

# PHÂN TÍCH PHÉP CHIẾU, PHÉP THẾ VÀ PHÉP TỈNH LƯỢC TRONG LIÊN KẾT VĂN BẢN

## AN ANALYSIS OF REFERENCE, SUBSTITUTION AND ELLIPSIS IN TEXT COHESION

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**Tóm tắt:** Trong bất kỳ một văn bản nào, sự liên kết trong văn bản đó đóng vai trò hết sức quan trọng. Các câu trong một văn bản được liên kết với nhau thông qua các phương tiện liên kết bao gồm: phép chiếu, phép thế, phép tỉnh lược, phép nối, liên kết từ vựng và kết hợp từ. Trong đó ba phương tiện liên kết đầu tiên đều có đặc điểm chung là: liên kết văn bản và tránh sự lặp lại từ và thừa từ. Do đó, bài báo này sẽ giới thiệu tổng quan về liên kết văn bản, các phương tiện liên kết nói chung và tập trung vào phân tích ba phương tiện liên kết là phép chiếu, phép thế và phép tỉnh lược. Đồng thời, bài báo sẽ phân tích một số văn bản mẫu dựa trên bảng mã hóa các tiểu mục để đánh giá tính hiệu quả của các phép liên kết và đưa ra các đề xuất hữu ích.

**Từ khóa:** Liên kết, phương tiện liên kết văn bản, phép chiếu, phép thế, phép tỉnh lược.

**Abstract:** In any kind of text, cohesion plays a very important role. The sentences in a text are connected by different cohesive devices including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion and collocation, among which the first three devices share the common features: they do not only connect sentences but also avoid redundancy and repetition. Therefore, this article will aim to provide an overview of text cohesion, and three cohesive devices: reference, substitution and ellipsis in different texts in particular. Also, the article will analyze some sample texts, both written and spoken ones by using a coding scheme to see how effectively these devices connect sentences in these texts. Then, implications will be made based on the findings.

**Keywords:** Cohesion, cohesive devices, reference, substitution, ellipsis.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A text, in a linguistic sense, is considered a series of sentences written or spoken out. To make sense or meaning, these sentences must be connected with each other not only grammatically but semantically and lexically as well. These are “Coherence” and “Cohesion” devices which connect sentences making texts comprehensible.

When learning English we often meet a text like this: "Mary and Tom went to John's house yesterday evening(1). They said that they had bought a nice present for him but they were unhappy because he was out then" (2).

In this text, we can understand the second only when we look at the first one. They here refers to Mary and Tom, he and him refers to

John and then refers to yesterday evening. They, he and him here are called reference items. By using these, the two sentences are connected without repeating the same words. Or another text as follows:

Daisy: Do you know who paid for the tickets yesterday evening? (1)

Laura: I think Jack did. (2)

Daisy: Did he? (3). I don't think so. (4)

In this dialogue, some sentences are unfinished or seem to be ungrammatical. Nevertheless, that is so common in dialogues. It is not necessary to repeat the same words but the information is clear.

As it can be seen through the two above examples that in a text, there always exists cohesion among sentences. Cohesion in a text is identified by cohesive devices, among which are reference, substitution and ellipsis. Unlike other cohesive devices, they share such common features as connecting sentences, avoiding redundancy and repetition. That is the reason why reference, substitution and ellipsis were selected to be analyzed in this article by using a coding scheme to see how effectively they make the text cohesive and implications will be made based on the findings.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Up to now, numerous studies on cohesion have been carried out. Among them are works done by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, Svartvik (1972); Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), Haliday and Hasan (1976), Collins Cobuild (1990). Haliday (1985), and Hinkel (2003). Each of them gave out different concepts and classifications from each other. After Quirk and Greenbaum (1972, 1973), the publication of Haliday and Hassan (1976) was marked as a milestone about cohesion and it will be reviewed in most parts of the article.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), cohesion is treated as sentence connection and is defined as the links between sentences whereas Haliday (1976) described cohesion as “the set of possibilities that exist in the language for making text hang together” (p.18).

In the book *Cohesion in English*, Haliday and Hasan provided a framework for studying and judging the cohesion and coherence of discourse or text. Also, five different types of cohesive devices were presented up to a varying degree of delicacy: (1) reference (i.e., the indication of information from elsewhere such as personals, demonstratives, and comparatives), (2) substitution (i.e., the replacement of one component by another), (3) ellipsis (i.e., the omission of a component), (4) conjunction (i.e., the indication of specific meaning which presupposes present items in the discourse, such as additive, adversative, casual, and temporal), and (5) lexical cohesion (i.e., the repetition of the same or relative lexical items). They contended that through analyzing the use of cohesive devices, one could evaluate or assess the text from the perspective of coherence.

Within the scope of this article, an adapted coding scheme for analyzing the texts will be created based on the brief and clear presentation of the three cohesive devices.

Reference will be dealt with in three subsections: personal, demonstrative, and comparative. Substitution and ellipsis will be dealt with in three subsections: nominal, verbal and clausal. Now let's discuss reference first.

### 2.1. Reference (semantic level)

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), Reference is a number of signals making the identity between what is being said and what has been said before.

As for Haliday (1976), Reference is the specific nature of information that is signal for retrieval.

There are three types of reference: personal, demonstrative, and comparative.

### 2.1.1. Personal reference: (RP)

(1) RP1: singular: I, his, hers, it...

(2) RP2: plural: we, them, your, ours...

### 2.1.2. Demonstrative reference

Demonstrative reference is reference by means of location, on a scale of proximity as follows:

(1) RD1: Near Demonstratives: this, these, here, now.

(2) RD2: Far Demonstratives: that, those, there, then

(3) RA: Definite article: the

### 2.1.3. Comparative reference (RC)

Comparative reference is indirect reference by means of identity or similarity where the system can be as follows:

(1) RC1: Identity: *same, equal, identical*(ly)

(2) RC2: Similarity: *similar, additional, such, so, likewise, similarly*

(3) RC3: Difference: *other, different, otherwise, else, differently*

(4) RC4: Comparison, quantity: *more, less, as many; ordinal*

For example:

[1] Tom and Mary didn't go to school yesterday. In fact, *they* went for a picnic with, *their* friends.

[2]- Have you ever been to New York?

- Yes, I was *there* for a month last year.

[3] Tom had to be sent home. However, the *other* boys had behaved well.

In [1] *They* refers to *Tom and Mary*, *their* refers to Tom and Mary, too. In [2] *there* refers to *New York*. And in [3] *other* refers to *the boys other than Tom*.

## 2.2. Substitution (S)

According to Haliday (1976), substitution is "the replacement of one item by another". It is divided into nominal, verbal and clausal substitution, which are summarized as follows:

### 2.2.1. Nominal substitutes (SN)

(1) SN1: for noun Head: *one/ones*

Have you any knives ? I need a sharp one.

We have no red pens, only blue ones.

(2) SN2: for nominal Complement: *the same*

Unlike *one*, *the same* presupposes an entire nominal group including any modifying elements (Noun phrase). For example:

A: I'll have to poached eggs on toast, please B: I'll have *the same*.

(3) SN3: for Attribute: *so*

Eg: John felt it was disappointing. Mary felt the SAME = Mary felt so, (TOO)

### 2.2.2. SV: Verbal substitutes

(1) SV1: for verb: do, be, have.

Eg: A: Do you like sweets?

B: I did. But I don't now.

(2) SV2: for process: do the same/ likewise

Eg:

They all started singing. So I did the same.

My boss bought a car. Why don't you do likewise ?

(3) SV3: for proposition: do so, be so

Eg: A: Do you ride a bicycle?

B: I did. But I don't do so now

(4) SV4:verbal reference: do it /that, be it/ that

Eg: A: Did you write that warning?

B: No, I didn't do that.

### 2.2.3. Clausal substitutes (SC)

(1) SC1: positive: *so*

Eg: A: Is Tom going to be elected?

B: I think *so*.

(2) SC2: Negative: *not*

Eg: A: Will we all have to vote again?

B: I suppose *not*.

## 2.3. Ellipsis

According to Haliday (1976), ellipsis is simply defined as "substitution by zero" because substitution and ellipsis are similar to each other. Ellipsis is divided into nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis as follows:

### 2.3.1. Nominal ellipsis (EN)

(1) EN1: Deictic as head

Eg: These shoes aren't mine. Are they yours?- No, these are Jane's.

(2) EN2: Numerative as Head

Eg: Which train will you catch?

- The second of the day.

His sons went into business. Neither succeeded.

Did you get a first prize? No, I got a third.

(3) EN3: Epithet as a head

Eg: What kind of potatoes would you like"? "Boiled", please.

### 2.3.2. Verbal Ellipsis (EV)

(1) EV1: Lexical ellipsis (ellipsis from the right)

Eg: Have you been swimming? Yes, I have

(2) EV2: Operator ellipsis (ellipsis from the left)

Eg: Has she been crying? No, laughing.

### 2.3.3. Clausal ellipsis (EC)

(1) EC1: Propositional ellipsis

Eg: "I've forgotten the address". "I have, too".

"You are not trying very hard". "I am".

Sorry I shouted at you. I didn't mean to.

(2) EC2: Modal ellipsis (subject + operator)

Eg: What have you been doing? Cooking.

To analyze them in different kinds of texts. In the next part, a coding scheme will be suggested and then, different kinds of texts will be chosen for analysis.

## 3. REFERENCE, SUBSTITUTION, ELLIPSIS IN TEXT ANALYSIS

In this part, I would like to analyze some sample texts to see how effectively the three devices work together to make the text connective. Then, some discussions and implications will be made about the use of the three devices.

### 3.1. Sample text analysis

There will be three texts chosen to analyze in this part. In order to analyze them, I shall indicate, first of all, the number of sentence in the paragraph then, cohesive items and then, what type of cohesion involved, in terms of reference, substitution, and ellipsis; this can be specified up to a varying degree of delicacy, as suggested in 3.1.1 below. Finally, the presupposed item in the presupposed sentence (which is also numbered too). Following is summary of cohesion and coding scheme.

### 3.1.1. Summary of reference, substitution, ellipsis and coding scheme

Table 1. Type of cohesion and coding

Type Coding	of		COHESION
Reference			R
1	Pronominals		RP
	(1) Singular:	<i>he, him, his, hers..</i>	RP1
	(2) Plural:	<i>they, their, theirs</i>	RP2
2	Demonstratives and definite article		RD
	(1) Demonstrative, near:	<i>this/these, here</i>	RD1
	(2) Demonstrative, far:	<i>that/those, there, then</i>	RD2
	(3) Definite article: <i>the</i>		RA
3	Comparatives		RC
	(1) Identity:	<i>same, identical</i>	RC1
	(2) Similarity:	<i>similar(ly), such, additional</i>	RC2
	(3) Difference:	<i>different, other, else</i>	RC3
	(4) Comparison, quantity:	<i>more, less, as many; ordinal</i>	RC4
Substitution			S
1	Nominal substitutes		SN
	(1) noun Head	<i>one/ones</i>	SN1
	(2) for nominal Complement	<i>the same</i>	SN2
	(3) for Attribute	<i>so</i>	SN3
2	Verbal substitutes		SV
	(1) for verb	<i>do, be, have</i>	SV1
	(2) for process	<i>do the same/likewise</i>	SV2
	(3) proposition	<i>do so, be so</i>	SV3
	(4)verbal reference	<i>do it/that, be it/that</i>	SV4

3	Clausal substitute		SC
	(1) positive	<i>so</i>	SC1
	(2) negative	<i>not</i>	SC2
Ellipsis			E
1	Nominal ellipsis		EN
	(1) Deictic as head		EN1
	(2) Numerative as Head		EN2
	(3) Epithet as a head		EN3
2	Verbal Ellipsis		EV
	(1) Lexical ellipsis		EV1
	(2) Operator ellipsis		EV2
3	Clausal ellipsis		EC
	(1) Propositional ellipsis		EC1
	(2) Modal ellipsis (subject + operator)		EC2

### 3.1.2. Text types for analysis

Three typical texts in three different types (an informal and formal written text and a spoken text) will be chosen for analysis as follows:

#### Text 1: A note in a diary

The manager of the Theatre Royal put on a play that failed (1). The next one he had arranged to put on was not ready, and he was at his wits' end. He read a play of mine, called *Lady Frederick* (2). Though he did not much like it, he thought it might just run for the six weeks till the play he had in mind to follow it with could be produced (3). It ran for fifteen months (4). Within a short while, I had four plays running at the same time (5). No thing of the kind had ever happened before (6).

Table 2. Analysis of cohesive devices in text 1

S. No	Cohesive item	Type	Presupposed item
2	<i>one</i>	SN1	<i>play</i>
	<i>he</i>	RP1	<i>The manager of the "Theatre Royal"</i>

S. No	Cohesive item	Type	Presupposed item
3	his	RP1	- pay "Lady Frederick"
	he	RP1	
	it	RP1	
	the	RA	play he had in mind (not ready)
4	it	RP1	play "Lady Frederick"
5	the	RA	the kind = I had four plays running at the same time, within a short while

### Text 2: An extract from a scientific article

The entire ecological system on earth can be thought of as one huge living organism (1). It is composed of an infinitesimal number of interdependent units that all play their part in contributing to the well being and functioning of the whole (2). We human - beings are, of course, a part of this intricate web of life (3). Unfortunately, we often forget we are inextricably linked to nature, and by doing so, inadvertently contribute to its slow destruction (4). Survival will depend on our willingness to reorganize our political thinking (5).

No longer can those who ignore nature's warnings continue to bury their heads in the sand (6). Unless these politicians (who, in democratic countries, are supposed to listen to the people as well as to corporations) do something about the enormous environmental problems facing the earth, they will cease to be respected, and this will mean our old systems of government will inevitably change and collapse (7). Nothing can save them (8).

**Table 3. Analysis of cohesive devices in text 2**

S. No	Cohesive item	Type	Presupposed item
2	it	RP1	the entire ecological system on earth

S. No	Cohesive item	Type	Presupposed item
	that	RD2	an infinitesimal number of interconnecting part
	their	RP2	-
3	this	RD1	the entire ecological system on earth... functioning of the whole
4	doing so	SV3	forget we are inextricably linked to nature
	its	RP1	nature
6	those	RD2	(human being / politicians) who ignore nature's warnings.
	their	RP2	(human being / politicians) who ignore nature's warnings
7	these	RD1	(politicians) who ignore nature's warnings
	they	RP2	politicians who ignore nature's warnings
	this	RD1	ceasing to be respected
8	them	RP2	our very systems of government or these politicians

Note: In the above text, some cohesive items and their presupposed ones are within sentence. However, they have very strong cohesive relation here. That's why I also analyze them here.

### Text 3: A Dialogue in a story

Ma ran out of the house (1). Laura ran after her (2).

- "Scott's fainted, or something, down there", Pa said (3).

"I've got to go down after him"(4).

- "Did you send down the candle?" Ma asked (5).

- "No, I thought he had (6). I asked him if it was all right, and he said it was" (7). Pa cut the empty bucket off the rope and tied the rope firmly to the windlass (8).

- "Charles, you can't. You mustn't". Ma said (9).

"Caroline, I've got to". (10)

**Table 4. Analysis of cohesive devices in text 3.**

S. No	Cohesive item	Type	Presupposed item
1	<i>Ma</i>	RP1	<i>Caroline</i>
2	<i>her</i>	RP1	<i>Ma (Caroline)</i>
3	<i>there</i>	RD2	<i>far from the house</i>
	<i>Pa</i>	RP1	<i>Charles</i>
4	<i>him</i>	RP1	<i>Scott</i>
6	<i>he</i>	RP1	<i>Scott</i>
	<i>he had</i>	EC1	<i>Scott had had the candle</i>
7	<i>it was</i>	EC1	<i>It was alright</i>
9	<i>you can't</i> <i>you mustn't</i>	EC1	<i>Charles can't/mustn't cut the empty bucket of the rope and tied the rope firmly to the windlass</i>
10	<i>I've got to</i>	EC1	<i>Charles has got to cut the empty bucket of the rope and tied the rope firmly to the windlass</i>

### 3.2. Findings and Discussion

The analysis of text one, two and three shows that in both written and spoken texts, whatever the text type it is, reference has the most frequent use among the three devices. Among referent items, pronominals are shown to be the most common in all the three texts. Substitution appears in written texts but not very frequently whereas ellipsis only appear in the spoken text (text three). For ellipsis in text three, most of them are clausal ellipsis that helps the dialogue shortened but fully understood. It is used to compact the surface structure without reducing the clarity of the text. These results once again affirm that reference is used more in written texts while ellipsis is used more in speech. Ellipsis is shown to occur in responses in spontaneous conversations but

is seldom used in writing. However, the role of substitution in these texts is not as clearly shown as the rest two devices. It can be concluded that, substitution is not as popular as reference and ellipsis. In short, thanks to these cohesive devices, all the sentences are connected and fully understood without repetition and redundancy.

### 3.3. Implications

From what has been discussed above, the following implications will be made according to the findings:

- For EFL teachers, in the process of teaching English, even teaching grammar, language skills such as listening, reading, speaking, writing or translation, cohesion must be understood and used correctly. Thus, it is essential for the teachers to be a master in cohesion in general and the three devices in particular. Also, it is a good idea to design different exercises about cohesive devices for students to practice.
- For the learners, when using cohesive devices, learners can be confused because of a large subcategories of these devices. This will lead to the misuse of these devices. Therefore, learning this aspect will help students with more confidence in translating, writing and speaking at level of academy and fluency. To gain this, the learners should practise using them as often as possible and have feedback or peer check for each other.

### 4. CONCLUSION

In the article, three cohesive devices: reference, substitution and ellipsis have been described and coded for analysis. The first cohesive device has been dealt with is reference which implies that there is identity meaning between the presupposing item and the presupposed item, while substitution implies non-identity of meaning. Unlike reference, the other two cohesive devices

make the connection at the lexco-grammatical level, at what we called the level of "wording" (the form of "same element in the language (same wording) but different referent". While reference usually occurs in writing, ellipsis usually does in

speech. So with the combination or co-occurrence of them in a text, they make the text cohesive. Finally, from three sample text analysis, we can see how effectively the three cohesive devices connect sentences.

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