

A Corpus-based Study of Conjunctions in Mohsin Hamid's Novels

Ammara khan, Aisha Choudhary

Lecturer, Govt College University, Faisalabad

Abstract- Cohesion as an important linguistic feature has provoked many researchers' interest. To explore the uniformity and regularity in **conjunction devices**, this study is designed. Based on cohesion theory proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1976), the study is aimed to analyze the occurrences and frequencies of conjunction devices in the three most famous novels of Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid. For this purpose a parallel corpus consisting of three books of Mohsin Hamid was established. The results exposed that all of three books share more similarities in the usage of these devices of conjunctions. It also shows that additive conjunction "and" is vigorously utilized in all of three books. The bulk of conjunction devices are used for clarity and logicity. The study not only concentrates on the occurrence of conjunction devices but also focuses on the use and importance of conjunction devices for comprehensive writings moreover clarify how conjunctions link the components in a unified, actual and compound writing.

Index Terms- Conjunctions, cohesive devices, coherence, Linking words.

I. INTRODUCTION

Based on Halliday and Hassan (1976) theory on cohesive devices, the study is designed to examine the vigorous utilization of conjunction devices in the books of Mohsin Hamid. Many researchers have conducted comparative studies of cohesive devices in different text types and have investigated the role of cohesion in different text types. The books of Mohsin Hamid have been analyzed by different researchers on the basis of different stylistic features; this study is designed to analyze the role of conjunctions in his most famous three novels on the base of corpus linguistics. Cohesion has a substantial role in forming linguistic elements into a combined whole text. By discussing cohesive devices, these structures are frequently used to expand written piece of discourse to make it flawless and plausible (Halliday&Hassan 1976). On the basis of Halliday and Hassan's theory, Conjunctions are categorized into four main types. The foremost type *additive conjunctions* is used to present more information. The second type *adversative* includes conjunctions which presents contrast between different situations. *Causal* conjunctions, the third type, include the words which are used to introduce causes and results. The fourth type, *temporal* is used to explain relations in time.

Types of conjunctions	Examples
Additive	And, also, besides, in other words, moreover etc.
Adversative	But, however, although, yet, though, only, nevertheless etc.
Causal	So, then, hence, if, unless, so, for, therefore, consequently, because etc.
Temporal	Then, next, before, after, first, firstly etc

Types of Conjunction based on Halliday and Hassan theory (1976)

Purpose of study:

- The objectives of this evocative study are to examine;
- The conjunction devices which are used by the writer.

- The frequency of these conjunction devices.
- The effectiveness and complexity in text because of conjunctions.
- The coherence in the text.

Research Questions:

- How do conjunctions make writing effective and complex?
- How frequently have conjunctions used in the novels?
- Which conjunctions are more frequent and which are less?
- How much are conjunctions essential for novel writing?
- What is the purpose of using conjunctive devices?
- How coherence in the text is created because of conjunctions?

Significance Of the Study:

The significance of this study is to make readers familiar about conjunctions used in Mohsin Hamid’s Novels and to aware them about the coherence and comprehensiveness in the text because of conjunctions.

Delimitations:

The main limitation of the study was measuring frequencies of conjunction devices (based on Halliday and Hassan’s Theory) in Mohsin Hamid’s Novels, and to check the coherence in the text because of these conjunctions.

The study focused on the coherence in the text because of conjunction devices and frequencies of these conjunctive devices in Mohsin Hamid’s Novels. There are various other novels of which coherence and frequencies of conjunctions can be measured, but as time was constant, it was difficult to collect all novels. The research is mainly based on the most famous novels of British Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid.

Literature Review:

Conjunction is different to some extent in nature from other cohesive relations. Most researchers have concluded that conjunctions are words that bind a variety of language units together. Conjunction, according to “Halliday and Hassan(1976)”, is the fourth structural cohesion type which differs from reference, substitution, and ellipsis. If we discuss other cohesive devices in forming text relations, substitution is a structural relation, reference and ellipsis are semantic and grammatical relations, respectively. While with conjunction, there is other type of semantical relation.

Seeing links among sentences of a text, conjunction devices are important devices that “...make text knowledge continuity more proficiently” (Donnelly 1994, p. 96).

Markkanen, Crismore, and Steffensen (1993) Perceive conjunctions as textual markers which help to form discourse, whereas Hyland (2005), considers them as frame markers.

Conjunction refers to how a writer creates and expresses the consistent interactions between the elements of a text

(Eggin, 1994, p. 105). Conjunction depends on words called conjunctions, which are the words we practice to link clauses together. We can say that they are the words which express the rational connection.

Conjunctions are the devices which help the readers to recognize the mechanisms of the writing. **Carrell (1982)**

Kopple (1985) believes that conjunctions are called text connectives, which are used to link units of a text. With the development of linguistics, many researchers have conducted relative and comparative studies of conjunctive devices in different types of text and have explored the occurrence of cohesion in many types of text.

Methods:

1. Establishment of a corpus:

Three novel books by “**Mohsin Hamid**”, British Pakistani novelist, are selected according to possibility and accessibility, they are:

- Moth Smoke (2000)
- The Reluctant Fundamentalist. (2007)
- How to Get Filthy rich in Rising Asia. (2013)

In terms of accessibility, the selected books are available online, or accessible from libraries.

2. Data Collection and Corpus Building:

All of three books were taken as word files and these word files were converted into plain texts one by one which were tagged by using Part-Of-Speech Tagger and were fed to **AntConc 3.4.4**. **AntConc 3.4.4** is a corpus processing software tool which allows the analysis of the text. Frequencies of conjunction devices were counted by applying the formulas of conjunctions according to **UCREL CLAWS7 Tagset**.

3. Data Analysis:

Halliday and Hassan defined five basic kinds of cohesive devices in their book “Cohesion in English (1976)”, which are substitution, reference, conjunction, ellipsis, and lexical cohesion. In this study conjunction devices are recognized based on their organization. Conjunction devices between sentences stand out more noticeably. Therefore, it is the intersentence cohesion that is substantial because it signifies the variable aspect of cohesion, distinguishing one writing from another. Conjunction is quite dissimilar in nature from other cohesive devices. Conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but parenthetically, by asserting their clear meanings; they are not predominantly devices for getting out into the preceding (or following) sentence, but they express definite meanings which assume the occurrence of other constituents in the discourse.

Conjunctions	Novel-1 (Frequency%)	Novel-2 (Frequency%)	Novel-3 (Frequency%)	Total No. of conjunctions. (Frequency%)
Additive	2202(56%)	1111(54.1%)	1579 (62.5%)	4892 (57.5%)
Adversative	568(14.4%)	325(15.85%)	308 (12.2%)	1201 (14.1%)

Causal	1012(25.7%)	509 (24.8%)	540 (21.4%)	2061 (23.7%)
Temporal	150(3.8%)	105 (5.12%)	87 (3.4%)	342(4.02%)
Total	3932	2050	2514	8496

Frequency and percentage of four types of cohesive devices

The analysis of these novels provides the frequencies or occurrences of these conjunctions, more than half of conjunctions are additive, which are total as 4892 and having “and” as additive conjunction with 4465 occurrences, which shows that in all of the novels “and” is used more frequently as compared to other additive devices.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results gained indicate that the author has adopted all four types of conjunction devices, despite of the notable difference regarding their frequencies in the text. The total percentage of additive conjunctions in parallel corpus covers more than half proportion of total amount of conjunctive devices. The results indicate that additive conjunctions are used more repeatedly and frequently than other conjunction devices. Results also show that use of additive conjunction “and” is more frequent instead of other additive devices. “And” as additive device covers 91% of all additive devices in all three novels, only 8% “or” is utilized while 1% other additive devices are used. Same are the results if we compare additive devices with other conjunctions in each novel separately. Temporal devices are less frequent, these are only 4% of total conjunctions, while there is not a big difference of frequencies of causal and adversative conjunctions which are 23.7% and 14.1%, respectively. Conjunction devices are important for novel writing because conjunctions and conjunctive devices unite elements of a text together. When the writing is united and interconnected, readers are more likely to rely on what the writer is presenting. A writer uses conjunctions to make his writing more readable and to present logical relationship between sentences or ideas, this engenders faith and goodwill in the readers. As Aristotle said, producing that goodwill, what he called philosophy, makes people more vulnerable to persuasion. The results and analysis of the novels show that conjunctions improve the writing as a whole by giving the writing coherence, or flow. Conjunctions assist different purposes: presenting agreement, disagreement, causation, maintenance or prominence, consequence and conclusion. They work like a bridge from one of the writer's points to another. Conjunctions make the points flow smoothly in order to make writing persuasive and influential. The results show that conjunction devices are important and necessary for comprehensive writings. In comprehensive writings too much reiteration and repetition is avoided, so in order to create a flow in writing long sentences are used which are joined through conjunctions. Similarly Writer, Mohsin Hamid, has also utilized these cohesive conjunctions to make his writings comprehensive, exhaustive and extensive one. He has made use of all kinds of conjunctions to make his writing effective one. Conjunction “and” is used more repeatedly and frequently in his all these writings which shows that he has presented coherence in the writings and it also makes his writing descriptive and interpretative. This conjunction has been utilized by him as a

bridge from one point to another point of writer in addition it also maintains and establishes the texture of text. As cohesive writing is writing which clasps together well. It can be followed easily because it uses language effectively to guide the reader. Similarly, usage of conjunctions in his writings provides the writing a flow. This stream and flow in writing by the use of conjunctive devices show that ideas are interrelated which illustrate coherence in the text.

III. CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study was to identify the occurrences and frequencies of cohesive devices of conjunctions within interpretative and descriptive writings by Mohsin Hamid. It also aimed at disclosing the importance and impacts of conjunctions by the writers or authors in using these devices to establish texture and comprehensiveness in these writings. The results have indicated that the writers can create cohesion and inclusiveness in the texts by employing all the four types of conjunction devices, though some (as additive conjunctions) were used much more repeatedly and frequently than others. The study also identifies that conjunctions are used to produce coherence in the writings. It is concluded that conjunctive devices are essential features in the complex writings in order to signify more than single idea. These devices provide the writing a flow and coherence. The consistent interactions between clauses, among sentences, and paragraphs can be conveyed by conjunctions (and, or, because, so etc.)

REFERENCES

- [1] Kopple, W. J. V. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, vol.36 (1), pp. 82-93.
- [2] Donnelly, C. (1994). *Linguistics for writers*. USA: SUNY Press.
- [3] Crismore, A., Markkanen, R., & Steffensen, M. S. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasive writing: a study of texts written by American and Finnish university students. *Written Communication*, 10(1), 39-7.
- [4] Halliday, M. A. K. & Hassan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- [5] Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse*. London: Continuum.
- [6] Eggins, S. (1994). *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. Pinter: London
- [7] Jafarpur, A. (1991). Cohesiveness as a basis for evaluating compositions. *System*, 19, pp. 459-465. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X\(91\)90026-L](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(91)90026-L).
- [8] Carrell, P. L. (1982). Cohesion is not coherence. *TESOL Quarterly*, vol.16 (4), pp. 479-488.

AUTHORS

First Author – Ammara Khan, E-mail: Ammarakhan2249@gmail.
Second Author – Aisha Choudhary (Corresponding author) Lecturer, Govt College University, Faisalabad

E-mail: Aisha.appliedlinguistics@gmail.com