

Cohesive Ties and Meaning Comprehension

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Abstract

Cohesion is necessary in both spoken and written language. Speakers and writers use a variety of cohesive devices to link or clarify the relationships among ideas within a text or discourse. Cohesive devices are words used to show how the different parts of a text fit together to create cohesion. Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. Hence, objective of this study is to reveal the significance of using such cohesive tools in grasping the meaning of a linguistic text through the analysis of the grammatical cohesive devices especially the personal references as cohesive ties in a short story written by a famous writer Ernest Hemingway entitled " Cat in the Rain". The paper adopts a descriptive qualitative research method to identify the various personal references available in the above mentioned short story. The amount of occurrence and the category of anaphoric and cataphoric references are determined . This paper follows the model of cohesion set up by Halliday and Hasan in 1976 in Cohesion in English. The paper ends with some concluding remarks that are attained from the discussion of personal cohesive references in the selected text .

Keywords: Cohesive Devices, Comprehension

I. Introduction

A text, as a written or printed work regarded in terms of content rather than form, may be written for various purposes. It could be written to educate, entertain, inform, create an impression, etc. A text is not just a grammatical unit, but rather a semantic unit of language, i.e. a unit of meaning, not of form. Texture is what provides the text with unity and distinguishes it from a non-text. Therefore, it is the cohesive relation that exists between units of a text. Halliday and Hasan (1976:1) state that the term "text" is used in linguistics to refer to "any passage ,spoken or written, of whatever length , that does form a unified whole. It could be a prose or verse, a dialogue or monologue. It may be anything from a single proverb to a whole play, from a momentary cry for help to an all-day discussion on a committee." . Fareed and Hasan (2017:6) give a vivid description of the term "text" that the meaning and unity of text are well presented by the textual features of (well-formedness and interpretability), which in turn refers to writer's preferences of certain linguistic patterns to transfer ideas, thoughts and beliefs to people. It is generally believed that

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a text whether written or spoken is only meaningful when the various elements are brought together to make a unified whole.

Cohesive Devices

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976:4), cohesion is a semantic concept that refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text and define it as a text. Gramley (1992:183) adds that it occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. In grammar, cohesion is a grammatical unit that refers to a defining property of the word known as cohesiveness (Crystal; 2003:77) . According to Yule (1985:140), cohesion means ties and connections that exist within the text. Cohesive ties give valuable information about how speakers and writers organize and structure their text as well as the constraints and conventions they follow in this process. Finally, Curse (2006:25) states that cohesion is a matter of form and concerns ways of linking one piece of language to another. Halliday and Hasan (1976) give a classification of the types of cohesive relation which can be formally established within a text. Therefore, the main cohesive devices which bind a text together are of two main categories, grammatical and lexical devices. The types of grammatical devices as discussed by Halliday and Hasan 1976 are reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. Hence, in this study much attention is paid on one subcategory of cohesive devices namely personal references in Hemingway's "Cat in the Rain".

The Concept of Reference

The concept of "reference " is central to linguistics. Reference, in a broad sense, is the relationship between a concrete entity or an abstract concept and the linguistic item which is used to point to. That is to say, the lexical item refers to something outside the linguistic system. In grammatical analysis, the term is often used to state a relationship of identity which exists between grammatical units, e.g. a pronoun refers to a noun or a noun phrase. Crystal (1980 : 391) . Halliday and Hasan (1976: 31) treat reference as a particular kind of cohesion that is characterized by the specific nature of the information that has to be retrieved. This information is considered to be the referential meaning which is defined as the identity of the particular class of things that is being referred to ; and the cohesion lies in the continuity of reference , whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time .

Reference may either be exophoric or endophoric. M. Bloor & T. Bloor(2013). Exophoric reference requires the reader to infer the interpreted referent by looking beyond the text in the immediate environment shared by the reader and writer. The use of exophoric reference requires some shared knowledge between two speakers, or between writer and reader(s). For example in the sentence: *That is a wonderful idea!* To retrieve the meaning of *that*, the reader must look outside the situation. Halliday and Hasan considered exophoric reference as not cohesive, since it does not tie two elements together in text. On the other hand, endophoric reference lies within the text itself. It is classified into two classes: anaphoric and cataphoric. According to Paltridge (2012:115), "Anaphoric reference is where a word or phrase refers back to another word or phrase used earlier in the text". In this example: *Amy went to the party. She sat with Sara. She* refers back to *Amy*; therefore, *she* is an anaphoric reference. Cataphoric reference looks forward to another word or phrase mentioned later in the text. For instance in the following sentence, *he* is a cataphoric reference that looks forward to *Mike*. *As soon as he arrived, Mike visited his parents*. A anaphoric reference can also be expressed through the use of the definite article and the substitution of an already mentioned noun by a

synonym or hyponym. For example, *I saw a man and a woman standing by the gate. **The** man was wearing a hooded jacket and **the** woman was carrying a baseball bat.* "The" and " (the) in the second sentence qualify and specify the nouns "man" and "woman" in the first sentence. *There was so much delicious **food** on display, but I'm on a diet so I had to stick to the **salad**.* In this sentence, reiteration as a cohesive device is manifested where the two occurrences of "food" and "salad" have the same reference, that is, there is a "specific-general" relationship between these two lexical items.

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 37) realize three types of reference: personal, demonstrative and comparative. The present paper is mainly concerned with the personal reference, i.e. the reference by means of function in the speech situation, through the category of person. The personal category includes the three classes of personal pronouns, possessive determiners (usually called "possessive adjectives"), and possessive pronouns. The items of the person system are all reference items; they refer to something by specifying its function or role in the speech situation (Ibid.: 43–4). The items of the personal reference are as follows:

Subjective / Objective pronouns / Possessive adjectives / Possessive pronouns

First Person: I / me / my / mine ... we / us / our / ours

Second Person: you / you / your/ yours

Third Person: he / him / his/ his ... she / her/ her/ hers... it/ it / its / its ... they/ them/ their / theirs

II. Methodology

The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative. Based on the theoretical framework presented previously, an expository analysis of the cohesive references especially cataphoric and anaphoric ones in the short story "Cat in the Rain" by Ernest Hemingway. The analyzed data in this study was gained through documentation by conducting an analysis of the references in the short story. The procedure of the data analysis is to identify the type of each individual reference, calculate the number of occurrence and to which referent each reference relates. The following is the full script of the short story:

Ernest Hemingway's "Cat in the Rain" text

"Cat in the Rain" is one of the pieces of Hemingway's first collection of short stories, "In Our Time" (1924).

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. They did not know any of the people they passed on the stairs on their way to and from their room. Their room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden.

In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea.

Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. It was made of bronze and glistened in the rain. It was raining. The rain dripped from the palm trees. Water stood in pools on the gravel paths. The sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain. The motor cars were gone from the square by the war monument. Across the square in the doorway of the café a waiter stood looking out at the empty square.

The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on.

‘I’m going down and get that kitty,’ the American wife said.

‘I’ll do it,’ her husband offered from the bed.

‘No, I’ll get it. The poor kitty out trying to keep dry under a table.’

The husband went on reading, lying propped up with the two pillows at the foot of the bed.

‘Don’t get wet,’ he said.

The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to her as she passed the office. His desk was at the far end of the office. He was an old man and very tall.

‘Il piove,(1)’the wife said. She liked the hotel-keeper.

‘Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo(2). It is very bad weather.’

He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands.

Liking him she opened the door and looked out. It was raining harder. A man in a rubber cape was crossing the empty square to the café. The cat would be around to the right. Perhaps she could go along under the eaves. As she stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind her. It was the maid who looked after their room.

‘You must not get wet,’ she smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent her.

With the maid holding the umbrella over her, she walked along the gravel path until she was under their window. The table was there, washed bright green in the rain, but the cat was gone. She was suddenly disappointed. The maid looked up at her.

‘Ha perduto qualche cosa, Signora?’(3)

‘There was a cat,’ said the American girl.

‘A cat?’

‘Si, il gatto.’

‘A cat?’ the maid laughed. ‘A cat in the rain?’

‘Yes, –’ she said, ‘under the table.’ Then, ‘Oh, I wanted it so much. I wanted a kitty.’

When she talked English the maid’s face tightened.

‘Come, Signora,’ she said. ‘We must get back inside. You will be wet.’

‘I suppose so,’ said the American girl.

(1) ‘It’s raining.’

(2) 'Yes, yes Madam. Awful weather.'

(3) 'Have you lost something, Madam?'

They went back along the gravel path and passed in the door. The maid stayed outside to close the umbrella. As the American girl passed the office, the padrone bowed from his desk. Something felt very small and tight inside the girl. The padrone made her feel very small and at the same time really important. She had a momentary feeling of being of supreme importance. She went on up the stairs. She opened the door of the room. George was on the bed, reading.

'Did you get the cat?' he asked, putting the book down.

'It was gone.'

'Wonder where it went to,' he said, resting his eyes from reading.

She sat down on the bed.

'I wanted it so much,' she said. 'I don't know why I wanted it so much. I wanted that poor kitty. It isn't any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain.'

George was reading again.

She went over and sat in front of the mirror of the dressing table looking at herself with the hand glass. She studied her profile, first one side and then the other. Then she studied the back of her head and her neck.

'Don't you think it would be a good idea if I let my hair grow out?' she asked, looking at her profile again.

George looked up and saw the back of her neck, clipped close like a boy's.

‘I like it the way it is.’

‘I get so tired of it,’ she said. ‘I get so tired of looking like a boy.’

George shifted his position in the bed. He hadn’t looked away from her since she started to speak.

‘You look pretty darn nice,’ he said.

She laid the mirror down on the dresser and went over to the window and looked out. It was getting dark.

‘I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,’ she said. ‘I want to have a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her.’

‘Yeah?’ George said from the bed.

‘And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes.’

‘Oh, shut up and get something to read,’ George said. He was reading again.

His wife was looking out of the window. It was quite dark now and still raining in the palm trees.

‘Anyway, I want a cat,’ she said, ‘I want a cat. I want a cat now. If I can’t have long hair or any fun, I can have a cat.’

George was not listening. He was reading his book. His wife looked out of the window where the light had come on in the square.

Someone knocked at the door.

‘Avanti,’ George said. He looked up from his book.

In the doorway stood the maid. She held a big tortoiseshell cat pressed tight against her and swung down against her body.

‘Excuse me,’ she said, ‘the padrone asked me to bring this for the Signora.’

Again, When the interpretation of a reference lies within the boundaries of text, it is called endophoric relation. This relation forms cohesive ties within the text. There are two kinds of endophoric relations: anaphora and cataphora (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 17). Anaphora is the presupposition of something that has gone before, whether in the preceding sentence or not. It is a form of presupposition that refers to some previous item. In contrary, cataphora refers to the presupposition in the opposite direction, with the presupposed element following. Halliday and Hasan Both, (1976: 37) also say that anaphoric and cataphoric references use personal reference or pronominal reference, demonstrative reference and comparative reference.

III. Anaphoric references in the text

The personal anaphoric references in the text account 100 references. They are :

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. **They** did not know any of the people **they** passed on the stairs on **their** way to and from their room. **Their** room was on the second floor facing the sea. **It** also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden.

The personal pronouns " they, they " and the possessive adjectives" their ,their" are back reference to the noun phrase " two Americans" . The nonhuman pronoun " it" is a back reference to the noun phrase " their room" .

In the good weather there was always an artist with **his** easel.

" his" refers back to an artist .

Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. **It** was made of bronze and glistened in the rain.

" it" refers back to monument.

Outside right under **their** window a cat was crouched

"their" refers to American wife and husband.

The cat was trying to make **herself** so compact... .

"herself" refers back to cat.

‘I’ll do **it**,’ **her** husband offered from the bed.

"it" refers to getting the kitty. " her" refers to wife.

‘No, I’ll get **it**.

" it" refers back to kitty.

‘Don’t get wet,’ **he** said.

" he" refers back to husband.

The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to **her** as **she** passed the office. **His** desk was at the far end of the office. **He** was an old man and very tall.

" her and she" refer back to wife. " His and He" refer back to hotel owner.

‘Il piove,(1)’the wife said. **She** liked the hotel-keeper.

"she" refers back to wife.

He stood behind **his** desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked **him**.

"He, his, him" refer back to hotel owner.

She liked the deadly serious way **he** received any complaints. **She** liked **his** dignity. **She** liked the way **he** wanted to serve **her**. **She** liked the way **he** felt about being a hotel-keeper. **She** liked **his** old, heavy face and big hands.

"she, she, she, her, she, she" refer back to wife. "he, his, he, he, his" refer back to hotel owner.

Liking **him** **she** opened the door and looked out.

"him" refers back to hotel owner. "she" refers back to wife.

Perhaps **she** could go along under the eaves. As **she** stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind **her**. It was the maid who looked after **their** room.

"she" refers to cat. "she, her" refer to wife. "their" refers to husband and wife.

'You must not get wet,' **she** smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent **her**.

"she" refers to maid. "her" refers to wife.

With the maid holding the umbrella over **her**, **she** walked along the gravel path until **she** was under their window.

"her, she, she" refer back to wife.

She was suddenly disappointed. The maid looked up at **her**.

"she, her" refer to wife.

‘Yes, –’ **she** said, ‘under the table.’ Then, ‘Oh, I wanted **it** so much.

"she" refers to girl. "it" refers to cat.

When **she** talked English the maid’s face tightened.

"she" refers to girl.

‘Come, Signora,’ **she** said. ‘We must get back inside. You will be wet.’

"she" refers to maid.

They went back along the gravel path and passed in the door.

"they" refers to girl and maid.

As the American girl passed the office, the padrone bowed from **his** desk.

"his" refers back to padrone.

The padrone made **her** feel very small and at the same time really important. **She** had a momentary feeling of being of supreme importance. **She** went on up the stairs. **She** opened the door of the room.

"her, she, she, she" refer to girl.

‘Did you get the cat?’ **he** asked, putting the book down.

" he" refers to George " the husband".

‘**It** was gone.’

"it" refers to cat.

‘Wonder where **it** went to,’ **he** said, resting **his** eyes from reading.

"it" refers to cat. "he, his" refer to George.

She sat down on the bed.

"she" refers to girl " George's wife".

‘I wanted **it** so much,’ **she** said. ‘I don’t know why I wanted **it** so much.

" it, it" refer back to cat. "she" refers back to wife.

She went over and sat in front of the mirror of the dressing table looking at herself with the hand glass. **She** studied **her** profile, first one side and then the other. Then **she** studied the back of **her** head and **her** neck.

"she, she, her, she, her, her" refer to wife.

she asked, looking at **her** profile again.

"she, her" refer back to wife.

George looked up and saw the back of **her** neck, clipped close like a boy's.

"her" refers to wife.

'I like **it** the way **it** is.'

"it ,it" refer to hair style (clipped close).

'I get so tired of it,' **she** said.

" she" refers to wife.

George shifted **his** position in the bed. **He** hadn't looked away from **her** since **she** started to speak.

'You look pretty darn nice,' **he** said.

"his, he, he" refer back to George.

"her, she" refer back to wife.

She laid the mirror down on the dresser and went over to the window and looked out.

"she" refers to wife.

'I want to pull **my** hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,' **she** said. '**I**

want to have a kitty to sit on **my** lap and purr when I stroke **her**.'

"my, she, my, I " refer back to wife.

"her" refers to kitty.

‘And I want to eat at a table with **my** own silver and I want candles. And I want **it** to be spring and I want to brush **my** hair...’.

"my, my" refer back to wife.

"it" refers back to hair.

‘Oh, shut up and get something to read,’ George said. **He** was reading again.

"he" refers back to George.

His wife was looking out of the window.

"his" refers back to George.

‘Anyway, I want a cat,’ **she** said, ‘I want a cat.

"she" refers back to wife.

He was reading his book. **His** wife looked out of the window where the light had come on in the square.

"he, his" refer to George.

‘Avanti,’ George said. **He** looked up from **his** book.

"he, his" refer back to George.

In the doorway stood the maid. **She** held a big tortoiseshell cat pressed tight against **her** and swung down against **her** body.

‘Excuse **me**,’ **she** said, ‘the padrone asked **me** to bring this for the Signora.’

"she, her, her, me, she, me" refer to maid.

Cataphoric references in the text

The personal cataphoric references in the text account 4 references. They are :

It isn’t any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain.’

"it" refers to any fun.

‘Don’t you think **it** would be a good idea?’

" it" refers to idea.

‘I get so tired of **it**,’ she said. ‘I get so tired of looking like a boy.’

"it" refers to looking like a boy.

‘Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo(2). **It** is very bad weather.’

"it" refers to weather.

IV. Concluding Remarks

Cohesion refers to the act of forming a whole unit. This whole unit can be created using various linking materials. Linking materials responsible for unity can be likened to bricks and cement which make up the building. Bricks and cement can be put together to create any form of structure. However, it is only when they are laid together properly that they form a building. Similarly, a text will be cohesive if cohesive ties are used however it will only be coherent if the cohesive ties are used appropriately to create meaning and enhance the ability of a text to be successfully interpreted and understood.

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