



PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC
RESEARCH

MOHAMED KHEIDER UNIVERSITY OF BISKRA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Sciences of the Languages

Submitted and Defended by
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Exploring the Role of Using Cohesive Devices in Improving Students' Academic Writing

The Case of Third Year Students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

A Dissertation submitted to The Department of English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of a Master of Language Sciences

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Academic Year: 2021-2022

Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to

The strong and gentle soul who taught me to trust in Allah, believe in hard work,
my lovely mother « Khadidja »

My shiny moon and beloved father « Hocine » who always cares about my studies
and my success

My husband who gave me support and care and his beloved family

My sisters and brother, the source of motivation and love

My nieces and nephews, the dear and beloved angels

«Acha, Jouvou, Issou, Dido»

To all those who prayed for me and besought God to help me

Thank you all

Acknowledgment

All the Praise is due to Allah alone, the Sustainer of all the worlds.

Special thanks and enormous gratitude to my supervisor Ms. Meriam GHENNAI; she guided this research and has been so generous in devoting her constant encouragement, time and knowledge to me. I would like also to express my gratitude to the members of the jury Dr. Barket TURQUI, and Messaouda BENDAHMANE; who read and evaluated this work. I also own thanks to my teacher Mr. Abdelnacer BEN ABDELREZAK for his time and help in collecting data necessary for the completion of this research work. In addition, I am thankful for the students who took part in the study for being a positive and productive. I would also like to thank the written expression teachers at the department of English for their participation in answering the questionnaires. It is only through their cooperation and support that this research could be made possible.

Abstract

The present research investigated to which extent cohesive devices are effective for successful academic writing. Exploring the role of using cohesive devices in third year students' academic writing at the English Department of Biskra University was one of the objectives of this research. The other objective was checking whether third year EFL students are familiar with using CDs in their academic writing. The last objective was to explore the patterns of use of cohesive devices by students. In order to meet these objectives, the book of Halliday and Hasan "Cohesion in English" (1976) was used to explore the patterns of cohesive devices' use by the students. In conducting this research mixed research tools was adopted as a research methodology for both gathering and analyzing data. A corpus analysis was conducted on twenty (20) essays written by third year students at the English Department of Biskra University, during the academic year 2021/2022. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to twenty (20) third year students and another questionnaire was addressed to three teachers of written expression module. The above research tools were used to explore the use of third year students of cohesive devices in academic writing. According to the findings, students usually use conjunctions, references and reiteration because they are the most familiar to them. However, the study also showed that there were little use of substitution, ellipsis and collocation because students have little familiarity with these types. The result of this study can be helpful to students to be familiar to all types of cohesive devices and encourage them to use it in order to improve their academic writing, as well as; it can be helpful for teachers to discover students' difficulties towards the use of cohesive devices and try to fix them.

List of Abbreviations

CDs: Cohesive Devices

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

PH.D: Doctor of philosophy

MA: Magister of Arts

MA: Master of Arts

BA: Bachelor of Arts

Q: Question

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Writing is one of the most significant skills that learners of English as a foreign language need to master. It is considered as interactive way to express ideas, experiences and feelings. It is a complex activity since it needs the fulfillment of different rules of grammar, word choice, using formal expressions and paying attention to every sentence in the text. However, one of the aspects that EFL students need to pay careful attention to while writing is the aspect of cohesion. Therefore, students should take into account that writing is more than being a matter of putting random sentences together, instead the information should be presented to audience in organized format that reserve the value of writing. Thus, students need to recognize the importance of cohesion in creating cohesive and coherent writing using cohesive devices in order to produce clear writing. Those concepts are necessary to manipulate sentence structure level to build comprehensible piece of writing.

1. Statement of the Problem

Academic writing is one of the major skills required of advanced foreign language students. Students need to understand and apply certain tools that enable them to manipulate sentences to build meaningful pieces of writing. Cohesive devices are among the tools employed by students in their writings. Exploring their use is worthwhile since they are considered as tools that guarantee the strong connection between sentences as well as ideas in a text, which consequently built cohesion and coherence.

Lexical and grammatical cohesive devices have a huge effect on the discourse quality since they guide the listeners or readers to perceive the meaning of sentences. Grammatical cohesion deals with structural connection between sentences of a text and it involves four types: reference, ellipsis, conjunctions and substitution. Lexical cohesion functions as a link between words and sentences within a text to keep the same intended meaning, and it includes two types: reiteration and collocation. In our research, we are going to explore the

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two ways in which cohesion is produced in writings of the university students of English using both types, grammatical and lexical cohesive devices.

2. Significance of the Study

This study will provide for students some benefits in learning English as a foreign language. Learning the appropriate use of cohesive devices is an important step for each student who wants to improve his/her academic writing. Using lexical cohesion by students guarantees the logical selection of words, and connecting these words in such a way that makes sense to the reader. Moreover, grammatical cohesion teaches students how to formulate understandable sentences using the needed structures to keep the same meaning within a text. On the other hand, teachers would have the ability to understand students' writings while correcting them, as well as knowing the exact meaning that their student wants to convey. The result of this study can be beneficial for students to be familiar with all types of the CDs and encourage them to use it in their academic writing. Also, the result of this study can be beneficial for teachers to discover students' difficulties towards the use of cohesive devices and try to fix them. Consequently, when students use the appropriate cohesive devices, they will produce meaningful pieces of writing.

3. Aims

The researcher has three main aims behind this research study. The first one is to check whether third year EFL students are familiar with using cohesive devices when they write in academic context. The second one is to explore the role of using CDS in academic writing of third year students of English in improving students' writing. The third is to explore the patterns of use of cohesive devices by students.

4. Research Questions

This thesis relies on the following questions:

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1. Do third year EFL students use cohesive devices appropriately in their writing?
2. To what extent do cohesive devices enhance students' academic writing?
3. What are the patterns of the use of cohesive devices in students' academic writing?

5. Hypotheses

The present research is based on the following hypothesis that shall be tested and verified

- If students use cohesive devices appropriately, their academic writing would be improved by building the unity of both ideas in terms of coherence and text as a whole in terms of grammatical and lexical cohesion.

6. Research Methodology

The suitable methodological procedure that the researcher intends to do is a descriptive study. Third year students' written performance will be analyzed by exploring quantitatively the use of cohesive devices. This will be done by collecting and analyzing students' pieces of writing short expository essays. The method is mixed method, consisting of using corpus analysis of students' writings and questionnaires administered to the students and the teachers of written expression module.

6. 1. The Sample

The study population comprises third year students of English and written expression teachers at the Department of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The study sample of students consists of twenty third year students randomly selected to represent the whole population of third year students. The sample of the teachers consists of three written expression teachers who will be randomly chosen to represent the whole population of written expression teachers.

6.2. Data Gathering Tools

The data gathering tools adopted in this research are corpus analysis, students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. The corpus analysis is conducted on students' essays; they will be asked to develop one of the following topics: "Has the internet made the society better?" or "Do the smart phones help the learning process?" in a form of short argumentative essay. This tends to evaluate their essays in terms of their use of cohesive devices. The questionnaires are directed to both, students and teachers to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of cohesive devices in their academic writing.

7. Structure of the Study

The present research is basically divided into three chapters; the first chapter deals with discourse analysis and its main related concepts, the process of academic writing skill, its definition, its basics, its stages and EFL students' common writing mistakes. The second chapter explores the notion of cohesion, its definition, the concept of cohesive devices with its types and its role in writing process, as well as, the common students' difficulties towards cohesive device use. The third chapter comprises the fieldwork, which is devoted to the analysis of the results obtained from teachers' questionnaire, students' essays analysis and students' questionnaire.

Chapter One: Academic Writing

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical background on which the current study is based. It comprises two sections. The first section explains what discourse analysis is, including the main concept which is written discourse. The second section is devoted to define the notion of writing and its effective basics in addition to its significant stages in order to introduce successful pieces of writing and the common writing mistakes of EFL students.

1-1- Discourse Analysis

1-1-1 Definition of Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a main goal of linguistic investigation. It is considered as an umbrella term for all researches within applied linguistics that focuses on language units beyond the sentence level. Scollen (2001) gives the discourse a social dimension by explaining that it is related to habits and social conventions, because people in communities are known and recognized through discourse and social interaction (2001, p.538). Moreover, Van Dijk (1997) combines the discourse's definition to language, communication and interaction which means discourse is a form of language in use (1997, p.1). The investigation of language in use aims at giving the language its fundamental function that is communication. Therefore, it is used to communicate thoughts and feelings.

Discourse analysis is the examination of language used by members of a speech community; it examines language patterns in texts and considers the connection between language and the social and cultural contexts where it is used for both written and spoken forms. Nunan (1993) states, "discourse analysis brings together language, individuals producing the language, and the context in which language is used" (1993, p.6). In other words, discourse analysis is not limited to the depiction of linguistics, yet it is also referred to

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people who use this language and the situation to what, how and when the discourse is performed. We can notice then that discourse analysis is language in use that is how people fulfill certain communicative goals by using language and perform communicative acts to present themselves to others.

1-1-2 Written Discourse

Spoken and written discourse have a similar purpose of informing and entertaining. Brown and Yule (1983) argue that the written language is planned to be permanent, and it reflects a transitional purpose as well as to transfer information which facilitates to narrow the long distances between people (1983, p.14). There are several characteristics that are unique to the written discourse. The writer has the chance to revise what he already wrote to be more precise and concise because written words can be modified, changed and looked up in the dictionary when it is needed. Also, the opportunity to change writer's point of view in the time he wants. On the other hand, the reader can take time to read and give careful attention to meaning (Brown & Yule, 1983). In short, written discourse is considered permanent record of information and it has different characteristics than the spoken one.

1-2 - Writing Skill

1-2-1 Writing Definitions

Writing is the way that written words are used to express ideas or opinions. It is a tool of human communication that represents thoughts in a comprehensible way. Rivers (1968), "In its simplest form writing can be the act of putting down in conventional graphic form something which has been spoken"(1968, p. 242). This definition considers writing as a method of recording speech in symbolic graphs, which are a representation of the sounds that we produce when we communicate. Moreover, writing as a concept is also related to the

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social context. Hayes (1996) argues that "Writing is a communicative act that requires a social context and a medium" (1996, p.11). Accordingly, the purpose of any piece of writing is to communicate according to the social features. Therefore, writing requires more than taking a pen and expressing perfect words on paper. This indicates the writing value which is not just a matter of collecting graphic symbols together as to generate words and sentences; rather it is a process that requires many factors that readers can understand through. All in all, from the views above we can realize that writing is a skill in which writers express oral thoughts in written form while taking the social context into account.

1-2-2 Basics of effective writing

For some, especially students, effective writing may mean a piece of writing that contains no mistakes, errors of grammar, punctuation or spelling. Yet, the process of effective writing is much more than that. Effectiveness of any piece of writing depends on clarity, organization, and appropriate word choice (Starkey, 2004). In addition to sentence structure which gives a formal shape to writing (Ho, 2005). Coherence and cohesion are essential aspects; therefore, any piece of academic writing should be coherent and cohesive (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Once someone is willing to put his/her effort, (s)he can improve his/her writing.

1-2-2-1 Clarity

Readers need clear sentences to correctly picture the exact meaning. Starkey (2004) notes that it has an important function in writing's validity, as it can guarantee the transmission of the message's meaning to readers (2004, p.11). Thus, writers should try to improve sentence clarity level. Starkey (2004) also states "Wordiness is boring" (2004, p.15) that is why reducing useless words is considered as a start to enhance writing clarity. There are some

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essential words in sentences which transmit meaning clearly to the reader, however; other words are considered as extra words that relate sentences together but we can omit them without changing the meaning. For example: "in a situation in which a replacement for the guidance counselor who is retiring is formed, it is important that our students committee be notified", "when a replacement for the retiring guidance counselor is found, our students committee must be notified" (Starkey, 2004, p.16). The two sentences have similar meaning, however; the second one is direct and shorter than the first because it does not contain unnecessary words which interrupt the meaning. (Starkey, 2004)

Furthermore, using active voice is another way to build clarity. Greetham (2001) emphasizes, "the active voice is almost always clearer and more direct" (2001, p.218). That is to say, when sentences are in the active voice subjects and verbs are clear and direct not like in passive voice subject is unclear. Using passive voice gives the sentence different interpretations to the reader, especially when the doer of the action is not mentioned in the sentence. There are some cases in writing where passive voice has its place but academically active voice is more used. Active voice makes writing comprehensible for readers.

In short, clarity in writing is important because it makes the meaning direct. It facilitates the understanding for readers. Writers can improve their writing clarity by reducing unnecessary words which are not essential in meaning. Also, the use of active voice gives clear image to transmit the meaning of sentences.

1-2-2-2 Organization of Ideas

The concept of organization is very broad (Freedman, 1979). It is the arrangement of ideas, incidents, arguments, or details in a perceptible order in a paragraph, essay, or speech (Nordquist, 2019). Some students find difficulties to start organizing their writing. Starkey (2004) emphasize that using a pyramid chart or outline help students to order their ideas in

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more formal way (2004, p.7). Each student works better with the appropriate technique that suits him.

Pyramid Chart Technique	Outline Technique
<p>1- Reread the prewriting notes.</p> <p>2- Answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What is the purpose of my writing? -What are the major parts, and how can they be categorized? -What are the minor parts, and how do they relate to the major parts? -What details can I use to illuminate both major and minor parts? <p>3- The answer to the first question is your thesis. Place it at the top of the pyramid. Below it, write the major parts and join them to the thesis with lines. Next, write the minor parts beneath the major ones, connecting them with lines. Finally, your details should be added under the parts to which they correspond.</p>	<p>1- Write the topic at the top of a paper.</p> <p>2- Under the topic write Roman numerals I, II, and III...</p> <p>3- Next each Roman numeral write the main ideas about your writing topic.</p> <p>4- Under each Roman numeral write A, B, and C...</p> <p>5- Next to each letter write the supporting sentences of the main idea.</p>

Table 01: Steps of Pyramid Chart and Outline Techniques

(Starkey, 2004, pp7-8)

The above table presents the steps of the two techniques "pyramid chart" and "outline" that guides the student to organize ideas for their piece of writing. These steps are useful for the writer in organizing any piece of writing. As well as, using pyramid chart and outline facilitates the understanding of the intended meaning to the reader since the ideas are well planned and ordered (Starkey, 2004).

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1-2-2-3 Word Choice

Word choice gives great value to any piece of writing. Writers should use words that have the exact meaning they intend to convey. Shannon (2011) states, "authors should avoid the use of incorrect, inexact, and ambiguous wording" (2011, p.18). In other words, the writer should take into consideration the selection of appropriate words that convey the intended meaning. According to Starkey (2004) there are two aspects that writer needs while choosing words. The first aspect is denotation and Starkey (2004) defined it as "the basic or literal meaning of a word" (2004, p.21); that is to say, the exact meaning and usually it is taken from the dictionary. He also states that the confusion may occur from choosing words that sound or look similar but in fact have very different meanings (2004, p.22). The second aspect is connotation which Starkey (2004) indicates that it is "a word's implied meaning, which involves emotions, cultural assumptions, and suggestions" (2004, p.21); that is to say, the possible interpretations that a word can have. It helps writers to determine whether the word chosen belongs to his writing and accurately achieves his writing goal. Consequently, writers should consider both denotation and connotation to facilitate the correct choice of words and make the message clear for readers.

1-2-2-4 Sentence Structure

In academic writing each sentence must be grammatically correct and well structured. Sentence structure contains: a subject which appear the doer of action, a verb which gives information about the subject, and a complement if required which is a group of words that provides more information about the verb. Following the formal sentence structure makes the intended message clear for readers as well as guides the writer for better writing.

Students face several problems with sentence structure while writing. According to Ho (2005) there are eight types of sentence structure errors which are: dangling modifier,

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squinting modifier, illogical sentence, sentence fragment, run-on sentence, inappropriate coordinating conjunction, inappropriate subordinating conjunction, and subject-verb agreement. However, the researcher would concentrate only on the three common errors which are sentence fragments, run-on sentence and subject-verb agreement.

In short, the common errors in sentence structure that are made by students are: the first one is sentence fragment which acts meaningless by its own and it may lack a subject, a verb, both, or a helping verb. The second error is run-on sentence which consists of two independent clauses attached without connecting word. The third one is subject-verb agreement error that does not have the strong connection between the subject and its verb that may disagree in number. Students should pay attention to their sentence structure errors and look for the correct forms to guarantee the unity of their sentences within a piece of writing as well as to make it comprehensible for readers.

1-2-2-5 Coherence and Cohesion

Coherence and cohesion are important basics of effective academic writing. Altenberg (1987) states that coherence refers back to the relationship occurs between the meanings of sentences within a text (1987, pp. 50-64). Adelstein and Pival (1980) add that a piece of writing has coherence if its sentences develop the main idea. Moreover, there are several ways to create coherent piece of writing; Oshima and Hogue (2006) suggest four ways; repeating keywords is an important technique for achieving coherence by drawing the reader's attention to the controlling idea of the piece of writing. Another way in which we create coherence is by avoiding the repetition of nouns, noun phrases or names and using consistent pronouns instead, which means; making sure that we use the same person and number while changing a repeated noun into a pronoun. The use of transitional words or phrases such as subordinators, coordinators, adjectives and prepositions, is also considered as a way to establish coherence in academic writing to indicate to the reader the relationship

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between the previous sentences and the following ones (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, pp. 22-25). Arranging ideas in logical order rises reader's ability to comprehend the text. There are three frequent types of logical order which are: chronological order, order of importance and contrast or compare order (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p.34).

On the other hand, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976) cohesion is also an important aspect to contribute a meaningful piece of writing. Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe cohesion as a semantic relation between one item in the piece of writing and another one that is important to its interpretation (1976, p. 4). That is, cohesion refers back to the way of using grammatical roles and items in the piece of writing to relates ideas together. The writers should include the needed cohesive devices with its two types grammatical and lexical cohesive devices in their pieces of writing to guarantee the whole unity of text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

In short, coherence refers to the unity created between the ideas of the piece of writing and it facilitates to the reader to understand the relationship that occurs between sentences. It can be achieved by repeating key words, using consistent pronouns, using transitional signals to link ideas and arranging them in logical ordered. However, cohesion refers to the semantic relation of sentences within the piece of writing. It can be achieved by using the cohesive devices appropriately to make it easy for readers to understand the meaning behind writing. Thus, writers should pay attention to both, coherence and cohesion to produce meaningful pieces of writing.

1-2-3 Writing stages

Writing will be easier if it done through certain stages. All writers follow their own unique writing processes before they make a final draft. However, there are different views on the stages that writers go through in producing a piece of writing, but a typical model identifies four stages: prewriting; composing/drafting; revising; and editing (Tribble, 1996, p.

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39). **Prewriting** stage contains choosing the topic and thinking of random ideas. Next, in **drafting** stage, the writer starts writing down his ideas in the paper in unplanned form. After that, the writer needs to re-see his first draft and modify it according to his purpose, this called the **revising** stage. **Editing** is the final stage that refers to the correction of grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors before publishing the final product (Tribble, 1996).

1-2-3-1 Prewriting

Prewriting is considered as a significant stage to explore and develop students' thoughts. Roberts (2004) notes, "prewriting helps students create images and ideas about the assigned topic" (2004, p.6). That means it facilitates to students to develop general thoughts concerning the topic. Moreover, Parson (1985) points that students who involve prewriting stage earn better writing achievement than those who start their writing without this type of preparation (1985, p.105). This means it allows students to collect and produce ideas before starting the actual writing.

During prewriting students should take into consideration four main issues as Brown and Hood (1989) indicates that "most writing requires some preparation ...largely depends on your *reader*, your *purpose*, the *content* and the writing *situation*" (1989, p.7). Therefore, students should know to whom or for whom they are going to write as well as decide the purpose behind their writing. Also, they should focus on what to write plus considering the time; how much time they have, and the place; where they are going to write the piece of writing. These issues determine their choice of information, the used language and the selection of ideas without giving attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Similarly, Roberts (2004) emphasizes that using prewriting strategies rises students' performance (2004, p.6). Writers can use many possible strategies to develop their ideas such as brainstorming and listing. Roberts (2004) agrees that brainstorming and listing are ways to

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generate random ideas and words by discussing them either in groups or individually. Then group these ideas into a list to facilitate writing (2004, p.18). Furthermore, Galko (2001) suggests other strategies; free-writing which is presenting ideas as they are in mind, and asking "wh" questions that are: what..? why..? where..? when..? who..? usually answering them let students think and develop the topic in different angles (2001, pp. 21-23).

Prewriting is important stage in which students generate thoughts concerning a topic without paying attention to grammar mistakes. In this stage, students should take into consideration four main issues the reader, purpose of writing, the content and the writing situation. There are several strategies to enhance their ideas such as brainstorming, listing and free-writing. Students can use the appropriate strategy that suits their way of thinking as well as their purpose behind writing.

1-2 -3-2 Drafting

Once students have planned out their thoughts, the following stage is drafting. Drafting stage is the stage in which students choose the necessary ideas that are more relevant to their topics. Students focus on writing down their ideas on paper in a rough format and organizing them logically according to their purposes. Seow (2002) states that students should pay attention to the fluency of writing and not to the grammatical accuracy of the draft (2002, p.317). Consequently, in drafting stage students concentrate on the content of their topic rather than correcting mistakes such punctuations, spelling and capitalization.

Furthermore, students' job in drafting stage as Galko (2001) stresses, "is to translate your outline along with other good ideas you have along the way into paragraphs"(2001, p.50). In other word, Students need to link their previous ideas with supporting details to create paragraphs. Supporting details can include examples, quotations and arguments that maintain strong paragraphs. Additionally, Kane (2003) defines a draft as the first sketch of writing. It is

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not the final copy but just a tentative. The writers need to repeat his writing until they arrive to the final draft. He believes that better result comes from several drafts (2003, p.34).

All in all, in drafting stage students start writing down their ideas. The objective of writers in this stage is contributing the amount of information needed in the topic that supports the main idea of the text.

1-2 -3-3 Revising

Revising is re-seeing your paper in a new way. It refers to improving the general structure and content of writer's paper, its organization and ideas to make the argument more logical (Grunwald, n.d). Johnson (2008) suggests that "revising is the heart of the writing process" (2008, p.179); that means revision is the key to effective writing. Moreover, Galko (2001) states that while revising writers might face problems that they need to solve them in this stage like misspelled words, unstructured sentences and the thesis statement which is not clear or does not support their purpose behind writing (2001, p.73). Reading loudly and carefully the draft as if the writer is in the reader's place is considered a useful way to check if there is unclear or confusing part within the piece of writing.

Another point of view which emphasized on deciding the suitable words; that writers wrote them as they came in their mind in the prewriting stage. This makes sentences or paragraphs more precise and gives it great value (Elbow, 1998, p.25). This because omitting unnecessary word is a large part of revision. Additionally, Kane (2003) stresses two other aspects that should be taken into consideration. The first one is revising whether punctuations are in the right place or if there is any missed one to insure the correct relation between sentences. The second one is about avoiding the repetition of the usual conjunctions such as "and ", "but" and "however". In fact, they are not wrong as they work well in a paragraph, but over using them makes the reader feel bored (2003, p.38).

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In brief, revising stage is considered a general review of the previous draft. It contains developing both structure and content by revising the grammar mistakes, spelling as well as correcting the placement of punctuations and checking the repeated conjunctions to create meaningful sentences and paragraphs.

1-2 -3-4 Editing

Editing stage comes at the end in which students produce their final piece of writing. It is common to end up with some sentences that are poorly formulated. Writers need to look critically at where meaning could be conveyed in a more effective way or in fewer words. Fulwiler (2002) notes that "editing is polishing to make the paragraphs, the sentences and the individual words communicate carefully, correctly with clarity, style, and grace" (2002, p.178). In other words, editing involves looking at each sentence and make sure that it is well designed and serves its purpose.

In the same way, Starkey (2004) defines editing as "a word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence task" (2004, p.57). Therefore, this stage requires careful attention to every word in the piece of writing. Students can use the margin to note some comments that they notice while editing. Besides that, in this stage students can ask for help from a skillful friend in classroom because some mistakes the writer himself cannot notice them. On the other hand, there is teacher editing in which the teacher comments and uses correction symbols to guide students in editing their writing and correct mistakes by themselves such as capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar mistakes (Harmer, 2004, p. 111)

Consequently, editing is significant stage for students to submit a polished piece of writing. It is concerned with making each word, sentence and paragraph meaningful as well as serves the purpose of writing. This requires careful attention to correct their grammar mistakes, spelling, capitalization and punctuations. Teachers can help student in this stage by

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reading the work and commenting using the correction symbols to guide them in editing their writing by themselves.

1-2-4 Common Writing Mistakes of EFL Students

Making mistakes is something frequent which can happen during the process of acquiring a language (James, 1998). English writing skill is considered as a hard task for EFL students. Corder (1967) indicates that the mistakes committed by the EFL students are considered important aspect since they highlight the way language is acquired by students (1967, p.167). The "Elements of the Academic Essay" is taxonomy on academic writing developed by Gordon Harvey (n.d.). It consists of the key components of academic writing that are stated as the most common mistakes of EFL learners. These components are: theses statement, evidence, structure, stitching, style, readers' motivation, cohesion and coherence.

According to Harvey (n.d.) theses statement refers to the main idea that the writer tend to develop. He (n.d.) also adds that it demonstrates the main position of the piece of writing; that is, when the reader read the theses statement, he would know generally what the text is about. Thus, it should be limited enough and touches the total area of the text. Langan (1996) states three students' common mistakes in writing thesis statement. It may be an announcement of a subject but not a statement, the statement is either too general or too specific, and the statement includes more than one idea (1996, p. 42). The National Research Council (1996) emphasizes the importance of contributing explanations using evidence, which can result benefits for students. For instance, supporting their claims leads them to contribute a stronger understanding of their piece of writing (1996, p. 148). Evidence may include data, illustration, scientific truth or quote of experts. It is used to support the thesis and rise the credibility of the whole text. Student should bring realistic concrete evidence for the reader to accept it (Harvey, n.d.).

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Harvey (n.d.) further indicates that, the structure of academic writing reveals at the logical order of each sentence. In other words, any piece of writing should have a clear connection between the points conducted to make it easy for readers to follow and understand it. Students should avoid jump backward and forwards in order to reach a meaningful structure for their writing. According to Valdes (2019), all form of academic writing has a correspondent structure. The academic pieces of writing contain an introduction, body, and conclusion. In the introduction part the writer needs to mention the topic in general, specify the position of his writing and introduce the thesis statement. Each body paragraph supports one of the main points of thesis statement. The conclusion is often summarizes the main ideas, and the paper findings.

Stitching consist of using words or phrases that acts like connectors. It shows how the following sentence or paragraph follows smoothly the previous one (Harvey, n.d.). In fact, in writing tasks students have ideas in their minds but it would be difficult for them to write them down; they worried how they would be organized in the paper. They only need to relate them using linking words or transitions. Other difficulties that may face students are style and readers' motivation. Harvey (n.d.) states that the style refers to the choice of words to produce sentence structure. It should be concise and precise directly to the main point of the text otherwise they will lose the readers' motivation. As He (n.d.) indicates that the writer can attract the readers' attention to continue reading the piece of writing; this usually appear in the introductory paragraph to challenge their motivation towards the topic of the piece of writing.

Harvey's taxonomy also emphasizes that both cohesion and coherence are significant aspects in academic writing. Coherence is the way students writing make sense to readers in terms of ideas, that is; it guides the readers' interpretation of students writing, whereas; cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical relationships that occur between sentences

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which hold it together. Thus, Students should make sure that their piece of writing must be cohesive and coherent.

Overall, academic writing is significant aspect which has key elements to improve it. EFL students face difficulties on learning writing skill. Their common writing mistakes emerged from the following elements: theses statement, evidence, structure, stitching, style, readers' motivation, cohesion and coherence. Therefore, it can be noted that mistakes in academic writing made by EFL students are the results of their incomplete awareness of the learned language especially their incomplete background to academic writing components. Students need to take into consideration these mistakes and try to develop their level on writing skill.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the different aspects that are related to our subject of investigation. We have presented the definitions of some important concepts that are considered useful to comprehend our topic including discourse and written discourse. As well as, this chapter focuses on the writing skill by mentioning basics of effective writing and writing stages since they are considered as fundamental processes in our field of study. EFL Students should pay attention to these aspects and try to address their mistakes and difficulties in order to improve their performance.

Chapter Two: Cohesive Devices

Cohesive Devices

Introduction

Cohesive devices are considered one of the significant elements in academic writing. The following chapter will discuss the notion of the two concepts cohesion and coherence plus the differences between them according to Halliday and Hasan's "Cohesion in English" concerning the linguistic items that create both cohesion and coherence. In addition to, the overview of cohesive devices by providing the reader with the definition of cohesive devices, and the main classification of them, as well as the fundamental aspect concerning cohesive devices in details by presenting their definitions, function, types. This chapter also includes the crucial role of using cohesive devices for successful academic writing and students' common difficulties towards cohesive devices use.

2-1 The Concept of Cohesion

2-1-1 Overview of Cohesion and Coherence

Cohesion and coherence are considered as the greatest linguistic terms in academic writing which guarantee text comprehensibility. According to Tanskanen (2006) indicates that "cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical elements on the surface of a text which can form connections between parts of the text" whereas he adds, "Coherence resides not in the text, but is rather the outcome of a dialogue between the text and its listener or reader" (2006, p.7). Consequently, cohesion is about sentences structure and grammar rules of a text, and coherence is about meaning elements which exist through a text that allow readers to understand the text. Furthermore, Widdowson (1978) stated that cohesion is a matter of how appropriately sentences and its parts are related together within a text (1978, p.26). This means, the term cohesion refers to the connection that occurs between sentences in a text to ensure its effectiveness.

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Another characteristic of coherence is that "it allows a text to be understood in a real-world setting"(Witte & Faigley, 1981, p.199). Consequently, Coherence refers to the opportunity that is given to a text to be comprehensible according to its context. On the other hand, Kane (2003) emphasized, "Coherence means that the ideas fit together"(2003, p.95). Thus, to ensure that a text is coherent it should contain suitable relationship between thoughts, feeling and perception. Checking whether the sentences of a text correspond with its ideas is a useful way to test the coherence of confused ideas which affect the whole meaning of the text as well as readers understanding.

In short, both cohesion and coherence are essential aspects that form cohesive and meaningful writing. Cohesion studies the grammatical and semantic relation of sentences together, whereas coherence focuses on the meaning of sentences as whole. They are two different concepts but interconnected.

2-1-2 Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English

Halliday and Hasan are linguists who in 1976 put forward a framework for the analysis of cohesion in English language. Their goal is to examine the linguistic items that create cohesion. According to them, cohesion refers to semantic relations that can be found at the text level (1976, p.4). In other words, cohesion is expressed through grammar and vocabulary which present the semantic relation in any piece of writing. Therefore, Cohesion is divided into two types grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion includes elements such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction, whereas lexical cohesion contains reiteration and collocation (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.6). They also claim that grammatical and lexical devices become cohesive only when they are interrelated by three devices or more in the text (1976, p.5). That means if a text contains only one single device, it may not be

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cohesive by itself. Yet, creating cohesion needs at least three cohesive devices to contribute the unity of the text.

However, the perspective of the study presented by Halliday and Hasan were criticized by a number of researchers from several different perspectives. Widdowson (1978) claimed that "it is not difficult to provide the following interchange with a plausible interpretation, in spite of the complete absence of cohesion" (1978, p.29). When he (1978) said "the following interchange" he means the example that he gave which did not contain any cohesive device but it still had meaning. In addition, Hellman (1995) also stressed in the important of coherence within any piece of writing in his saying "coherence is regarded as a property that is constitutive of texts: What separates a text from a non-text is that the former is coherent, the latter is not" (1995, p.191). That is, coherence enables a piece of writing to be a text and distinguish it from a non-text. Therefore, both Widdowson and Hellman agreed that the creation of coherence can be made without the existence of cohesion. Furthermore, the linguists Carrell (1982) was ready to dispute the whole concept of cohesion and its theory (1982, p.487). She (1982) claimed that "cohesion is not the cause of coherence; if anything, it's the effect of coherence" (1982, p. 486). That is, the basic of cohesion is not truly proved and he considered that it is only formed due to a text's coherence

Halliday and Hasan (1976) agree with the point which considers cohesion important in building text unity due to the use of cohesive devices. However, Hellman (1995), Widdowson (1978) and Carrell (1982) claim that coherence produces a unified connection within a text without the existence of cohesion. Instead of deciding which one is more significant or more necessary, it is shown from the previous perspectives that both coherence and cohesion contribute the unity of text. Therefore, writers would give importance not only for cohesion, but also for coherence, because the two aspects are independent and interrelated in the same time.

Cohesive Devices

2-2 Cohesive Devices

Cohesive devices are words or phrases that act as connection between sentences of a text. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) cohesive devices are " a semantic relation between an element in a text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it" (1976, p.8). That is, cohesive devices are considered as structural relation within a text and elements that convey the intended meaning of the text. Additionally, they (1976) suggest that "the concept of ties makes it possible to analyze a text in terms of its cohesive properties and give a systematic account of its patterns of texture"(1976, p.4). They (1976) mean that text derives texture from cohesive ties which is considered as regular tools to express the coherence of a text.

Furthermore, Hedge (2005) stated that cohesive devices are "the means by which parts of text are linked as logically related sequences, they signal the relationship between ideas in such a way that the writer intentions are made clear"(2005, p.83). In other words, he (2005) described the cohesive devices as a tool of organized connection between the elements of the text as well as they facilitate to writers to show their ideas in understandable way for readers. Similarly, Harmer (2004) indicates that cohesive devices combined the elements of texts together for the reason of keeping the same meaning that the writer wants to convey and they play the role of showing how sentences are related to each other.

All in all, cohesive devices guarantee the semantic relation between elements of text. They highlight the texture of the text which considered as a regular tool to express coherence of texts. Cohesive devices keep the logical link between the elements of text as they present writers' ideas in clear way.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify cohesion into two categories grammatical and lexical cohesion. They (1976) summarized these cohesive devices in the following figure:

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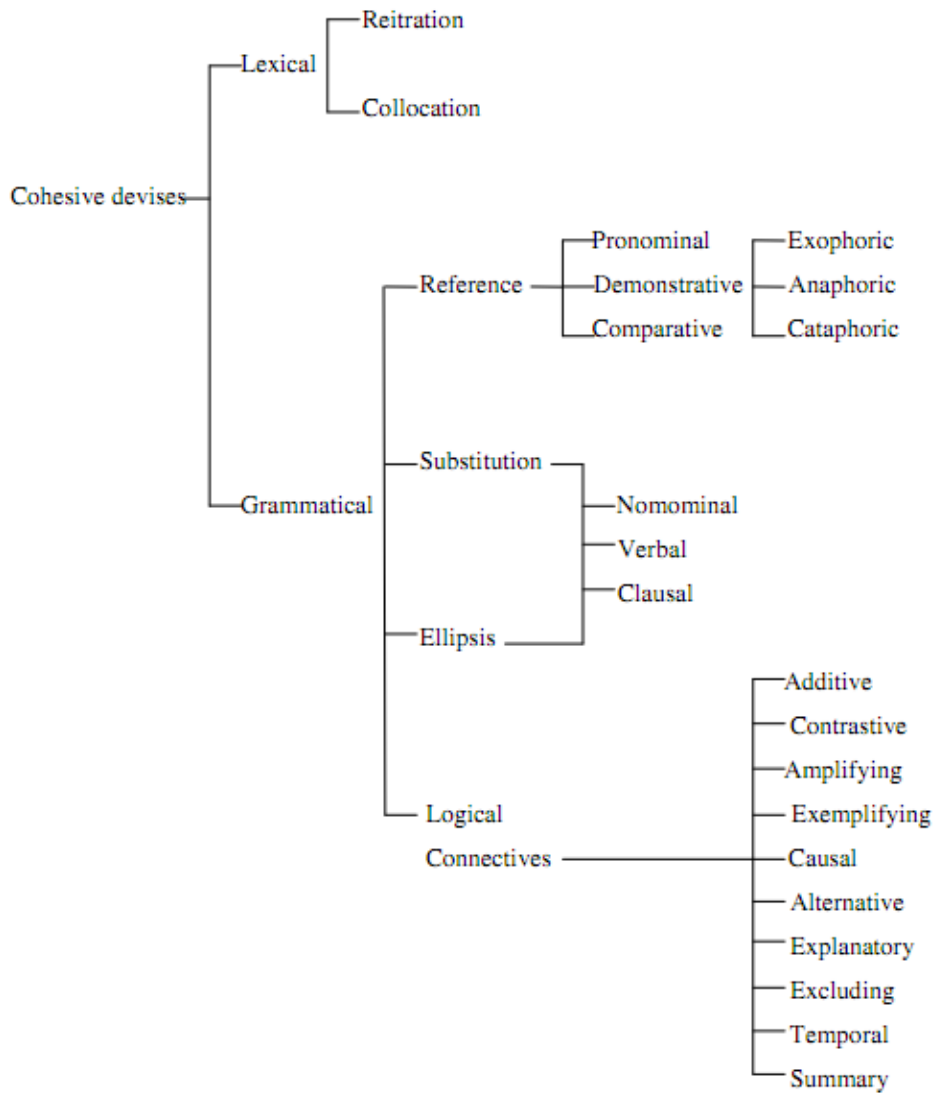


Figure 01: Types of Cohesive Devices in English

Williams, 1983 (cited in Kennedy, 2003, p. 23)

2-2-1 Classification of Cohesive Devices

Halliday and Hasan (1976) present taxonomy of various types of cohesive devices. They divide cohesion into two parts grammatical cohesive devices that include four categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions, and lexical cohesive devices that refers to two categories: reiteration and collocation (1976, p.16). They further indicate that each category is divided into a number of subcategories.

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The following table presents the division of the types of cohesion that will be discussed below (based on Halliday and Hasan, 1976):

Cohesion			
Grammatical Cohesion			Lexical Cohesion
Reference	Exophoric [situational]		Reiteration
	Endophoric [textual]		
	Anaphoric [to preceding text]	Cataphoric [to following Text]	
Substitution			General word
Ellipsis			Collocation
Conjunction			

Table 02: Types of Cohesion

(Tsareva, 2010, p. 10)

2-2-2 Grammatical Cohesion

Grammatical cohesion refers to the various grammatical devices that can be used to make relations among sentences more explicit. Grammatical cohesive devices are used to tie pieces of text together in a specific way. Their function is to help the reader understand the items referred to, the ones replaced and even the items omitted (Harmer, 2004). Carter et al. (2001) further indicate that grammatical cohesion is the way grammatical features are unique string of words (2001, p.158). Halliday and Hassan (1976) put forward the basic categories of grammatical cohesion pointing that we can systematize this concept by classifying it into a small number of distinct categories, they refer to them as: reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions.

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2-2-2-1 Reference

Reference can be identified as the situation in which one element cannot be semantically interpreted unless it is referred to another element in the text (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) Reference uses personal pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives to establish a cohesive relation between the cohesive item and its antecedent (1976, p. 37). Reference refers to systems which introduce and track the identity of participants through text (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Moreover, Witte and Faigley (1981) define reference cohesion as the use of words or items in the text that present other elements and serve its interpretation (1981, p. 191).

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) Reference may either be exophoric or endophoric. This is because simply when we refer to a given item, we expect the reader to interpret it by either looking forward, backward and outward. Exophoric reference requires the reader to infer the interpreted referent by looking beyond and out of the text in the immediate environment shared by the reader and writer. On the other hand, endophoric reference lies within the text itself (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 33). Paltridge (2012) Further indicate that endophoric reference is classified into two classes: anaphoric and cataphoric. Anaphoric reference is where a word or phrase refers back to another word or phrase used earlier in the text, whereas, cataphoric reference happens when a word refers to a forward word existed within the text (Paltridge, 2012, p. 115). In addition, McCarthy (1991) states, "Exophoric reference directs the receiver out of the text and into an assumed shared world" (1991, p. 1). That means, in exophoric reference the writer pushes the reader to think out of the text and focus more on the context.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) summarize the system of references in the following diagram:

Cohesive Devices

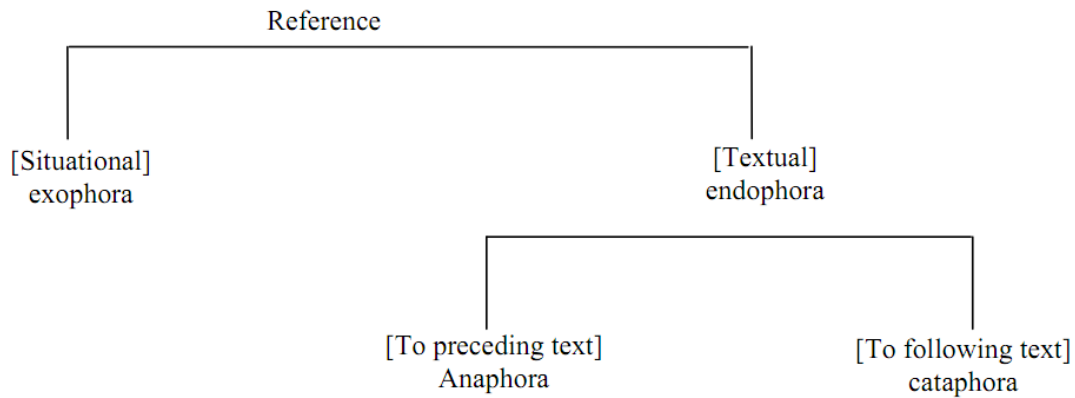


Figure 02: The System of Reference

(Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 33)

Halliday and Hasan (1976) emphasize that reference can be divided into three types: personal reference, demonstrative reference and comparative reference. Personal reference is a reference that functions in the speech situation through the category of person. There are three categories of personal: personal pronoun, possessive pronouns and possessive determiners (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.37). Demonstrative reference is a reference to location. It includes neutral and selective demonstrative. Neutral demonstrative represented with "the". While selective demonstrative has more item: this, that, these, those, here and there. (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 38). Comparative reference implies the existence of two or more ideas that are compared. It is indirect reference that shows identity or similarity. There are two kinds of comparison in comparative reference. They are general and particular comparison. General comparison means comparison that is simply in terms of likeness and unlikeness without expressing any particular property; two things may be the same, similar or different. Particular comparison means comparison that in respects the quantity or quality of something (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 39).

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2-2-2-2 Substitution

Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that substitution occurs when an item is replaced by another item in the text to avoid repetition. The difference between substitution and reference is that substitution lies in the relation between words, whereas reference between meanings. In other words, Substitution is grammatical relation rather than semantic relation (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 91). That is, substitution is used to avoid the repetition of particular item.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) there are three types of substitution nominal, verbal and causal substitution. Firstly, nominal substitution happens when a noun or a nominal group can be replaced by "one" or "ones" which functions as a head of nominal group. Nominal substitution is the largely used kind in writing (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 90-91). Secondly, verbal substitution involves substituting a verb or a verbal group with another verb. The verb element used to replace items in this type is "do" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 117). Thirdly, clausal substitution occurs when an entire clause can be replaced by "so" or "not". In this type of substitution the entire clause is presupposed, and the contrasting element is outside the clause (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 130).

2-2-2-3 Ellipsis

Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that ellipsis involves something which is not included in the sentence, however; its meaning is there. As Robbins (2007) emphasize that in English the reasons of ellipsis include avoiding repetition, economy of component, continuation of thoughts and constituting the concept of cohesion (2007, p.106). According to Quirk et al. (1985) ellipsis is regarded as grammatical omission in contrast to other types of omission; the words omitted if they are particularly recoverable and this recoverability of words depends on the context. In other words, the omission of words in ellipsis does not affect or change the meaning since they are already exist in the context but indirectly. Similarly, McCarthy (1991)

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shows that ellipsis means deleting an element without changing its case. Thus, the omitted element is known, in spite of its absence, since it is recoverable from the context. Marogy (2012) further indicates that "the aim of ellipsis is brevity and economy, but it can only occur when the speaker is certain that the listener is able to recover the full meaning of the utterance and the omitted word" (2012, p. 121).

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), English has three types of ellipsis: nominal, verbal and clausal (1976, p. 147). Firstly, nominal ellipsis is the ellipsis that occurs within the nominal group where the noun or pronoun is deleted (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 147). Similarly, This type of ellipsis is divided into sub-categories which are subject, object, auxiliary, predicate, adverbial, topic, comment, adjective, conjunctive noun, subject complement, and genitive ellipsis (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Secondly, verbal ellipsis is defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as an ellipsis within the verbal group. In other word, simply it involves the omission of the verb (1976, p.167). There are two types of verbal ellipsis, lexical ellipsis and operator ellipsis. Lexical ellipsis means deleting the lexical verb from the verbal group, that is; any verbal group not having a lexical verb is elliptical as in the following proposed example by Halliday and Hasan: A: Have you been running? , B: Yes, I have. In sentence (B) there is lexical ellipsis that consist the omission of lexical verb (running). Operator ellipsis, on the other hand, means deleting the subject and all the auxiliaries, except the lexical verb like in the following proposed example by Halliday and Hasan: A: What have you been doing? , B: Running. In sentence (B) there is operator ellipsis which is keeping the lexical verb (running) and omitting the rest of the sentence (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p. 167). Thirdly, the clausal ellipsis functions as verbal ellipsis, where the omission refers to a clause. It occurs if either the model element or propositional one is omitted (Halliday & Hasan,1976, p. 197).

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2-2-2-4 Conjunction

The fourth significant cohesive device in academic writing is conjunction. Conjunctions have been studied under various labels and have drawn much attention from various scholars in the field of English/Linguistics over time. Halliday and Hasan (1976) treat them as "linguistic devices that create cohesion" (1976, p.13). Conjunctive devices are not considered by themselves cohesive, but they relate the text with other element to enhance the intended meanings of it (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.226). Generally conjunctions are considered as linkers or connectors that may join two words, phrases, clauses or sentences together, either in speech or in writing as Leech and Svartvik (1994) note (1994, pp. 203-204).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) suggest four types of conjunctive cohesive devices that ensure cohesion in English. The first type is additive conjunctions. They structurally coordinate or link by adding to proposed item such as and, also, furthermore, in addition and so on. The second type is adversative conjunctions. They are used to express comparison or contrast between sentences and they include but, on the other hand, however, yet, and though...etc. The third type is causal conjunctions. They express the cause or reason of what is being stated. They include: then, so, hence, and therefore. The fourth type is temporal conjunctions. They represent sequence relationships between clauses and they include: next, secondly, then, and in the end. These types make a meaningful relation between words and sentences within a text that facilitate comprehension for readers (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 242-267).

Kennedy (2003) introduced a clear classification with illustration of the most common conjunction relationships which he summarized in the following table (2003, p.325):

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Relationship	Examples of Logical Connectives
Addition/inclusion	And, furthermore, besides, also, in addition, similarly
Contrast	But, although, despite, yet, however, still, on the other hand, nevertheless
Amplification	To be more specific, thus, therefore, consists of, can be divided into
Exemplification	For example, such as, thus, for instance
Cause-effect	Because, since, thus, as a result, so that, in order to, so, consequently
Alternative	Or, nor, alternatively, on the other hand
Explanation	In other words, that is to say, I mean, namely
Exclusion	Instead, rather than, on the contrary
Temporal arrangement	Initially, when, before, after, subsequently, while, then, firstly, finally, in the first place, still, followed by, later, continued
Summary/ Conclusion	Ultimately, in conclusion, to sum up, in short, in a word, to put it briefly, that is.

Table 03: Basic Conjunction Relationships in English

(Kennedy, 2003, p. 325)

2-2-3 Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion is created for the choice of a given vocabulary and its role is played by certain basic semantic relation between words in creating textuality, thus, it is the predominant means of connecting sentences in discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). That is,

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lexical cohesion is concerned with the relationship that exists between lexical items in a text such as words and phrases. Morley (2009) further indicates that lexical cohesion is about meaning in text. It concerns the way in which lexical items related to each other or to other cohesive devices so that textual continuity is created (Morley, 2009).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify two major subclasses of lexical cohesion: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration is the use of a word to refer back to other particular word that has mainly similar meaning. It is also divided into four subclasses, ranging from repetition of the same item to repetition through the use of a synonym or near-synonym, a superordinate item, or a general item (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.278). However, collocation is the use of a word that is in some way associated with another word in the preceding text (Halliday & Hasan, p.284). Moreover, Osisanwo (2005) represent the types of lexical cohesion with their subtypes in the following figure (based on Halliday and Hasan's work, 1976):

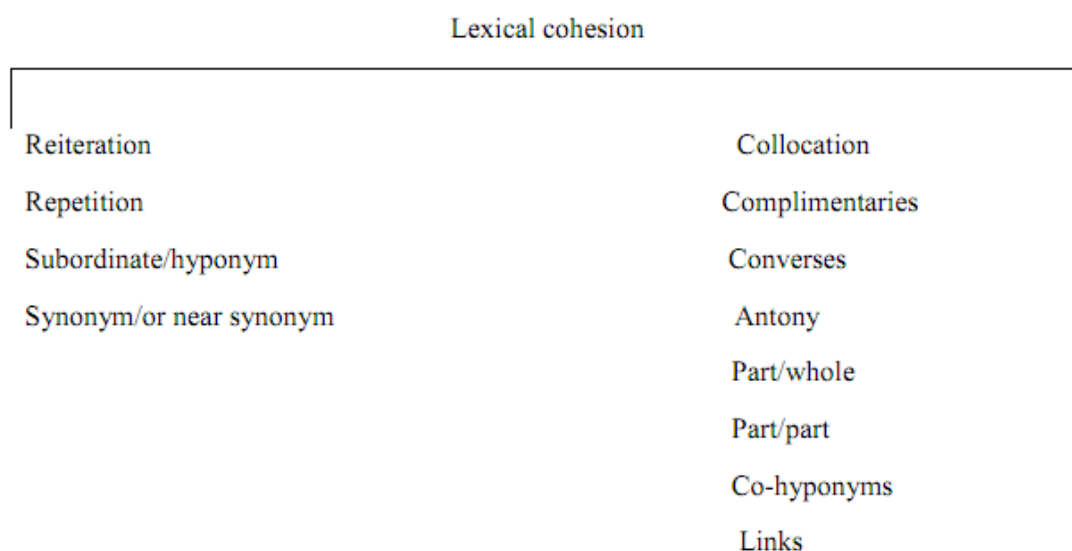


Figure 03: Types of lexical cohesion

(Osisanwo, 2005, p. 34)

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2-2-3-1 Reiteration

Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe reiteration as a phenomenon in which one lexical item refers back to another to which it is related by having a common referent (1976, p.278). That is, reiteration is the act of using a word to refer back to other particular word that has approximately similar meaning. They further define reiteration as "the repetition of a lexical item or the occurrence of a synonym of some kind, in the context of reference" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.318). In other words, reiteration is saying something several times by using two occurrences that have the same interpretation. On the other hand, both Gutwinski (1976) and Tannen (2007) agree that reiteration is considered as a stylistic feature of a writer since it mirrors the distinctive choices made by each writer. That is, Writers use reiteration as tool to show their style as long as it reflects their own writing choices (Gutwinski, 1976, p.80, Tannen, 2007, p.8) In English, reiteration contributes to text cohesion since it helps the reader to recall a lexical item and associate it with another repetition of the same word (Gutwinski, 1976, p. 80).

In English, reiteration may include the repetition of a lexical item, a general word referring back to a lexical item, the use of synonymy or near synonymy and superordinate (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 27). Firstly, repetition is the most direct form of lexical cohesion that occurs when a lexical item is repeated. Repeating the lexical item occurs either by full morphological repetition (total repetition) or by partial morphological repetition of the word stem or root (partial repetition) (Hoffmann, 2012, p. 87). Secondly, the general words correspond to major classes of lexical items. Not all general words are used cohesively; in fact only the nouns are when they have the same referent as whatever they presupposing, and when they are accompanied by reference item, for examples: the general word the bus is public transport (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 280). Thirdly, synonymy or near synonymy refer to the similarity of meaning between two or more items. Yule (2006) states that words,

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which are synonymous, can often be substituted in sentences. He (2006) adds that the sameness of meaning between synonymous words is not always total, that is; there are certain situations in which synonymous words cannot be substituted for each other (2006, p.104). Fourthly, the relation of superordinate refers to any item in which the meaning includes the meaning of a preceding item, or any word that controls the preceding one in the lexical taxonomy and it is also called hyponymy, for instance: the hyponymy of the noun furniture are tables, chairs and closets (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 280). Furthermore, according to Halliday and Mathiessen (2004) antonymy is a special case of synonymy and also functions with lexical cohesive effect in a text. In English, antonymy is the opposite of meaning between words (2004, p. 573). In other words, the writer uses the opposite of a noun or noun phrase to avoid repetition, yet it serve the same interpretation of that noun such as hot / cold.

2-2-3-2 Collocation

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), "collocation refers to lexical cohesion that is achieved through the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur" (1976, p. 284). Collocation is considered the most problematical part of lexical cohesion to analyze because items said to collocate involve neither repetition, synonymy, superordination, nor mention of general items, what is important is that the items said to collocate should share the same lexical environment (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 286). In the category of collocation cohesion, Halliday and Hasan (1976) emphasize that collocation is the use of a word that is in some way associated with another word in the preceding text because it is a direct repetition of it, or is in some sense synonymous with it, or tends to occur in the same lexical environment (1976, p. 139). Additionally, Nunan (1993) claims that collocation can cause major problems for discourse analysis; besides the difficult of its employment it also represents an obstacle in interpretation (1993, p. 29). Moreover, Tanskanen (2006) states, "collocation is a very subjective relation: what is considered as a valid relation will inevitably

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slightly vary from one communicator to the next" (2006, p. 34); in other words, collocation may be understood differently by readers or hearers.

McCarthy and O' Dell (2005) suggest six types of word combinations that can be created by collocation: adjectives + nouns, nouns + verbs, noun + noun, verbs + expressions with prepositions, verbs + adverbs, and adverbs + adjectives. That is, writers may develop collocation by linking words using one of the previous word combinations. Tanskanen (2006) develops a new categorization of collocation which is: ordered set, activity related collocation and elaborative collocation (2006, p. 61).

2-2-4 The Role of Cohesive Devices in the Writing Process

Any piece of writing must be organized in a way that ensures its cohesion. Using cohesive devices is one way to achieve cohesive writing. They are regarded as a crucial aspect for successful academic writing (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Thus, they are considered as tools that give good results by making connections between the different parts of any given text and each one has special function in writing. Cohesive devices are words and phrase which are used as helpful tools in order to create a meaningful text with a good style.

Furthermore, Halliday and Hasan (1976) considered cohesive devices as means used to connect sentences together and facilitate for the reader or the listener to understand the intended meaning without any difficulties. Therefore, they are necessary in any piece of writing in general and in any successful interpretation of the text in particular. Harmer (2004) states that cohesive devices help to bind elements of a text together so that we know what is being referred to and how the phrases and sentences are related to each other (2004, p. 24). That is, they enable the reader or the writer to understand how the various elements in the text are referred to, since they show the logical relationship between sentences and paragraphs.

Cohesive Devices

Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the text is dependent to another (1976, p. 4). Halliday and Hasan (1976) emphasize that concept of tie lead to analyze a text in terms of its cohesive properties and it gives a systematic account of its elements. Students need to understand how to employ these devices to make their text cohesive and coherent towards the main idea of the text. Cohesive ties can be in form of reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions, reiteration and collocation.

Reference plays the role of indicating information from another item such as personals, demonstratives, and comparatives to avoid repetition. Substitution acts as the replacement of one item by another to reduce the repetition of that item. Ellipsis plays the role of grammatical omission of recoverable item in order to avoid repetition and keep the same intended meaning. Conjunctions act as the logical connection between the elements within the text to indicate a specific meaning such as additive, adversative, casual and temporal. Reiteration plays the role of repeating the same or relative lexical items in order to confirm its meaning (1976, p. 4). Two roles of collocations were suggested by McCarthy and O'Neil (2017). First, they facilitate for students to express their spoken or written ideas naturally and concisely as native speakers. Second, students can earn lexical knowledge and enhance their vocabulary baggage. Wood (2002) further indicates that collocations serve the need for fluency in language acquisition. Therefore, there is a solid relationship between using collocation and language acquisition and performance.

To sum up, Cohesive devices are words or phrases used to connect ideas between different parts of text. Using them guides the reader to understand what message does the writer wants to convey. The main function of cohesive devices is to signal the relationships between the different clauses, sentences and paragraphs within the text. Cohesive devices make our content coherent and cohesive in order to facilitate its comprehension for readers.

Cohesive Devices

2-2-5 Students' Common Difficulties towards Cohesive Devices Use

EFL students face difficulties while using the cohesive devices in their academic writing. Students sometimes avoid the use of these devices in their academic writing, which could be a result of their fearing of making mistakes. Wikborg (1990) founds that EFL students often face cohesion difficulties in their writing that come from missing or misleading sentence relationships. This would be a cause of losing the real function of these devices. According to Halliday and Hasan's Taxonomy (1976), there are four types of errors while using cohesive devices: omission, addition, misformation and misordering errors. Omission error happens when students delete one or more than one word a sentence. That is, students may not include a type of CDs in the sentence despite it should be placed to complete the meaning of the sentence. Students also can make addition error, it is to add a word that the writer can delete from the sentence; which means students may add extra cohesive device in the sentence though it is useless. The sentence then would contain two cohesive devices. Another error could face students is misformation error. It occurs when the writer use the wrong form of a word in a sentence. Students find it difficult to choose the right cohesive device that suits more in their sentences. Missordering error refers to the use of cohesive device in the wrong place. That is, they have incomplete knowledge of their exact function. Student lack the ability to use the cohesive devices appropriately because of the lack writing practice and their limited awareness of cohesive devices use (Abduh, 2017) In short, the students' common difficulties that they face in using cohesive devices are addition, omission, misformation and misodering errors. Thus, Students should take into consideration the four types of mistakes and focus more on fixing them. This could be done by practicing the use of cohesive devices. They should try to be aware of each cohesive device function in order to develop meaningful sentences and paragraphs.

Cohesive Devices

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the aspect of cohesive devices. It introduces the definition of concepts that we consider helpful to the understanding of our topic of investigation including cohesion and coherence. The researcher attempts to stress on the definition of cohesive devices and their classification that contribute to well connect writing since they are considered as key terms in our field of study. This chapter also highlighted the role of cohesive devices in achieving and developing EFL students' academic writing that enable the reader to know how the different parts of the text are organized. It includes also, the students' common difficulties towards cohesive devices use. Thus, any piece of discourse written or spoken is supposed to use the necessary devices that contribute to the best understanding of the main elements in the text.

Chapter Three:

Field Work

Introduction

The present chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to theoretical framework, research questions and aims of the study. It is made up of three main sections. The first one is concerned with the discussion of the data of teachers' questionnaire to explore the performance and the level of third year students towards the use of cohesive devices. The second one is devoted to the discussion of students' questionnaire that aims at discovering their awareness and difficulties towards cohesive devices use in the academic writing. The third one deals with the corpus analysis of the results obtained from the students' writing productions and discusses whether they are familiar with the use of cohesive devices and their use of CDs. All in all, the researcher is going to discuss the findings in relation to the literature review using three research tools teachers' and students questionnaire and students' writing production.

Research Methodology

The research methodology that the researcher tends to use is a descriptive study. Third year students' writing production will be analyzed by exploring quantitatively the use of cohesive devices. It will be done by collecting and analyzing students' short expository essays. The method is mixed method, consisting of using corpus analysis of students' writings and questionnaires are addressed to the students and the teachers of written expression module.

Population and Sampling

The study population comprises third year student and written expression teachers at the Department of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The students' sample consists of twenty third year student. The researcher has chosen this sample randomly to

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represent the whole population of third year EFL student. The choice of students' sample is based on the fact that third year students are already studying how to develop an essay and expository essay is in their program and we suppose that they have ability to use cohesive devices in their academic writing. The teachers' sample consists of three written expression teachers. They were chosen to represent the whole population of written expression teachers. Thus, the two above samples were used to explore students' use, familiarity and difficulties towards the cohesive devices.

Data Collection Tools

The present research study involved three data collection tools teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire and students' writing production. A corpus analysis was conducted on students' essays writing; they were asked to write about one of the two topics: "Has the internet made the society better?" or "Do smart phones help the learning process?" in a form of short argumentative essay. This tends to evaluate their essays in terms of their use of cohesive devices. The questionnaires were administrated to both, students and teachers in order to investigate students' familiarity and attitudes towards the use of cohesive devices in their academic writing.

3- Discussion of Findings

3- 1 Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was addressed to three teachers of written expression module at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. Teachers' questionnaire is divided into three sections the first one includes general information concerning teachers' degree of qualification and how long they have been teaching English and especially written expression module. The

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second section is devoted to exploring the level of student's writing skill and their writing skill problems noticed by the teachers. The third section seeks to explore students' attitudes towards using cohesive devices in order to see their familiarity towards using cohesive devices and if they use them correctly. In short, teachers' questionnaire is one of research tools that aims at exploring students' attitudes towards the use of cohesive devices depending on teachers' experience and attitudes.

3- 1 -1 Description of the Questionnaire

❖ General Information

The first section is devoted to describe the general information of the teachers. It contains three (3) questions: the first one is concerned with the degree of qualification under four (4) options: PH.D (Doctorat), MA (Magister), MA (Master) and BA (License). The other question is about how long they have been teaching English and the options given are from one year to more than fifteen (15) years. The third question is about how long they have been teaching the module of written expression and the options given are the same as the previous question.

❖ Students' Writing Skill

The second section focuses on academic writing skill of third year students. It includes five (5) questions; four of them are multiple choice questions (Q₁, Q₂, Q₃, Q₄), and the last one has two parts; the first part is closed ended question (Q_{5.a}) and the second one is open ended question (Q_{5.b}). The aim of this section is highlighting students' writing skill level and difficulties by relying on written expression teachers' answers.

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❖ Students' Attitudes towards Using Cohesive Devices

The third section is devoted to describe students' attitudes towards the use of cohesive devices. It contains six (6) questions; the first question (Q₁) and the first part of the third question (Q_{3.a}) are closed ended questions, the following ones (Q₂, Q₄, Q₅) are multiple choice questions, and the second part of the third question (Q_{3.b}) and the last one (Q₆) are open ended questions. The purpose behind this section is to explore students' attitudes and difficulties towards the use of cohesive devices in academic writing according to the experiences of written expression teachers.

3- 1 - 2 Result of the Questionnaire

The data and responses gathered from teachers' questionnaire are mentioned in the following tables:

❖ Section One

Question 01: What is the degree of your qualification?

Qualification degree	Frequency	Percentage
PH.D (Doctorat)	3	100%
MA (Magister)	/	/
MA (Master)	/	/
BA (License)	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 04: Teachers' Qualification Degree

The result obtained from the above table present teachers' qualification degree. It is noteworthy that all teachers (100%) have achieved PH.D degree. This insures the high of academic qualification of the teachers.

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Question 02: How long have you been teaching English?

Years of teaching English	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	1	33.3%
5-10 years	1	33.3%
10-15 years	1	33.3%
More than 15 years	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 05: Years of Teaching English

The table 05 is about years of teaching English language by the participants. From the results presented in this table, we can see the variety of their experience. One of them have been teaching English for 1 to 5 years (33.3%), the other one have been teaching English for 5 to 10 years (33.3%), and the last one have been teaching English for 10 to 15 years (33.3%). Thus, the teachers have been teaching English for different period of times which indicates the professional experience they own and the reliability of the results derived from their questionnaire.

Question 03: How long have you been teaching the module of written expression?

Years of teaching written expression module	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	2	66.7%
5-10 years	1	33.3%
10-15 years	/	/
More than 15 years	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 06: Years of Teaching Written Expression Module

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The results in the table above introduce the years of teaching written expression module by the participants. (66.7%) of the them have been teaching written expression for 1 to 5 years and (33.3%) of them have been teaching English for 5 to 10 years. Consequently, the experience they have in teaching the module could be described as relatively below average. Nonetheless, it can be sufficient for the purpose of this research.

❖ Section Two

Question 01: In your opinion, which skill does the majority of your students find difficult to master?

Skills	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking	/	/
Writing	3	100%
Listening	/	/
Reading	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 07: The Most Difficult Skill

The table 07 shows the most difficult skill for third year students. As it is noticed, all the teachers (100%) agreed that writing is most difficult skill for the majority of third year students. According to this result, we can say that most of third year students still struggle with developing acceptable academic pieces of writing since the three respondents have the same opinion that said writing is the difficult skill for students.

Question 02: Do you think that your students are interested in academic writing?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
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Very interested	/	/
Somewhat interested	2	66.7%
Neutral	1	33.3%
Not very interested	/	/
Not at all interested	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 08: Students' Interest towards Academic Writing

The data displayed in the table above shows students' interest towards academic writing. (66.7%) of teachers' response indicate that third year students are somewhat interested in academic writing. However, the other (33.3%) of teachers' response was that students are neutral toward writing skill interest. Therefore, these results affirm that some of third year student are aware about the importance of writing and a few of them are not aware of its importance.

Question 03: How can you evaluate your students' academic writing?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	1	33.3%
Pre-intermediate	/	/
Intermediate	2	66.7%
Upper- intermediate	/	/
Advanced	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 09: Evaluation of Students' Academic Writing

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The table 09 is about teachers' evaluation of students' academic writing. We can see that (66.7%) of teachers evaluate third year students as intermediates in this aspect. However, (33.3%) of them describe students as beginners. Thus, the result obtained from teachers' evaluation is that students' level in academic writing range between average and below average.

Question 04: From your experience, what are the most common writing problems you always notice in your students' academic writing?

Students' writing problems	Frequency	Percentage
Evidence	1	33.3%
Stitching	/	/
Style	1	33.3%
Structure	/	/
Cohesion and coherence	/	/
Readers' motivation	/	/
Thesis statement	1	33.3%
Others	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 10: Students' Common Writing Problems

The above table presents students' common writing problems. It shows that one teacher (33.3%) indicates evidence as students' writing problem, another one (33.3%) pointed style as students' writing problem, and the third one (33.3%) noted thesis statement as students' writing problem. Over all, according to teachers' experience we may say that evidence, style and thesis statement are the common students' writing problems, however; the respondents have not considered cohesion to be a prevailing writing problem.

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Question 5.a: Do you think that the time allocated as well as the place to teach written expression is sufficient to encourage students to better understand and assign academic writing activities?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
No	1	33.3%
Somehow	1	33.3%
Yes	1	33.3%
Total	3	100%

Table 11: Teachers' Opinion towards Time and Place Allocated of Written Expression

The table 11 collects the opinions of teachers toward the effects of time and place allocated for written expression in encouraging students' understanding of academic writing activities. The results show that (33.3%) of teachers responded with no, the other (33.3%) of them answered somehow, and the rest (33.3%) said yes. Consequently, the results of this question consist of three remarkably different opinions, that is, the time and the place allocated of the written expression module may be sufficient to encourage students better understand academic writing activities as it may not be. The reasons there are different responses could be explained through their answers to the follow-up question.

Question 5.b: In all cases, explain why?

The explanations in all cases:

- **No**

One of the teachers pointed that students need more time for practice. That is, time and place allocated to teach written expression is not a real reason for students to understand the academic writing activities, however; they need extra time to reach that.

- **Somehow**

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Another participant was partly agreed that the time and the place scheduled is sufficient for better understanding writing activities and he stated that students need more practical sessions.

- **Yes**

The rest respondent agreed that time is sufficient just lack of collaboration between course designers and more motivation and engagement from learners, which means students' motivation, also play a role towards the way the course is designed to understanding writing tasks.

❖ Section Three

Question 01: Are your students familiar with cohesive devices?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
No	/	/
Somehow	1	33.3%
Yes	2	66.7%
Total	3	100%

Table 12: Students' Familiarity of Cohesive Devices

The table 12 introduces the familiarity of students towards cohesive devices. (33.3%) of teachers indicated that students are somehow familiar with cohesive devices. However, (66.7%) of teachers agreed that students are familiar with cohesive devices. Therefore, the result obtained from the table above is that a considerable number of students are familiar with cohesive devices.

Question 02: How many of your students use cohesive devices in their academic writing?

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Options	Frequency	Percentage
None of them	/	/
A few of them	1	33.3%
Some of them	/	/
Most of them	2	66.7%
All of them	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 13: Students' Use of Cohesive Devices

The table above shows students' use of cohesive devices. There are two different opinions of teachers: (33.3%) of them noted that a few of students use cohesive devices. On the other hand, (66.7%) of the participating teachers pointed that most of students use cohesive devices. According to these results, we may say that the majority of third year students use cohesive devices and give it importance while constructing their academic writing.

Question 3.a: In your opinion, do they use cohesive devices correctly in their academic writing?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
No	/	/
Somehow	3	100%
Yes	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 14: Students' Correct Use of Cohesive Devices

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The table 14 displays students' correct use of cohesive devices. The responses of the teachers are all the same, that is; (100%) of the respondents agreed that students use cohesive devices somehow correctly. Thus, from the table we can notice that the majority of students have some knowledge about the correct use of cohesive devices.

Question 3.b: If no, please specify?

None of them answered "No".

Question 04: What are the most used cohesive devices by your students?

Cohesive devices	Frequency	Percentage
References	/	/
Substitution	/	/
Ellipsis	/	/
Conjunctions	3	100%
Reiteration	/	/
Collocation	/	/
Others?	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 15: The Most Used Cohesive Devices by Students

The table 15 illustrates the most used cohesive devices. All the participating teachers (100%) agreed that the most used cohesive devices by students are conjunctions. Consequently, it is noteworthy that the majority of third year students are capable of using conjunctions in their academic writing besides that their use is limited to conjunctions and there is not a variety of use of other devices as noticed by teachers.

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Question 05: From your experience, what difficulties do your students face when they write using cohesive devices?

Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Omission error	1	33.3%
Addition error	/	/
Misformation error	2	66.7%
Misordering error	/	/
Others?	/	/
Total	3	100%

Table 16: Students' Difficulties towards the Use of Cohesive Devices

The above table highlights students' difficulties in using the cohesive devices. (66.7%) of the participants indicate that misformation errors are the most noticeable difficulty that students face while using cohesive devices. On the other hand, (33.3%) of teachers pointed that omission error is the cause of students' difficulties. Overall, according to teachers' responses omission and misformation errors are students' common difficulties towards the use of cohesive devices, that is; they are weak in terms of the correct way to use cohesive devices specially when they omit words or use the wrong form of words that affect and change the meaning.

Question 06: What are your suggestions for students to develop the use of cohesive devices as a tool to improve their writing skill?

The suggestions:

- More practice and being exposed to authentic academic materials.
- Using cohesive devices will certainly help students in maintaining a smooth move from one idea to another.

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- Reading composition models that illustrate for cohesion and write similar pieces of writing.

As it mentioned above, students should take into consideration that the more they practice the use of cohesive devices through reliable academic tools the more they develop their writing skill. Also, they should read the pieces of writing that illustrate for cohesion to be able to produce similar writings. Thus, the connection of ideas will be strongly built due to the use of cohesive devices.

3 - 1 - 3 Discussion of the results of Teachers' Questionnaire

The results collected from teachers' questionnaire reveal that they all agree that the most difficult skill for students to master is writing. In other words, almost all third year students lack the ability to form and write well-structured piece of writing. Therefore, teachers suggest for students to practice more the academic writing and do not rely only on the scheduled sessions. The data obtained from this research tool is that some of third year students are somehow interested in academic writing. As it is noticeable that some of them give importance to writing skill, but a few of them are not at all aware about its importance. Moreover, third year students are considered between beginners and intermediates according to teachers' evaluation in terms of academic writing skill. Students' common writing problems may appear in their evidence, that is; they are not able to contribute strong evidences to support their main idea while writing. Thesis statement also might be a problem for some students during writing task, as well as; the problem of their weak style that may affect their successful academic writing.

The results also show that students are familiar with the concept of cohesive devices. From teachers' experience we can say that most of third year students use cohesive devices in their academic writing, however; their use of cohesive devices needs improvement. All

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teachers agree that the most used ones are mainly conjunctions, which means that students are able to use it and they are aware of its meaning and function too. According to teachers, the omission error and the misformation error are the common difficulties that face the majority of students while using cohesive devices in their academic writing. In other words, students are confused to select the suitable words to connect their ideas and sentences. Consequently, they use the wrong form or structure of the word, or omit one word or more than one word which is actually important for sentence meaning. The teachers suggest that the more students practice the use of CDs using reliable academic sources the more their writing will be improved since they are considered helpful to build strong relationship between ideas of the piece of writing. Reading text that demonstrates cohesion is also beneficial for students to produce similar ones.

In short, it is noteworthy that writing is the most difficult skill for third year students. The target students are familiar with cohesive devices; however, their use of them is limited to one type, which is conjunctions. Teachers indicate that students struggle with using the devices appropriately. The common difficulties that face third year students while using cohesive devices are omission error and misformation error. Teachers state that is important to take into consideration the pieces of advice and start working on.

3- 2 Students' Questionnaire

This part deals with the description and the analysis of the students' questionnaire. The questionnaire was submitted to twenty third year EFL students. It aims at exploring their performance towards academic writing skill. The researcher tends to analyze their awareness towards cohesive devices use and the difficulties that face them while using cohesive devices in academic writing, as well as, the most common cohesive devices they use. Overall, students' questionnaire is one of research tools that aim at exploring students' familiarity and difficulties toward the use of cohesive devices in academic writing.

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3 - 2 - 1 Aim of the Students' Questionnaire

The first section focuses on describing the general information of students. It involves two questions: the first one is concerned with the gender of the students. The other one is about their English level, it is under five (5) options which are: beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. Thus, the aim of those two questions is to take students' English level into consideration while analyzing their responses of the questionnaire.

The second section focuses on academic writing skill of third year students. It includes seven (7) questions; five of them are multiple choice questions (Q₁, Q₂, Q₃, Q₄, Q₅), and the last two questions have two parts; the first parts are closed ended questions (Q_{6.a} and Q_{7.a}) and the second ones are open ended questions (Q_{6.b} and Q_{7.b}). The aim of this subsection is to explore students' perspectives on their writing skill and the difficulties they face when writing.

The third section is devoted to the students' attitudes towards using cohesive devices. It contains seven (7) questions; all of them are multiple choice questions, except the third one, which contains a table in which students are asked to tick the most used cohesive devices in their academic writing and to give examples for each one. Those questions aim at exploring students' attitudes and difficulties towards the use of cohesive devices in academic writing.

3 - 2 - 2 Results of the Students' Questionnaire

❖ General Information

Question 01: Specify your gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	35%
Female	13	65%

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Total	20	100%
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Table 17: Students' Gender

The table 17 indicates the gender of the participants. Both of genders are present in students' questionnaire; (35%) of students are male, however; (65%) of them are female. As we can notice that the presence of female is more than male. Therefore, the majority of the participants are female.

Question 02: What can you say about your English level?

English Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	/	/
Pre-intermediate	5	25%
Intermediate	11	55%
Upper-intermediate	4	20%
Advanced	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 18: Students' English Level

The result obtained from the above table present the English level of the participating students. There is a considerable variety in students' level; (25%) of students consider themselves as beginners in English, (55%) of them claimed that they are intermediates, and the remaining percentage (20%) indicated, that they are upper-intermediates.

❖ Students' Writing Skill

Question 01: Which language skill is the most difficult for you?

Skills	Frequency	Percentage
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Reading	1	5%
Writing	12	60%
Speaking	4	20%
Listening	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Table 19: The Most Difficult Skill for Students

The above table highlights students' most difficult skill. As it is mentioned, the majority of participants (60%) claimed the writing skill as the most difficult skill. (20%) considered speaking as the most difficult skill for them. Besides, (15%) of them mentioned speaking as the difficult one. However, only (5%) of students indicated that reading is the more difficult one. Overall, the result yielded from this question is that the most difficult skill for the majority of students is the writing skill.

Question 02: Do you think that it is important to develop the skill of writing in English?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	/	/
Disagree	/	/
Strongly Agree	11	55%
Agree	6	30%
Neutral	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Table 20: The Importance of Writing Skill for Students

The table 20 illustrates the importance of developing writing skill for students. It is noteworthy that (55%) of students strongly agree with the importance of developing the

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writing skill. (30%) also agree with this point. On the other hand, the low percentage (15%) represents the students who feel neutral towards that. Another important observation is that no participant disagrees with idea that it is important to develop writing skill. According to students' opinions presented above, we assumed that most of students agreed with the idea that developing their writing skill is an important aspect.

Question 03: What can you say about your level of writing?

Levels of writing	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	4	20%
Pre-intermediate	/	/
Intermediate	13	65%
Upper-intermediate	/	/
Advanced	3	15
Total	20	100%

Table 21: Students' Level of Writing

The table above introduces the writing level of the students. The highest rate (65%) presents students who consider themselves to have an intermediate level. (15%) of students claimed that they have upper-intermediate writing level. On the other hand, the percentage (20%) refers back to students who consider themselves beginners in terms of writing skill. The result obtained from this question shows that the majority of third year students are perceive themselves to be intermediate in terms of writing skill.

Question 04: In your opinion, which of the following components is important in academic writing?

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Components	Frequency	Percentage
Thesis statement	3	15%
Evidence	2	10%
Stitching	/	/
Style	5	25%
Structure	4	20%
Cohesion and coherence	3	15%
Readers' motivation	3	15%
Sources	/	/
Others?	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 22: The Important Components of Academic Writing for Students

The results in the above table introduce the important components of academic writing according to students' opinions. Their opinions are diverse, for instance; (25%) refers to students choice of style as an important component of academic writing, while 20% of students chose structure as the important one. Thesis statement, cohesion and coherence, and readers' motivation are under the same percentages (15%) that are stated by students. Only (10%) of students indicated that evidence is the important components of academic writing. None of them chose the other two component stitching and sources. Therefore, we may say that students consider all the mentioned components important in academic writing except the unselected once which are stitching and sources. A remarkable note indicates that students give importance to cohesion which is the scope of our study; that means they are aware of its sufficient role in producing successful academic writing.

Question 05: While doing your writing task, do you?

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- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| a) Start writing immediately | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Think first about the ideas that you want to involve | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Write down your ideas into sentences and paragraphs | <input type="text"/> |
| d) Prepare an outline then follow it | <input type="text"/> |

Options	Frequency	Percentage
A	6	30%
B	11	55%
C	3	15%
D	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 23: Students' Steps in Writing Tasks

The table 23 presents students' used steps in their writing tasks. The highest percentage (55%) refers to the students who think first about the ideas that they want to involve before start writing. While, (30%) of the participating students start their writing directly and only (15%) of them write down their ideas in forms of sentences and paragraphs. As it is noticed, a considerable number of students prefer to think first about what ideas to include and then start writing. This indicates that they acknowledge the importance of the organization of their ideas during the writing tasks.

Question 6.a: Do you follow these stages when you write (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing)?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
No	11	55%
Yes	9	45%

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Total	20	100%
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Table 24: Students' Use of Writing Stages

The table above displays students' use of writing stages. As it is noticed in the table, more than half of the students (55%) answered that they do not follow stages of academic writing. On the other hand, the rest of the percentage (45%) represents the students who indicate the use of those stages. Thus, we can say that the majority of third year students do not follow the writing stages, whereas; a few of them follow the stages of academic writing. This indicates that they neglect the role of these stages to improve their writing skill.

Question 6.b: If yes, what is the most difficult stage for you?

One of students said prewriting stage, three of them said revising stage and five of them said editing stage. The aim of this question is to discover whether the difficult stages for them are revising or editing stage because they are the stages in which writers use the cohesive devices in academic writing.

Question 7.a: Do you face difficulties while linking your sentences or paragraph to each other?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
No	5	25%
Yes	15	75%
Total	20	100%

Table 25: Students' Difficulties while linking their Sentences or Paragraphs

The results mentioned in table 25 are about students' difficulty towards linking sentences and paragraphs. More than half of students (75%) find it difficult to link sentences and paragraphs together. However, a few of them (25%) indicate that they do not face problems

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when linking. Therefore, from the collected data, most third year students are struggling to create well connected sentences and paragraphs.

Question 7.b: If yes, explain how?

The explanation:

- I have problem with linking word and ideas together. (this explanation is provided by four students)
- I think I don't know how to use the linking tools.
- Well ... I think we need more grammatical courses this is my opinion.
- By knowing which one the best transition word that suits the situation (this statement is provided by two students).
- I do not know what and how to use the linking word (this explanation is provided by five students).
- I feel confused when and where to place them.
- I find it difficult to relate my sentences.

It is noteworthy that, students' difficulties towards the creation of connected sentences and paragraphs are with linking word and ideas together. They do not know which, how and when to use the appropriate transition words. This could be resulted by the unawareness of the function of each linking word, which leads students fell confused while using them.

Question 7.c: If no, explain how you link them?

The explanation:

- When I write paragraph the ideas will comes directly Linking or sometimes I link them so easy.
- It comes just like this when I think of the topic I write what comes in my mind
- Using conjunctions and connectors

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- Linking words and transitions
- It's easy for me to link my sentences to each other because the first step in writing a clear paper is creating separate paragraphs for each idea that supports the paper's main thesis.

It is remarkable that the participants who claim that they do not have difficulties towards linking sentences and paragraphs, they practice more the writing skill. They are able to use conjunctions, transitions and linking word.

❖ Students' Attitudes towards Using Cohesive Devices

Question 01: How familiar are you with cohesive devices?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very familiar	/	/
Familiar	11	55%
Slightly familiar	6	30%
Unfamiliar	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Table 26: Students' Familiarity of Cohesive Devices

The results collected in the above table show the familiarity of students towards cohesive devices. 55% responded that they are familiar to cohesive devices. 30% referred back to students whom are slightly familiar. Whereas, the rest of the percentage 15% of the respondents claimed that they are unfamiliar with these devices. Consequently, it is noteworthy that the majority of sample is familiar with the cohesive devices, nevertheless; a few of them do not.

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Question 02: Select the cohesive devices that you know\ Studied in class?

The known cohesive devices	Frequency	Percentage
References	4	20%
Substitution	/	/
Ellipsis	/	/
Conjunctions	11	55%
Reiteration	4	20%
Collocation	1	5%
Others?	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 27: The Most Known Cohesive Devices for Students

The table 27 introduces the common known cohesive devices for students. More than half of students (55%) chose conjunctions as the most known device. The two devices, reference and reiteration are presented under the percentage of (20%) for each. Only (5%) of them claimed that they know the collocation device. Conjunctions tend to be the most known cohesive devices by the students. References and reiteration are also among the devices that students are quite familiar with, nonetheless, to a small extent in comparison to conjunctions.

Question 03: What are the cohesive devices that you use most in your academic writing (paragraph or essay)?

The most used cohesive devices	Frequency	Percentage
References	5	25%
Substitution	/	/
Ellipsis	/	/

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Conjunctions	10	50%
Reiteration	5	25%
Collocation	/	/
Others?	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 28: The Most Used Cohesive Devices by Students

The table 28 shows the most used cohesive devices by students. As it is mentioned, the (50%) of students uses mostly the conjunctions device. On the other hand, the rest percentage (50%) is divided in half for the two selected devices references and reiteration by students. Thus, the most used cohesive devices by third years students are mainly conjunctions besides the two other once references and reiteration. From the responses of (Q2) and (Q3), it is noteworthy that students use the cohesive devices that they already known/ studied but the participant who claims his/her knowledge towards collocation do not use it; this could be for its difficulty.

Students' examples of cohesive devices:

Conjunctions: therefore, however, because, but, as result, in short, and, in addition to, whereas, so.

References: better, much, more, it, they, these, that, its, there.

Reiteration: they use repetition and synonyms.

Question 04: How important do you think using cohesive devices is in improving your writing skill?

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Options	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	/	/
Somewhat important	7	35%
Very important	13	65%
Extremely important	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 29: The Importance of Using Cohesive Devices for Students

The above table presents students' opinions towards the importance of using cohesive devices. The highest percentage (65%) refers to students who answered that using cohesive devices is very important. The rest of the percentage (35%) represents those who claimed that the use of cohesive devices is somewhat important. It could be noticed that none of them thought that the use of cohesive devices is not at all important. Therefore, it is clearly that students see the use of those devices as an important aspect while writing academically.

Question 05: How often do you use these cohesive devices in your academic writing?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Never	/	/
Rarely	6	30%
Sometimes	9	45%
Often	2	10%
Always	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Table 30: The Frequency of Cohesive Devices Use by Students

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The table 30 illustrates data for the frequency of using cohesive devices by students. As it mentioned above, nearly half of the students (45%) use cohesive devices. Whereas, the percentage (30%) represents the students that rarely use cohesive devices. The rest (15%) and (10%) refer to the responses of students that often and always use those devices. Consequently, there is variety of frequency of cohesive devices use; however, the highest percentage indicates that students sometimes use those devices in their academic writing.

Question 06: In which stage of writing do you use cohesive devices?

Writing stages	Frequency	Percentage
Prewriting	3	15%
Drafting	11	55%
Revising	2	10%
Editing	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Table 31: The Writing Stage in which Students Use Cohesive Devices

The above table illustrates the writing stage in which students use the cohesive devices. The highest percentage (55%) of students stated that they use them at the stage of drafting. (20%) of the respondents indicated that they use them at the editing stage. The percentage (15%) show using those devices at the prewriting stage. Concerning the remaining rate (10%), it refers to using them at the revising stage. Therefore, slightly more than half of the students use cohesive devices in the drafting stage.

Question 07: What are the difficulties that you face when you write using cohesive devices?

Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Omission error	9	45%

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Addition error	3	15%
Misformation error	6	30%
Misordering error	2	10%
Others?	/	/
Total	20	100%

Table 32: Students' Difficulties while Using Cohesive Devices

The data in the table 32 displayed students' difficulties towards using cohesive devices. The highest percentage (45%) of students stated omission error as their difficulty while using cohesive devices. Then, (30%) presents the students that recognize misformation error as the most difficult aspect they face. Only (15%) of them encounter difficulty at the level of addition error. While, the rest (10%) students declare to face another problem which is misordering error. Thus, from the above details we notice that students actually face all the mentioned problems or difficulties with varying degree, but the most common ones are omission and misformation errors.

3 - 2 - 3 Discussion of the results of Students' Questionnaire

The analysis of the questionnaire's results illustrates that the majority of students are aware of the writing skill importance. It shows also that most of them are considered average in writing skill. The collected data indicates that both revising and editing stages are the more difficult ones for them in which the cohesive devices should be used. The questionnaire evaluation shows that using the CDs in these stages could be the reason why they find them difficult to reach. The analysis also shows that students have difficulties towards linking sentences and paragraphs while writing academically. This could be explained that they do not know how, when and where to use the linking words and transitions, in other words; the

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majority of students are not able to hold their sentences and paragraphs together to form a unified piece of writing.

The analysis of the previously mentioned results indicates that a considerable number of students recognize the importance of using cohesive devices in academic writing. The majority of them are familiar with these devices. It also shows that the most known and used type of these devices are conjunctions. It could be noticed from the results that few students are familiar with references and reiterations. According to the frequency of cohesive devices use by students; the highest number of them sometimes uses the cohesive devices especially in drafting stage of writing. The analysis also demonstrates that the difficulties that students face are omission, misformation , addition and misordering error.

Overall, most of students are considered to have intermediate level in English and writing skill as well, but they still face difficulties toward an important components in writing which is cohesion. The majority of them are familiar with the use of cohesive devices especially conjunctions, references and reiteration whereas they are not familiar with the other ones (substitution, ellipsis and collocation). Besides, students acknowledge their difficulties towards using those devices in writing which are mainly omission and misformation errors. The analysis also illustrates the lack of familiarity with other types of cohesive devices and the difficulties that result from the lack of practice require more focus on improving students' knowledge and skills in this aspect.

3- 3 Analysis of Students written Production

The third data collection tool used for the purpose of answering the research questions is corpus analysis of students' written production. The researcher has asked a random sample of twenty third year EFL students of English Department at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra to write short argumentative essay. I have proposed for them to choose one of the two

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topics; the first topic is: Has the Internet Made the Society Better? , and the second one is Do Smart Phones Help the Learning Process?. The purposes behind using this research tool is exploring quantitatively the use of cohesive devices in those students' writing production, discovering the patterns of use of cohesive devices and seeing to what extent do cohesive devices enhance students' academic writing. In brief, students' writing production is one of research tools which aims at exploring their familiarity and their use of cohesive devices.

3 - 3 - 1 Discussion of the Analysis of Students' Written Production

3- 3- 1- 1 The Frequency of Grammatical Cohesive Devices Use

The data collected from students' use of grammatical cohesive devices are mentioned in the following tables:

❖ Students' Use of References

Total use of References devices	Types of References used	Number of devices	Percentage
263	Personal References	179	68.06%
	It	56	21.29%
	Its	8	3.04%
	They	33	12.55%
	Their	2	0.76%
	Them	6	2.28%
	You	30	11.41%
	Your	8	3.04%
	Our	29	11.03%
	Us	7	2.66%
	Demonstrative References	44	16.72%
	This	5	1.90%
	That	22	8.36%
	These	14	5.32%
	Those	2	0.76%
There	1	0.38%	
Comparative References	40	15.20%	

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	As	7	2.66%
	much	8	3.04%
	More	9	3.42%
	Less	2	0.76%
	Better	3	1.14%
	Such	1	0.38%
	like	4	1.52%
	Same	1	0.38%
	So	5	1.90%

Table 33: Frequency of Students' Use of References

The above table represents the frequency of references used by students. As it is mentioned, the total use of references is about 263 devices, that is (35.98%) of the whole use of cohesive devices by students. The personal reference is the highest percentage (68.03%) the most used ones are mainly: (it: 21.29%), (they: 12.55%), (you: 11.41%), and (our: 11.03%). The rest of personal references are rarely used. On the other hand, demonstrative and comparative references have nearly the same percentage (16.72%, 15.20%) and the most mentioned ones are (that: 8.36%), (these: 5.32%), (more: 3.42%), (much: 3.04%), and (as: 2.66%). Overall, from the collected data, it is noteworthy that the majority of students use all the types of references specially the personal references.

❖ Students' Use of Substitution

Total Use of Substitution Devices	Types of Substitution Used	Number of Devices	Percentage
5	Nominal Substitution One	3	60%
	Verbal Substitution Do	1	20%
	Clause Substitution Not	1	20%

Table 34: Frequency of Students' Use of Substitution

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The table 34 displays the frequency of substitution use by students. As it is noticed, the total use of substitution is only about 5 devices which means (0.68%) from the whole use of cohesive devices by students. It is clear that third year EFL students have a very limited use of substitutions.

❖ Students' Use of Conjunctions

Total use of Conjunctions Devices	Types of Conjunctions Used	Number of Devices	Percentage
308	Additive Conjunctions	169	53.23%
	And	93	30.19%
	Also	13	4.22%
	Furthermore	10	3.25%
	Then	4	1.30%
	In addition to	5	1.62%
	Additionally	4	1.30%
	Besides	5	1.62%
	Or	14	4.54%
	Else	3	0.97%
	In other words	9	2.92%
	For instance	4	1.30%
	Adversative Conjunctions	60	19.48%
	But	15	4.87%
	On the other hand	8	2.60%
	However	23	7.47%
	Yet	2	0.65%
	Though	1	0.32%
	Nevertheless	2	0.65%
	Whereas	6	1.95%
	Contrary	3	0.97%
Causal Conjunctions	58	18.84%	
Thus	8	2.60%	
So	9	2.92%	
Hence	4	1.30%	
Therefore	12	3.90%	
Consequently	2	0.65%	
In consequence	6	1.95%	
As a result	10	3.25%	
Because	5	1.62%	
For this reason	2	0.65%	
Temporal Conjunctions	21	8.45%	

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	Next	4	1.30%
	While	2	0.65%
	In conclusion	3	0.97%
	To sum up	5	1.62%
	In short	6	1.95%
	Briefly	1	0.23%

Table 35: Frequency of Students' Use of Conjunctions

The above table introduces the frequency of students' use of conjunctions devices. The data reveals that the total use of conjunctions is about 308 devices. In other words, conjunctions have (42.13%) from the total use of cohesive devices by students. The highest percentage (53.23%) refers to the use of additive conjunctions. Its most used devices by participants are (and: 30.19%), (or: 4.54%), and (also: 4.22%). While the percentage (19.48%) presents the use of adversative conjunctions (however, 7.47%) and (but: 4.87%). (18.84%) is the percentage of using causal conjunctions. The most used ones: (therefore: 3.90%) and (as a result: 3.25%). On the other hand, temporal conjunctions (8.45%) have the lowest percentage of use. Therefore, almost third year EFL students are capable of using the following three types of conjunction; additive, adversative and causal specially the additive one.

3- 3- 1- 2 The Frequency of Lexical Cohesive Devices Use

❖ Students' Use of Reiteration

Total Use of Reiteration Devices	Types of Reiteration Used	Number of Devices	Percentage
155	Repetition (Internet, Smartphone, Society, learning)	92	59.35%
	A General Word (education, knowledge, information, applications)	13	8.39%
	Synonymy / Near Synonymy (technology, study, people,	35	22.58%

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	lifestyle, development, invention, mobile phones, positive impact)		
	Antonyms (traditions, problem, difficult, negative impact)	15	9.68%

Table 36: Frequency of Students' Use of Reiteration

The table 36 shows the frequency of reiteration used by students. The results indicate that the total use of reiteration that is about 155 devices; that is, (21.20%) from the whole use of cohesive devices by students. The highest percentage (59.35%) refers to students' use of repetition of the key word of the given topics. This insures that they find it the easiest types of reiteration devices. While (22.58%) it about the frequency of students' use of synonymy or near synonymy. The remaining two types, which are a general word and antonyms, are rarely used by them.

3 - 3 - 2 Result of the Analysis of Students' Written Production

The data collected from students' written production show that they are familiar with a number of cohesive devices. Students' use of cohesive devices indicates that there are predominant patterns of use of cohesive devices which are more frequently used in their academic writing, which are conjunction, reference and reiteration. The highest percentage was for the use of conjunctions. Additive, adversative and causal conjunctions are mostly the predominant ones. However, the over use or the wrong use of these devices may affect negatively the successfulness of students' pieces of writing. For instance, the cohesive device (and) is repeated about 93 times in students' written production which indicates the lack of variety of the use of additive conjunctions. It is also noticed that students are not able to use the temporal conjunctions despite their importance in improving the writing skill; this could be resulted from their unawareness of them.

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From the collected data, it is noteworthy that students are familiar with the references devices. It could be noticed that they use all the types of references specially the personal references. Besides, it is noteworthy that the participants are somehow familiar with the reiteration devices. They acknowledge the use of reiteration types; repetition and synonymy or near synonymy are the most used ones since they are considered as the simple forms of reiteration. On the other hand, there is a very limited use of substitution, it is clear that third year EFL students have a very limited knowledge towards the use of substitutions, whereas; other students do not have any information about them because they neither known nor studied them. Nevertheless, the total absence of using both ellipsis devices and collocation devices which indicates that third year students neglected the importance of both ellipsis and collocation. A remarkable note, the written production of the students who use cohesive devices in an appropriate way with fewer errors was well-structured; their ideas were clearly interrelated with no confusion. This helps the researcher to read smoothly their writing as well as understand their intended meaning.

In short, the analysis of frequency of students' use of cohesive devices shows that they are familiar with some cohesive devices. The common predominant patterns of use of CDs are conjunctions, references and reiterations. However students should take into consideration and give importance to each type of cohesive devices in order to improve their academic writing.

The following graphic illustrates the frequency of the predominant patterns of use of cohesive devices:

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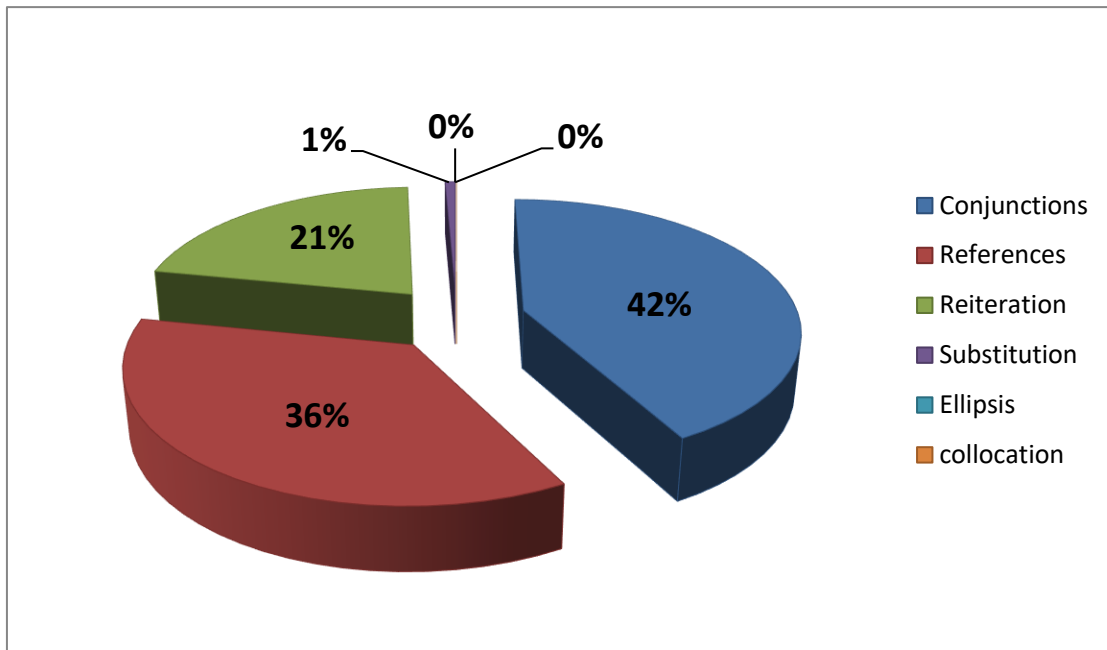


Chart 01: Students' Use of Cohesive Devices

Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher focuses on the analysis and the discussion of the results obtained from the data collection tools. The tools include teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire and students' written production. The data obtained shows students' familiarity and awareness towards the importance of cohesive devices in building their pieces of writing. However, they still have challenges towards some cohesive devices. As it is mentioned in the analysis of the results that third year students have intermediate level in writing especially those who acknowledge the use of CDs. The cohesive devices that they use are conjunctions, references and reiteration, but they neglect the use of ellipsis and collocation.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study aims at exploring the use of cohesive devices by students and its role in improving academic writing. The research study has three objectives: to discover third year EFL students' familiarity towards the use of cohesive devices in academic writing, to explore the role of cohesive devices use in students' writings, to explore the frequency of cohesive devices use by students. To reach the required results, three data collection tools were used; teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire and students' written production. The results obtained from the research tools show that most students are familiar with the use of cohesive devices, however; some of them use them in inappropriate way, their errors could be made by addition, omission, misformation or misordering of words. The most common used cohesive devices by students were conjunction, references and reiteration, whereas they face difficulties toward using ellipsis, substitution and collocation. The teachers who participated in the study advise students to practice more the use of cohesive devices and read documents that demonstrates cohesion and try to write similar ones in order to produce better academic writings. The results of this study confirm our hypothesis, which indicates that the appropriate use of CDs would improve the academic writing, that is; they will guarantee the unity of both ideas in terms of coherence and text as a whole in terms of grammatical and lexical cohesion.

On the basis of the results obtained, some recommendations are suggested to help both teachers and students to improve the students' academic writing in terms of cohesive devices use:

- ◆ Cohesive devices have to be more practiced in and outside the classroom using a variety of activities not only through writing skill; these devices should be taken into consideration by students to enhance their ability of using them appropriately before including them in academic writing.

General conclusion

- ◆ Teachers could find motivated writing activities and focus more on using the cohesive devices that are considered difficult for students.
- ◆ Students should be exposed to different topics and styles of writing. This will give them the chance to learn the different linguistic features that create cohesion.

To sum up, the role of cohesive devices use in third year EFL students is sufficient to improve their academic writing, however; more research needs to be done for other university levels to have more insights about the topic. Also, a research could be done on the usefulness of different approaches to teach and address CDs in the classroom, or research on the use of spoken forms of these devices.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is a data gathering tool for a master dissertation which explores the role of using cohesive devices in improving students' academic writing. The researcher relies on your experience and attitudes regarding students' use of cohesive devices. You are kindly requested to choose the appropriate answer and fill in the space when needed. Your answers will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes.

Thank you in advance for your time, effort and collaboration.

Prepared by **Khaoula REKROUK**

Supervised by **Ms Meriam GHENNAI**

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University of Biskra

Academic year

2021/2022

Section One: General Information

1. What is the degree of your qualification?

- a) PH.D (Doctorat)
- b) MA (Magister)
- c) MA (Master)
- d) BA (License)

2. How long have you been teaching English?

1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	More than 15 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How long have you been teaching the module of written expression?

1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	More than 15 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section Two: Student's Writing Skill

1. In your opinion, which skill does the majority of your students find difficult to master?

Speaking Writing Listening Reading

2. Do you think that your students are interested in academic writing?

Very Interested Somewhat Interested Neutral
Not Very Interested Not At All Interested

3. How can you evaluate your students' academic writing?

Beginner Pre-Intermediate Intermediate
Upper-intermediate Advanced

4. From your experience, what are the most common writing problems you always notice in your students' academic writing?

- Evidence; The data, facts, examples, or details used to support the thesis
- Stitching; using transition words that tie together the parts of writing
- Style; The choices of words and sentence structure
- Structure (logical order, progressive order..)
- Cohesion and coherence
- Readers' Motivation
- Thesis statement
- Sources

Others?.....

5. a. Do you think that the time allocated as well as the place to teach written expression is sufficient to encourage students to better understand and assign academic writing activities?

No Somehow Yes

5. b. In all cases, explain why?.....

.....

Section Three: Students' Attitudes towards Using Cohesive Devices to Improve their Writing

1. Are your students familiar with cohesive devices?

No Somehow Yes

2. How many of your students use cohesive devices in their academic writing?

None of them A few of them Some of them
Most of them All of them

3. a. In your opinion, do they use cohesive devices correctly in their academic writing?

No Somehow Yes

3. b. If no, please specify (in terms of their meaning, use, function...)

.....
.....

4. What are the most used cohesive devices by your students?

- Grammatical Cohesion: Reference
- Substitution
- Ellipsis
- Conjunctions
- Lexical Cohesion: Reiteration
- Collocation

Others?.....

5. From your experience, what difficulties do your students face when they write using cohesive devices?

- Omission Error: they omit one or more than one word in the sentence
- Addition Error: they state the word which must not appear in the sentence
- Misformation Error: they use the wrong form of the word or structure
- Misordering Error: they state the word in the wrong place

Others?.....

6. What are your suggestions for students to develop the use of cohesive devices as a tool to improve their writing skill?

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

Thank you for your time, effort and collaboration.

Appendix 2: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

You are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire, which aims at gathering data for a research of a master dissertation entitled Exploring the Role of Using Cohesive Devices in Improving Students' Academic Writing. Your contribution will be of a great importance for the success of my research study. For each question, choose the right answer or fill in the space provided with the required information.

Be sure that your responses will be anonymous and they will be used for academic research purposes only.

Thank you for your time, effort and collaboration.

Prepared by **Khaoula REKROUK**

Supervised by **Ms Meriam GHENNAI**

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University of Biskra

Academic year

2021/2022

Section One: General Information

1. Specify your gender:

Male female

2. What can you say about your English level?

Beginner Pre-Intermediate Intermediate

Upper-Intermediate Advanced

Section Two: Students' Writing Skill

1. Which language skill is the most difficult for you?

Reading Writing Speaking Listening

2. Do you think that it is important to develop the skill of writing in English?

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral

Strongly agree Agree

3. What can you say about your level of writing?

Beginner Pre-Intermediate Intermediate

Upper-Intermediate Advanced

4. In your opinion, which of the following components is important in academic writing?

(you can choose more than one)

Thesis statement; the idea that your piece of writing demonstrates

Evidence; The data,facts, examples, or details used to support your thesis

Stitching; using transition words that tie together the parts of writing

Style; The choices you make of words and sentence structure

Structure (logical order, progressive order..)

Cohesion and Coherence

Readers' motivation

Sources

Others?

5. While doing your writing task, do you? (you can tick more than one)

- a) Start writing immediately
- b) Think first about the ideas that you want to involve
- c) Write down your ideas into sentences and paragraphs
- d) Prepare an outline then follow it

6. a. Do you follow these stages when you write (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing)?

No Yes

b. If yes, what is the most difficult stage for you?.....

7. a. Do you face difficulties while linking your sentences or paragraph to each other?

No Yes

7. b. If yes, Explain how?.....

If no, Explain how you link them?

Section Three: Students' Attitudes towards Using Cohesive Devices to Improve their Writing

1. How familiar are you with cohesive devices?

Very familiar Familiar Slightly Familiar Unfamiliar

2. Select the cohesive devices that you know\ Studied in class? (you can tick more than one)

- Grammatical Cohesion: Reference
- Substitution
- Ellipsis
- Conjunctions
- Lexical Cohesion: Reiteration
- Collocation

3. What are the cohesive devices that you use most in your academic writing (paragraph or essay)? And please give example for each one?

Tick	Cohesive Devices	Examples
.....	references
.....	Substitution
.....	Ellipsis
.....	Conjunctions
.....	Reiteration
.....	Collocation

4. How important do you think using cohesive devices is in improving your writing skill?

Not at all important Somewhat important
 Very important Extremely important

5. How often do you use these cohesive devices in your academic writing?

Never Rarely Sometimes
 Often Always

6. In which stage of writing do you use cohesive devices?

Prewriting Drafting Revising Editing

7. What are the difficulties that you face when you write using cohesive devices?

Omission error: You omit one or more than one word in the sentence

Addition error: You state the word which must not appear in the sentence

Misformation error: You use the wrong form of the word or structure

Misordering error: You state the word in the wrong place

Others?.....

Thank you for your collaboration.

المخلص

مهارة الكتابة بلغة أجنبية هي مهارة من الصعب جدا اكتسابها. ارتكاب الأخطاء النحوية من حيث ربط الجمل و الفقرات يعد من بين المشاكل الأساسية التي تصادف الطالب عند كتابة نص ما, و بالتالي نحن نركز على إظهار أهمية استخدام أدوات الربط اللغوية. هدف هذه الدراسة التحقق من مدى تمكن طلبة السنة الثالثة ليسانس قسم اللغة الإنجليزية و إدراكهم لاستعمال أدوات الربط اللغوية في تقديم نص متماسك و في نفس الوقت مفهوم و أيضا استكشاف الأدوات الأكثر استعمالا من طرف الطلبة. اعتمد الباحث في هذه الدراسة على ثلاث وسائل مختلفة لجمع المعلومات؛ دراسة تحليلية لمقالات الطلبة مع التركيز على استعمالهم لأدوات الربط اللغوية. كما تم تقديم استبيانين, استبيان مقدم لمجموعة من الطلبة (20) و استبيان اخر مقدم لمجموعة من أساتذة التعبير الكتابي (03) من اجل جمع معلومات حول المشاكل الأكثر تداولاً التي يوجهها الطلاب أثناء استعمال تلك الأدوات و النتائج المتحصل عليها تدل على قدرة أغلبية طلبة السنة الثالثة تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة على استخدام أدوات الربط اللغوية لكن في نفس الوقت يجدون صعوبة في البعض منها و هذا بسبب معرفتهم المحدودة لكيفية استخدام تلك الأدوات, ولقد أكد الأساتذة أن المداومة على استخدامها تطور من مستوى كتابة الطلبة إلى الأحسن.