then? Texts have some properties beyond those typically attributed to grammatical units, such as clauses, phrases or words – these are what text linguistics is concerned with. Clearly, a text is any piece of language, spoken or written, of whatever length, which forms a unified whole. A speaker of a language can easily

distinguish between a text and a collection of sentences. This is because texts have texture, that is, the quality of functioning as a unity.

The relationship between cohesion and text is arguably discussed by Brown and Yule (1983) who hold that lexical cohesion is not always necessary for text to produce semantic relations between sentences. In other terms, they admit that text can exist without lexical cohesion, though lexical cohesion cannot exist without text. This case is explained by its authors as follows: [T]he reader may indeed use some of the formal expressions of cohesive relationships present in the sentences, but he is more likely to try to build a coherent picture of the series of events being described and fit the events together, rather than work with the verbal connections alone. (Brown & Yule, 1983: 197).

Focusing on the idea that cohesive ties do not always lead readers to a coherent interpretation of what they have read, i.e. the text, Brown & Yule (Ibid.) draw attention to the fact that educators have to play a significant role when teaching L2 learners a text (either for reading or writing) and   how to lead them to understand the coherence of that text. For these researchers, cohesion is neither necessary nor sufficient to create coherence, though most discourse includes cohesion. It is, therefore, necessary to recognize that "cohesion is a manifestation of certain aspects of coherence, and a pointer towards it, rather than its cause or necessary result" (Cook 1994: 34). That is, cohesive ties have to be considered as a "manifestation of how we are making sense of the message in the text" (Carter & McCarthy 1988: 204). This means that it is necessary to understand cohesive ties semantically, as well as grammatically. Hence, it can be considered that knowledge of lexical cohesion might help L2 learners understand discourse. This aspect will be dealt with opportunely in a next sub-section.

Another significant feature of cohesion is texture. The latter is said to be that feature of text which made it a unified whole. In the words of Halliday and Hasan (op. cit.: 2), the concept of "texture is entirely to express the property of 'being a text'". Hence, a text has texture if this is what makes it distinct from something that is not a text. It is argued that this texture derives from the fact that "it functions as a unity with respect to its environment". In short, the texture is primarily provided by that semantic concept that is cohesion, which in its turn gives it unity.

3.2.2 Cohesion versus Coherence

The second term to clarify within the context of the present study is the term 'coherence' which comes usually to be related to the term cohesion.

Interest in coherence research has grown in the past several years and there have been many studies done in this field. In the last 20 years, however, in order to understand how readers interpret a text as coherent and how writers use language to convey a coherent message, researchers in psychology, linguistics and applied linguistics have begun to explore this notion (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996: 67). These studies focused on several perspectives of the issue and some researchers do not agree on the definition of the term "coherence". The term coherence has been defined in various ways.

On this score, some researchers apply the term cohesion to the surface structure of the text and the term coherence to the concepts and relations underlying its meaning. Cohesion has sometimes been applied to smaller units of language in the text, and coherence, to some general overall interrelatedness in the text. Other researchers have defined cohesion as "continuity in word and sentence structure", and coherence as "continuity in meaning and context" (Louwerse & Graesser, 2005).

Therefore, a good number of personal viewpoints have been developed here and there about coherence as related to cohesion with different categorizations. These researchers have, however, come to differentiate between coherence and cohesion as a first step. It is generally accepted that cohesion and coherence are two different concepts which do not have synonymous meanings though they are related. While cohesion is defined by many researchers as referring to the syntactic and semantic connectivity of the linguistic forms on the textual surface (Connor & Johns, 1990; Crystal, 1991; Halliday & Hasan, 1976), coherence is defined as a "principle of organization postulated to account for the underlying functional connectedness or identity of a piece of spoken or written language" (Crystal cited in Jin, 1998:2). In other words, cohesion is the connectivity on the surface or sentential level and coherence is the connectivity in terms of content and organization and on a broader level such as paragraph or discourse level (Jin, 1998:.2).

According to Witte and Faigley (op. cit.:199) coherence defines those underlying semantic relations that "allow a text to be understood in a real - world setting" and "coherence conditions are governed by the writer's purpose, the audience's knowledge and expectations, and the information to be conveyed" (Ibid.: 202).

Coherence, on the other hand, refers to the kind of relationships, among elements of a text, which are not based on surface links, but links derived from thematic development, organization of information, or communicative purpose of the particular discourse. Widdowson (1983: 71 cited in Kuo, op. cit.: 48), in a discussion of the relationship between interpretation and the given/new information, indicated that it is possible to have "passages which are impeccably cohesive but nevertheless incoherent in that they are not indexical of frames which represent constructs of familiar or possible worlds". In other words, contextual ties are crucial to the achievement of coherence in a text. In addition to that, such ties are usually based on shared knowledge between the writer and the reader.

On their part, de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981, cited in Hoey, 1991:11)) maintain that cohesion "concerns the ways in which the components of the surface text, i.e. the actual words we hear and see, are mutually connected within a sequence". However, they argue that coherence "concerns the ways in which the components of the textual world, i.e. the configuration of concepts and relations which underlie the surface text, are mutually accessible and relevant". In other words, like many other researchers, they also claim that cohesion is related to the features on surface or sentential level whereas coherence refers to the relations and meanings at a deeper level.

Similarly, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000: 125) define coherence as "the quality that makes a text conform to a consistent world view based on one's experience and culture or convention" and they state that coherence is an interactive process involving the writer, the written text and the reader. As far as cohesion is concerned, they maintain that it is achieved through the use of cohesive ties that explicitly link all the propositions in a text together.

Numerous studies have been done on cohesion and coherence to explore the two concepts and the most influential publication on the study of cohesion is the publication of Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English (1976). With the publication of this book, a refined analysis of cohesion was provided. According to these researchers, coherent texts have two characteristics: cohesion and register. They defined cohesion as a semantic concept referring to "relations of meaning that exist within the text and that define it as a text" (Ibid.:4) and added that cohesion is "the continuity that exists between one part of the text and another" (p. Ibid: 299). Register is defined as the coherence with a context; that is, it refers to the variety of language which is appropriate for the situation of the speech event.

Another definition of the term holds that "coherence is a matter of putting the selected material in the right order with the right connectives" (Lauer et al. 1985, cited in Palmer).

These 'right connectives', however, are not only specified but are, very often, not necessary for a text to be coherent. Lauer et al. (1985: 94

Moreover, Halliday and Hasan spoke of the term "texture" for the kind of text property that is commonly referred to as "coherence". They stated that "…there will be certain linguistic features present in that passage which can be identified as contributing to its total unity and giving it texture" (1976:.2). Thus, they claimed that coherence, or texture, is created by the linguistic features, which implies that there must be some linguistic property of the text that contributes to coherence. They stated that there are two types of cohesion that contribute to this coherence, one being grammatical cohesion and the other being lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion is achieved through devices such as reference, substitution, conjunction and ellipses, and lexical cohesion is achieved through such devices as synonyms and collocations.

As long as the study is concerned, the GCD remain basic aspects that majors of English have to display either in writing or reading, particularly at the first year university level. On the contrary, and being more subtle and requiring much lexical acquisition and language mastery, the other type of cohesive devices, i.e. the lexical cohesive devices, we think, might be dealt with in more advanced level (or later on) provided that the students have already assimilated not only the notion of cohesion and its implications in reading and writing, but the power of the reading skill as well.

Having won a solid reputation in the field of systemic functional linguistics, Halliday and Hasan have come to identify five main cohesive devices in English: the grammatical ones and they are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and the lexical cohesion. Before dealing with each type, let's first attempt to define what is meant by cohesive devices.

3. 4 Defining Cohesive Devices

It is mentioned right from the beginning that the phrase-term 'cohesive devices' is the one that the majority of authors and researchers (linguists, applied linguists, grammarians, educators, etc.) attribute to those elements which have the "property of signaling that the interpretation of the passage in question depends on something else"(Halliday & Hasan, op. cit.:13).

The same phrase-term is also attributed other labels such as 'cohesive ties', 'cohesive connectors', 'cohesive links', cohesive markers, etc. Yet, the function and the meaning of these labels remain almost the same. As a matter of fact, and through our review of the literature, all these labels are used interchangeably by most of the researchers and so do I.

In genral, cohesive devices are single words or phrases that basically make the text hang together. In communication, cohesive devices are needed in order to enable the speaker and/ or the listener to understand the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of speech.

In addition, there is no doubt that to be coherent a text may incorporate a minimum of cohesive devices that would link the sentences together. Their presence is not, however, a necessary condition as mentioned before in that a text may be coherent without the inclusion of such ties. With regard to this particular aspect of the cohesive devices and their role within a text or discourse, Salkie (1995: 1) argues that "cohesive devices are only one factor in making a text coherent". He adds that they are just as important in making texts coherent as other factors such as 'the intentions, expectations and background knowledge of the text producer (the speaker or writer) and the text receiver (the hearer or reader)'. In realization, lexical items and grammatical structures tend to determine the way in which cohesion is expressed.

On such grounds, it is admitted that the linking relationships, through which cohesion is achieved, are explicitly expressed in the surface structure of the text. Text cohesion, therefore, is obtained through a variety of lexical and grammatical relationships between items within sentences in the text and they are of two main categories Cavalcanti, (1987). In realization, lexical items and grammatical structures tend to determine the way in which cohesion is expressed. Important to mention, here, that the typology and taxonomy used in our study is that of Halliday and Hasan (1976).

This classification includes grammatical reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions, and lexical cohesion. Although we are concerned only with the grammatical cohesion, we do believe that there is an implied distinction between grammatical and lexical cohesion that should be made.

3. 4 Lexical versus Grammatical Cohesion

Although we are concerned only with the grammatical cohesion, we still do believe that there is an implied distinction between grammatical and lexical cohesion that should be done. There follows some explanation of the two terms as well as their components. Let's first therefore see what lexical cohesion is and how important it is in text and discourse.

3. 4. 1 Lexical Cohesion

By all accounts, Halliday & Hasan (1976) distinguish between two major types of cohesive relation, namely grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion differs from grammatical cohesion in that it "regularly leaps over a number of sentences to pick up an element that has not figured in the intervening text." Such a type of cohesion, the lexical one, includes various types of relationships between two lexical items in different sentences, such as repetition, paraphrase, collocation, etc.

69

On this score, Halliday & Hasan (Ibid.: 279–80) classify reiteration into four types: the same word, a synonym/near-synonym, a superordinate, and a general word. For example, 'a boy' can be replaced in the following sentences with 'the boy' (the same word), 'the lad' (a synonym/near-synonym), 'the child' (a superordinate), and 'the kid' (a general word. Meanwhile, they recognize collocation as an important part of creating cohesion in connected text. Collocation refers to the semantic and structural relation among words, which native speakers can use subconsciously for comprehension or production of a text. They argue the case of collocation as follows:

> The cohesive effect … depends not so much on any systematic relationship as on their tendency to share the same lexical environment, to occur in collocation with one another. In general, any two lexical items having similar patterns of collocation – that is, tending to appear in similar context – will generate a cohesive force if they occur in adjacent sentences.
>
> (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 286)

It is assumed that a 'cohesive force' will produce a 'cohesive tie,' which is the relationship between a cohesive item and the item it presupposed in a text. In other words, collocational links between lexical items create cohesion. In response to Halliday & Hasan (1976), some researchers have discussed lexical cohesion and come to argue that Halliday and Hasan fail to notice that lexical cohesion is "the single most important form of cohesive tie" (Hoey,1991). This researcher holds that lexical repetition, for instance, is more important than any other type of lexical cohesion, especially when forming cohesive ties over large spans of text, because there is less room for ambiguity.

However, cohesion, on the whole, can be said to be "the means by which texts are linguistically connected" (Carter 1998: 80). It has been significantly recognized that lexical cohesion cannot exist without sentences. That is, cohesive words should be discussed not only as the meaning relations which hold between items, but also as the explicit

70

expression of those meaning relations within a text. Ultimately, it is necessary to consider cohesion as "a set of discourse semantic systems" (Martin 2001: 37)

Lexical cohesion is the final type of cohesion dealt with in Hasan and Halliday (1976). Unlike the components of grammatical cohesion, namely reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunctive cohesion, lexical cohesion is not associated with any syntactic classes of elements. It is therefore the most open -ended and least adequately defined of the five kinds. In lexical patterning, successive sentences can be expected to exhibit some relationships through their vocabulary. For example: (i) through the repetition of a word or phrase; (ii) synonymy (words of the same meaning, e.g. commonly & popularly); (iii) antonomy (the relation of semantic contrast, e.g. high, low); hyponymy (the semantic relation between a more general expression and related specific relations, e.g. cigarettes, cigars); collocations (words which tend to occur with one another in certain contexts, e.g. education, classroom, teacher, etc

Since the present study is confined to the study of the GCD, yet, we admit the very significant role this linguistic aspect may play in FL reading and writing in terms of decoding and comprehending a given text, and eventually interacting with it.

3. 4. 2 Grammatical Cohesion

Unlike the lexical cohesion achieved through repetition, synonymy, antonomy, hyponomy, and collocation, grammatical cohesion is realized through the use of what is commonly known as cohesive devices which in their turn link the elements that are structurally unrelated through the dependence of one on the other for its interpretation. Without these cohesive devices, not only the text would lose its 'coherent' aspect, but the semantic system cannot be effectively activated, therefore no cohesion at all.

Let's now introduce what constitutes the cohesive devices and its types. In this context, Hasan and Halliday have sorted out four types of GCD, they are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction which most linguists and experts in the field work in. A major advance in the understanding of how cohesion operates in English text is Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English (1976) of which an outline (R. Williams, 1983: 36) of the system is described below:

```
                                    ┌collocation
                                    │
                                    │          ┌repetition
                                    │          │
                  ┌(1) lexical──────┤          ├synonym
                  │                 └reiteration┤
                  │                            ├superordinate
                  │                            │
                  │                            └general noun
                  │
                  │
                  │                              ┌(personal)─────────┐
                  │                              │                   ├anaphoric
                  │              ┌(2) reference──┼(demonstrative)────┤
                  │              │               │                   └cataphoric
                  │              │               └(comparative)──────┘
cohesive ties ────┤              │
                  │              ├(3) substitution────┐
                  │              │                    ├nominal
                  │              │                    │
                  └grammatical───┤                    ├verbal
                                 │                    │
                                 │                    └clausal
                                 ├(4) ellipsis────────┘
                                 │
                                 │                    ┌additive (the 'and' type)
                                 │                    │
                                 │                    ├adversative (the 'but' type)
                                 └(5) conjunction─────┤
                                                      ├causal (the 'so' type)
                                                      │
                                                      └temporal (the 'then' type)
```
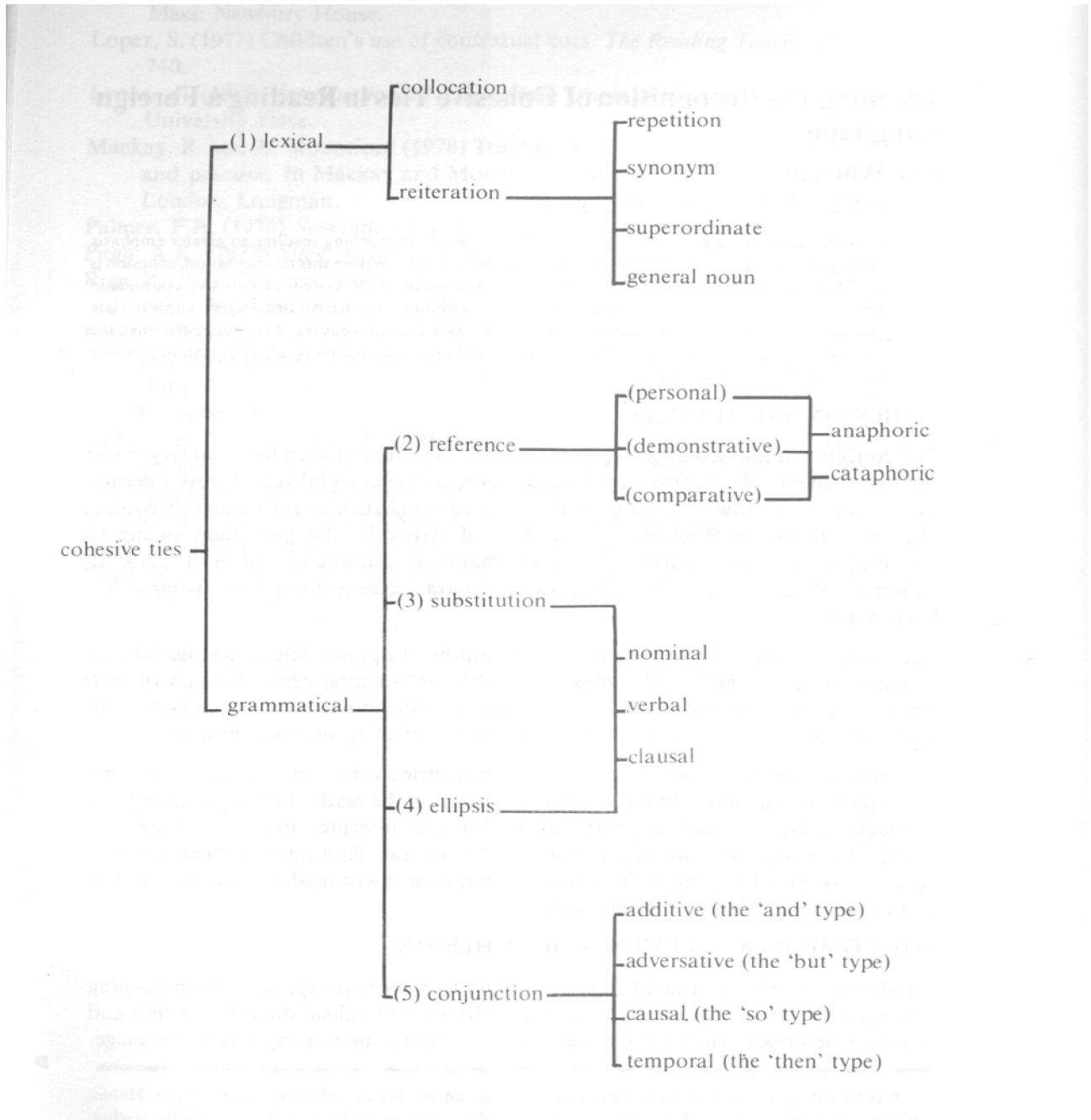
Diagram 1 : The lexical & G C devices according to Halliday & Hassan's Taxonomy

Source. R. Williams in Reading in a Foreign Language, Vol. 1, N°1 March 1983, pp. 35-52

Accordingly, Hasan & Halliday came to distinguish four grammatical devices which constitute the major points in our study as illustrated by the diagram below:

grammatical

(2) reference
- (personal)
- (demonstrative)
- (comparative)
  - anaphoric
  - cataphoric

(3) substitution
- nominal
- verbal
- clausal

(4) ellipsis

(5) conjunction
- additive (the 'and' type)
- adversative (the 'but' type)
- causal (the 'so' type)
- temporal (the 'then' type)
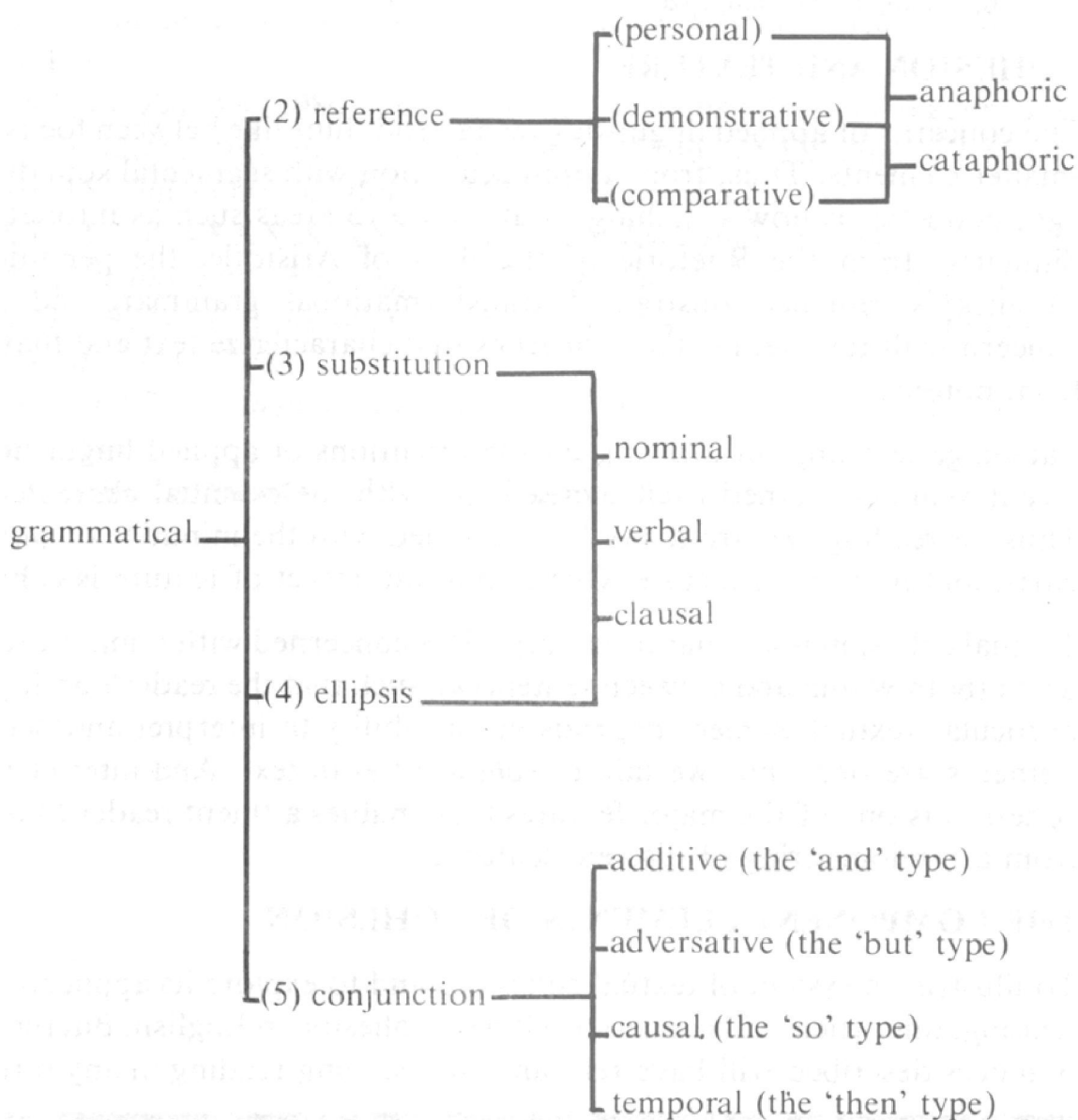
Diagram 2 : The G C Devices according to Halliday & Hassan's Taxonomy

Source. R. Williams in Reading in a Foreign Language, Vol. 1, N°1 March 1983, pp. 35-52

3.4.2.1 Reference

Reference is one of the most frequently used cohesive devices. Perhaps it is impossible to imagine a sentence which does not make reference in some form; and in most cases those references will perform a function of providing discourse cohesion. This grammatical aspect

relates one element of the text to another one for its interpretation; it can be present or not (endophoric and exophoric reference). Reference is rather a semantic relation in that certain items in a given language which cannot be interpreted semantically in their own right make reference to something else within the text for their interpretation. Simply put, reference involves the use of pronouns, articles, or adverbs to refer backward or forward to an item mentioned in the linguistic or situational text. In Hasan & Halliday's (op.cit.:31) words, the term reference means "there are certain items in every language which have the property of reference (…); that is to say, instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right, they make reference to something else for their interpretation. In English these items are personals, demonstratives and comparatives". Among these referential devices that can create cohesion, we can cite the anaphoric and the cataphoric ones which come under the label of endophoric references, and the exophoric referernce as shown in the diagram below:
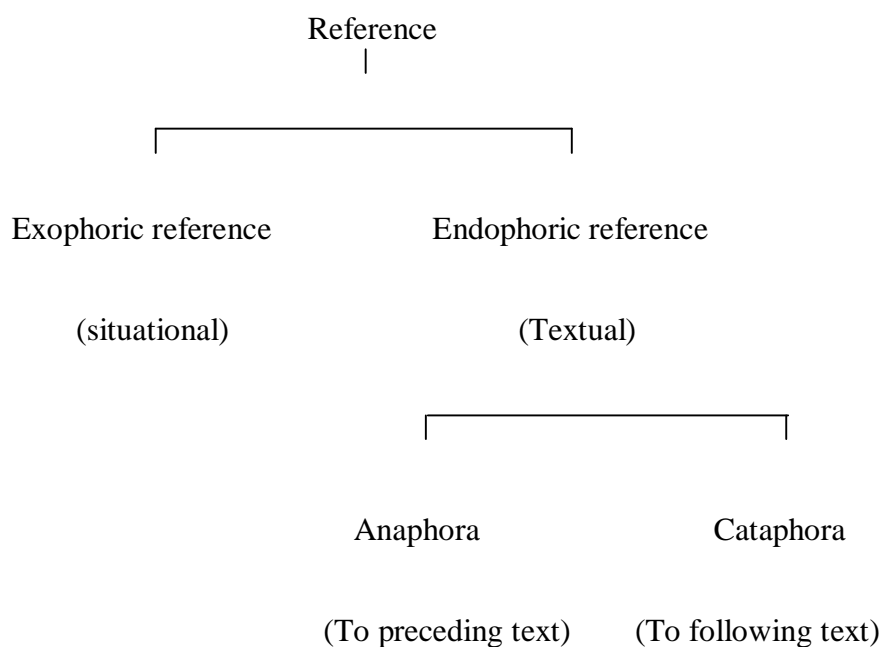
Reference

Exophoric reference   Endophoric reference

(situational)   (Textual)

Anaphora   Cataphora

(To preceding text)   (To following text)

Diagram 3: Types of cohesive reference

3.4.2.1.1 Exophoric Reference

Exophoric reference concerns specific language elements within a text which rely on knowledge of the situation for interpretation. It is not, however as Hasan & Halliday point out , "a synonym for referential meaning." i.e. exophora do not "name anything" Rather, exophora signal "that reference must be made to the context of situation." In short, the crucial function of exophora is reference to a state or item which has not been named, but which must be understood through an understanding of the situation. Exopheric reference deals with reference outside the text. It is very much dependent on the context of the situation.

Example: For he's a jolly good fellow and so say all of us. Here the text is not indicating who he is? But he can be recognized by the situation in which the expression is used.

3. 4.2.1.2 The Endophoric References

It is a general name for reference within the text. This reference can be of two types: (i) Anaphora: reference backward, (ii) Cataphora: reference forward.

a. Anaphoric Reference

An anaphoric reference refers to another element that was introduced earlier in the text/speech. To understand the element referred to by an anaphoric reference one would need to look back in the text/speech. Said otherwise, the referent precedes the cohesive device; it occurs when the writer refers back to something that has been previously identified. This is used for referents which refer backwards in a sentence or text: e.g.1: the apple on the table was rotten. It had been there for days; e.g.2 : Salima wakes up earlier; she is always active. In these two examples while "it" refers to the apple,"she" refers to the person called Salima.

b. Cataphoric Reference

A cataphoric reference refers to another element that is introduced later on in the text/speech. To understand the unit referred to as a cataphoric reference one has to look ahead in the text/speech. It is a reference forward in discourse. Something is introduced in the abstract before it is identified and the referent follows the cohesive device. for example: When she arrived, Salima was surprised to find her flat door open. Here, the pronoun 'she' is a cataphoric reference because it refers to the noun 'Salima' that is introduced later on in the text.

In contrast to anaphoric and cataphoric references, we may mention, functionally speaking the three main types of cohesive devices that are: personal, demonstrative, and comparative.

1.Personal Reference

This type is a reference by means of function into a speech situation through the category of the person in the form of personal pronouns. This category is classified into several pronouns; personal pronoun, possessive pronoun, and possessive determiner. All of these pronouns are used as the head of nominal group. Personal pronouns are I/me, you, he/him, she/her, it, we/us, they/them. Possessive pronouns are mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, and theirs. And possessive determiners are my, your, his, her, its, our, and their. The examples of personal reference as follow: Salima has a beautiful necklace. She bought it from Mecca . Hers is more expensive than he sister's. Pronoun it refers to necklace while she refers to Salima. And hers is possessive pronoun that refers to Salima as the owner.

2. Demonstrative Reference

The second type is essentially a form of verbal pointing. The speaker identifies or points out the referent by locating it on scale of proximity. The most common demonstrative pronouns are: "this", "that"; "these"; "those"; whereas "here", "there", "now", and "then" are considered as demonstrative adverbs . The examples of demonstrative reference may be as follow: Those cars should not park there.

3. Comparative Reference

The third type of reference is divided by Halliday and Hasan into two categories namely general (deictic) and particular (non-deictic). General (deictic) deals with identity, similarity, and difference. Identity is signaled by the reference-terms: same, equal, identical, and identically. Similarity is usually termed by: such, similar, so, similarly, likewise. And difference is signaled by other, different, else differently, otherwise.

Illustration of this kind of comparison is as in the following examples: (i) The similar two cars; (ii) The similar cars; (iii) The others performed similarly. The use of similar in example (i) is an adjective functioning as a deictic to the head of the nominal group cars, whereas, in example (ii) functions as an epithet. And in example (iii), the adverb similarly functions as an adjunct in the clause.

3.4.2.2 Substitution

Substitution is the replacement of one linguistic item by another. When talking about replacement of one item by another, it is meant replacement of one is word/phrase with another word or phrase. .Substitution is simply used to avoid repetition of a particular item. There are three main types of substitution: nominal, verbal, and clausal.

1. Nominal Substitution

The nominal substitution is the replacement of a noun or noun phrase with the substitutes such as one, ones; and in some instances we may find the substitute same as in e.g.1: John bought a new truck, his neighbours, the Smiths, bought the same. E.g.2: These trousers are too small why shouldn't you buy larger ones.

2. Verbal Substitution

The verbal substitution means the replacement of a verb element by a verbal substitute- do, does, or did. E.g. Does he buy sweets now? Yes, he does.

3. Clausal Substitution

The third type is the clausal substitute which may be represented by so or not. A clausal substitution means simply the replacement of a clause by a clausal substitute-so or not. The substitution so is used in the positive form and not is used to the negative form. This kind of substitution does not presuppose a noun or a verb but the entire clause, as in: e.g. They say he will come tonight. If so, the meeting will be held tomorrow; if not, it will be reported for the next week.

3.4.2.3 Ellipsis

Ellipsis, as a cohesive device, is also considered as a kind of substitution where one linguistic item is replaced by nothing/zero; therefore it is an omission of an item. In short, ellipsis occurs when some essential structural element is omitted from a sentence or a clause and can only be recovered referring to an element in the predicting text. As with substitution, there are three types of ellipsis-nominal, verbal and clausal.

1. Nominal Ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis operates on the nominal group, it omits a noun within a noun phrase. In this ellipsis, the sentence whose item is omitted can be understood by understanding the previous sentence e.g.: My sons play an awful lot of sport both (   ) are incredibly energetic.

2. Verbal Ellipsis

This ellipsis is defined as the complete omission of a verb phrase, e.g.: A: Have you been working? B: Yes, I have (   ).

3. Clausal Ellipsis

Clausal ellipsis is the omission of the element's structure in the clause; that is to say this kind of ellipsis occurs within clausal sentence. E.g.: A: Why did you book only three places? Paul's coming with us, isn't he? B: Is he? He didn't tell me (   ).

3.4.2.4 Conjunction

Unlike reference, substitution and ellipsis, conjunctions are not devices for reminding the reader of previously mentioned entities, actions and states of affairs. Conjunctions are rather linking words or as commonly known "discourse markers". They are used to tie ideas or concepts together. They "do not signal information present in the text, They rather signal by means of formal markers the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what has been said before" (Baker, 1991:190).

In the same token, Halliday and Hassan (1976) maintain that conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meanings; they are not primarily for reaching out into the preceding or following text but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in a discourse. The same

authors come to sort out four types of conjunction - temporal, causal, additive, and adversative.

1. Additive Conjunction

Additive conjunction usually joins the presupposing clause to a similar presupposed clause. Generally, this kind of conjunction is divided into three conjunctions; and, or, and nor. And the other similar links are and, also, or else, furthermore, in addition, besides, alternatively, incidentally, by the way, that is, I mean, in other words, for instance, thus, likewise, similarly, in the same way, on the other hand, by contrast. E.g.1: From a marketing point of view, the popular tabloid encourages the reader to read the whole page instead of choosing stories. And isn't that what any publisher wants? E.g.2: Do you want to have tea here? Or should we stay in the living room and have it there?

2. Adversative Conjunction

Adversative conjunction links the presupposing clause that is contrary to the expectation set by the presupposed clause. Adversative conjunctions are very often signaled by the links yet, though, only, but, however, nevertheless, despite this, in fact, actually, as a matter of fact, at the same time, instead, rather, on the contrary, at least, rather, I mean, in any case, in either case, whichever way it is, anyhow, at any rate, however it is. The following example illustrates this type: I'm afraid I'll be home late tonight. However, I won't have to go in until late tomorrow.

3. Temporal Conjunction

The use of temporal conjunction indicates the sequence of time such as: "then + immediately" indicated by at once, thereupon, on which, "then + after an Interval" signaled by

soon, presently, later, after a time, "then + repetition" is indicated by next time, on other occasion, "then + a specific time interval" signaled by next day, five minutes later.

Generally, temporal conjunction is signaled by some links; then, after that, just then, at the same time, previously, before that, finally, at last, first..., then, at first..., in the end, at once, thereupon, soon, after a time, next time, on the occasion, next day, an hour later, meanwhile, until then, at this moment, up to now. E.g. The weather cleared just as the party approached the summit. Until then, they had seen nothing of the panorama around them. Causal: 'you aren't leaving, are you? Because I've got something to tell you'.

4. Causal Conjunction

The causal conjunctions involve the primary reason, result, and purpose relation between sentences. In other words, the causal conjunction expresses the relation of the presupposing clause which results from some other action in the presupposed clause. This kind of conjunction is commonly signaled by the devices so, then, hence, therefore, consequently, because of this, for this reason, on account of this, as a result, in consequence, for this purpose, with this in mind, for, because, it follows, on this basis, arising out of this, to this end, in that case, is such an event, that being so, under the circumstances, otherwise, under other circumstances, in this respect, in this regard, with reference to this, otherwise, in

the other respect, aside from this.

It's worth stating that the most frequently used causal conjunction are; so, thus, hence, therefore, consequently, as a result (of that), because of that, and in consequence (of that). An illustration of this type would be: Salima studied hard for final test preparation last month; therefore she got the best mark.

3.4.3 Functions of the Grammatical Cohesive Devices

GCD are said to have different functions. With regard to this, Renkema (1993) mentions the following functions:

1. Reference

The functions of reference are: (i) to indicate reference pronoun; e.g. Salima has a beautiful necklace. She bought it from Mecca. (ii) to indicate spatial order; e.g. Those cars shouldn't park there; (iii) to indicate the degree or order of the importance of a class and comparison e.g. The similar two girls.

2. Substitution

The function of substitution is to substitute the similar noun, verb, and clause in the sentence. The substitution which is used to substitute a noun is one and ones. And the substitution which is used to substitute verb is do, does, and did. And, the substitution which is used to substitute clause is so.

3. Ellipsis

The function of ellipsis is to omit the similar noun, verb, and clause which have been stated in the preceding sentence.

4. Conjunction

The functions of conjunction are (i) to indicate an additional of a fact or idea; (ii) to indicate a concession in an argument; (iii) to indicate cause and effect relationship; (iv) to indicate contrast; (v) to indicate conclusion or a summary

Conclusion

The chapter went through the essential elements that are found in discourse analysis. The latter is a very large field of which we have mentioned the various definitions as well as the different discourse analysis trends.

Cohesion and coherence have been reviewed as essential elements that discourse analysts went through their various researches and investigation, among them Halliday and Hassan who emerged as pionnering in this field.

We went through an overview of the GCD which constitutes a core feature in our study . This review of the cohesive devices makes us say that these devices and expressions, according to the specialists and experts, help to unify the text and give it not only the necessary cohesion , but also the coherent aspect that texts usually display.

The examples provided earlier for each type of the cohesive ties are simply to illustrate each case; a more or less exhaustive list of the major different types of grammatical cohesive ties and connectors is to be found in appendix 1.

CHAPTER FOUR

Field Work

Introduction

The present section and sub-sections are devoted to the analysis of the experimental work undertaken for this purpose, i.e. to analyze the university first year students' test. A test they underwent within the teaching of the grammar module. Students have been taught for a period of time (about a whole term) the grammatical cohesive devices all along other grammatical and syntactic notions. This has been done with, of course, one precise objective that is how to improve students' reading comprehension through the teaching off the grammatical cohesive devices.

It ought to be noticed that these first year university EFL students' curriculum does not include such a module as reading comprehension. This issue struck at my mind and aroused my curiosity as well as my interest when I noticed, right from the beginning of the academic year (when I had been proposed to teach the module of grammar as a 'vacataire' teacher), that my first year university students show enormous difficulties in spelling or reading even the shortest reading passage, not to mention other deficiencies or inabilities of linguistic aspects such as phonology and pronunciation. I quickly realized that this could be an interesting topic of research, so I immediately decided to investigate this aspect of reading which is so crucial at this level. In addition and to be consistent with the Magistere option (Reading and Writing Convergences) I am undertaking, I did not hesitate to tackle this issue of reading.

The reading comprehension issue has been tackled here since the majority of the linguistic features (grammar, structures, lexis, spelling, meanings, etc.) might be found in a reading comprehension lecture. Simply put, It was possible not to remedy several aspects at the same time while teaching grammar. And while the cohesive devices and transitional words were being taught through some short reading passages, the focus has only been put

on these two aspects namely the reading comprehension in relation to the grammatical cohesive devices.

Our study attempts to explore the impact of one important aspect that EFL students majors face while indulging in a reading text/passage. This aspect might be considered as closely related to comprehension and so many researchers have pursued under diverse angles and perspectives. The aspect raised here is about the grammatical cohesive devices and their importance in enhancing or increasing the students' comprehension. Indeed, it constitutes one core issue in the present dissertation; the second one being reading comprehension.

Again, this topic seemed interesting for it stemmed from the fact that throughout my teaching career (more than 14 years as a secondary school teacher) learners usually display a relative mastery of lexical knowledge but whose reading comprehension skills were low, not to say disastrous. So came the idea to investigate this problem of reading comprehension in relation to the teaching of the grammatical cohesive devices when I came to teach for the first time at the university two groups of English majors as a 'vacataire'. The lexical cohesive devices (the other linguistic category of devices) are not here our concern in the present dissertation since, as previously mentioned, they might be postponed at a more advanced level of study.

As far as the grammatical cohesive devices are concerned, it is worth mentioning the benefit of these items on the two skills: reading and writing skills. This does not mean that when students show a relative mastery in the use of these cohesive devices they would be efficient readers and be eventually so in writing. Rivas (1999), with respect to this aspect, mentions that learners have to master other skills as well; that's why she urges learners to possess the grammatical/syntactic knowledge which remain for her an essential factor in comprehending a text.

We hypothesized therefore that when teaching these cohesive grammatical ties/devices properly within a thorough framework of grammar and syntax, students would find it easy to undertake a reading task and would most probably achieve a higher percentage (than usual) of comprehension.

4.1 The Sample

In this sub-section, a thorough description of the test is provided as well as the sampling students who underwent it. The second part or sub-section will be devoted to the data collection and the administration of the test.

The study was carried out through an experimental design with control (CTR) and experimental (EXP) groups, both randomly formed. While the former involved 38 students, the second group 37. The two groups, who exhibit reading comprehension difficulties and other linguistic problems such as spelling and pronunciation, were first year university major groups in the department of English, university of Oum El Bouaghi, Algeria. The advantage of such groups, we assume, is that the students possess the same educational background which will be required for comprehension. The subjects are also homogeneous in terms of language proficiency.

The participants were already taught in their Secondary school notions such as connectors, transitional words, and conjunctions. A fact which makes them already familiar with a quite good number of the cohesive ties and linking words that they studied in the three-year period of their secondary school and even earlier. These notions might have been taught during the grammar sessions or during the reading and/or the writing ones. Therefore, we are assuming that the participants received almost the same instruction since I, myself dealt with these notions and taught them to the three secondary school forms.

4.2 Description of the Test

The test consists of a reading passage of about 400 words. The passage is under a form a cloze test followed by two subsequent activities. Although the text includes quite a good number of cohesive devices and connectives, we decided to restrict the number to twenty seven (27) ones for convenience and management; and for each gap in the examples given in the sentences students have to choose one out of three. The text has been adapted so as to get a varied sample of connective devices. The students have been presented an informational/expository text since they are much more familiar with such type as the latter helps them much to know more about the passage. . The students were supposed to read the passage and fill in the gaps with one of the three suggested linking words; then they were required to do two more activities that check also comprehension as usually done in such lessons. Although the text bears no precise reference for its author, it is submitted to the learners for the following reasons: (i) it deals with a very contemporary topic that is the issue of overweight people, entitled ' Get Fat by Dieting' ; (ii) it's an magazine article, as stated by the author, chosen for the easiness of its lexis and style, (iii) it includes some 400 words (average length for this level); (iv) it includes the different-but not all, types of cohesive devices and connectors, (v) it's an authentic text, i.e. written by a native speaker in a magazine (yet adapted by the researcher for the requirements of the study) ; (vi) it may most probably arouse students' interest in terms of theme and topic.

4.3 Procedures

What follows will be an attempt to analyze the different data and givens obtained after having submitted the tests to the students. We will proceed first by commenting the results, then analyzing them, and then drawing some pedagogical implications as well as a general conclusion.

4.3.1 Teaching Cohesive Devices

I have been teaching the module of grammar for the whole academic year. The lectures dealing with the cohesive devices have been taught during a whole term including the test session of the study. The teaching of these notions (cohesive ties) required at times an explicit teaching and at others an implicit contextualized frame of the rules. As previously mentioned, the students were, for the majority of them, already familiar with those connective ties. A fact which not only helped me to keep the same pace for the lectures, but encouraged them to do a good number of exercises through short reading passages as well as other types of activities (Cf. Appendix n° 2). These served as pre-testing activities since students were each time asked either to read or find out any connector or link within sentences, or between sentences and paragraphs. It's worth mentioning that these lectures were meant only for the EXP group; the CTR group was assigned the other grammar lessons. They will be taught these notions of cohesive ties during the last term of the academic year so as both groups would have studied the same notions during that academic year.

Let us now see briefly what others found in this research field. Actually, several studies have shown the important role played by grammatical knowledge in the native and nonnative reading process. Among native English speaking learners, Chapman (1979) finds a relationship between reading ability and the ability to complete anaphoric relations in a cloze test, and he concludes that the mastery of such textual features – including cohesive ties is a central factor in fluent reading and reading comprehension.

Mackay (1979) and Cowan (1976) similarly argue that the recognition of conjunctions and other intersentential linguistic devices is crucial to the information-gathering skills of second language readers. Adopting the appropriate reading strategies as well as models may enhance second and / or foreign language readers' comprehension, therefore, educators and

teachers should include classroom instruction on the cohesive devices of English (substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion), and their function across sentences and paragraphs. Such instruction can make students aware of how ideas in a text are unified by these cohesive elements. In the same token, Williams (1983) not only discusses the importance of recognizing cohesive ties in reading in a foreign language, but also suggests teaching materials and methods to bring this about. Specifically, he proposes a system of symbols and textual markings that teach foreign readers how to use cohesive signals in order to increase their reading comprehension and its relationship to reading development.

Considering their importance particularly at the level of reading and writing, a number of researchers and instructors suggest series of exercises and activities that help FL/SL students understand not only the meanings and functions of the cohesive ties, but to facilitate the comprehension of reading passages and produce coherent compositions. In this context, sentence combining and completion exercises are proposed by Zamel (1983: 25-6) as an alternative to the lists of transitions that figure in many textbooks while the reordering of scrambled sentences and the addition of any necessary linkers are proposed when manipulating longer stretches of discourse. On the other hand, the same author urges learners ought to learn that conjunctions texts are not always filled with conjunctions- these are easy to be detected, while other linking devices and connectives (i.e. lexical cohesion, pronoun references, ellipsis, substitution, etc.) might be of equal importance.

All in all, various approaches and methods have been adopted and proposed by instructors so as to enable learners to achieve a relative understanding of a reading passage or write an acceptable coherent piece of writing.

4.3.2 Analysis of the Results

The analysis of the results consists of (i) an overview of what the students of the EXP group achieved, (ii) the scores obtained by both groups, the EXP and the CTR for the recognition of each cohesive device type and its use as well as the activities for comprehension, (iii) comparison and interpretation of the results of the two groups in terms of correctness.

4.3.2.1 Overview of the Experimental group's achievement

Having studied the various grammatical cohesive devices in terms of use, function, and meaning during a whole term, the EXP group was submitted the reading text under the form of a cloze test activity one with the requirements of filling in the gaps with one correct (i.e. a connective) word among three suggested ones. It's worth reminding that we proceeded to the selection of 27 grammatical cohesive devices out of more than 30. We have eliminated any word repeated for the sake of not leading students to ambiguities or confusion. We have also attempted through our adaptation to the text to vary those devices so as to make the test reflect most of the devices studied earlier. Hence, the general findings are as shown in the table below:

Nb of students	Percentage	Nb of Devices solved	Percentage
17	45.94 %	19	70.37 %
09	24.32 %	11	40.74 %
08	21.62 %	25	92.59 %
03	08.10 %	08	29.62 %

Table 1: General achievement of the EXP group in the cloze test

At first sight at the results in Table 1, we admit that 17 out of 37 students could achieve an appreciable result (45.94 %) which represents nearly half of the group with a total of 70.37 % of 19 cohesive devices solved. While a fewer number of students (08) could reach

an excellent score of 25 devices solved with a ratio of 92.59 %. The third group – 09 students realized less than half of the correct devices (11), a fact which gave a percentage of 40.74 %. Three (03) students representing 08.10 % solved just 08 items, and this was the lowest result.

A first comment before carrying on the detailed analysis per type of device as well the comparison of the results between the EXP and the CTR groups is that although less than half of the students (45.94 %) did not reach the average result, it is still assumed that the same number of students could solve a quite good number of cohesive devices regardless their types. This result is to be accounted for lectures provided during the teaching sessions as well as the various exercises dealt with during the pre-test period all along our teaching to the different types of the connectives. We ought to remind here that the teaching sessions have been usually followed by various exercises so as to consolidate each type of devices. Another explanation of these general results would be the fact that certain types of grammatical devices seem much more within the learners' reach than others; this is the case of reference cohesive device, for example, versus conjunctions. As a matter of fact, the students seem much more familiar with such devices (i.e. reference and relative pronouns) since, as previously mentioned, they were already accustomed to such exercises and types.

Moreover, it is also assumed that the absence of ellipsis (as a cohesive device) in the text, though adapted, made it easier for the students to solve most of the suggested devices. Such device, the ellipsis, is not only subtle but delicate to be found in a text. One fourth of the total students realized an excellent score in that they solved 25 items out of 27 ones. The only explanation we may provide is that we usually in such educational situations have heterogeneous classes, a fact which makes us almost always have a very few number of students who arrive at the university with a good potential of the language and show great interest to the lectures and studies in general.

Let us now move to more detailed results before we tackle the comparative analysis between the two experimental groups. The following discussion will be devoted to the analysis of the type of cohesive device per se. The text includes four types of connectives and devices. Of the 27 proposed devices – there are actually much more as mentioned earlier, but we have eliminated all those that were repeated including the definite article 'the' which usually functions as a cataphoric reference. It usually makes a forward reference in the discourse. As this item presents some delicacy in its use, we avoided including it during the lectures about the cohesive devices. We actually apprehended the case in which students would misuse it when used as a simple article or determiner.

4.3.2.2 Results of the EXP group in solving the cloze test

What follows will be an account of what and how the EXP group of students achieved in terms of solution of the different types of cohesive devices that the reading passage included. First, the pie chart 1 gives us the overview about the EXP group in solving the cloze test.
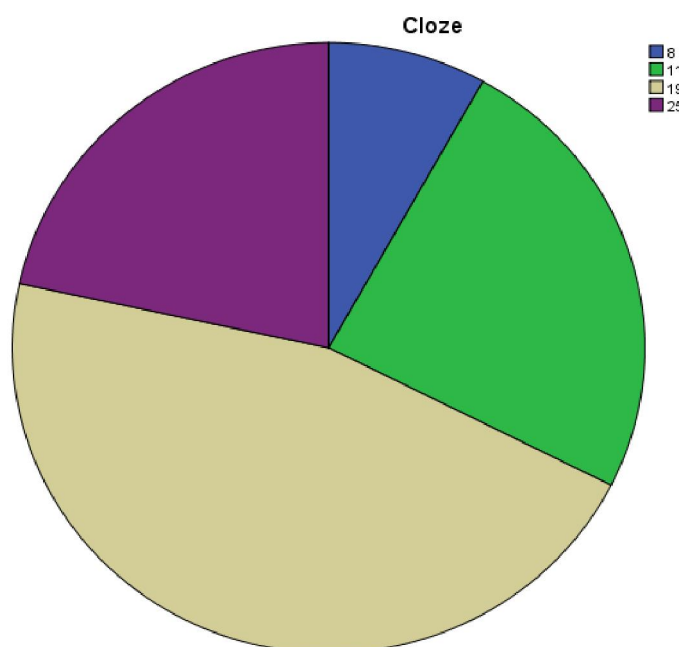
Pie chart 1: Results of the EXP group in solving the cloze test

93

A. Number of students solving the reference type

As earlier mentioned, students succeeded in realizing a good score in solving the reference cohesive device type. Actually, twenty-one out of 37 students (77.77 %) could easily find the 7 cases of the reference type, a percentage of 100%. The obvious reason is that besides the familiarity of such cohesive types, the students find no difficulty to recognize them, therefore to realize them.

Nb of students	Percentage	Nb of Ref. type solved	percentage
21	77.77 %	07	100 %
1O	37.03 %	06	85.71 %
06	22.22 %	05	71.42 %

Table 2: Number of students solving the reference device type

The two other figures (37.03 % & 22.22 %) are also a hint in favour of the students and their relative mastery of these connectives. With this realization, the rate remains still considerable in that 10 students realized 85.71 % while the remaining ones (06) scored 71.42%. The two devices that have been missed by both groups that got 06 and 05 devices solved are the comparative devices 'whereas' and 'while'. This might be explained by the fact that students are not used to comparative forms and their articulators when communicating either orally and/or in written form. In short, the students managed to recognize and use appropriately this kind of cohesive devices for their easiness and manageability. Another factor that explains the big number of students that solved this kind of device would be that of the high frequency these devices may have in texts.

B.Number of students solving the substitution type

Table 3 represents the ratio obtained by the students as well as the number of devices solved.

Nb of students	percentage	Nb of Sub. type solved	percentage
18	66.66 %	02	100 %
17	62.96 %	01	50 %
02	07.40	00	00 %

Table 3: Number of students who solved the substitution device type

Being not numerous - just two, the substitution type of cohesive devices did not hinder half of the number of students (18) to get more than 50 % of these devices with a 100% rate.. While 17 learners could solve just one out of two with (62.96 %) of success which makes 50 %, 02 students did not find any. This might probably as previously mentioned that some students are of a very low proficiency level and show no interest in their studies. Also, the assumption that such devices display a kind of subtlety and require more attention to be recognized and used is so strong in our belief.

C.Number of students solving the conjunction type

The figures below represent both the number of the students who solved the conjunction device type as well as the number of devices which is 15.

Nb of students	percentage	Nb of Conj. type solved	percentage
12	44.44 %	13	86.66 %
09	33.33 %	11	73.33 %
08	29.62 %	09	53.33 %
05	18.51 %	07	46.66 %
03	11.11 %	06	40.00 %

Table 4: Number of students solving the conjunction device type

Less than one third of the students (12) and a percentage of 44.44 % could solve 13 out of 15 conjunctive devices which represent some 86.66 % of the total number. This result

is due most probably to a prior knowledge of most of the conjunctive devices and to these students' appropriate guessing. Shall we say that the others could not achieve a similar result because of the difficulty of the cohesive terms to be guessed? We do not think so since when we analyze the rates for the number of cohesive devices that had been solved; we would assume that the figures (73.33 %; 53.33 %; and 46.66 %) are satisfactory.

Now, considering the number of learners who failed to obtain a higher score in solving the suggested devices, we think that the results are more or less balanced in that there is a difference of two students from one ratio to another; a fact which makes us hold that the teaching of these devices and their assimilation had been relatively achieved in a adequate way. The other factor that may be behind such results is the nature of some connectors such as 'then' and 'again' which are not within all students reach and require much practice so as they be mastered. These two items had been almost missed by the majority of the students as their positions in the sentences require a great sense of acuity. Besides these remarks, we would also admit that during the teaching sessions, some students got often absent; therefore they might have missed some of these devices and did not practice, either in class or at home, much to assimilate them.

This phenomenon of being absent from time to time is to be added to the fact that some students' proficiency level is actually very low. Nowadays, such categories of learners attempt to undertake studies as majors in English though their level is very low; and they show neither an interest for their studies, nor attempt to read for the sake building or consolidating the very knowledge they come at the university with.

 D.Number of students solving the relative pronouns type

Table 5 displays the results that have been achieved by the learners in solving the relative pronoun devices. The latter are just three as we have omitted the repeated ones.

Nb of students	percentage	Nb. of Rel. Pr.type solved	percentage
16	59.25 %	03	100 %
19	70.37 %	02	66.66 %
02	07.40 %	01	33.33 %

Table 5: Number of students solving the Relative Pronoun device type

As far as the relative pronouns are concerned, we have to mention that the latter are not included in most of the check list (Cf. Appendix 1) we have gone through and proposed by several educators and instructors. In a word, they are not cohesive devices proper yet they are considered by the majority of these discourse analysts as linking words which actually connects two clauses and without which, the meaning is either ambiguous or unclear at all.

Table 5 exhibits 03 cases of relative pronouns where 16 students out of 37 got a 100% result, i.e. all of them solved this particular item. On the other hand, while 19 students solved 02 out of the three items, that is to say 70.37% of the students for 66.66 % relative pronouns, only 02 learners solved only 01 item, a ratio of 07.60 % students for 33.33 % for the pronouns. Our comment is that the students' results are on the whole satisfactory for the simple reason of the students' familiarity with such category of connectives and their guessing was most of time right.

4.3.2.3 General Comment on the EXP group's results

Before going further in the analysis between the EXP group and the CTR one in terms of results and achievement, our first general comment on this first part of the experiment was that students on the whole succeeded to solve three fourths (3/4) of the items where each time half or more than a half of the students scored a full 100 % of items solved as shown in Tables 2, 3, & 5. In the fourth case, we would say that considering the achievement realized for the devices solved (86.66 %, Table 5), the result is in its turn successful though the number of

students is inferior to the half. Few students, on the other hand, did not do the effort or attempt at all to solve the suggested items. This might be accounted for either their inability to do so or for their ignorance of some precise items.

We have also to mention the fact that in the case of the conjunction devices type, none of the students could get the total number of devices solved (15) since most of them missed at least two of them, either the temporal device 'then' or the additive device 'again' and sometimes both of them. Because of the subtle connotation of these two devices in this precise use, and because of the non-yet-developed students' style in English usage; students missed these precise linking words.

In conclusion, it is assumed that the teaching of the various grammatical devices might be helpful in, as a first step, reconstituting the text, therefore, decoding it. Comprehension, which is as important as decoding, would normally follow and be a second step to accomplish through the several readings that students did when attempting to solve the cloze.

4.3.2.4 Results of the CTR group in solving the cloze test

As done above with the EXP group, we would attempt to figure out the CTR group's results while trying to solve the suggested items in the cloze test. It has to be reminded that unlike the EXP group, the CTR one has not been taught the grammatical cohesive devices and linking words with the purpose to compare between the two groups' achievements and observe the effect of these connectors on students' reading comprehension.

Nb of students	Percentage	Nb of Devices solved	Percentage
14	36.84 %	13	48.14 %
10	26.31 %	08	29.62 %
09	21.05 %	04	14.81 %
05	07.89 %	02	07.40 %

Table 6: General achievement of the CTR group in the cloze test

At first glance at the results of the CTR group as well as at pie chart 2 (p.960, one would quickly notice the very low results obtained through the cloze test. And the evident answer to give at once is that this precise group did not study as mentioned before the lectures about the grammatical devices. A fact which may be relatively in favour of the students' results. Nonetheless, we may assume that since a good number of these devices are already known to the students, i.e. being part of their prior knowledge (most probably studied in earlier periods), how to explain these low results. The highest score has been realized by a group of students (14) who could solve 13 linking words (48.14 %) out of 27. Though having not studied thoroughly the items they could achieve less than the average. This category of learners might have called at their prior knowledge and their sense of guessing that's why they realized a better score. It also goes without saying that this group did not feel much motivated for the solution of the test since it was the first time that they were asked to undertake such task.

On the other hand, considering the other results in the same group, 14.80 % and 07.40 % which represent respectively 04 and 02 students, one would dare say that these students might have not concentrated on the test or belong to hat category of students whose level and interest for the studies is almost totally absent. Now let us have a look at the details of the test and account for each type of cohesive devices per se.
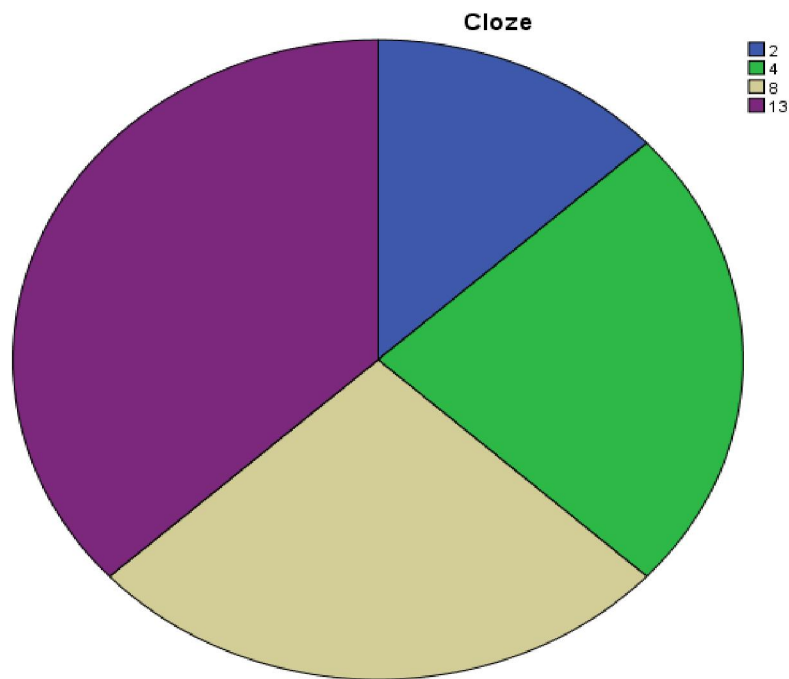
Pie chart 2: Results of the CTR group in solving the cloze test

A.Number of students solving the reference type

The first cohesive type to deal with is the reference type which includes seven (07) items as shown in the table below.

Nb of students	Percentage	Nb of Ref. type solved	percentage
20	52.63 %	06	85.71 %
09	23.68 %	05	71.42 %
07	18.42 %	04	57.14 %
02	05.63 %	02	28.57 %

Table 7: Number of students solving the Reference device type

Among the 38 learners involved in this group, 20 students (52.63 %) succeeded in solving 06 items out of 07 (85.71%); an appreciable result for a group who did not study those cohesive devices, yet we dare say that this particular type of devices seems within their reach

100

since most of them were already familiar or used to deal with such devices, particularly the personal and possessive pronouns. On the whole, the students' realizations are satisfactory except for two students whose results are actually very low (05.63 %). These two students might the case of students whose proficiency and even aptitude levels are very low.

B.Number of students solving the substitution type

The second type of linkers that is substitution has been already shown in table 2.

Nb of students	percentage	Nb of Sub. type solved	percentage
07	18.42 %	02	100 %
23	62.16 %	01	50 %
05	13.15 %	00	00 %
03	07.89 %	00 (undone)	00 %

Table 8: Number of students solving the substitution device type

Although the number of the cohesive devices is just two, only 07 (18.42 %) students out of the total number (38) succeeded to solve them. The realization of the EXP group is much greater than that of the CTR group. Twenty-three (23) students who represent 62.16 %, however, realized a higher score in realizing 01 device. What remains in terms of results concerns a group of 05 (13.15 %) and 03 (07.89 %) learners that make a total of 08 realized zero devices. The former obtained zero device solved because the students attempted but their answers were not correct, whereas the second group of three (03) left the blanks empty. The most probable explanation to this is some students did not feel motivated to do the task whereas some others are simply ignorant of the usage.

C.Number of students solving the conjunction type

The figures below represent both the number of the students who solved the conjunction device type as well as the number of devices solved by these students.

101

Nb of students	percentage	Nb of Conj. type solved	percentage
08	21.05 %	08	53.33 %
10	28.94 %	07	46.66 %
10	26.31%	05	33.33 %
07	18.42 %	04	26.66 %
03	05.26 %	03	20.00 %

Table 9: Number of students solving the conjunction device type

To compare some figures between the two groups, we would say that while in the EXP group 12 out of 37 students solved 13 out 15 devices which represent some 86.66 %; in the CTR group, 08 out of 38 testees could solve half of the devices, i.e. 08 devices that represent 53.33 %. This evidence is to be justified by the fact the EXP group has advantage of having studied the linking words over the CTR one of which only 08 out of 15 words have been solved by less than one-fourth (08) students. Those students from the CTR group who could solve 08 devices (53.33 %) might have called at their sense of guessing and prior knowledge. Such students are almost usually to be found in each FL/SL classroom.

The other results in table 9 which is specifically related to the conjunctive connectors demonstrate clearly the differences in results between the two groups. Thus, the CTR group is far lagging behind the EXP group. The 03 students in both groups who obtained respectively 40.00 % for the EXP group and 20.00 % for the CTR one is a clear illustration of the difference between them in terms of achievement.

D.Number of students solving the relative pronouns type

Table 10 displays the results that have been achieved by the learners in solving the relative pronoun devices. The latter are just three cases out of some eight ones, but as previously mentioned, we have omitted the pronouns that are repeated.

Nb of students	percentage	Nb. of Rel. Pr.type solved	%
13	34.21 %	03	100 %
15	39.47 %	02	66.66 %
10	26.31 %	01	33.33 %

Table 10: Number of students solving the Relative Pronoun device type

Once again, and for the sake of not being redundant, the table shows the clear cut difference obtained by each group either in terms of number of students or in terms of device solving. For instance, while only 02 students in the EXP group solved 01 out of the 03 suggested devices, the number of students in the CTR group is much greater (10). Again, we would say that, as a matter of fact, the result is most probably due to the teaching of those words besides the higher motivation for solving the test on the part of the CTR elements.

4.3.2.5 Results of the EXP group in solving the text comprehension test

Following the cloze activity, and with the purpose of standing on an effective general comprehension of the text on the part of the students, a second activity has been designed as follow up activity. It consists of a number of questions (07) of which some are about the general understanding of the passage (3) and some are about some details or specific information in the text (4) eliciting students to use the skimming and the scanning strategies respectively to solve each type of questions. The questions have been designed with the purpose to circumscribe the whole text meaning as well as some precise ideas. Thus, questions 1, 2, and 3 deal with general comprehension while 4, 5, 6, and 7 with specific/ detailed information.

In their attempt to answer the comprehension questions as well as the True/False activity (Cf. Appendix n° 2) designed as a follow up activity to check the overall

103

understanding of the reading text, the EXP group realized the following results in response to the questions below:

1. What was the purpose of Pr. Cluze's study?

2. Why do people need less food after having started a 'get thin quickly' diet?

3. What approach or advice to dieting the article recommend?

Ques. Nb.	Cor. Ans	%	Inc. Ans.	%	No Ans.	%
Question 1	30	81.1%	06	16.2%	01	2.70%
Question 2	22	59.4%	11	29.7%	04	10.9%
Question 3	18	48.6%	10	27.0%	09	24.4%

Table 11: Number of Sts EXP answering the text comprehension test

So far, the EXP group has realized an appreciable result in answering more than 70 % of the general comprehension of the text which represent some 27 learners as shown in pie chart 3 (p. 105). Very few students, however, missed to answer the questions (02) due, most probably, to the subtlety of the questions or a simple neglect of answering them, while only 08 students got incorrect answers, a fact which represents 21.60%. Let us see now the table below related to the same group and its results in answering the detailed information of the text.
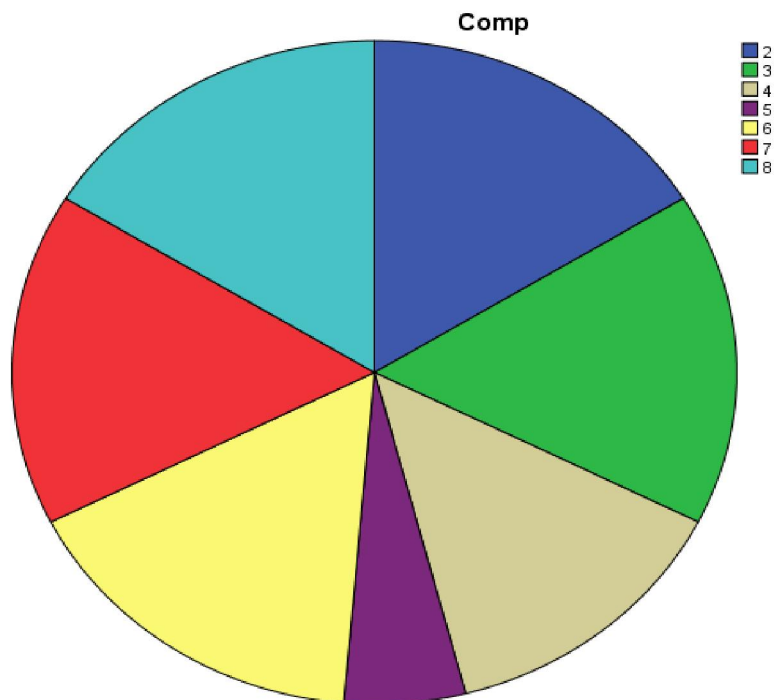
Chart pie 3: EXP Group: text comprehension questions

The second part of the comprehension questions which includes 06 statement-items are designed under a 'True or False' activity where the students are asked to tick each item and decide whether the statement is true or false. This activity, by its nature, is usually welcomed by the students and enables, at the same time, the designer to assess some details of the reading passage. The results are shown in Table 12 and pie chart 4 below:

Statements	Cor.Ans	%
a.Pr. Cluze is a researcher working in Arizona Statewide university	18	48.64%
b.The dieting program lasted for more than six months	23	62.16%
c. The 500 participants were all considered as being overweight	20	54.05
d. Half of those who were in their normal limits in the beginning gained weight	16	43.24%
e. When losing muscle power, physical activity will be difficult for dieters	19	51.35%
f. Developing countries witness an increase in overweight people	20	54.05%

Table 12: Number of EXP Sts answering the comprehension test: T/F activity

Of the six statement-items proposed, the EXP group succeeded in answering four 04 of them with a more than half percentage for each item (b= 23 students out of 37 with 62.16%; c= 20 students with 54.05%; e= 19 students with 51.35%; f= 20 students with 54.05%). The two remaining ones, we think, are missed because of the tricky aspect the items involved, though including no ambiguity at all. It goes without saying that we have mentioned in this precise activity only the students who got correct responses; what remains would be considered as incorrect.

So, on the whole we would admit, making an anticipatory conclusion that learners might have, with this second activity, reached a considerable level of comprehension with regard to the results they realized in both activities, i.e. the cloze test activity and the text comprehension one.

4.3.2.6 Results of the CTR group in answering the text comprehension test

What would be the results for the CTR group in doing activity two, then? Let's consider the givens as shown below (Table 12 and Pie chart 4), bearing in mind that these questions are the same as the ones asked to the EXP group; they are supposed to assess general comprehension.

Ques. Nb.	Cor. Ans	%	Inc. Ans.	%	No Ans.	%
Question 1	14	36.8%	20	52.69%	04	10.6%
Question 2	12	31.6%	17	44.7%	09	23.7%
Question 3	12	31.6%	15	39.5%	11	28.9%

Table 13: Number of Sts CTR answering the text comprehension test
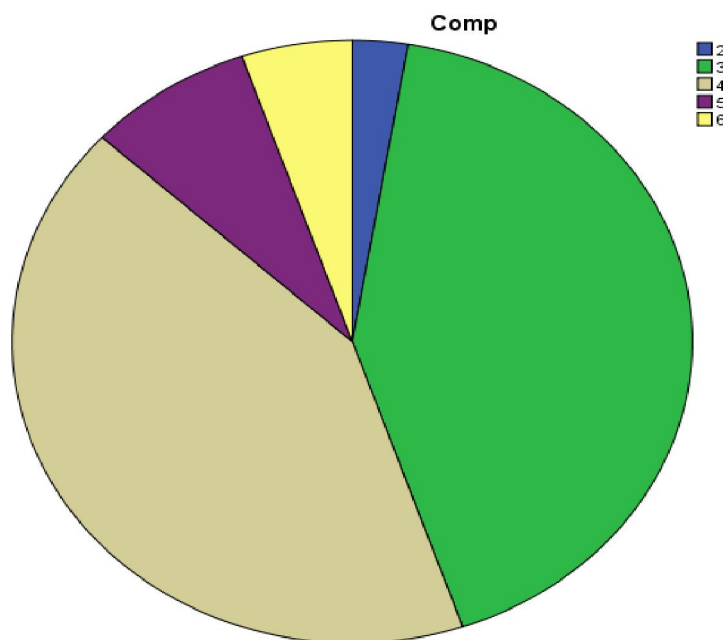
Pie chart 4: CTR Group: text comprehension questions

Comparatively to the EXP group's results, those of the CTR group are less satisfactory on the whole. For the three (03) questions, only 19 students could answer them correctly whereas in the EXP group 27 ones succeeded to answer correctly the questions. The number of students who did not answer the questions (09) and those who provided incorrect answers (10) are additional data to assert the less successful results of the CTR group. To explain such givens, we would say that this group of learners did not only get the chance to study the lectures about the grammatical cohesive devices, but did not also show interest and motivation. In addition to that, the formulation of questions 2 and 3 requires a greater concentration and understanding on the part of students to be answered.

The results, on the other hand, of the 'true and false' activity will be discussed according to table 14 as follows:

Statements	Cor. Ans	%
a.Pr. Cluze is a researcher working in Arizona Statewide university	14	36.84%
b. The dieting program lasted for more than six months	19	50.00%
c. The 500 participants were all considered as being overweight	21	55.26%
d. Half of those who were in their normal limits in the beginning gained weight	13	34.21
e. When losing muscle power, physical activity will be difficult for dieters	18	47.36%
f. Developing countries witness an increase in overweight people	19	50.00%

Table 14: Number of CTR students answering text comprehension: T/F activity

The students have through this activity answered correctly 03 out of 06 statement-items; a good performance indeed compared to the previous ones. To account for such performance, we would recognize that the learners could obtain the average (50.00 %) for items 'b' and 'f' and more than 50.00% for item 'c'; these, we assume, are within their reach in terms of formulation, and students in this case could easily guess the answer through the key words used in the statements.

Summary of the findings

Our first comment with regard to the two groups' results is that the EXP group succeeded in solving most of GCD and linking words. Students of the CTR group failed, however, in 85 % to solve the test-items. The first evident explanation for this is due, to the best of my knowledge, to the fact that the EXP group has been taught during a whole period almost all those grammatical words that connect sentences and paragraphs whereas the other group has not. This seems the very simple and direct evidence which implies the fact that in succeeding to solve the maximum of the devices (i.e. by providing the appropriate linking words to join sentences) and answering the comprehension questions as well as the True/False items), the EXP group has reached the decoding or reading-word phase, also called the literal comprehension. This phase, it is held, is hypothesized to be a prerequisite for general reading comprehension because when students are able to decode words effortlessly and automatically

(i.e., without devoting significant cognitive resources to identifying letter-sound correspondences), they have freed up additional cognitive resources that can be applied to understanding the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences within text (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Perfetti, 1985; Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2005; cited in Basaraba et al. 2012, p.3).

The other factors that might be taken into consideration, in a way or another, to account for such results are (i) the familiarity of both groups with the most common devices-type such as the personal and the relative pronouns types, particularly the CTR group whose members found it easier to solve the maximum test-items, (ii) the nature of the cloze as a test (gaps to be filled) contributed to some extent to the solving of the test-items where students are required to fill in the gaps with one of the three suggested test-items, (iii) students were also familiar with the text structure in that such text called informational texts help greatly in supporting reading comprehension and "are designed to communicate information to the reader so that he or she might learn something" (Gersten Fuchs,Williams, & Baker, 2001, Cited in Basaraba et al. Ibid.), (iv) a greater motivation and interest of the EXP group is behind the positive results they obtained since it has been taught those discourse markers whereas the CTR group has not.

A last comment would be made on the correlation between the two activities, i.e. the cloze test and the comprehension questions plus the T/F activity, (Cf. figures 1 & 2 below)

Figure 1: diagram showing the correlation of the two activities for the EXP group

Simply put, any test taker who has well done in test one (cloze test) has almost well done in test 2 (text comprehension test), therefore the obvious correlation between the cloze (activity 1) and the comprehension questions and the T/F (activity two). Taken together, the two activities, accordingly, make it very clear that their correlation is positive in terms of text comprehension, i.e. students of this group has reached a considerable level of comprehension since they solved successfully, and to a great extent, both activities.

While figure 2 below shows in its turn the correlation between the two activities, (the cloze test and the comprehension questions and the T/F one) of the CTR group where on the whole, students fail in both activities. Subsequently, comprehension, we admit, has not been achieved satisfactorily.
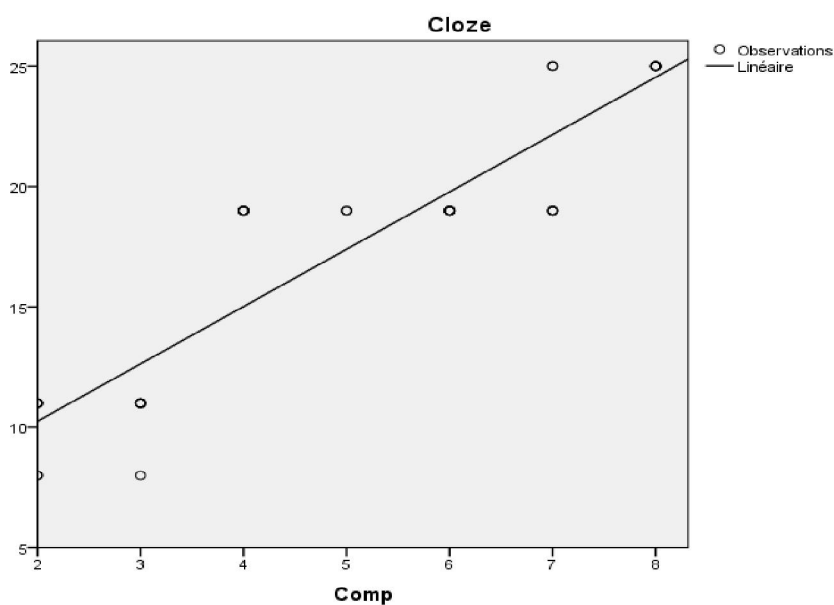

Figure 2: Diagram showing the correlation of the two activities for the CTR group.

CHAPTER FIVE

Pedagogical Implications

Introduction

     Considering the results of the analysis in chapter four, one may venture to say that the students, at least those of the EXP group, have succeeded to achieve a relative effective comprehension of the text. We are cautions to use the term 'relatively' for we continue to think that a full effective comprehension is not dependent only on the teaching of the various grammatical cohesive devices. There may surely be other factors such as pronunciation and spellling which also contribute to make comprehension actually effective. The present chapter discusses the results obtained as opposed to other research findings, presents the limitations and the pedagogical implications of the study on the whole, and make suggestions for future research.

5.1 Research Findings in the Field of Cohesive Devices and Reading Comprehension

     A quite good number of studies have explored the effect of discourse markers on reading comprehension. By discourse markers, it is meant any word or phrase either grammatical or semantic that joins two propositions or sentences or paragraphs where the usual outcome is to obtain a coherent piece of writing/reading. In our particular case, we would rather use the terms discourse markers making reference to the grammatical cohesive devices as well as the various connectors which fulfill such function either at the intersentential or paragraph levels. In interactive approaches to reading, the manner in which the readers use the linguistic features to work out a meaning from the text is considered very important. Also, much emphasis has been placed on the manner in which readers combine the sentences and propositions to comprehend a text.

Accordingly, cohesion has gained a great deal of interest in the field of reading. Research findings suggest that the presence of cohesive devices facilitates text comprehension by decreasing reading time and improving content recall. Haberlandt (1982, cited in Ying, 2006) found that target sentences preceded by a connective resulted in faster reading times than unconnected sentences. Ying (Ibid.:52) suggests that "while the absence of discourse connectors does not affect a sentence grammatically, it does omit a powerful clue about the speaker's perception of the relationship between prior and subsequent discourse". Therefore, these word linkers and their presence in a text are shown to enhance readers' comprehension of texts and their provision in reading passages will facilitate FL/SL learners' reading comprehension.

Many studies investigating the effect of the linking connectors on reading comprehension have examined the effect of their presence or absence on the subjects' comprehension of the texts they read through manipulating some original texts by adding or omitting some discourse connectors and comparing the subjects' reading comprehension of the original and the manipulated texts. In most of these studies, subjects had higher reading comprehension scores on the tests which employed passages with more connectors than the tests involving texts with fewer of them.

Discourse markers are widely studied in second and foreign language teaching and their effect has largely been explored on the four language skills. Researchers have investigated the effect of connective ties on the learners' comprehension of written and spoken texts. Moradan (1995), therefore, suggested that explicit instruction of connectors and linking words should be involved in language courses to help learners take advantage of their knowledge of them in reading comprehension and other language uses.

112

Arapoff (1968), from a word count by Ernest Horn, estimated that roughly 50 of the 1000 most commonly used words in written English were sentence connectors. A fact which may contribute greatly to the access of the different meanings and connotations that may be found in a reading text for example. This count involved only single words and did not include common idiomatic discourse markers, such as of course, in addition, and as a matter of fact which may well be as highly frequent as single word discourse markers, like otherwise, thus, or therefore. She suggests that "just the fact that such words occur frequently makes them worth studying".

Investigating the effect of explicit instruction of discourse markers on the reading comprehension of FL/SL learners, Innajih (2007) urges instructors to teach the various types of cohesive devices explicitly and their relation to reading comprehension. Also, in a cloze study, Stoodt (1972, cited in Innajih, 2007), found a significant relationship between reading comprehension and the comprehension of discourse markers.

5.2 Implications

The findings of the present study have implications for learners, teachers, and teacher educators in the realm of FL and SL teaching in particular and education in general. It helps teachers in accomplishing their challenging task of teaching English in various English FL contexts where learners have less exposure to language compared to ESL contexts. Teachers can help learners use different strategies and methods to assimilate what they are taught and are required to do.

It could be opportunely said that the EXP group through our study has benefited considerably from explicit instruction of the grammatical cohesive devices as well as the various exercises and activities done for that purpose. The participants showed an appreciable control of the cohesive devices due, certainly to the courses they had and their determination

to solve and answer the questions unlike the elements of the CTR who failed on the whole. The implicit but direct consequence of such situation is the students' improvement in achieving a better comprehension of the text. A good number of students (Cf. Statistics and diagrams in Appendix 2) managed to solve most of the test items. Thus, discourse linkers have an essential role in establishing cohesion and coherence in a text; they should therefore hold a central place in language courses, though they are not decisive or determinant in reading a passage.

What the results propose is that for achieving a relatively effective reading comprehension, an appropriate command of English cohesive devices is required. The implication of the study for language teaching would be that instructors should pay more attention to discourse markers while designing reading comprehension courses for they enhance significantly their reading comprehension skills. Besides and according to the results of the study it is suggested that for a better global comprehension of reading texts, FL/SL learners need not only to master those grammatical devices but recognize their meanings and functions as well. In short, the requirement here consists of having a good command of most of the discourse cohesive devices. One suggestion to accomplish that is to undertake explicit instruction of the grammatical cohesive devices, their meanings and functions in different contexts.

The high correlation between the solving of the cloze test and the comprehension activity (i.e. questions and True/False) (Cf. Appendix 2) is an illustration of the successful achievement of the EXP group and the relative failure of the CTR one. The recognition of the connective ties items and their placement in the right gap (Cf. The cloze test) could be a good indicator of the test takers' ability to comprehend the relationship between the propositions (i.e. sentences) and paragraphs of the reading text, and therefore their overall reading comprehension. The suggestion is that these linking words can be better exploited in reading

comprehension courses. In addition, discourse cloze tests are good choices to be included during the reading comprehension sessions. These cloze tests and other similar activities measure mainly the students' overall comprehension of the text and the relationship between the parts of the text.

Based upon this fact, the syllabus designer should believe that including these elements, i.e. the cohesive ties and/or connectors in textbooks and materials has become a necessity. Activities such as the cloze, inference and reference questions, and multiple choice tests should be very often designed so as to help the learners overcome their apprehension of not understanding the text.

Another implication we draw from the study is that teachers ought very often to explain thoroughly certain cohesive devices for their delicacy and subtlety (substitution reference, some adversative conjunctives, etc.).

As it is evident that the learners' reading comprehension improved after a period of teaching of the cohesive devices, it is suggested that the teaching and exercising of such elements (grammatical connectives, etc.) be intensified in-class and out-of-class besides the assignment of some reading passages to motivate students for extensive reading.

However, like all studies, this research had limitations and could not include all the issues related to the topic. Therefore, there is need for further studies to shed more light on the issues. First, the study has not the pretention to hold that the solely teaching of the grammatical cohesive devices solves the FL/SL learners' reading problems and intricacies. One has to mention that within the same context of cohesion, there exists another important category of cohesive device that is the lexical one. As explained earlier in chapter three, this category is much more delicate and complex to be dealt with by first year students; and it

would be better to postpone its teaching at a more advanced level. Hence the study would gain much objectivity if this aspect had been dealt with too.

Second, the adaptation of the text to the students' level of proficiency is another constraint to the study. As we have not found a reading text that responds wholly to the requirements of the study, mainly the presence of the various grammatical cohesive devices, so we felt obliged to adapt it. Though adapted, the text does not, for example, include any instance of ellipsis. A fact which made the text somehow limited in that it does not cover all the GCD.

Third, interested researchers can study the relation between recognition of connective ties and reading comprehension on other levels of language ability. It is hoped that more research on this topic will solve more problems in the field of foreign and second language reading.

Finally, we make the suggestion that instructors and syllabus designers ought to integrate reading passages with similar activities so as to enable students not only to comprehend the text but also be familiar with the maximum of cohesive ties since the latter are of utmost importance in decoding and comprehending the reading passages. It is noted that most EFL learners (as it was the case for the CTR group in our study) generally lack the knowledge and awareness of how and when cohesive devices should be used, which may suggest that there is a gap between the teaching of reading comprehension and the teaching of grammar where such elements of cohesion may be found. In other words there is much less integration between these two courses. It is expected that, with the integration of reading and grammar teaching, participants would become aware of and more sensitive to the characteristic features of a good English reading passage.

General Conclusion

This research was conducted with the assumption that the teaching of the various grammatical cohesive devices might cause a relative improvement to first year university EFL learners' reading comprehension. As very little was done and known in this context, our study was based on empirical research where the first period consisted of teaching exclusively the grammatical cohesive devices and a series of activities and exercises and home works done in class or at home to consolidate the teaching sessions. The second phase consisted of a test made up of a cloze test comprehension to a suggested adapted reading passage as well as two other activities (True/ False and comprehension questions) which have been designed to check effective comprehension and proved to correlate. It's worth mentioning that while the experimental group (EXP) has been taught the essential of the grammatical cohesive devices (GCD), the control group (CTR) has not.

As a matter of fact, the study confirms the hypothesis which states that if the grammatical cohesive devices are taught thoroughly to first year university students, their reading comprehension skill would relatively improve.

Important also to mention, that the dissertation has dealt with the major theoretical aspects that support in a way or another issues raised as well as the experiment. The dissertation has tackled aspects such as the general frame of ELT in Algeria where students are taught almost the major grammatical elements that make up the English grammar syllabus in the first year. Another important aspect which is concerned directly with the grammatical cohesive devices- the central feature of our study, is discourse analysis. Aspects such as cohesion and coherence and their close relation with reading comprehension have been also dealt with so as to demonstrate the importance of those connectives and their role to achieve comprehension. There followed a detailed account of the major types of GCD that may be

found in a reading passage. Being an essential element in the study, reading in general and reading comprehension in particular have been also detailed all along chapter three sorting out the process of reading, the types and models of reading, the importance of both vocabulary and the background knowledge, and schemata.

The field work brought a number of results which went hand in hand with our assumption in that the EXP group showed a higher mean of comprehension (Cf. Appendix 2) whereas the CTR got a much lower one. The direct explanation of the expected results is that besides the teaching of the grammatical connective ties to the EXP group, which went on through a whole term, the latter answered almost all items, therefore obtained higher scores than the CTR group. This might also be accounted for the fact that the EXP group showed a very obvious readiness to solve the questions but also got high scores in the easiest parts of the test (reference connectives and relative pronouns). On the contrary, the CTR group failed in solving a good number of items, a fact which has been demonstrated through the cloze test as well as the comprehension and true/false questions. The explanation to this fact is due, most probably, to the fact that this group, i.e. the CTR group, has not only been taught the GCD, but also their ignorance to most of these elements.

These results have led to some pedagogical implication where it is believed that a thorough adequate teaching of these connective ties would explain the good results of the EXP group. Subsequently, teachers would be urged to do so to enable heir students to overcome the various 'hurdles' of the reading comprehension. This, of course, is not sufficient in the sense that a text includes a variety of linguistic features and teachers as well as their students have to do with. Therefore, teaching grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling are other essential features that may render a reading passage easy and accessible for the students.

References

Al Mutawa, N. and Kailani, T. (1989). Methods of Teaching English to Arab Students. UK, Longman Group.

Alderson, J.C. (2000). Assessing Reading. Cambridge: CUP.

Alptekin, C. and Alptekin, M. (1984)."The Question of Culture: EFL in Non-Speaking Countries" ELT Journal, 38 (1), pp. 14-20.

Anderson, G.S. (1977). A Whole Language Approach to Reading. Lanham, MD: University Press of America

Arapoff, N. (1968). "The semantic role of sentence connectors in extra-sentence logical relationship." TESOL Quarterly, Vol.2, (4). pp. 16-25

Baker, C.D. and Luke, A. (eds.) (1991). Towards a critical sociology of reading pedagogy. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Basaraba D. and Tindal, G. (2012). "Examining the Structure of Reading Comprehension: do Literal, Inferential, and Evaluative Comprehension Truly Exist?" Springer: Science and Business Media B.V.pp.2-19.

Bensaou, H. (1988). "Reflections on the Teaching of English Literature." In Revue des Langues et Littératures., Algiers: O.P.U, (3), pp. 11-17.

Brown, D. (1989). Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall Regents.

Brown, G. and Yule, G. (1983). Discourse Analysis. Cambridge: CUP.

Cain, K. (2009). "Making Sense of a Text: Skills That Support Text Comprehension and Its Development,Perspectives on Language and Literacy." The International Dyslexia Association. pp.12-27.

Carrel, P. L. and J. C. Eisterhold (1983). "Schema Theory and ESL reading redagogy." TESOL Quarterly, 17, pp. 553-573.

Carrell, P.L. (1982). "Cohesion is Not Coherence". TESOL Quarterly, 16 (4), pp. 479-488.

Carter, R.A. and McCarthy, M.J. (1988). Vocabulary and Language Teaching. London, Longman.

Carter, R.A. (1998). Vocabulary: Applied Linguistic Perspectives. London, Routledge.

Cavalcanti, C.M. (1987). "Investigating foreign language reading performance through pause protocols." In Faerch, C, and Kasper, G. (1987) Introspection in Second Language Research. Multilingual Matters. LTD. Clevedon: Philadelphia. pp.54-71.

Celce-Murcia, M. Olshtain, E. (2000). Discourse and Context in Language Teaching. Cambridge: CUP.

Celce-Murcia,M. (1991). Language Teaching Approaches: An Overview. New York: Newbury House.

Chapman,L.J. (1979). "Confirming children's uses of cohesive ties in text pronouns." The Reading Teacher, 33, (3), pp.317-322.

Chastain, K. (1991). Developing Second Language Skills: Theory to Practice.(2nd ed).Boston : Charles. H, Heinle and Kand Mc Nally College Publishing Company.

Cherchalli, S. (1986) Learners' Reactions to their Textbook with Special reference to the Relation between Differential Perception and Differential Achievement: A Case Study of Algerian Secondary School Learners. Unpublished PhD Thesis, 1986. University of Algiers.

Chomsky, N. (1965). Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Christophersen, P. (1973). Second-Language Learning, Myth and Reality. London, Penguin Education.

Clymer, T. (1968). "What is Reading ? Some Current Concepts." In H. M. Robinson (Ed.) Innovation and chance in reading instruction: Sixty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society of the Study of Education, pp.48-66. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Coady, J. (1979). "A psycholinguistic model of ESL reader". In R. Mackay, B. Barkman and R. Jordan (Eds.), Reading in a Second Language: Hypotheses, organization and practice. (pp. 5-12). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Connor, U. and Johns, A.M. (1990). Coherence in writing: Research and pedagogical perspectives. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Cook, G. (1990). Discourse. New York: Oxford: OUP.

(------------) (1994). Discourse and Literature: the Interplay of Form and Mind. Oxford, OUP.

Cook, V. (1991). Second Language Learning and Language Teaching. Edwward Arnold/Hodder Headline Group: Melbourne.

Cowan, J. R. (1976). "Reading, perceptual strategies and contrastive analysis." Language Learning, 26, pp.95-109.

Crane,P.A. (2000). "Texture in Text: A Discourse Analysis of a News Article Using Halliday and Hasan's". Retrieved: 20/1/20 http://library.nakanishi.ac.jp/kiyou/gaidai.pdf

Crystal, D. (1992). Introducing Linguistics. London: Penguin English.

Brassell, D. and Rasinski,T. (2008) "Comprehension That Works, Taking Students Beyond Ordinary Understanding to Deep Comprehension." Shell Education, 5301 Oceanus Drive Huntington Beach, CA.

Dakowska, M. (2001). Psycholingwistyczne podstawy dydaktyki j zyków obcych. Warszawa: PWN. Translation: Psycholinguistics: A basis for Foreign Languages. Warsaw:PWN.

Davies, F. (1995). Introducing Reading. Ed. R. Carter & D. Nunan. London: Penguin English Series.

Ellis, G. (1996). "How Culturally Appropriate is the Communicative Approach" ELT Journal, 50 (3), pp. 231-218.

Eskey, D. (1988). "Holding in at the bottom: an interactive approach to the language problems of second language learners." In carrell, P.L., Devine and D.E. Eskey (Eds.), Interactive Approaches to Second-language Reading. (pp.151-1172). Cambridge: CUP.

Grellet, F. (1981). Developing Reading Skills. A Practical Guide to Reading Comprehension Exercises.UK:CUP.

Goodman, Kenneth S. (1967). "Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game." Journal of the Reading Specialist 6, 126-135.

Gough, P.B. (1972). "One second of reading." In James F. Kavanagh and Ignatius G. Mattingly (eds.), Language by ear and by eye (pp.331-358). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Grabe, W. (1988). "Reassessing the Term 'Interactive'." In P.L. Carrell, J. Devine and D.E. Eskey (Eds.), Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading. Cambridge: CUP, (1990 ed.)

Grabe, W. and Kaplan, R.B. (1996). The Theory and Practice of Writing: An Applied Linguistic Perspective. London:Longman.

Grabe, W. and Stoller, F.L. (2002). Teaching and Researching Reading. Pearson Education Limited. England.

Guangling, L. (2006). "Cloze Tests and Reading Strategies in English Language Teaching in China". Master Thesis, University of the Western Cape.

Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1976). Cohesion in English. London: Longman.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1985). Introduction to Functional Grammar. London: Edward Arnold

Harmer, J. (2001). The Practice of English Language Teaching. England : Longman.

Hasman, M.A. (2000). "The Role of English in the 21st Century" English Teaching Forum, 38 (1), pp. 2-5.

Hawkins, E. (1981). Modern Languages in the Curriculum. Cambridge: CUP.

Hayane, O. (1989). L'enseignement de la Langue Anglaise en Algérie depuis 1962. Alger: OPU.

Hoey, M. (1991). Patterns of Lexis in Text. Oxford: OUP.

Hudson, T. (2007). Teaching Second Language Reading. New York: Oxford: OUP

Innajih, A. (2007). "The effect of conjunctive types on the English language reading comprehension of Libyan university students." [Online] Available: www.ecls.ac.uk/publish/text/the Effect of Conjunctive/

Jin,W. (1998). "Cohesion and the Academic Writing of Chinese ESL Students at the Graduate Level". Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Illinois University, Illionis, USA

Kendeou, P. and Van Den Broek, P. (2007). "Interactions between prior knowledge and text structure during comprehension of scientific texts". Memory and Cognition, 35, 1567–1577.

Kendeou, P., Van Den Broek, P., White, M., & Lynch, J. (2007). "Comprehension in preschool and early elementary children: Skill development and strategy interventions." In D. McNamara (Ed.), Reading comprehension strategies (pp. 27-45). New York: L Erlbaum.

Khelloufi, S.A. (1983). A Study of the Teaching of English with Special Reference to Existing Policies, Teaching Methods and Students' Attitudes. Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Algiers, 1983.

Koda, K. (2006). Insights into Second Language Reading: A Cross-Linguistic Approach. New York: CUP.

Kuo,C.H. (1995) "Cohesion and Coherence in Academic Writing: From Lexical Choice To Organization" RELC Journal, 26/47. pp. 47-62

Louwerse, M.M. and Graesser, A.C. (2005). Coherence in discourse. In Strazny, P. (ed.), Encyclopedia of Linguistics. pp. 216-218, Chicago, Fitzroy Dearborn.

Laberge, D. and Samuels, S.J. (1974). "Towards a theory of automatic information". Reading in a Second Language, pp.79-90, Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

Makey, Sandra L. (1985). Teaching Grammar. Oxford; Pergamon Institute of English.

Martin, J.R. (2001). "Cohesion and Texture". In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen and H.E. Hamilton (Eds.), The Handbook of Discourse Analysis., Oxford, Blackwell. pp.35-53.

McCarthy, M. J. (1991). Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers. Cambridge: CUP.

McDonough J. and Shaw, C. (1993). "Materials and Methods in ELT." Oxford: Blackwell.

Mei-yun, Y. (1993). "Cohesion and the Teaching of EFL Reading". English Teaching Forum, 31 (2), pp.12-21.

Ministry of Education (1995). Syllabuses for English. Algiers: ONPS.

Moradan, A. (1995). Significance of conjunctions as a cohesive device in teaching writing. Unpublished MA thesis. Allameh Tabatabai University.

Nation, K. (2005). "Children's Reading Comprehension Difficulties." In M.J. Snowling and C. Hume (Eds.)The Science of Reading. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Nation, K. and Norbury, C.F. (2005). "Why reading comprehension fails: insights from developmental disorders." Topics in Language Disorders, 25, pp.21-32.

Nutall, C. (1987). Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language. Londres: Heinemann. (2nd ed.)

 Palmer, J. (1999). "Coherence and cohesion in the language classroom: the use of lexical reiteration and pronominalisation." RELC Journal, 30 (61), pp.61-85.

Pearson, P.D. (2010). "Reading First: Hard to live with—or without." Journal of Literacy Research, 42(1), pp.100-108.

Pérez-Llantada, C. (2007). "New Trends in Grammar Teaching: Issues and Applications". Atlantis, Vol 20 (1), pp. 157-163.

Quirk, R., and Sidney, G. (1985). A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language. London: Longman

Rababah, G. (2003). "Communication Problems facing Arab Learners of English". Journal of Language and Learning.Vol.3, (1) pp.180-197. Riyadh, Saoudi Arabia.

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). Reading for understanding: Toward an R & D program in reading comprehension. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Renkema, Jan. (1993). Discourse Studies: an introductory textbook. Amesterdam: John Benjamins Publshing Company.

Rivas, R. (1999). "Reading in recent ELT coursebooks" ELT Journal, 53, pp.12-21.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1977). "Toward an Interactive Model of Reading." Attention and Performance VI. Ed. S. Dornic. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates,

Salkie, R. (1995). Text and discourse analysis. New York: Routledge.

Samuels, S. J. and M.L. Kamil. (1988). "Model of the Reading Process." In P.L. Carrell, J. Devine and D.E. Eskey. Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading. (Eds). Cambridge: CUP, (2nd.ed.). pp.89-114.

Sheng, H. (2000). "A Cognitive Model for Teaching Reading Comprehension." English Teaching Forum. Vol. 38,(4), pp.12-16.

Silberstein, S. (1987)."Let's Take Another Look at Reading: Twenty Years of Reading Instruction." English Teaching Forum, Vol.12 (1).pp.28-33.

Smith, F. (1985). Reading without Nonsense. New York: Teachers College Press.

(------------) (2004). Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read. NewYork: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

(--------------) (1973). Psycholinguistics and Reading. New York: Holt Rinehart Winston.

(--------------) (1978). Reading. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speece, D.L., Roth, F.P., Cooper, D.H., & De La Paz, S. (1999). "The relevance of oral language skills to early literacy: A multivariate analysis." Applied Psycholinguistics, 20, 167-190.

Stanovich, K.E. (1980). "Toward an Interactive-Compensatory Model of Individual Differences in the Development of Reading Fluency." Reading Research Quarterly 16, pp. 32-71.

Strevens, P. (1987). "English as an International Language" English Teaching Forum, 25 (4), PP. 56-63.

Stubbs, M. (1983).Discourse Analysis. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Vacca, R.T. and Vacca, J.L. (1996). Content Area Reading.(5th Ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

Westwood, P. (2008). What Teachers need to Know about Reading and Writing difficulties? Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd. ACER Press. Australia.

Widdowson. H.G. (1983). Learning Purpose and Language Use. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(---------------------) (1990). Aspects of Language Teaching. New York: Oxford, OUP.

Widodo, H. P (2006). "Approaches and procedures for teaching grammar". English Teaching Practice and Critique, Vol. 5, (1). pp. 122-141.

Williams, R. (1983). "Teaching the recognition of cohesive ties in reading a foreign language". Reading in a Foreign Language, Vol. 1(1), pp.35-52.

Williams, R. (1984). Reading in the Language Classroom. London: Macmillan.

Witte, S.P and Faigley, L. (1981) "Coherence, Cohesion, and Writing Quality". College Composition and Communication, Vol. 32/2, pp. 189-204.

Wolf, M. (2007). Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain. New York: Harper Collins.

Woods, E (1995). Introducing Grammar. London: Penguin.

Ying, G. (2006). The Relationship Among Vocabulary Knowledge, Syntactic Awareness and Reading Comprehension. Unpublished MA Thesis, Florida State University.

Zamel, V. (1983). "Teaching Those Missing Links in Writing." ELT Journal, Vol. 37 (1) pp. 22-9.

Zhenyu, Z. (1997). "Intensive reading: getting your students to see the forest as well as the trees." English Teaching Forum, 35 (1), pp.40-43.

APPENDIX 2

Tests submitted to the EXP and the CTR groups

<u>The reading passage</u>:   Get fat by dieting

A report revealed that <u>if</u> a person follows one of the many 'Get Thin Quickly' diets <u>which</u> have been invented by 'experts' all around the world, <u>this</u> person is more likely to gain weight than lose <u>it</u> in the longer term.

A study has been recently conducted by Pr.Marianne Cluze of Arizona Statewide University over six months on 500 people who undertook a specialized dieting program. The participants selected <u>their</u> choice of diets from a list taken from published dieting books. In the beginning of the dieting period, the participants were weighed. Of the 500 volunteers, 400 were considered to be overweight <u>whereas</u> the remaining ones were within the normal limits for their heights, gender and age. <u>They</u> were <u>then</u> all weighed at periods throughout the six months, <u>and</u> a journal was kept on their eating habits during that time.

<u>At the end</u> of the research period, it was found that 70% of all participants had actually increased their weight <u>while</u> 50% of the 100 remaining <u>ones</u>, who had not been overweight when they started the study, had experienced a gain in weight. This was not a surprising finding for Professor Cluze, <u>who</u> explained the phenomenon that <u>when</u> a person goes on a diet that promotes fast weight loss, there is usually a reduction in the amount of bodily muscle. <u>As</u> the muscle is lost, the amount of energy required by <u>that</u> person is also reduced. This means that the dieter doesn't need to eat as much as before <u>in order to</u> keep the same weight. <u>If</u> he continues to eat less, he will, <u>therefore</u>, lose more muscle and need even less food.

<u>In addition</u>, physical exercise will become more difficult <u>because of</u> the loss of muscle power. <u>As a result</u>, dieters will quickly lose weight at first. Eating normally <u>again</u> they will put on more weight as their body requires less food to feed the muscles.

<u>So</u> it seems that Pr. Cluze's research has demonstrated <u>that</u> 'Get Thin Quickly' diets have the opposite effect of that desired. This might be one reason why the number of overweight people in developed countries is increasing. <u>Finally</u>, it is thought, that instead of losing a lot of weight in a short space of time, <u>one</u> should try slowing the pace, eating a balanced diet and exercising regularly.

Anonymous - A Magazine article Suggested by: Katie Dunworth, Curtin University of Technology, 2008.

Read the text carefully, then choose one of the three words given between brackets to fill in the gap.

Get fat by dieting

A report revealed that----------1 (also/ _if_ / for) a person follows one of the many 'Get Thin Quickly' diets----------2 (in order to / soon / _which_) have been invented by 'experts' all around the world, -----------3 (_this_ / what / but) person is more likely to gain weight than lose -----------4 (who / _it_ / him) in the longer term.

A study has been recently conducted by Pr.Marianne Cluze of Arizona Statewide University over six months on 500 people who undertook a specialized dieting program. The participants selected ----------------5 (_their_ / those / whose) choice of diets from a list taken from published dieting books. In the beginning of the dieting period, the participants were weighed. Of the 500 volunteers, 400 were considered to be overweight------------6 (in addition / until / _whereas_) the remaining ones were within the normal limits for their heights, gender and age. ----------7 (them / _they_ / their) were-----------8 (before /during / _then_) all weighed at periods throughout the six months-------------9 (but / _and_ / still), a journal was kept on their eating habits during that time.

---------------10 (until / once / _at the end_) of the research period, it was found that 70% of all participants had actually increased their weight-----------11 (_while_ /finally / before) 50% of the 100 remaining-------------12 (some / _ones_ / many), who had not been overweight when they started the study, had experienced a gain in weight. This was not a surprising finding for Professor Cluze,-----------13 (which /whom/ _who_) explained the phenomenon that----------14 (_when_ / during /consequently) a person goes on a diet that promotes fast weight loss, there is usually a reduction in the amount of bodily muscle.--------15 (similarly / _as_ /but) the muscle is lost, the amount of energy required by---------16 (which / _that_ / who) person is also reduced. This means that the dieter doesn't need to eat as much as before--------

----17 (so / in order to / while) keep the same weight.------------18 (besides / so that / if) he continues to eat less, he will,-------------19 (although / therefore / since), lose more muscle and need even less food.

-----------------20 (in addition / until/afterwards), physical exercise will become more difficult----------21 (however / because of / meanwhile) the loss of muscle power.------------- 22 (whenever / as / as a result), dieters will quickly lose weight at first. Eating normally----- ---------23 (again / likewise / nevertheless) they will put on more weight as their body requires less food to feed the muscles.

------------24 (yet/ whereas/ so) it seems that Pr. Cluze's research has demonstrated --- ---------25 (too / that /also) 'Get Thin Quickly' diets have the opposite effect of that desired. This might be one reason why the number of overweight people in developed countries is increasing. -------------26 (as soon as /when/ finally) it is thought, that instead of losing a lot of weight in a short space of time,--------27 (she /one / whose) should try slowing the pace, eating a balanced diet and exercising regularly

Anonymous- A magazine article suggested by: Katie Dunworth, Curtin University of Technology, Australia, 2008.

A.Text Comprehension questions:

Read the text carefully, then answer the questions according to the text.

1.What was the purpose of Pr. Cluze's study?

2.Why do people need less food after having started a 'get thin quickly' diet?

3.What approach or advice to dieting the article recommend?

B. Read the statements in the table, then decide whether they are 'true' or 'false'. Tick the in the box.

Statements	True	False
a.Pr. Cluze is a researcher working in Arizona Statewide university		
b.The dieting program lasted for more than six months		
c. The 500 participants were all considered as being overweight		
d. Half of those who were in their normal limits in the beginning gained weight		
e. When losing muscle power, physical activity will be difficult for dieters		
f. Developing countries witness an increase in overweight people		

Experimental group: Pie chart of the Cloze and text comprehension tests
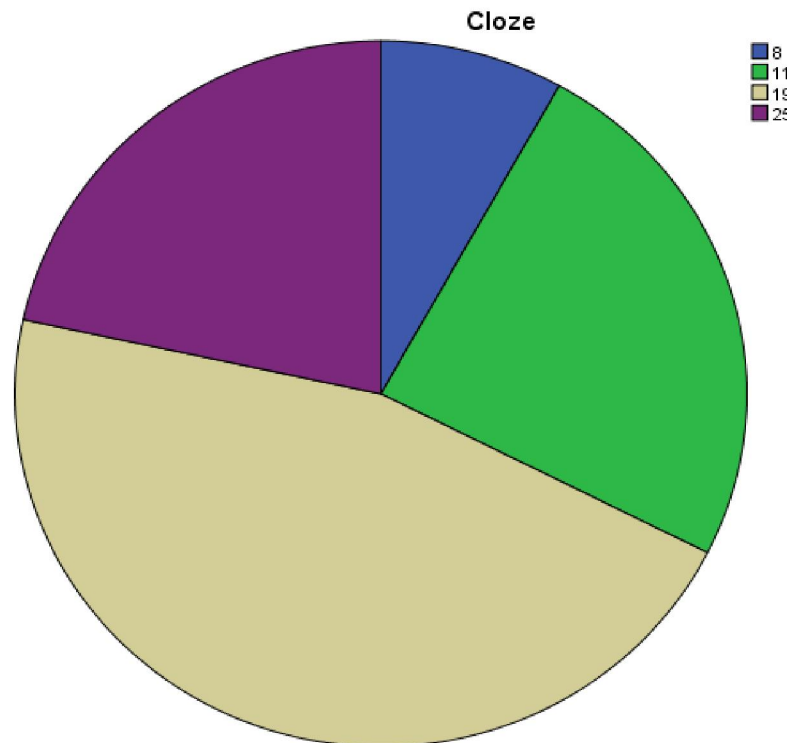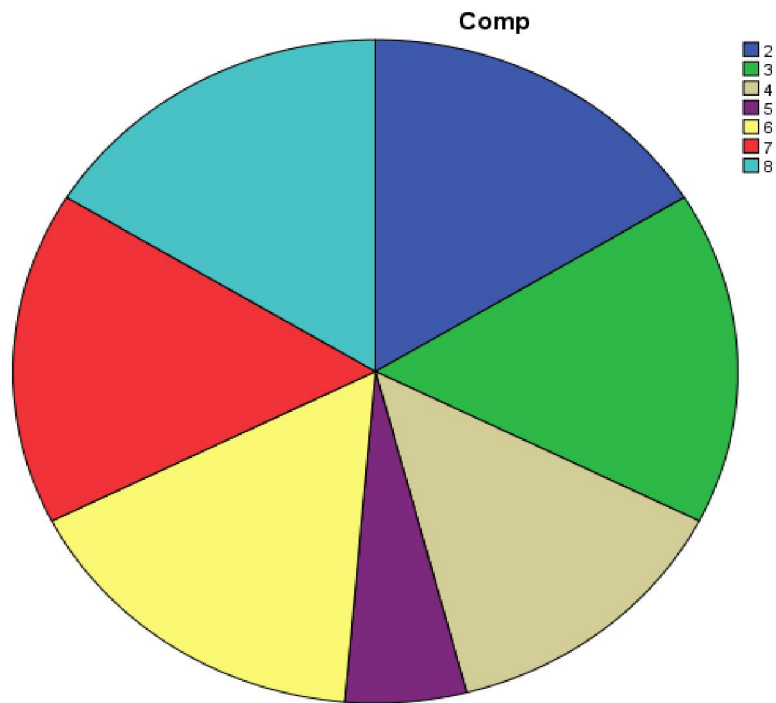

Chart pie 1: EXP Group: Cloze test

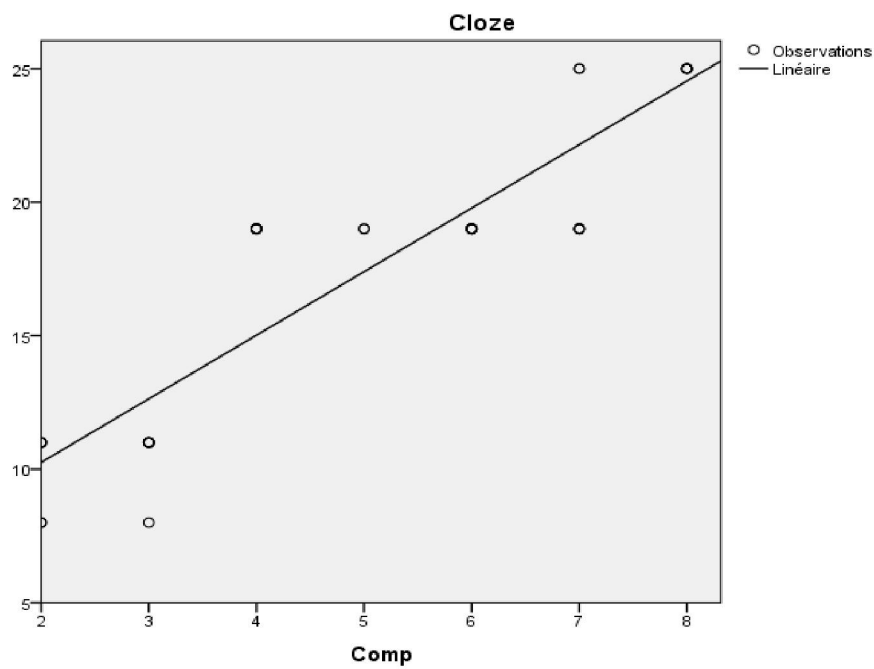Chart pie 3: EXP Group: Text comprehension questions

Figure 1: diagram showing the correlation of the two activities for the EXP group

Control group: Pie chart of the Cloze and text comprehension tests
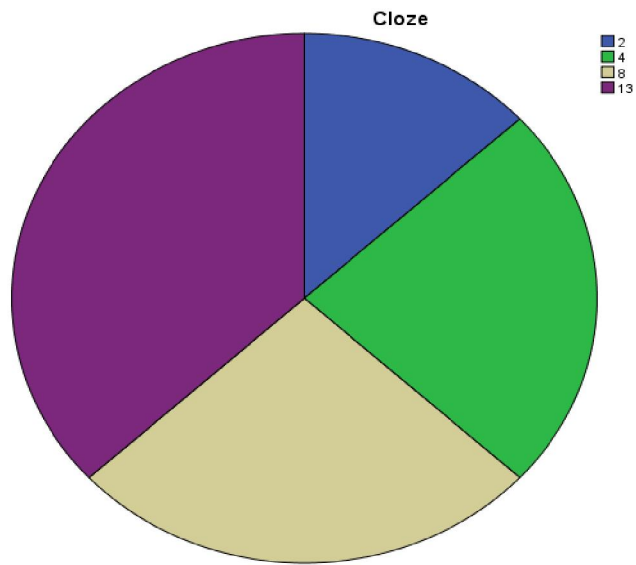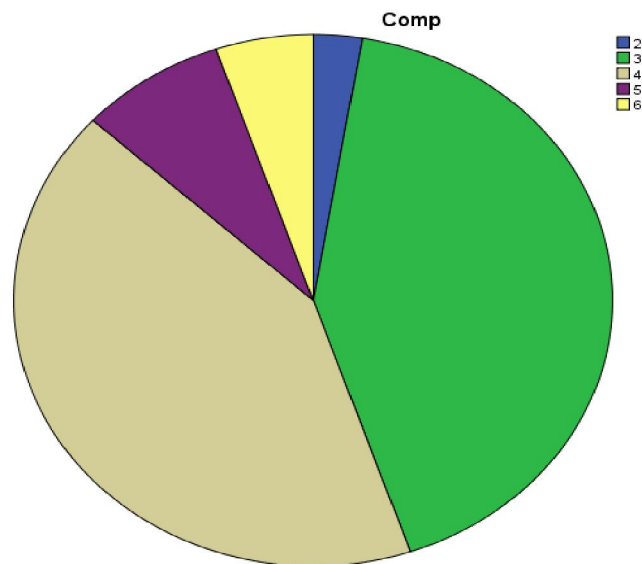

Chart pie 3: CTR Group: Cloze test
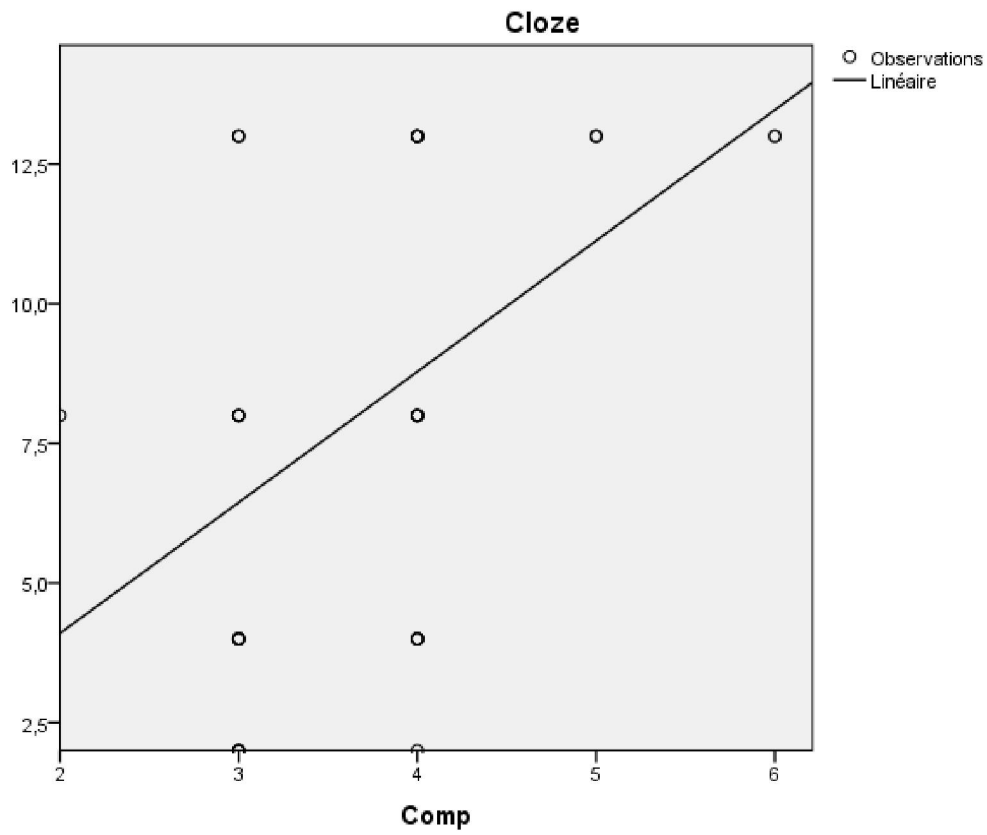

Chart pie 4: CTR Group: Cloze test

Figure 2: Diagram showing the correlation of the two activities for the CTR group.

Appendix 1

Cohesive Devices &Transitional Words

Addition		
again also and and then besides	equally further(more) in addition (to...) indeed next	in fact moreover too what is more finally
Comparison		
compared with in comparison with in the same way/manner	similarly likewise	again also
Contrast		
besides but however in contrast instead conversely it may be the case that certainly also likewise	naturally nevertheless of course on the contrary on the other hand regardless granted like different from Alternatively	still whereas while yet although despite it is true that notwithstanding
Enumeration		
first(ly)- secondly etc. finally in the (first) place	last to (begin) with more important	on top of (that) next then
Concession		
although- it is true that it may appear regardless certainly	granted that naturally it is true that I admit that	of course it may be the case that
Exemplification		
as (evidence of...) for example for instance thus to illustrate	such as to show what (I mean) specifically let us (take the case of...)	
Inference		

if not, ... in (that) case	otherwise that implies	then

Summary/Conclusion

in all in brief to summarise in summary	in short in conclusion therefore In a nutshell	on the whole to sum up basically

Time and Sequence

after (a while) afterwards at first at last at (the same time) while first , second, third... thereafter concurrently soon as soon as	before (that time) finally in the end meanwhile next immediately next firstly , secondly, thirdly... in the future subsequently at that time	since (then) so far then (up to) (then) later somewhat earlier shortly over the next (2 days) as long as last

Result / Cause / Reason

accordingly as a result consequently since as a consequence of... caused accordingly	for that reason hence thus if...then... ...result(s) in ... contribute to In consequence	then therefore the (consequence) of that is... ...is due to... brought about by/because... lead to...

Reformulation

in other words rather Briefly put simply	that is (to say) to put it more (simply) basically

Replacement

again alternatively	(better) still on the other hand	the alternative is...

Transition

as far as ...is concerned as for ... incidentally	now to turn to... with (reference) to	with regard to... Concerning...

Place/Position

above	adjacent	below
beyond	here	in front
in the back	near	there
nearby	there	closer to
elsewhere	far	farther on
opposite to	to the left	to the right
behind		

Miscellaneous - Adverbs may be used at the beginning of sentences to show how the sentence which follows relates to the rest of the text. Many of them reveal the writers attitude to the idea they are expressing and so can be used as an important tool in evaluative writing.

Admittedly	Fundamentally	Paradoxically
All things considered	Generally speaking	Potentially
As a general rule	Interestingly	Predictably
As far as we know	Ironically	Presumably
Astonishingly	In essence	Primarily
Broadly	In general	Probably
By and large	In particular	Remarkably
Characteristically	In practice	Seemingly
Clearly	In reality	Significantly
Coincidentally	In	Surprisingly
Conveniently	retrospect/hindsight	Theoretically
Curiously	In theory	To all intents and purposes
Disappointingly	In view of this	Typically
Equally	More interestingly	Ultimately
Essentially	More seriously	Understandably
Explicitly	More specifically	Undoubtedly
Even so	Naturally	Unfortunately
Eventually	On balance	With hindsight
Fortunately	Obviously	
	On reflection	
	Overall	

Major grammatical cohesive devices and connectors proposed by David O'Regan – 2002

Additional transitional words and phrases

Addition:	in addition, again, moreover, further, furthermore, finally, lastly, at last, in conclusion, first, second, in the third place (not firstly, secondly, and so on), once again
Comparison:	similarly, likewise, in like manner, whereas, but, on the other hand, except, by comparison, where compared to, up against, balanced against, vis-a-vis
Contrast:	but, however, yet, still, nevertheless, on the other hand, after all, for all of that, on the contrary, notwithstanding, in contrast

Emphasis:	in fact, indeed, in any event, certainly, definitely, never, extremely, absolutely, always, forever, perennially, eternally, emphatically, unquestionably, without a doubt, certainly, undeniably, without reservation
Example:	for example, for instance, in this case, in another case, on this occasion, in this situation, take the case of …, proof of this, evidence of this, thus, in this manner
Exception:	yet, still, however, nevertheless, in spite of, despite, of course, once in a while, sometime
Place:	near, beyond, opposite to, adjacent to, at the same place, here, there
Proof:	for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, moreover, besides, indeed, in fact, in addition
Purpose:	to this end, with this object, for this purpose
Result:	accordingly, thus, consequently, hence, therefore, wherefore, thereupon
Sequence:	first, second, third, A, B, C, 1, 2, 3, next, then, following, this, at this time, now, at this point, after, afterward, after this, subsequently, soon, finally, consequently, before this, previously, preceding this, simultaneously, concurrently, at this time, therefore, hence
Summary:	in brief, on the whole, in sum, to sum up
Time:	at once, immediately, meanwhile, at length, in the meantime, at the same time, in the end, in the interim, then

Source: Parker, John F. (1982) The Writer's Workshop. Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley, pp. 227-228

Lectures and Exercises on Cohesive Devices

Main objectives and aims: By the end of the lectures, students would:

1.Be aware of the importance and role of the cohesive devices in joining sentences or parts of paragraphs

2.Discriminate between the grammatical and the lexical cohesive devices

3. Identify and use the various types of GCD appropriately

4. Infer meanings through appropriate usage of the cohesive devices

5. develop the skills of reading with reference to the various cohesive devices

Lecture on Cohesive Devices

I.Introduction : Cohesive devices

To make sense of a text, the reader needs to understand the connections between its parts. One way writers help the reader to do this is to make explicit signals of the type of relations between parts.

I.1 What does cohesion mean?

You might think of cohesion as a means of establishing connections within a text at all sorts of different levels, e.g. section, paragraphs, sentences and even phrases. By following the conventions that rule the cohesion (and coherence) principles, you can establish connections within your text and your reader will be able to go straight to your meaning without getting distracted.

How is cohesion different from coherence? It is difficult to separate the two concepts. However, think of coherence as the text making sense as a whole at an ideas level, and cohesion as rather more mechanical links at a language level. You can imagine that it is possible for a piece of writing to contain plenty of cohesion yet little coherence.

I.2 Purposes of using transitional words and phrases

Transitional words and phrases are often used for many purposes, among others: (i) help the readers to read papers more smoothly; (ii) they provide logical organization and understandability/comprehension; (iii) they improve the connections and transitions between thoughts/ideas. This would make the text coherent and a coherent paper allows the reader to flow from the first supporting point to the last, and (iv) transitions indicate relations, whether

within a sentence, paragraph, or paper. (See the list below that illustrates "relationships" between ideas, followed by words and phrases that can connect them.)

II. Types of cohesive devices

II. 1 Conjunctives and transitional words as cohesive devices

One type of signal is conjunctions. The terms conjunction and conjunctive devices have been categorised into four groups to express different meanings when used; these may express additive, adversative, causal, and temporal relations between sentences. Moreover, these conjunctions may be of four types: (i) coordinating conjunctions such as: and, but, or, yet, for, nor, so; (ii) subordinating conjunctions such as: after, although, where, so that, as long as, because, among others (see appendix n°   ); (iii) correlative conjunctions such as: both . . . and, not only . . . but also, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, whether . . . or (see appendix n°   ), and (iv) Adverbials such as however, moreover, nevertheless, consequently, as a result; these are used to create complex relationships between ideas.

Conjunctions reflect the writer's positioning of one point in relation to another in creating a text. For example, the conjunctions however and despite the fact that can be used to reflect adversative relations. These conjunctions and other similar words and/or expressions are highly found in reading texts and can help much for the comprehension of the writer's messages and the various connotations.

It's worth noting that these and other devices that join words, sentences, and paragraphs are often referred to as connectives, connectors, linking devices, transitional words, or ties. On the whole, students often find them relatively easy to learn while reading and start using them in their writing from early on.

is substitution by zero) e.g. Peter brought some beans, and Catherine a piece of bread .

II. 2 Transitional words

One way to make a paragraph easier to read is to use words and phrases (in case one is writing) or understand and recognize those words and phrases that let the ideas flow from one sentence to the next (in case one is reading Transitions are like traffic signs ("STOP," "TURN LEFT") that direct a reader's attention. Here is an example: The phrase "in addition" appears frequently in English because these words are a sign that one idea will be added to another.

In simpler terms, transitional devices are like bridges between parts of a given reading passage/paper. They are cues that help the reader to interpret ideas the reading passage/ paper develops. Transitional devices are words or phrases that help carry a thought from one sentence to another, from one idea to another, or from one paragraph to another. And finally, transitional devices link sentences and paragraphs together smoothly so that there are no abrupt jumps or breaks between ideas. There are several types of transitional devices, and each category leads readers to make certain connections or assumptions. Some lead readers forward and imply the building of an idea or thought, while others make readers compare ideas or draw conclusions from the preceding thoughts.

Here is a list (non-exhaustive, see above) of most used transitional words and phrases as an illustration of what preceded.

1. Transitions that add information: and, furthermore, also/too, additionally, as well, in addition, etc

Examples: (a) A pond is a body of fresh water. Also, most lakes are freshwater.

(b) The energy of river water can be used to produce electricity. Furthermore, the wind's energy can be converted to electricity.

2. Transitions that indicate an effect or result: so consequently, thus, as a consequence, therefore, as a result, Examples: (a) Oxygen has only a small number of electrons and protons, so it is a light element.

(b) Photosynthesis is a process in which plants feed themselves and grow. As a consequence, it is an essential process.

(c) The moon has no atmosphere. Therefore, it has no animal or plant life.

3. Transitions that connect one idea to a fact or illustration: for example, to illustrate, one/an example for instance, etc.

Examples: (a) We use microprocessors in our everyday lives. To illustrate, micro-processors help us drive our cars, run our TVs, and cook our meals.

(b) There are many courses on science at the university. For instance, there are courses on biology, physics, engineering and chemistry.

4. Transitions that show Contrastive Ideas: but, yet, though....., however, although...., nonetheless, even though...., on the other hand, etc.

Examples: (a) The cost of solar batteries is very high. On the other hand, the sun is a free source of energy.

(b) Even though tropical rain forests provide us with valuable products, many of these forests are being destroyed.

(c) The atmosphere of Venus is similar to that of Earth. Nonetheless, the dry surface of Venus is completely different from that of Earth.

5. Transitions that summarize Ideas (These transitions indicate that a paragraph or essay is about to reach a conclusion.)

They are; to sum up, in conclusion, in brief, in summary, in short, to summarize, etc

Examples: (a) In short, the cerebrum is the brain part that controls thinking.

(b) To summarize, an amoeba has only one cell, but carries out a full cycle of life function.

Note that transitional words have meaning and are not just used at beginnings or middle of sentences. They can also be used to show relationships between different parts of the same sentence. As mentioned above, they cue readers to relationships between sentences/clauses. If you use the wrong transitional word then you confuse your reader. It would be better if you didn't use any transitional word rather than the wrong one. Furthermore you do not need a transitional word at the beginning of each sentence. Good writers rarely use them as they achieve coherence by using other techniques. Many students overuse transitional words.

NB:(See list of conjunctives and transitional words above)

II. 3 Lexical cohesion

This category seems to be the most subtle and complex one (particularly) for foreign language learners in that it requires a considerable lexical (i.e. vocabulary) stock drawn essentially from learners' readings and experience. A brief introduction to this type is given here to explain the subtleties of this type.

Writers also make their writing more cohesive by using lexical ties, which is another type or way of realizing cohesion such as the use of word repetition, synonyms and antonyms, and superordinates. To illustrate these instances, let's see the following examples: (i) <u>repetition</u>: the problem with contemporary art is that it is not easily understood by most people. Contemporary art is deliberately abstract, and that means it leaves the viewer wondering what she is looking at; <u>synonyms</u> (words having the same or nearly the same meaning) e.g.: enormous – immense/huge; <u>antonyms</u> (a word having a meaning opposite to that of another word.) e.g. "You always pass failure on the way to success."; and <u>superordinates</u> (words that belong to the same category ranging from general to most specific, in other terms: it's the Logic Of or being the relation of a universal proposition to a particular proposition in which the terms are the same and occur in the same order.)

e.g.1 animal – dog; e.g.2 rose, lily, daisy, dandelion, flower, snapdragon: those in italics are hyponyms whereas flower is superordinate, and they are synonyms of each other.
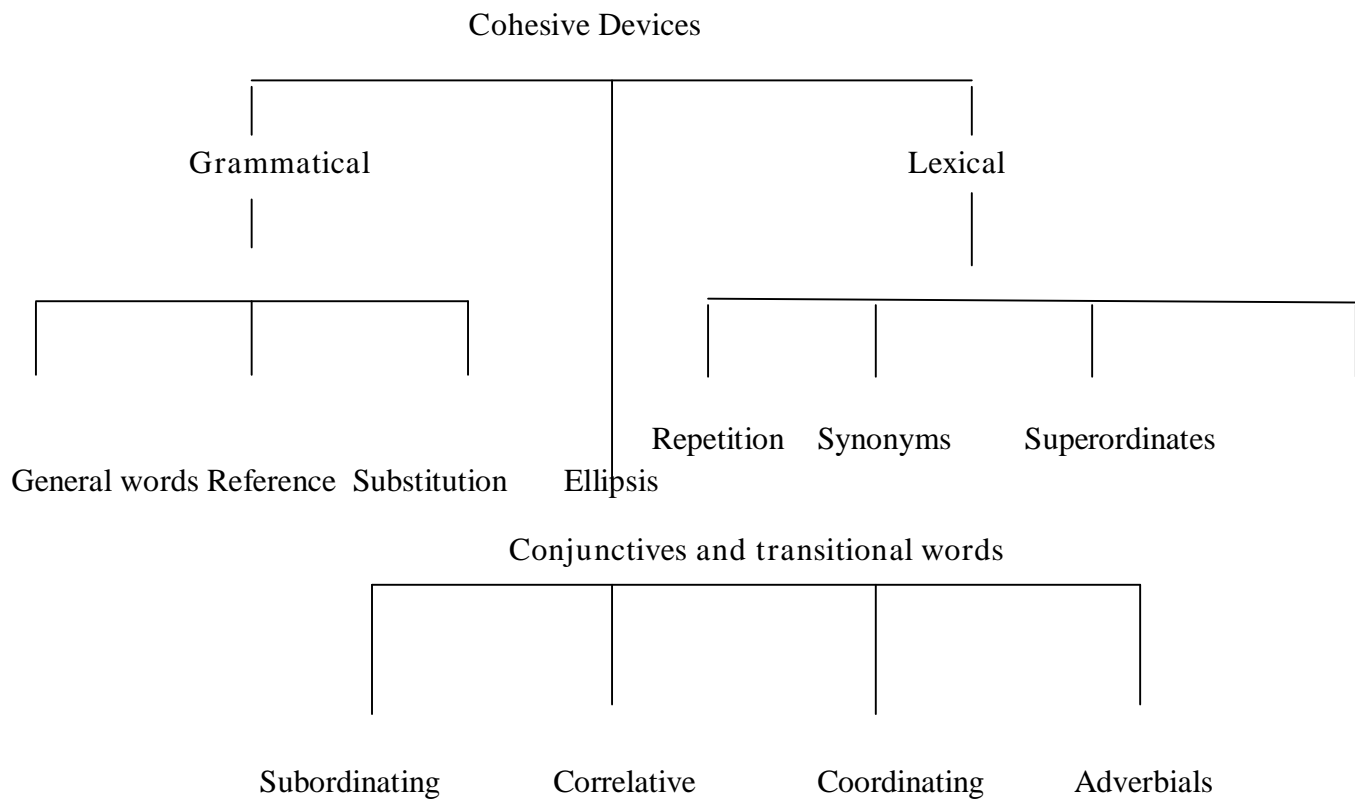
NB: this category of cohesive devices might be taught at an advanced level, in second year for instance.

II. 4 Grammatical words

A text is also made cohesive through the use of grammatical words which carry meanings such as reference through the use of the pronouns: this, that, these, those, he, she, it, they, and we (they refer back to something previously mentioned); substitution (it occurs when an item is used instead of a particular item to avoid repetition) e.g People were advocating the change of the current regulations; they wanted new ones; and ellipsis (it occurs when there is substitution by zero) e.g. Peter brought some beans, and Catherine a piece of bread .

NB: it often occurs that no cohesive device is used / found between a sentence and another one, yet there is coherence, i.e. the two sentences or ideas relate to each other through meaning, e.g. John found himself unable to go to work. He has been ill since the start of the week.

Summary: the following diagram shows the different types of cohesive devices that may be found in a reading passage. Move now to practise these cohesive devices through the following exercises.

Cohesive Devices

```
                              Cohesive Devices
          ┌───────────────────────────┴───────────────────────────┐
      Grammatical                                              Lexical
          │                                                       │
   ┌──────┼──────┐                              ┌─────────┬───────┼───────────┐
   │      │      │                              │         │       │           │
                                          Repetition  Synonyms  Superordinates

General words Reference Substitution        Ellipsis
```

Conjunctives and transitional words

```
          ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
          │              │              │              │
     Subordinating   Correlative    Coordinating    Adverbials
```

II. Exercises and activities about GCD

General aim: To bring students recognize the GCD and use them.

1. To familiarize students with the various GCD

2. To enable students to practise (use) the various GCD

3. To enable students to recognize the GCD in reading passages

Exercise one: Read the following texts and try to identify the linguistic devices that join its elements.

The human nose is a wonderful thing. A whiff of a special smell can bring back fond memories of a great holiday or a budding romance. The pleasing odor of a favourite meal cooking, or cookies in the oven, can have us salivating with hunger. But its ability to smell foul odors it what makes the nose truly valuable. Our capability to detect foods that have gone off simply by giving them a sniff can prevent us from eating things that could make us sick. The smell of smoke has saved many people from fires.

Exercise 2: I. Cohesive devices at the sentence level. Complete the sentence with the appropriate link word

A. Conjunctives

1. I didn't have enough money to pay for my lunch, ... I had to do the washing up.

 a. so   b. because   c. but   d. since

2 ... I didn't have enough money to pay for my lunch, I had to do the washing up.

a .but   b. as   c. so   d. If

3. I knew I had to pay the bill ... do the washing-up.

 a. or   b. either   c. nor   d. neither

4. It doesn't seem likely ... he will come.

 a. as   b. so   c. that   d. if

5. Don't come ... you are asked to.

 a. because   b. unless   c. that   d. since

6 ... you change your mind, give me a ring before 3pm.

 a. because   b. as   c. if   d. Since

7 ... it was cold outside; he went out without his overcoat.

a. since   b. although   c. because   d. In case

8 ... my boss gives me a pay rise; I won't stay in this company any longer.

a. even if　　　b. in case　　　c. as long as　　　d. because

9. He failed his exam ... he didn't work enough.

a. unless　　　　　b. because　　　c. so　　　d. although

10. The dog bit the postman ... he dropped the letter into the mailbox.

a. when　　　b. until　　　c. whereas　　　d. during

11. I won't leave this room ... my work is finished.

 a. because　　　b. as　　　c. until　　　d. since

12 ... you ask me, my answer will be clear : No, I won't do it.

a. Since　　　b. So　　　c. While　　　c. Whereas

 13. Though it didn't take long to reach the hospital, he died ... they got there.

 a. before　　　b. after　　　c. because　　　d. unless

14 ... I have finished this task, I'll go out for a drink.

a. Unless　　　b. Although　　　c. As soon as　　　d. Moreover

15 ... …..you don't know, she is already married.

 a. Whether　　　b. Such as　　　c. Even　　　d. In case

16. I bought an anti-virus program ... protect my data.

a. even if　　　b. in order to　　　c. for　　　d. so as to

 17 ... I had finished typing the letter, I realized I had typed the wrong one.

a. Until　　　b. After　　　c. Meanwhile　　　d. While

18. "I think, ... I am", as Descartes said.

 a. in case　　　b. unless　　　c. therefore　　　d. before

19 ... you agree or not, I'll go to the States next year.

a. Either　　　b. Or　　　c. Neither　　　d. Whether

20 ... you do your work properly, ... you won't be allowed to go to the movies tonight.

 a. Neither ... nor　　　b. Either ... or　　　c. Whether .. or　　　d. Not only ... but also

Exercise two: Make one sentence from the two below, using the word(s) in brackets.

1. She wasn't very rich. She gave money to the beggar. (although)

2. He left early. He wanted to arrive on time. (so that)

3. You can go out tonight. You must tell us where you are going. (provided)

4. I don't earn a big salary. But if I did, I wouldn't buy a car. (even if)

5. Take a sandwich. There might be no restaurant. (in case)

6. There was a lot of noise. He managed to sleep. (despite)

7. Sue likes Opera. Joe prefers jazz. (They have different tastes.) (whereas)

8. The weather was bad. They enjoyed the trip. (even though)

9. He had the 'flu. He went to work. (in spite of)

10. You have to put the alarm on. If not, it won't work. (unless)

Exercise three:

Cloze: Read the following paragraph and put each of the following linking words or phrases in the gaps.

In contrast , At the same time, On the contrary, On the other hand, A case in point, Both, Unlike, an example of this,   Despite/In spite of, Furthermore, Yet.

The Mc Nuggets' menu is hardly an example of healthy eating. 1_____, it offers a choice of everything that should normally be avoided. The fish burger is particularly high in fat, with added salt and sugar. 2_____, the College refectory, whose menu was completely revised early this century, offers much more nutritious food. 3_____, its kitchens and the way food is caught and prepared have been transformed by a revolutionary new chef. 4_____, the decor and pretentions of the refectory are calculated to appeal to the serious academic rather than the six-year old child. 5_____ it is not uncommon in Mc Nuggets to enter a restaurant and find yourself in the middle of a large birthday party, with music, games and food out of all proportion to the number of partygoers. 6_____ is the Mc Banquet offered to ten year olds: it caters for ten guests, has ten times too much food and lasts ten hours.

7_____ Mc Nuggets and the College refectory have undergone many changes since the millennium. Some say that College management completed the work started by the fast food chains in the last century by destroying what was left of the traditional English puddings. 8_____, according to others the new in-house catering team has enhanced and extended the health value and interest of the lunch menu with their exciting new organic options. The Quorn and Vegetable Bake, served on Wednesdays, is 9_____.

10_____ Mc Nuggets, the College refectory seems to have quietly and steadily transformed itself into an elegant, spacious and modern cafeteria, seamlessly combining ancient and modern. The cashier's desk at the far end of the servery is a perfect illustration of this point. 11_____ their differences, both eateries offer the hungry visitor much that is stimulating and should be visited at least once, if only for reflection and contrast, by all students of Education.

Key: 1. On the contrary, 2. In contrast, 3.At the same time, 4.Furthermore, 5.In Contrast, 6. A case in point, 7.Both, 8.Yet, 9. An example of that, 10. Unlike, 11. Despite/In spite of.

Exercise four: Identification of the relationships at the sentence level

1. Originally there was an abundance of white pine in American forests. However, so many uses have been discovered for this wood. That the supply of white pine is becoming smaller and smaller.

2. Randolph grew up in New York and knew its secret charms and hidden faults. He did not even care about the world that people told him existed beyond New York's limits.

3. Our bodies are strengthened not by what we eat but by the food we digest. Similarly, our minds are developed not by what we read but by what we understand.

4. Conversation centred around "I" should be infrequent and chosen wisely. People may think that you have an exaggerated idea of your own worthiness if you speak often of yourself.

5. A steer is slaughtered principally for its meat; but the hide is used for leather, the bones for fertilizer, the hoofs for glue, the hair for brushes, and the blood for tonics. A useful purpose is served by practically all parts.

6. The fighter's plane's great speed actually works against the pilot. He cannot sight and fire conventional guns efficiently, because he does not have enough time.

7. Mosquito control is desirable for two reasons. First, the bite of the mosquito is irritating; second, it may cause the spread of malaria.

8. Domestic animals are often capable of learning tricks, but they are unable to pass these acquired skills onto their offspring. Thus each animal knows only those tricks that he has been taught.

9. If an interviewer spends all the interview time expressing his opinion, he will obtain little of the information he requires from the interview. A good interviewer is a good listener.

10. A college graduate and an intelligent man, George worked diligently and effectively; yet he worried that he was not doing as he should; it seemed that his worry came from lack of confidence.

Exercise five: Use Appendix one (above) to classify the following linking words / phrases according to the list given below: in the first place, also, for example ,to sum up, moreover, firstly, although, to begin with, all things considered, such as, therefore, on the other hand, however, apart from this, in other words, in particular, for instance, in addition, because, while, taking everything into account, furthermore, for one thing, since, lastly, secondly.

To List Points	To add more points	To introduce opposing viewpoints	To introduce examples /reasons	To conclude

Homeworks the exercises below and others (not included in this appendix) are provided sometimes as homeworks for the sake of gaining time in continuing the lectures.

Exercise six: Identify the references by underlining them in the following texts:

Exercise a

Every organization, as soon as it gets to any size (perhaps 1,000 people), begins to feel a need to systematize its management of human assets. Perhaps the pay scales have got way out of line, with apparently similar-level jobs paying very different amounts; perhaps there is a feeling that there are a lot of neglected skills in the organization that other departments could utilize if they were aware that they existed. Perhaps individuals have complained that they don't know where they stand or what their future is; perhaps the unions have requested standardized benefits and procedures. Whatever the historical origins, some kind of central

organization, normally named a personnel department, is formed to put some system into the haphazardly. The systems that they adopt are often modelled on the world of production, because that is the world with the best potential for order and system.

Exercise b

We all tend to complain about our memories. Despite the elegance of the human memory system, it is not infallible, and we have to learn to live with its fallibility. It seems to be socially much more acceptable to complain of a poor memory, and it is somehow much more acceptable to blame a social lapse on 'a terrible memory', than to attribute it to stupidity or insensitivity. But how much do we know about our own memories? Obviously we need to remember our memory lapses in order to know just how bad our memories are. Indeed one of the most amnesic patients I have ever tested was a lady suffering from Korsakoff's syndrome, memory loss following chronic alcoholism. The test involved presenting her with lists of words; after each list she would comment with surprise on her inability to recall the words, saying: 'I pride myself on my memory!' She appeared to have forgotten just how bad her memory was'.

Exercise six: Identify examples of substitution and ellipsis in the texts below:

Exercise c

The human memory system is remarkably efficient, but it is of course extremely fallible. That being so, it makes sense to take full advantage of memory aids to minimize the disruption caused by such lapses. If external aids are used, it is sensible to use them consistently and systematically - always put appointments in your diary, always add wanted items to a shopping list, and so on. If you use internal aids such as mnemonics, you must be prepared to invest a reasonable amount of time in mastering them and practising them. Mnemonics are like tools and cannot be used until forged. Overall, however, as William James pointed out (the italics are mine): 'Of two men with the same outward experiences and the same amount of mere native tenacity, the one who thinks over his experiences most and weaves them into systematic relations with each other will be the one with the best memory.'

Exercise d

This conflict between tariff reformers and free traders was to lead to the "agreement to differ" convention in January 1932, and the resignation of the Liberals from the government in September 1932; but, until they resigned, the National Government was a genuine coalition in the sense in which that term is used on the continent: a government comprising independent yet conflicting elements allied together, a government within which party conflict was not superseded but rather contained - in short, a power-sharing government, albeit a seriously unbalanced one.

Exercise e

The number of different words relating to 'camel' is said to be about six thousand. There are terms to refer to riding camels, milk camels and slaughter camels; other terms to indicate the

pedigree and geographical origin of the camel; and still others to differentiate camels in different stages of pregnancy and to specify in-numerable other characteristics important to a people so dependent upon camels in their daily life (Thomas, 1937)

Exercise f

There were, broadly, two interrelated reasons for this, the first relating to Britain's economic and Imperial difficulties, the second to the internal dissension in all three parties.

Exercise seven: Identify examples of conjunction in the following texts:

Exercise g

These two forms of dissent coalesced in the demand for a stronger approach to the Tory nostrum of tariff reform. In addition, trouble threatened from the mercurial figure of Winston Churchill, who had resigned from the Shadow Cabinet in January 1931 in protest at Baldwin's acceptance of eventual self-government for India.

Exercise h

These two sets of rules, though distinct, must not be looked upon as two co-ordinate and independent systems. On the contrary, the rules of Equity are only a sort of supplement or appendix to the Common Law; they assume its existence but they add something further.

Homework

I. Read the text carefully, and then answers the questions

A man to remember

Perhaps the most vital person I have ever met is an Italian professor of philosophy who teaches at the university of Pisa. Although I last met this man eight years ago, I have not forgotten his special qualities. First of all, I was impressed by his devotion to teaching. Because his lectures were always well-prepared and clearly delivered, students swarmed into his classroom. His followers appreciated the fact that he believed in what he taught; and that he was intellectually stimulating. Furthermore, he could be counted on to explain his ideas in an imaginative way, introducing such aids to understanding as paintings, recordings, pieces of sculpture, and guest lecturers. Once he even sang a song in class to illustrate a point.

Second, I admired the fact that he would confer with students outside of the classroom or talk with them on the telephone. Drinking coffee in the snack bar, he would easily make friends with students. Sometimes he would challenge a student to a chess game. At other times, he would join in groups to discuss subjects ranging from astronomy to scuba diving.

Many young people visited him in his office for academic advice; others came to hit home for social evenings.

Finally, I was attracted by his lively wit. He believed that no class hour is a success unless the students and the professor share several chuckles and at least one loud laugh. Through his sense of humour, he made learning more enjoyable and more lasting. If it is true that life makes a wise man smile and a foolish man cry, then my friend is a truly wise man. Probably the best example of his wit is this bit of wisdom with which he ended a lecture: "it is as dangerous for a man to model himself upon his invention, the machine, as it would be for God to model himself upon his invention."

Questions

1. Find out the topic sentence.

2. Who was the man the author met eight years ago?

3. Provide an equivalent name to the term "professor of philosophy".

4. What characterizes the Italian Professor?

5. Mention 3 professional features and other 3 personality features that render the man unforgettable?

6. What words does the writer use to sequence the man's major qualities?

7. What's the relationship between the sentence "furthermore, he could be counted . . . lecturers" and the preceding one?

8. The two last paragraphs include words that are close in meaning. Find them out.

9. What does "others" in § 2 refer to? Are there other similar constructions in the text? Find them out.

10. What word would you use to replace the term "then" in the third §? What meaning does it express?

11. What striking strategy the professor used to clarify a given point in the lesson?

12. What is God's invention? How would you explain such linguistic phenomenon?

13. Who is the 'friend' the author is speaking about? How would you explain such a use of such a term?

14. What word would you use to replace the semi colon in the last sentence of the 2nd §. (Many young people visited him in his office for academic advice; others came to hit home for social evenings.)

15. Replace the term 'because' in the sentence "Because his lectures were always well-prepared and clearly delivered, students swarmed into his classroom." (§1, line 3) using (a) similar word(s)

16. Match the following titles with the corresponding paragraph. One title is odd.

   1. The man's liveliness and his keen knowledge of both life and humans

   2. The man's high sense of professional responsibility

   3. The man's various beliefs and habits in daily life

   4. The man's cheerfulness, modesty, and availability for the others

Résumé

Cette dissertation a pour objet d'examiner l'effet des éléments ou connecteurs grammaticaux de cohésion enseignés aux apprenants de langue étrangère, ayant pour objectif l'amélioration, un tant soit peu, de leur compréhension de textes. Etant dans un cycle où la lecture devient primordiale à tous les niveaux, les étudiants de première année universitaire sont donc appelés a lire de plus en plus, et de ce fait doivent montrer diverses qualifications pour pouvoir lire correctement et comprendre aussi. Pour lire et comprendre relativement mieux, nous avons proposé à enseigner tous les connecteurs grammaticaux qui servent à obtenir une cohésion entre les différentes parties du texte, soit au niveau des phrases ou bien au niveau des paragraphes. En fait, ces connecteurs sont voués à ce rôle prépondérant au niveau textuel. Pour pouvoir attester cet aspect, un test composé de deux parties, un exercice à trou (cloze) et des questions de compréhension (compréhension test), a été soumis à deux groupes, l'un expérimental et l'autre de contrôle. Le premier a étudié l'ensemble des connecteurs grammaticaux pendant une période de temps, tandis que l'autre n'en a pas. Les résultats des deux groupes, après analyse, ont été très clairs dans le sens où le groupe expérimental a réussi a répondre positivement à presque toutes les questions, alors que le groupe contrôle a failli d'une manière conséquente. Sur la base de ces résultats, il a été fait de quelques recommandations et autres propositions dont la première consiste à inciter et les enseignants et les responsables pour l'élaboration des programmes (syllabus designers) à inclure ces notions grammaticales de manière à inciter les étudiants non seulement à lire fréquemment mais diminuer leurs appréhensions quant ils s'engagent dans une quelconque lecture que ce soit.