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COHESION DEVICES IN
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THROUGH A THEMATIC
BLOG

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COHESION DEVICES IN STUDENTS' COMPOSITIONS THROUGH A THEMATIC
BLOG

by

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To God, because He has given me the life, the wisdom and the strength to reach this stage of my life. To my family, because they have been my support through the difficulties and my triumph in the happiness. And to you, my dear love, who encouraged me to accept this challenge and helped me in an important part of this process.



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ABSTRACT

This proposal was aimed at researching the use of cohesion devices in students' written productions, where they interacted through a thematic blog. The participants of this qualitative research were 10th grade students from the Juana Escobar School. The English class was used as a space to learn about these language structures, and the blog became the method through which they could show evidence of their interest of writing their thoughts about different topics by using cohesive devices about them. This was verified in the results, since the students not only gained vocabulary, but also improved their cohesion and coherence in their written productions.

Key words: Cohesive Devices, Thematic Blog,

Esta propuesta fue dirigida a la investigación acerca del uso de dispositivos de cohesión en las producciones escritas de los estudiantes, cuando interactúan a través de un blog temático. Los estudiantes del Colegio Juana Escobar, de 10º grado, fueron los participantes de esta investigación cualitativa, en donde la clase de Inglés, fue un espacio para conocer sobre estructuras del lenguaje y, el blog se convirtió en el elemento donde ellos pudieron evidenciar el interés de escribir sus pensamientos sobre temas diversos haciendo uso de los dispositivos de cohesión a lo largo de ellos. Estos fueron revelados en los resultados, ya que no solamente ganaron vocabulario, sino que también mejoraron la cohesión y la coherencia en sus producciones escritas.

Palabras clave: Dispositivos de Cohesión, Blog Temático.



INTRODUCTION

Education has long had a continuous process searching for innovation and improvement in order to form integral human beings, who will be able to understand the reality they are surrounded by, and any possible situations they will face in the future, promoting their capability to project themselves in different fields. This implies that Education allows students to express their ideas about a variety of different situations that can happen and are part of society. Thus school, and its use of virtual media which will help transform the educational perspective in a Colombian context, becomes the space where students can share these perceptions and change the role they are used to having inside the classroom. Considering this, students will be more participative when discussing aspects from their lives when they are studying the academic contents and improving their writing process. When students pronounce their ideas in written compositions, in this case informal paragraphs, they are encouraged to create links that join dreams with words, that is why sentences need to connect to each other, to achieve this it is necessary to use “cohesion devices” to join ideas between sentences to create texture (Halliday and Hasan: 1976, quoted by Tangkiengsirisin. p. 1).

All of these aspects were the main focus of this study, which searched for students' active participation in different environments of language learning, improving their language proficiency in writing through the use of a thematic blog (which is considered a useful tool to get confidence) and in this way writing by using a L2. Along the implementation of this proposal, students participated in three different texts. First, in a spontaneous composition where they had to describe their future plans. Second, they had to write a text in which they had to implement the topic of connectors seen in a class. Finally, they had to write another paragraph by using connectors and a grammatical structure developed in classes. These aspects permitted students to empower their ideas in each session in the blog page, involving them in another perspective of English classes, different from the one they had previously used.

To acutely illustrate the basis of this work it is structured in seven chapters. The first chapter contains the justification of the study, how it relates to the importance of this research, certain relevant aspects that contribute to guide the answers for research



objectives are pointed out; it is also mentioned the impact that this will have on the population and setting where it is carried out. The second chapter contains the research objectives, which helped to guide the process of the investigation that was developed at the Juana Escobar School. In addition, these objectives allow for the organization of the data analysis that functions to focus the attention on specific aspects from the established process. In the third chapter, the reader can find the theoretical background, which constitutes the foundation of the project, this chapter discusses and explores the construction of the research objectives including the perspectives and ideas of some authors and researches, who have studied the field worked on in this project. Then the methodology, type of study and instruments used to collect data throughout the project's duration are explained in detail.

Then the characteristic aspects of the data collection are stated in the fifth chapter, where the data collection process is described, along with the setting and the population who participated in the project, as well as the instrument applied (which is also explained why it was used for this project). Subsequently, the reader can find the results and discussion chapter, where the data analysis findings are described based on the categories that emerged. These findings are described providing some samples taken from the instrument to indicate and clarify the identified aspects, which were useful to guide the research objectives. The final conclusions for this study, which are portrayed in the seventh chapter, also contain teaching implications and some suggestions for further research.



1. JUSTIFICATION OF ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL INTEREST:

The Colombian educational context has a special interest in the learning and appropriation of English as a second language (MEN, 2007) not only for being one of the most spoken languages around the world, but also because it provides a plentitude of labor and cultural opportunities (Rodriguez, 2011); (MEN, 2009). As a way to guide students along this process of acquisition the Colombian education system is oriented to develop competences in all its levels; and for foreign languages the improvement of basic and communicative skills has been the main focus along the last ten years (MEN, 2007-09). Although this country has an important route in teaching English as L2, in bilingual and non-bilingual schools, the results on the latter have not been as expected. According to the “Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo” (2004), when taking the Common European Framework into account, students in the eleventh grade finish their scholar program at a B1 level. Specifically in Bogota’s case, the percentages of “Pruebas Saber”, which measured the level of proficiency in different subjects, was presented in 2012 and established differences between public and private schools, these scores do not reveal the minimal approach to the expected objectives.

Entity	A-	A1	A2	B1	B+	NP
School	49,2%	40,0%	10,8%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
District	48,5%	38,7%	9,3%	0,3%	3,2%	0,1%
Private	30,6%	29,5%	15,7%	6,6%	17,5%	0,1%
Bogota	39,4%	34,2%	12,6%	3,4%	10,3%	0,1%

NP: Percentage of students who do not present the test

Chart 1: Percentage of students by level of proficiency in English test (n.d., 2012)

As it is shown in Table 1, about 13,7% of students are located in the B level and almost 40% of them are located in the A- which, based on the classification made by the ICFES (2012), does not even approach the basic level. The difference between the district and private schools’ results is clearly evident, because in public education almost 50% are located in this inferior level. It is necessary to clarify the interest in district results, because this project will be developed in a public school, in which its test results are exposed in the second file of the chart. It is possible to observe that half of the students, who presented the test, had a level of A-. On the other hand, the scores of students’ results are located on the A level and some of them on the B level.



Under these circumstances, it is pertinent to design proposals to be implemented in class which can improve the learners' proficiency in the use of a second language. From this writer's teaching experience, it has been noticed that in spite of their difficulties and mistakes made trying to use English, learners prefer their writing ability because they feel more confidence and less afraid of making mistakes. Taking advantage of these areas of confidence, it was decided to emphasize written productions to describe and analyze the coherence and cohesion from written productions in students of the 10th grade when they interacted through a topic blog. This type of production is supported by official curricular documents (MEN, 2002; 2006) which present it as one of the communicative competences and it is also included as one of the features of the B level according to the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2002). Furthermore, it will contribute to the syllabus from this institution because when analyzed it is evident that there is an emphasis on the grammar aspect that has not been effective enough for students to express their ideas in a spontaneous way by using the L2.

The thematic blogs were selected as instruments to generate the written productions from students, since they are useful and frequent tools used by students (and in this case with academic purposes). According to Sharma and Barret (2007), through blogs the students can obtain textual information, photos and access to other pages to work in several skills from a target language. Also they are easy-to-manage tools to communicate with other beginners, allowing for work both in and outside of the classroom. It helps in different moments to present a topic, to practice, to receive feedback, to evaluate and to improve both the self-control and the group analysis work in order to achieve this aim.

This project was designed to reflect two different aspects which can contribute to the improvement of language teaching in public schools. The former aspect is to take considerations from the way that learners structure their written texts, and to improve them through the use of different writing production strategies. The latter aspect is to promote the use of virtual media in the classroom, since they have become useful interactive tools, narrowing distances and promoting a real communication, where students can interact and express by using a L2.



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2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

- To describe and analyze the cohesion devices in written productions on students from 10th grade when they interact through a thematic blog.

Specific objectives:

- To design and implement a thematic blog for students, in order to generate the ability of written production in English as a second language.
- To establish analysis categories from the students' written productions based on the taxonomy of cohesion devices.
- To systematize the collected information from the analysis categories established.



3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The development of competences has become the main emphasis of the Colombian educational context. The acquisition of English as a foreign language in this country is considered a young process, its initial proposal was born in 2003 with the implementation of the “Proyecto Distrital de Bilinguismo: Bogotá y Cundinamarca bilingües en diez años” (Concejo de Bogotá, 2006), which proposed the intensification of language teaching, providing a solid basis for students of public schools and improving their labor opportunities. As it was mentioned previously in the justification, this project has as one of its purposes that undergraduate students will finish their scholar age with a B1 level of English, taking into account the Common European Framework (“Programa Nacional de Bilinguismo”, 2004).

According to the “Estandares curriculares” (MEN, 2006) the B1 level is divided into two groups of grades which are named “pre-intermediate 1” for eight and ninth, and “pre-intermediate 2” for tenth and eleventh grades. Because the goal of this project is to describe and analyze the cohesive and coherence of written productions in 10th grade students when they interact through a thematic blog, the next step is to analyze the standards associated explicitly with the stipulated coherences and cohesions. Considering the low levels of proficiency shown by the school learners, as it was exposed in the table 1, it is necessary to point out standards from the sixth to the eleventh grade, presented in table 2.

6 th to 7 th A2.2 (Basic)	8 th to 9 th B1.1 (Pre-intermediate 1)	10 th to 11 th B1.2 (Pre-intermediate 2)
Use proper vocabulary to make coherent texts.	Organize coherent short-paragraphs, taking into account formal elements of language such as spelling and punctuation.	Structure written texts taking into account formal elements of language such as punctuation, spelling, syntax, coherence and cohesion

Chart 2. Source: MEN, (2006). “*Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* (p. 22-26). Bogota. Ministerio de Educación Nacional.



Based on this information it is possible to reflect that in pre-intermediate 2 the complexity of texts is determined by the use of language elements. From this author's knowledge of teaching languages, it was necessary to consider the previous aspects, despite being from other grades, to achieve text as a product. All of these parameters were taken into account to design the activities both alongside the classes and in the blog page. In addition, research conducted about coherence and cohesion has only determined the method of collecting information through writing essays, but it has not considered the presence of coherence and cohesion in lower levels, as this is state of the art.

3.1 Research Background

Research into projects about coherence and cohesion has found that all of them are based on Halliday and Hasan Taxonomy (1976), presented in table 3. They point out that cohesion explains how meaning is constructed based on semantic relations that are motivated between the lexical and grammatical items in a text. Furthermore, they establish that cohesion occurs when the semantic interpretation of some linguistic elements in the discourse depends on others. In other words, this is the basis where it is possible to construct the coherence, and becomes an essential feature to judge if the text is coherent or not. (Halliday and Hassan quoted by Castro, 2004 p.215).

In relation to coherence, it is construed as the association of ideas in a text to create significance for readers (ibid). To put it more simply, it is the result of the meaningful interaction between the text and the reader. Throughout the investigations consulted, it the relationship between cohesion and coherence from a theoretical perspective is not evident. However research has established connections between these constructs from the acquired results; for instance, Connor (1984, quoted by Castro, 2004) analyzed the cohesion shown in some argumentative essays from two L1 English and two advanced ESL writers (Japanese and Spanish) and found that to have a cohesive text in ESL it is not essential to be coherent, and there is no difference in the use of reference or conjunction cohesion between ESL texts and L1 English texts. He also suggested that the latter showed a great variety in the lexical use, while the advanced learners do not use it properly and regularly.



TYPE OF COHESION	CATEGORIES	ASPECTS	EXAMPLES
REFERENCE COHESION	Personal Reference	<i>Personal pronouns</i>	I, me, you, we, us, him, her, they, them, it
		<i>Personal determiners</i>	My, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, their, theirs, its
		<i>Relative pronouns</i>	Who, which
	Demonstrative	<i>Determiners</i>	The, this, there, that, those
		<i>Demonstrative adverbs</i>	Here, there, then
	Comparative	<i>Adjectives</i>	Same, identical, equal, other, different, more, better, etc.
		<i>Adverbs</i>	Similarly, differently, more, less, etc.
SUBSTITUTION COHESION	Nominal	A: Can you give me a glass? B: there is <u>one</u> on the table	
	Verbal	Every child likes chocolate and I think my son does too	
	Clausal	Latecomers will not be allowed in school after 8.00am the headmaster says so.	
ELLIPSIS	Nominal	These are my two dogs. I used to have <u>four</u>	
	Verbal	Teacher: Have you done the homework? John: Yes, <u>I have</u>	
	Clausal	Mary: Are you going to buy a new dress for my birthday? Mother: <u>Yes</u>	
CONJUNCTIVE COHESION	Hence, so, after, and, but, then, etc. e.g. <i>he took a cup of coffee after he woke up.</i>		
LEXICAL COHESION	Repetition	Of a word or phrase	
	Synonymy	Commonly, popularly	
	Antonymy	High, low	
	Hyponymy	Cigarettes/ cigars	
	Collocation	Education, classroom, class, and so on	

Chart 3. Halliday and Hasan's (1976), Cohesion Taxonomy. In: Sadighi and Heydari (2012)

Halliday and Hasan's (1976) concept of textual cohesion involves how a text works together. According to them, "text" is defined as "any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole" (1976: 1). In the linguists' view, cohesion involves relationships between two or more meanings in a text, and such



relationships are referred to as “cohesive ties”. Cohesion, therefore, is achieved through the use of cohesive ties, which can be found within or across sentences. Halliday and Hasan (1976) have classified cohesive ties into five major categories: *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis*, *lexical cohesion*, and *conjunction*, although in Halliday (1994), these cohesive ties have been reclassified into four types, with ellipsis being a subcategory of substitution. These five types of cohesive ties will be described.

3.1.1 Reference

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 308) define “reference” as “the relation between an element of the text and something else by reference to which it is interpreted in the given instance.” Reference can be categorized into three subtypes. First, *personal reference* is achieved through the use of personal and possessive pronouns, and possessive adjectives. They refer to individuals and objects that are mentioned in some other parts of a text.

Neil is a devoted teacher. *He* always prepares *his* lessons carefully.

(The personal pronouns *He* and *his* refer to the noun *Neil*.)

Another subtype is *demonstrative reference*, which is mainly realized by demonstratives (used both as pronouns and as adjectives). This type of reference can be used to identify a single word or phrase, or a longer text across several sentences, phrases, or even pages.

As a writing teacher, I would like to emphasize *this*. *Cohesion is very important for text organization*.

(The demonstrative pronoun *this* refers to the entire following sentence.)

The last subtype, *comparative reference*, is achieved through adverbs and adjectives of comparison, which are used to compare similarities or identities between items in a text. Normally, reference items and the antecedent items are co-referential. That is, they share a semantic relation whereby the interpretation of an item depends on something else in the discourse.

Some people eat to live while *others* live to eat.

(The comparative referential tie *others* refers to *people*.)



3.1.2 Substitution

Substitution occurs when one linguistic item is replaced by another that contributes new information in a text. This new information differs from the information previously provided by the antecedent linguistic item. Substitution involves the use of the terms “one(s)” or “(the) same” for nouns, “do so” for verbs, “so” or “not” for clauses. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), *substitution* differs from *reference* in two important respects. First, while *substitution* is a formal relation, *reference* is a semantic one. Second, a substitute item has to have the same structural function as that for which it is substituting. In the following example the reader can determine that difference:

Pete owns the black *sedan*. The blue *one* belongs to Mike.

(The word *one* is the substitute for *sedan*.)

Chen thought *the film was fun to watch*. His girlfriend didn't think *so*.

(The word *so* is the substitute for *the film was fun to watch*.)

3.1.3 Ellipsis

Considered as the equivalent of substitution by zero, *ellipsis* refers to “the omission of an item” (Halliday and Hasan: 1976: 88) that is already understood from the antecedent context. An elliptical item “leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere” (143). In the linguists' view, *substitution* requires an explicit linguistic form such as *do* and *one* to refer to the presupposed item, whereas in *ellipsis*, no linguistic item is used to refer to the presupposed item. Ellipsis plays an important part in sentence connection. If the reader comes across a structure that seems to be an elliptical construction, he/she is usually forced to look back to what was said previously in order to interpret the sentence. The reader interprets the sentence by reference to what has been ellipted and he/she can only know what has been ellipted on the basis of what is present in the preceding context.

Encountering an elliptical or substitute clause, the reader or listener needs to supply the missing words, which provide a cohesive relationship with what has been stated before. Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify *substitution* and *ellipsis* as two different types of cohesive ties although in a later work by Halliday (1994), the two cohesive ties are combined as a single category.



There are only a few *vehicles* on the road. More Ø are expected to travel along the road after the New Year Holiday.

(The word *vehicles* is omitted in the second sentence.)

3.1.4 Lexical Cohesion

Halliday and Hasan (1976) divide lexical cohesion into *reiteration* (which is subdivided into the repetition of a lexical item, the use of a general word to refer back to a lexical item, and the use of a synonym, or superordinate terms) and *collocation*. Lexical cohesion is a cohesive relation whose cohesive effect is achieved by the selection of vocabulary.

There's a *flower* in the vase. The *flower* was bought from a market.

(The word *flower* is repeated in the second sentence.)

The *computer* should be replaced. That old *thing* works erratically.

(The word *thing* is the general word referring to *computer*.)

His *job* is enjoyable. He has never been bored with his *work*.

(The words *job* and *work* are synonymous.)

They went to *the Emporium*. The *shopping mall* was large and had a lot of goods.

(The noun phrase *shopping mall* is the superordinate term referring to *the Emporium*.)

My grandmother liked *strong tea*.

(The adjective *strong* collocates with the head noun *tea*.)

In lexical cohesion, however, there are no particular lexical items which always have a cohesive function. That is, any pair of lexical items may bear a cohesive relation, but each lexical item per se does not indicate whether, in a particular context, it is functioning cohesively or not. A cohesive relation, therefore, can be established only by reference to the text.



3.1.5 Conjunction

Conjunction is the type of cohesion that involves the use of ties that perform the main function of connecting sentences. Conjunction, or connective, links two ideas in a text or discourse together semantically. With the use of conjunction, the understanding of the first idea accommodates the interpretation of the second idea. In English, conjunctive relations are usually established through the use of conjunctive ties, which may be a coordinating conjunction (like *and*, *but*, *or*), an adverb (like *in addition*, *however*, *thus*), or a prepositional phrase (like *besides that*, *despite the fact that*). Halliday and Hasan (1976) divide conjunctive relations into five broad categories: *additive*, *adversative*, *causal*, *temporal*, and *continuative*, each of which is further divided into several subcategories.

This is the first time I have tried Japanese food, and I like it very much.
(*And* is an additive conjunction.)

Jane finally arrived at the railway station; however, the train had left.
(*However* is an adversative conjunction.)

She is an efficient secretary, so her boss always admires her.
(*So* is a conjunctive tie signifying a causal relationship.)

Tom had a shower. Then he had breakfast.
(*Then* is a temporal conjunctive tie.)

You don't have to worry. It wasn't your fault after all.
(*After all* is a continuative conjunction.)

In Halliday and Hasan's (1976) analysis, distance is also a significant characteristic of cohesion. With a low distance, an immediate tie has a presupposed item in the sentence. A mediated tie occurs when the presupposed item is within the preceding sentences and the distance between the presupposed and the presupposing items is medium. A remote tie, with the highest distance, occurs when the presupposed item has one or more intervening sentences that are not involved in the presupposition (339). (Halliday and Hassan, 1976, quoted by Tangkiengsirisin, S. p. 3)



3.2 State of Art

Based on this taxonomy some investigations in relation to the goals of this project will be presented in detail.

3.2.1 Ong, Justina, (2011) Investigating the use of cohesive devices by Chinese EFL learners. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*. V. 13, 3, p. 42-65. The purpose of this research was the examination of cohesive errors in expository compositions of Chinese students who were learning ESL in a university in Singapore. The main idea was to make students aware of the difficulties in the use of cohesion by observing their cohesive errors in quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Certain reasons were taken into account to focus on in this analysis. First, the incorrect use of these devices generated misunderstanding from the reader in the intention of the writer. Secondly, the difficulties presented for Chinese learners to properly use the cohesion devices in writing production. Third, this study intended to calculate the frequency and percentage of cohesive errors based on the main categories and sub-categories from Halliday and Hasan (1976). Then, these categories were classified into types and the incidence and proportion of cohesive errors was determined and finally a linguistic report was provided with justification of the cohesive errors.

These 20 Chinese EFL learners were taking an intensive course to obtain an ordinary level in GCE (General Certificate of Education), they formed a homogeneous group, because all of them were Chinese, they were learning English as a foreign language and they had a similar language and instructional background. All of them wrote an essay when they started the course which denoted the lack of influence on teaching methods and curriculum materials on the authentic samples. These compositions were analyzed in order to detect cohesive errors, and then classified into main categories and subcategories based on Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy (1976). As qualitative result of the research were established four different types of common errors were recognized: a) *misuse*, understood as the wrong use of cohesive devices, b) *unnecessary addition*, when a cohesion device is used redundantly, c) *omission of cohesion device*, absence of it despite it being expected alongside the reading, d) *redundant repetition of cohesive devices*, which are used more than once in a text when they could be replaced by synonyms or other words.



Based on the quantitative results 140 cohesive errors were identified in ten expository compositions, where reference obtained the highest percentage of errors and the conjunction and lexical errors were the second and third highest respectively, it also showed that substitution and ellipsis errors were not found along the writing productions. Taking into account sub-categories, in the reference category, the order from highest to lowest was definite articles, then pronominal, comparatives and finally demonstratives. In the conjunction sub-category, additive errors had the highest percentage, followed by adversative and finally temporal and casual. And in the lexical cohesion sub-category, repetition and collocation had the highest percentage of errors and synonym errors had the lowest. To conclude, the study showed that in most cases students had difficulties using the reference conjunction and the lexical cohesion. In addition, students did not know the function and use of definite articles, they could not use reference cohesion to clarify and comparatives were wrongly used. To add new information and exemplify learners' work with simple additives but without a cohesive purpose and to express contrary relations they used wrong adversatives. The lexical cohesive errors in repetition of the same words revealed that the students were not able to use reference cohesion when required. And the misuse of collocation pointed to the students' deficiency in a wide range of vocabulary which had resulted in their inability to elaborate and extend ideas using synonyms and other cohesive devices.

3.2.2 Chen, Chia-Yin. Cohesion a study of personal pronouns in EFL writings. *Journal of Foreign Language Instruction*. p. 33-45. This study had the purpose of improving the writing skill of students in order to make them aware about the things they did while writing activities; this project was successful in one constraint of written academic English language: the use of personal pronouns as cohesive devices. The data was collected from an essay by eight international students who lived in America and were preparing to get into an American university, and the control group conformed by eight native American writers who worked in their master's degree and were involved in teaching English.

All of them have to write about a specific topic, "exercising power", in a limited period of time, and then they were selected and classified based on the Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy (1976) specifically on reference cohesion devices (personal pronouns). Every essay was decoded and analyzed with the KWIC MAGIC program which read



the marks and counted them to be mathematically analyzed. This project worked with different concepts, with the text as a discourse unit and as a measure of quality, where the collected data showed patterns of anaphor use, making an interpretation of texts as a representation of meaning for the reader. Another concept taken into account was the anaphoric ties and the effect on the reader based on the relationship between anaphor and cohesive ties and the ability to use semantic processes. In relation to personal pronouns, these were used in texts with features of topic paragraph boundaries and in some occasions intervened to the cohesive ties.

To conclude, the study showed that it was likely that the factors which allowed the production and representation of rhetorical relations were not as available for EFL writers as they were for the control group. Besides, no-native American writers had easy access to the discourse elements which became a problem in production of the text. According to Fox's (1993) study the cohesive ties are constrained by the relation of the environment with the tie, and based on this statement Chen concluded that Native Americans disrupted this constraint in a more proportional way than the non-natives, which influenced their interpretation of the text. In addition to this, McCarthy (1994) pointed out the influence of cultural background and the abilities to overcome lexico-grammatical problems, and the differences between cultures in the same aspects, proving along with this project that Asian writers had difficulties at the discourse level due to their cultural perspective.

3.2.3 Liu, Lida & Qi Xiukun (2010) A contrastive study of textual cohesion and coherence errors in Chinese EFL abstract writing in engineering discourse. *Intercultural communication Studies*. Harbin Institute of Technology. p. 176-187.

This empirical research experiment inspected the insufficiency of textual cohesion and coherence present in abstract productions from advanced Chinese learners of EFL. The main purpose of this project was to study the deficiency of cohesion, seen as a grammatical or lexical relationship between different elements of the text; and coherence, presented as the relationship which links the meaning of utterances in a discourse based on the shared knowledge of the speakers. This experiment took into account the principal motives to fossilize incoherent and non-cohesive terms in order to explore, control and improve the understanding of this EFL writing process. It also



talked about the cultural influence and the fossilization of L1 over L2 as the principal difficulties of efficient communication.

The dimensions used along the study were: five cohesive ties based on Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy (1976), the lexical cohesive framework stated by Hoey (2000) and the thematic progression developed by Zhu & Yan (2001) in order to examine the four different factors: linguistic, pragmatic, cognitive and cultural, and how they affect coherence and cohesion in texts from Chinese and English languages. The participants were divided into three groups, the first group with 30 non-English EFL doctoral in different fields of science, writers from the Harbin Institute of Technology with a high level of proficiency in English. The second group consisted of 30 Chinese EFL learners, chosen for their high level of proficiency in English writing skills. And the third group consisted of 30 EMLs (English Mother Language) who represented the professional skills. The instruments used to analyzed data were: the grammatical cohesion of reference, ellipsis, substitution and conjunction proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1976), the lexical cohesion of reiteration stated by Hoey (2000) in order to discuss simple and complex repetition, and the thematic progression developed by Zhu & Yan (2001) to judge the theme, the rhyme and the development of the subject.

The results of this quantitative study revealed that the deficiency of cohesion and coherence was present in most of the Chinese EFL abstracts when taking the lexical, grammatical and textual characteristics into account. It showed that coherence errors are the main factor that interferes with information and that causes the generally unproductive communication with target readers. It exposed that many differences exist in the structural, non-structural, lexical cohesion and coherence between Chinese and English languages and cultures. This eradicated the textual property, broke the reader's expectancy and diminished effective communication. A positive aspect that emerged from this analysis was that coherence is not constructed solely from the use of cohesive devices; because these two terms are closely related it would signify that coherence is subjective and dependent on the readers' evaluation of the text and what could be considered as a cultural aspect has an influence on it. Another important conclusion established by this study was that genre-based abstract discourse encourages the development of a more accurate interaction, taking into account the social perspective of teaching and researching, not only in the type of audience but



also from their expectations, how the information is given and the cultural differences that exist between the readers and writers.

3.2.4 Ramasawmy, Narainsamy (2004) Conjunctive cohesion and relational coherence in students' compositions. South Africa University. This research study observed the connection between conjunctive cohesion and relational coherence in narrative and expository compositions, taking into account their writing quality. The imperative to do this research was due to the lowest results obtained in twelve years of teaching the language, based on the GCE (General Certificate of Education) and BGCSE (Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education). Established arguments by some authors stated that the incoherence could be the reason behind students receiving these low grades. The author explored the effects of conjunctive cohesive concreteness and functional relations, taking into account the general scores of written compositions.

This study emphasized on the use of Halliday and Hassan's (1976) taxonomy, which identified the five types of cohesion (see table 3) and made a detailed presentation of every category and sub-category. Relational coherence was defined based on reason-result and means-purpose interpretations which were found alongside student compositions. The author formulated certain hypotheses: 1) *Conjunctive cohesion and writing quality*, which determined the connection between both terms in student compositions. 2) *Contiguous functional relations (Hubbard, 1989) and writing quality* which defined the relation between them. 3) *Conjunctive cohesion and composition genres*, which established the differences present between the frequency use of conjunctive cohesion along the narrative and expository compositions.

The participants were 60 12th grade students from Moshupa Senior Secondary School in Botswana, aged from 18 to 19 with 37 boys and 23 girls. Their native language was Setswana and interacted using it outside and sometimes inside classes. They were students from a similar socio-economic environment; in these government schools the use of English was minimal. They were asked to write two separate tests, with the expectations that they had been received proper teaching and had practiced the narrative and expository writing specifications. They wrote a narrative composition and then two weeks later an expository one. In each session, they had 60 minutes to write



the compositions with a word count of 350-500. The complete exam took 80 minutes; the other 20 minutes were distributed between question papers and marking answer sheets and collection of the students after the test. The topics selected for the narrative test were 1) A new-born baby who is found abandoned at a bus-stop; 2) Someone who has a great disappointment that turns out to be a blessing in disguise. The topics for the expository test were 1) Favoritism and 2) Discipline. The topics were taken from the Cambridge GCE O-level in order to have the same standard specifications as the BGCSE.

Taking into account the findings that collected and analyzed along with the study's hypothesis it was established that: Hypothesis 1: Conjunctive cohesion and writing quality did not show significant differences between high and low-rated texts in narrative compositions, while in expository compositions they indicated a significant difference between both groups, which indicated a positive relationship between cohesion frequency and writing quality. Hypothesis 2: Contiguous functional relations and writing quality were found, along with the research that a significant relationship existed in the narrative compositions, in both groups; and in expository compositions it was possible to determine that there was a positive relationship amongst the seven categories analyzed: temporal, cause-effect, paraphrase, matching, amplification, and truth and validity relations. Temporal, matching, amplification, truth and validity relations were more profusely used, as was shown in their percentage densities. Hypothesis 3: Conjunctive cohesion and composition genres revealed significant differences in the frequency of conjunctive cohesion in expository and narrative compositions.

To conclude with respect to Hypothesis 1, cohesion was found to be significantly related to writing quality in the case of expository but not narrative texts. In terms of Hypothesis 2, the density of contiguous functional relationships was significantly higher in the high than in the low-rated texts in narrative and expository genres of the study. The expository writers demonstrated some degree of complex combination of semantic relations such as truth and validity, in contrast to the simple temporal relationships in the narrative compositions. Hypothesis 3 statistically tested the relationship of narrative and expository genres on different types of conjunctives such as temporal, causal, adversative and additive. It was found that every type of conjunctive used showed a



differential distribution between the genres: this was carefully accounted for alongside different samples present along the development of the document. There was thus an association between types of conjunctives and genres.

All of these pieces of research contributed in relevant aspects, because they provided meaningful information which guided the trajectory of this project based on the document presented by Ong (2011) which demonstrated the combination of quantitative and qualitative research. Although this author emphasized on counting the cohesive mistakes made by students, categories were established that took the Halliday and Hassan's taxonomy into account, which would light the achievement of one of this project's specific objectives. Taking into account the Chen study, it is possible to determine that in spite of this being a piece of quantitative research, it contains worries about the improvement of writing skill and of making students aware of the common mistakes; furthermore, the emphasis made on personal pronouns could establish a background to define if all of the categories established by Halliday and Hassan will be taken into account or just some specific ones.

Liu and Qi's (2010) research took coherence into consideration in a deeper way than other studies, it was not limited to solely count the number of mistakes made by students, and it also evaluated how cultural, environment and fossilization factors affected the learning process of a second language, specifically in writing production. Finally, Ramasawmy's (2004) study exposed specific aspects of cohesion and coherence such as the conjunctive cohesion and the relational coherence, and would prove to be beneficial to the clear understanding of categorization processes.

3.3 Communicative Language Teaching

The Council of European Modern Languages Project (1971), made a publication by Van Ek (1975) named "The Threshold Level", this document had a succession of syllabus stipulations that defined the content required for common communication in English. The main purpose of this project was to indicate all of the knowledge, abilities and reactions that a learner would require to reach that level in order to experience different daily situations effectively (Arzamendi, Ball, Gassó & Hockly, n.d. p. 79). Subsequently in 2001 a European Union Council resolution suggested the implementation of the Common European Framework (CEF) to determine an updated



and more modern version of language proficiency; the CEF is divided into six levels as shown in table 4:

A- Basic Speaker	A1- Breakthrough
	A2- Waystage
B- Independent Speaker	B1- Threshold
	B2- Vantage
C- Proficient Speaker	C1- Effective Operational Proficiency
	C2- Mastery

Chart 4. Arzamendi et al., (2001) *Common European Framework of References* (n.d. p. 80)

Every level enlists some skill-based descriptors to specify the exact stages of the process that a learner requires. According to the government documents, undergraduate students in Colombia might graduate with a threshold or B1 level, which they have to accomplish with certain specifications of basic skills, and in terms of writing production they have to be able to “*produce simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest*” (CEF, 2001, quoted by Arzamendi et al. n.d. p. 169). Under these circumstances, CLT received a meaningful contribution from the CEF.

Chomsky (1965-66) used the term “Linguistic Competence” to refer to the knowledge and proper use of language rules, which involve the creativity and structure of new sentences. Hymes (1972), talked about “Communicative Competence” of the use of language in social situations, in order to express it effectively in daily situations. On the other hand, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed the construction of four subsections which contributed to the development of the CLT. The first subcategory, grammatical competence, seen as the ability to use language structures accurately, was the same linguistic competence from Chomsky. The second subcategory, sociolinguistic, was conceived as the talent to interpret the setting where communication happens. The third subcategory, discourse competence, established the capacity to take specific components in a message based on their cohesion and coherence. The final category, strategic competence, explained the method of maintaining a fluid conversation taking into account all of its variations. (Canale and Swain, 1980, quoted by Arzamendi et al. n.d. p. 84)



Based on these concepts it is conceivable to establish some implications that can be applied in this project. Although Chomsky and Hymes have contrary perspectives, Widdowson (1978) proposed connecting them in a teaching methodology from the former to the latter, in other words making it possible to work on linguistic categories to produce them through communicative items, the following chart reveals every item from both categories:

LINGUISTIC CATEGORIES	COMMUNICATIVE CATEGORIES
• Correctness appropriacy • Usage • Signification • Sentence • Proposition • Cohesion • Linguistic skills (e.g speaking and hearing) • Communicative abilities	• Use • Value • Utterance • Illocutionary act • Coherence • Communicative abilities (e.g saying, listening, talking)

Chart 5. Linguistic and Communicative categories. Widdowson (1978), quoted by Arzamendi et al., (2001) in: *Methodological approaches* (n.d. p. 85)

Although every characteristic has an important role in communication, those which are relevant to the project are cohesion, seen as an element to define formalities of language and link to the discourse and coherence, seen as a subjective perspective to describe sense, clarity of ideas and their logical development through the text. (Widdowson, 1978, quoted by Arzamendi et al. n.d. p. 85)

3.4 Blog as a Communicative Tool

Teaching English has become an important element to achieve different purposes that can improve lifestyle. English is an essential language in this globalized age, where it is possible to find a multitude of information in an easy way. Based on this, the teaching process can find in technology a useful tool to foster students, because it is entertaining and permits them to produce written works. It also helps teachers to innovate in their teaching methodologies, creating a great environment to interact not only through technology but also to improve their relationships with students, making



them feel more aware of their abilities and improving their communication in a written manner as an instrument to prepare them for future life.

The use of blogs benefits the interactivity, autonomy and confidence of the students at the moment of publishing their comments. According to Ward (2004) the use of blogs helps language teaching and learning especially in terms of grammar complexity, correctness and fluency, and additionally a sense of freedom can be developed to help them express their ideas and state their position easier than in a normal class. People can find several blogs in the informative, academic and educative environment, and the learners can start to practice writing strategies in a motivating and pleasant manner. Blogs suggest many opportunities to adopt educational procedures. For instance, students are encouraged to write, create, practice cooperation, interchange concepts and appreciate what they produce. The work with blogs incorporates metacognitive processes because writing on the Internet must be timely and accurate. The student-teacher interactions can be conducted in other manners not only inside the classroom. They can publish materials and have access to the information or other sources to do classroom projects and activities, taking advantage of the time. (Rojas, 2011)

To continue talking about Ward (2004), he said that *“a weblog is a website that is updated regularly and organized chronologically according to the date, and in reverse order from most recent entry backwards.”* (p. 17). It was considered that the use of a blog could be interesting to encourage students in this project, to write their thoughts, opinions and positions about different topics, because they have never used this resource in English classes. This is proposed with the idea of maintaining an enjoyable experience in the language learning process. This group does not feel confident to speak in English during the classes; consequently, it is necessary to find a way to communicate with them by writing, which is the skill that they can manage better. In that sense the blog becomes a useful tool to promote communication among students by using L2. Furthermore a blog gives students the opportunity to participate actively in their learning process. Teachers must develop the habit of writing, and if students are engaged with technology a blog can be very useful to obtain good results in this project.



The use of blogs is a new tool in the teaching and learning processes, but as Quintero (2008) pointed out, there are studies that have proven the advantages of using weblogs to enhance students' writing development. These studies conducted by Ward (in 2004) determined the factors as weblogs improve learners' composition proficiency. There is no doubt that technological resources are attractive for students. For that reason, with the development of this project it was considered that an Internet resource like a blog could turn out to be a motivational and productive element in the classroom.

4. METHODOLOGY

In order to accomplish this proposal it is necessary to implement the Theme-Based approach, pointed out by Brown (1994), providing students with topics that promote discussions that will motivate them, and since these themes are a part of their life, they allow them to express their ideas fluently whilst they are learning new facets of the language. With this in mind, the Communicative Language Teaching was established as the method that students can use to interact amongst their peers, not only through expressing their ideas orally, but also in their writings, giving the teacher the possibility to use these as the first step of analysis, which motivates students to use language as an element to improve this skill (Brown 2000); for this reason, it is necessary to have interventions in class where the topics, the interaction with students and the writing proposals posted in the blog can be used as the first steps of analysis. To establish a real connection between writing and blogs, it is necessary to refer to Quintero (2008:16), who stated that *"New technologies extend writing environments by linking students-writers to other people with whom they can interact through writing"*.

The phases to be carried out in the project were shown from the moment of explanation of the blog page, up until the collection of data, passing through the interventions performed in class as a base to apply methodologies at the instant of posting student comments. After the creation of the blog page, the next step was to present the blog to students, explaining to them the methodology to be used and how it links with the classes. The idea of using a thematic blog was to foster the use of English as a way to help the students communicate spontaneous and premeditated comments about themselves, because they did not feel confident speaking English in class, so it was necessary to find a recursive instrument that both increased and



improve the communicative aspect, and took the wide technological resources into account; the blog provided students with a plentitude of opportunities to participate actively in the language learning process.

Then the interventions were utilized which determined not only grammatical but also contextual topics, which generated the possibilities to stay centered on those topics and correspondingly made use of the structures seen in classes, made drafts of the students' comments and reviewed them when the blog was posted. These topics were related to future plans, methods of living and expectations. The information was then collected through the students' compositions which had their descriptive part analyzed in order to identify the common cohesive devices used by students; this step was completed on June and July. These steps were developed using the resources of the school's English center, where it was possible to establish a connection using virtual Medias, and in some cases in their homes. As Quintero (2008) mentioned, "students don't tend to write unless they have to" and blogs could be a way to change that.

4.1 Type of study

Since the main purpose of this project was to analyze the cohesive devices and coherence used by students through the implementation of this blog, Qualitative Research was considered the most suitable method in which to base this project on. Merriam (1998) defined Qualitative Research as a method to get a deep understanding of an event in a real and natural environment. Alongside this project, the sense of reality was achieved through the participants' interaction with the topics that entail processes that would subsequently help the learners to construct their ideas and points of view. This method was based on insights and connotations that can form part of a thinking development rather than from quantification, which measures knowledge through numbers. A type of Qualitative Research that was used is the Case Study approach, because it requires an establishment of the issue. This facilitated the selection of the participants, in order to focus on them to collect and analyze data in a straightforward manner.

Other characteristics of this approach were the ones established by Merriam (1998), who pointed out that a Case Study is focused on a natural description and analysis



rather than from a statistical perspective. The main goal of this natural perspective was to discover different aspects in a population where the process carried out was the significant research tool. Outcomes and confirmation were put aside; because these are not the principal objectives of qualitative research. Another feature mentioned by the author is that a case study can be applied to just one person or to a group without having any irregularity between the two.

4.2 Instruments to collect data

To develop this project, one of the critical steps to bear in mind and organize was the collection of data, which came from the population selected and described previously, these instruments helped to expose information about the cohesive devices used, the presence of coherence, the attitudes and to evaluate the pertinence of the material that was used to work along the project development. These elements were corroborated from the data collected, which were analyzed and then constituted into the main tool to define the results of the research proposal. To collect the necessary information some instruments were selected to support the processes carried out, these instruments are described below.

4.2.1 Thematic Blog: The thematic blog was selected as an instrument to generate the students' written productions, because these were useful and frequent tools used by them and in this case they encompassed academic purposes. According to Sharma and Barret (2007), through blogs the students can gain textual information, photos and access to other pages to work in several skills from a target language. Also they are easy-manage tools to communicate with other beginners allowing work both in class and outside the classroom. It helps in different moments to present a topic, to practice, to feedback, to evaluate and to improve the self-control and the group analysis; therefore in order to achieve this aim it was necessary to design and create a blog. (See Appendix A)



5. STUDY

5.1 Data Collection

The data used in this study was collected from student's written productions produced in a paragraph format, which were posted on the blog's web page in three different moments. All of these were used as assessments to examine the student's proficiency in using cohesion alongside their expository written work. This process began in May, introducing the topic to students who were asked to take an active role in the development of their writing process through their participation in the blog. The activities with the students were carried out in May and June. Some of these activities were systematically presented where writing strategies were subsequently applied. During the process this author was expecting to be asking students to be focusing, structuring, drafting, re-viewing and evaluating at the moment of the posting on the blog. Data was gathered from the collection of comments uploaded onto the blog's page. The teacher played the role of guide and facilitator.

As previously mentioned, these productions were developed based on three different topics. In the first moment, the written texts were created without any explanation about the topic, and in this case students wrote their paragraphs spontaneously, referencing their future plans. At the beginning, the texts were written in the classroom as a practical exercise, and then the students had to sum up their texts into one paragraph and post it onto the blog (it was necessary to ensure that students did not receive any feedback or correction in this process). Secondly, an intervention was performed by the teacher, who explained certain linking words and phrases with the purpose of making the productions more challenging and organized. These connectors were presented in a guide (Appendix B), and worked into a class with practical exercises. After this activity, students had to work on the blog and watch a video, and based on that they had to comment answering about their dreams and the necessary steps to achieve them by using the connectors learned previously. As a third step, there was another intervention from the teacher which explained a specific topic, and subsequently each student was asked to write about their best ever holiday based on different landscapes presented in the blog, where they implemented not only the connectors explained before but also the new topic presented in class.



Figure 1 summarizes the process and the moments where is necessary to have an intervention to present a topic in order to increase student's knowledge about written texts.

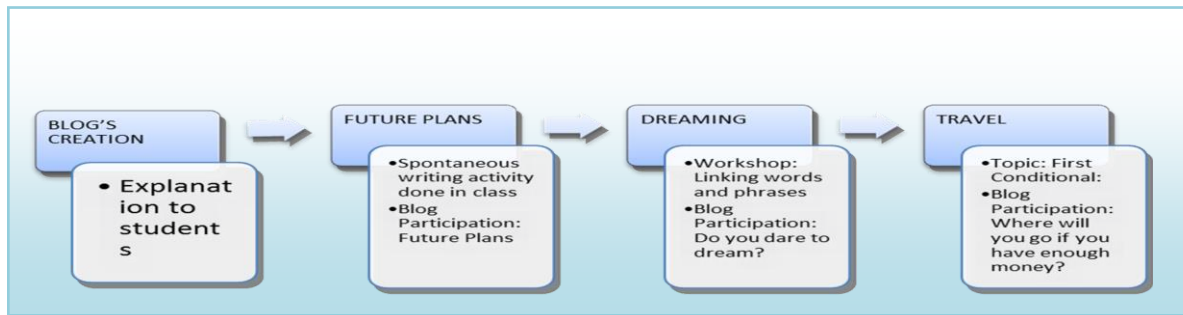


Chart 6. Phases and Classes interventions

After the writing process was completed by students, the procedure to select data was established based on the continuity and participation of the students commenting on the three different topics. Taking into account this specification, the group was reduced to those individuals who had actively participated in the blog alongside the three different topics.

5.2 Setting and Participants

This research was developed with students from Juana Escobar, a public school located in San Rafael in the San Cristobal district, a neighbourhood in the first social status. The students were in the 10th grade and conformed of 14 girls and 11 boys to give a total of 25 students whose average ages were from 14 to 16 and had had contact with English during their school careers. In their English classes they had managed a basic level of proficiency in their second language through written exercises, answering tasks given by the teacher based on the practice of grammatical structures in different tenses. The school had some technological resources such as computer rooms, tape recorders, video beams, software with Internet and an English Centre Resources Room, although many of the activities were also done by the students outside of school.

Taking into account the specification of the posts on the blog and the participation in all three different topics, the group of students was reduced to ten, who had shown their interest in using English as a “normal” language by actively participating in their classes and by developing their written productions in the blog page. They fit the criteria



established for this plan which was centred on students with a positive classroom attitude and a noticeable participation. However, it is important to highlight that although not all of the students participated in the blog as specified, all of them made an important effort to work in classes developing the exercises. Some of them wrote about one or two topics, but as an important aspect of this research was to make evident a writing process developed through the practice, it was not possible to use them as part of the analysis. This study helped to develop a willingness to participate in students, especially for those who did not have a proper language interaction inside the classroom, to deal with new vocabulary, structures and coherent elements.

5.3 Research Sources

It is necessary to clarify that the blog became the most powerful tool to collect data, since these types of websites organize the information chronologically and have a close connection with social web sites in order to make students aware about the specifications. However the way this data was analyzed was determined by the observation of student's written productions and the way they made use of cohesive devices.

It was then considered that the use of a blog could be interesting for 10th grade students in the Juana Escobar School, because they had never used this resource in class. The first step to develop this tool was its creation, a process that lasted three weeks, where it was necessary to organize the different pages by topics and connect them with the blog posts, of which there were three in total. It was necessary to look for information, readings, videos and pictures according to the themes presented to encourage the students to write.

This source provided not only physical data to analyze, but also helped to perceive a change of mind from students. In order to make this idea more clear, Cuesta (2010) commented that "students could find a self-controlled scenario in a learning space created by an online environment and assisted by their tutors", this became evident during this project because the students who had a less significant participation in class had a more active role posting comments in the blog.



Secondly, to analyze the students' compositions it was necessary to take out the comments that had a prominent participation along the other topics posted in the blog. Their analysis was primarily focused on the descriptive aspects in order to classify them into the five types of cohesion devices, proposed by Halliday and Hasan's Taxonomy (1976), and then divided into the categories and subcategories by using different colours to highlight its presence in the text.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to account for the methods of the cohesive devices in the written productions of the 10th grade students, the information was analyzed conducting the following procedures. Although this was a qualitative study, it was necessary to quantify the frequency of cohesive devices used along the three different moments to identify the process carried out at the beginning of the study, and how this affected the structural intervention performed in classes (Appendix 6). This quantification was gathered using the codification performed with the colors and applied to the students' texts with the purpose of ensuring that the cohesive ties appeared in all the paragraphs. The data was expected to show variations in the use of cohesion between the first topic-paragraph that was spontaneous and the other two topics where there were grammatical elements to be taken into account.

The description of the results is categorized based on each cohesion type proposed by Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy, the following chart summarizes the categories and subcategories determined from the data analysis.

Research objective	Categories	Subcategories
To describe and analyze the cohesion types in written productions on students from 10 th grade when they interact through a thematic blog	Reference Cohesion	Personal
		Demonstrative
	Conjunctive Cohesion	Additive
		Adversative
		Causal
		Temporal
	Lexical Cohesion	Synonym
		Antonym

Chart 7. Categories and Subcategories found from Data Analysis



With regard to the Substitution Cohesion and Ellipsis, it is necessary to clarify that the analysis revealed no cases of them in either of the students' texts when taking into account all of the topics treated along the blog use. Under these circumstances, they were not reported in the categorization process of this study.

6.1 Reference

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976: 308), "reference, is the relation between an element of the text and something else by reference to which is interpreted in the given instance". This type of cohesion is divided in three subtypes: *personal reference*, which refers to the subjects and objects pointed out in some parts of the text through the use of personal pronouns and possessive pronouns and adjectives; *demonstrative reference*, which is used to recognize a particular word, phrase or long text through sentences or phrases; *comparative reference*, establishes similarities between items in a text through the use of comparative adverbs and adjectives. The differences between anaphoric and cataphoric references are not taken into account in this document, but the analysis of reference cohesion implicates the exploration of these specific aspects in each written text.

6.1.1 Personal Reference

With the analysis it is possible to determine that students made use of this type of cohesion in order to be more emphatic with their ideas, especially when using personal reference since this is the case that has a significant regularity in their texts. These results displayed the variance in the use of personal, and sometimes relative pronouns, in the students' written paragraphs, showing a remarkable difference between the moment of spontaneous writing (where they did not receive any grammatical guidance) with the texts written after an explanation about connectors and a linguistic structure, which were required to write the second and third comments on the blog page. To have a clear perspective about this frequency use it was necessary to follow certain steps in order to have accurate data to analyze. Firstly it was crucial to quantify the number of times that the students used these pronouns to compose their texts, secondly the complete sentences had to be extracted so that their use could be identified along their written compositions, and finally the use of personal references from the Halliday and Hasan's Taxonomy (1976) were evaluated along with the process oriented on writing.



In the spontaneous writing, the results of the analysis in the personal reference subcategory revealed that students used more personal pronouns and determiners; however some of them presented cohesive errors that were not properly structured. Well-formed reference students indicated their future plans and placed a special relevancy on people and objects. In each of the samples, presented below, the devices used are explained alongside written compositions:

- a) *I want to study and if I have children I will give them all.*
- b) *My plans for the future are principally to enter an university to study graphic design, it will not be easy but I will achieve it.*
- c) *My plan is to be a great player, usually people think it is easy but actually is not.*

In these samples the underlined words correspond to the most common uses of personal references applied for students along their written texts. These items point out the relevance of describing individuals and things that are part of the students' immediate context. According to Halliday and Hasan, when personal pronouns are properly used "the syntactic function of the personal itself, nor the syntactic function of its referent, has any bearing on the anaphoric relation between both" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, quoted by Rahman, p. 56), these samples clearly demonstrate the function of the referent device to denote the anaphoric information.

However, not all of the sentences were correctly formulated, the most frequent errors in personal reference were related to the incorrect use of pronouns and determiners, and furthermore the students did not take into account the number in categories between plural and singular. The following examples show some of those mistakes:

- d) *(...) try to find a girlfriend where we can be together for hug __ much and tell you how much I want it...*
- e) *(...) continue to collaborate you to my mother at home.*

In example (d) there is a lack of a personal pronoun which could be replaced by "her", making reference to "the girlfriend" or "us" in order to follow the previous information



established by the use of personal pronoun “we”. Then the student uses the object pronoun “you” to continue talking about “the girlfriend”, and later uses “it” also making reference to the same person. This situation is repeated in example (e) where “you” is used and not “her” to refer to student’s mother. These simple mistakes contributed to the lack of cohesion and difficulties in the proper interpretation of the text.

In the second and third texts, it was possible to guide students on the use of connectors and the grammatical structure of the first conditional. The results revealed a low level of mistakes by using personal pronouns and determiners, and also a proper use of relative pronouns into their paragraphs. The following sentences exemplify the use of these elements:

- f) My dream principally is to finish my studies, (...) I will have to study hard but I will achieve it with effort.*
- g) My dream is to be a great soccer player, because I like it since childhood.*
- h) I will go to Japan, I think it's a wonderful place to go on vacation (...) my partner will be someone who I appreciates much.*
- i) (...) the great Wall of China with its 8.518 km long which will be incredible walking it all.*

In examples (f) and (g) the students talk about their dreams, they properly use the pronoun “it” to refer to “finish my studies” and “soccer”. In (h) and (i) the use of the relative pronoun is applied along sentences not only to talk about a special person but also to comment on the characteristic of a place and use that previous information to express student’s likes.

6.1.2 Demonstrative Reference

The results in this subcategory are determined by the form of verbal pointing, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976) the use of determiners and demonstratives are closely related to the previous information and three different ways exist to distinct them into a text: first, proximity, which are used to refer to near elements (*this, these*) and not near components (*that, those*). Second, the distinction in the number in its categories of singular (*this, that*) and plural (*these, those*), and finally which should be used followed



by a noun. These samples illustrate how students apply these items along their written productions:

- j) My dream in short time is to be a footballer as well be the best in this.*
- k) (...) behave judicious in social service because I'm neglecting that.*
- l) My plans to follow study to pass it year and to gather in eleventh and to pass for study a in the Sena a course technique for more advance search work and to gain the life to have a family and be happy with them for the rest of lifes's ahead, those are my plans or purposes.*
- m) I like to travel to Portugal for landscapes and culture that this country has.*
- n) I like succeed always win although this is very difficult and even more in this country.*

In examples (j) and (k) the use of determiners are referencing the total event. In (l) “those” is used to talk about the entire student's plans, and denotes the application of the determiner to indicate a plural; and in (m) the determiner emphasizes in Portugal, the place that student want to know someday. Finally, (n) has the repeated usage of the determiner “this”, the first underlined word refers to the previous information, being successful, and the second talks about the country, which denotes proximity and puts an emphasis on it.

In Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy the demonstrative and comparative references are specific, however the analyses do not reveal cases that determine their use in students' compositions, for this reason they were not considered in this subcategory.

These findings suggest that the use of personal references, in personal and determiner type are not only the same in the first moments of writing, which were the spontaneous compositions, but also in the elaboration of the second and third paragraphs, where there was an intervention. The analysis does not show any difference in the quantity not even the significance along the texts, this means that there is no intervening variable affecting the study. Therefore it becomes evident that students infer the use of these ties to complement, emphasize and relate to given information.



6.2 *Conjunctive Cohesion*

The conjunctive cohesion is one of the most common and extensive to work on written compositions, since it is divided into different subtypes and accomplishes the function of joining clauses, sentences and paragraphs together. The difference with this type of cohesion is that it is not necessary to have specific elements that are interpretable in an explicit context, which gives it a particular fundamental significance. Halliday and Hasan stated that “conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meanings” which denotes a connection between independent concepts into a text, in addition they also pointed out that “they are not primarily devices for reaching out into the preceding (following) text, but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse” (Halliday and Hassan, 1976, quoted by Ramasawmy, p. 7)

As mentioned previously this category has been extended significantly, for that reason and to quote Halliday and Hassan again it is necessary to use the categorization developed by them about this type of cohesion. They divided it into four subtypes: additive, adversative, causal and temporal. In this study all subtypes were studied, especially because the students received a class where these connectors were presented to them to be applied into their written compositions.

In order to have a perspective of the elements developed in this process, it was necessary to present a part of the guide that was explained to the students, which is summarized in the diagram below. In this diagram the connectors are grouped according to the similarity of their meaning based on three basic linking words *and*, *or*, *but*. Based on this workshop, students knew the cases where they could use them and the respective meaning, under these circumstances, a significance difference was established between the first composition done by students, where they did not have any previous knowledge about this topic, with the second and third compositions, where they had received an explanation about them to be applied into their paragraphs.

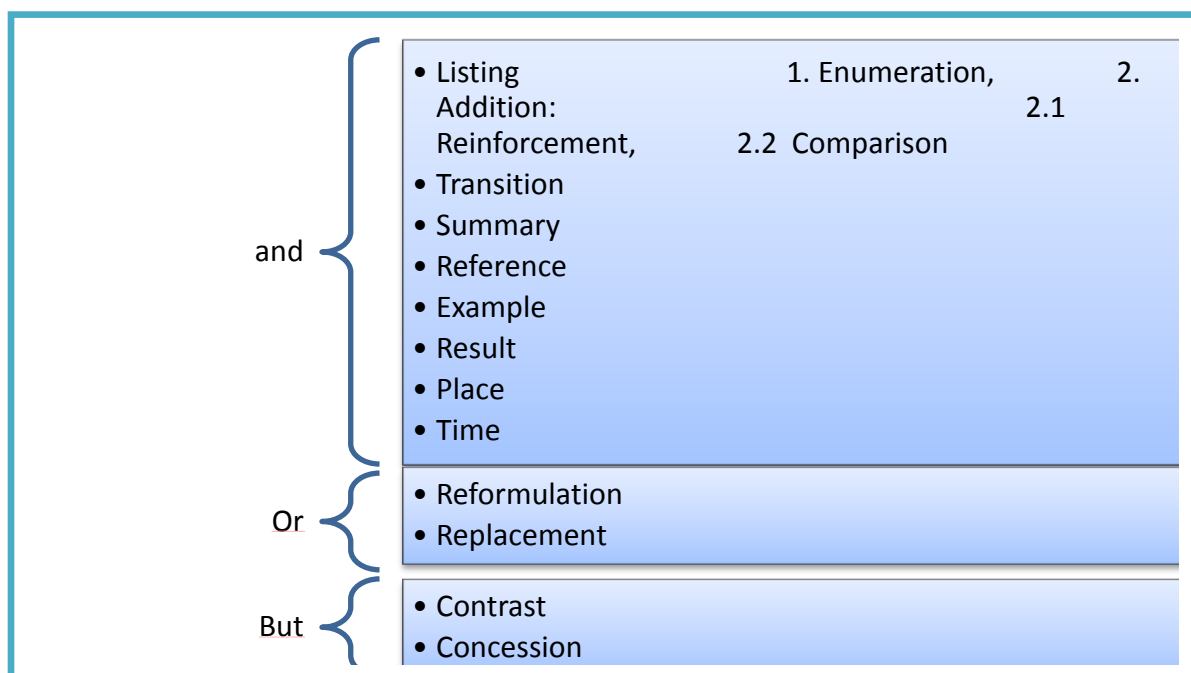


Chart 8. Types of Connectives

Based on this diagram it was possible to classify the conjunctive ties into the four subcategories established by Halliday and Hasan (1976). The following part explains the results obtained in each one.

6.2.1 Additive

This subcategory was the most suitable to establish links of ideas, because in this case the author discussed a particular concept and wants to continue discussing something related. This type of relationship occurs between statements and may be expressed concerning two or more ideas forming a list of them. In this study it is possible to determine the use of one of these connectors as fundamental, not only because it was the most used in the students' compositions, but also because it follows the precept of enlisting of ideas. The use of the conjunction "*and*" was the only element used in the first moment of the writing process. In the spontaneous writing, students connected their ideas by using "*and*" all the time, which revealed their lack of vocabulary. The following samples confirm this phenomenon, most of which are complete paragraphs where the students made a list of their future plans, in others they are just a minimal part that makes that aspect evident.



- o)** *I want to study and go ahead and help my parents work and if I get a goal and if I have children and give them all and not be asking for help to anyone.*
- p)** *My plans are to follow study of to pass the year and to gather in eleven and to pass for study in the Sena a course technique for more advance search work and to gain the life to have a family and be happy with them for the rest of life's ahead...*

In (o) and (p) the lack of punctuation is noticeable, and although this is not part of the research it has consequences due to the way the students relate their paragraphs, because they separate all of their ideas by using the conjunction *and*. In sample (o) the repetition is high which affects the total comprehension of the text. The contrary effect happens in example (p) where in spite of its frequency it does not have a negative effect on the paragraph's coherence.

Based on the second and third texts the difference in the use of additive connectives is remarkable for two reasons. Firstly because the students received a class where they studied those linking words, and secondly because those linking words were subsequently applied according to the purpose that the student wanted to express. The results revealed a significance increase of these additive connectors in their texts. Notwithstanding that the use of "*and*" prevails in them, other connectors were considered to state their ideas.

Examples of them are presented below:

- q)** *Also I would like to travel to different countries for know different cultures.*
- r)** *The worst is that when no one believes in you not only a heart decays but also gives you strength to achieve this goal and achieve what you desire.*
- s)** *My dream is soon be a footballer and be the best at this but also consider something simple that catches my attention as the mechanical industry.*
- t)** *(...) to get a good job and go to college with great knowledge, besides good grades in the icfes which is something that I achieve in grade eleven.*



In (q) the use of “also” gives a new idea that complements the previous information in the complete paragraph. (r), (s) and (t) present the conjunction and they complement their ideas by using other types of connectors which help to improve the text’s purpose.

6.2.2 Adversative

In this subcategory it is possible to establish the contrast between two sentences. In the first students’ compositions only a few moments are present where they can use them to generate that contrast. Samples of this are presented below:

- u) Perhaps I’m not the best student but I will make my best effort to achieve my goal*
- v) (...) usually people think it is easy but actually it is not.*

The most common adversative connector was the word “*but*” as it is observed in examples (u) and (v). In (u) the first statement is negative and it connects it with a linking word which provides a positive change to the complete sentence. In (v) it is the opposite case, where it changes from a possible positive perspective and the student contradicts that statement with a factual position.

Based on the second and third students’ compositions the changes are evident, since students not only make use of the word “*but*”, but also start to go beyond, implementing new words learnt in the connectors class. These samples reveal that increase in the vocabulary about connectors.

- w) I like succeed always win although this is very difficult and even more in this country.*
- x) One could imagine that is question of silver or sponsorship but in conclusion the only thing that matters is that you play well and believe in yourself.*
- y) I progress in my studies and I have to continue así (in that way), although I have to be more wise.*

The contrast between positive and negative statements is present in all cases. It is possible to determine that these students’ positions correspond to their own reflections



about the different topics proposed in the blog page. Although these statements present mistakes, such as switch code or improper adjectives and comparatives, the use of adversative connectors is accurate and keeps the coherence in the texts.

6.2.3 Causal

The use of conjunctions and prepositions to generate reasons, purposes, causes and effects are the main elements of this subcategory. The results display the difference in the use of conjunctions in the first students' compositions with the second and third compositions. In the former, the most common connector used by students was "*because*"; this appeared in a few of their paragraphs:

- z)** (...) *behave judicious in social service because I'm neglecting that*
- aa)** (...) *begin and online course for English because I have ignored my sister to open a portal to begin classes.*
- bb)** (...) *study something about trading it I'm achieving because I progress in my studies.*

Samples (z) and (aa) make a special emphasis on the effects generated, whereas (bb) focuses on the effects in progress. The few cases limited the quantity of samples to be analyzed in this study. From these findings there is a significant variation in the use of causal conjunctions between the first compositions to those written on the second and third posts in the blog page, because the students received a class where it was possible to reference more connectors to be used on these productions.

The following statements show those variations in the vocabulary and the causal conjunctions used by students in order to enlighten their written process:

- cc)** (...) *take my family ahead of this crisis so we have done that together...*
- dd)** *I would like to go to Argentina, so that; it seems to me a great place....*
- ee)** (...) *have a family a child and a girl and a man who is not a serviced, much less strongly, so that we can help my mother financially...*
- ff)** (...) *if I can achieve my dreams as I have planned...*



gg) *Also, I think at the end of the school take a great qualification in the icfes in order to join in the National University where I'll study business administration*

hh) *I would like to sail (...) meet the sea (...) know a lot of girls, and so many more things that you could do if you have a lot of money.*

(cc), (dd) and (ee) show subordinated conjunctions which introduce adverb clauses where it does not matter if the dependent or the independent clause comes first because the meaning of the sentence will not change. Samples (ff) and (gg) reveal their purposes by using the connector “as” and the preposition “in order to” applied properly into their sentences. Finally, the structural combination of a subordinated conjunction “so...that” plus quantifiers “many more” determines the significant differences and the effects of a structural instruction as a fundamental basis to nourish the writing process for students.

6.2.4. Temporal

The last subcategory from the conjunctive cohesion establishes the use of sequential connectors. The result of the analyses have revealed that there are no significant differences in the use of temporal conjunctions between the second and third paragraphs with the spontaneous writing performed at the beginning of the study. Findings revealed that “then” and “before” were the most common words used by students in their paragraphs.

ii) *The first is finish my studies. The second it to get a good image. Thirdly, take every opportunity and then try to be better and achieve always to do everything best.*

jj) *I want to study and then go ahead and help my parents.*

kk) *I would like to buy a car last model, well then I would travel to Italy, France and Portugal.*

ll) *The more important it is to reach my dream but before help my family.*

mm) *My dream to short term is mainly end school, after try to log in to an university...*

In samples (ii), (jj) and (kk) the word “then” works as a conjunctive adverb which accomplishes the purpose of giving continuity to the idea or ideas expressed



previously. According to Nell (1997), the word “*before*” has three different connotations: firstly as a subordinate conjunction, as it was explained before the order of the dependent or independent clauses that do not interfere with the meaning of the sentence; secondly, as a preposition and finally as a conjunctive adverb. (II) achieves the second purpose. Finally, in (mm) the word “*after*” has the function of a preposition which shows that the relation between the short term purposes with the one that represents a future action.

6.3 Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion implicates the use of words which suggest repetition or change to another word expressing the same meaning. Halliday and Hasan (1976) divided this category in two main groups; the first is reiteration, which is simultaneously divided into repetition, synonymy and antonymy; the second is collocation, which is the joining of two or more words together. Although in this research there were not cases of repetition and collocation, the findings revealed some cases of synonym and antonym which are describe in detail above.

Another aspect that has to be taken into account is that lexical cohesion does not have specific items that determine a cohesive function, according to Tangkiengsirisin (2010) “*any pair of lexical items may bear a cohesive relation but each lexical item per se does not indicate whether, in a particular context, it is functioning cohesively or not.*”. Under these circumstances a cohesive relation can be recognized merely by reference in the text.

6.3.1 Synonym

Synonyms correspond to words, proper names or phrases that have an intense relation to a suggested idea or word. In this analysis it is possible to determine that students make use of them in order to widen their vocabulary, to reinforce what they had previously stated and to reformulate their ideas. The results displayed no significant variance in the use of synonyms in the students’ paragraphs at the moment of spontaneous writing compared to the texts written in their second and third comments



on the blog page. However in some cases some of the words appeared together and in other cases it was necessary to refer to previous information. The following samples show how students made use of these lexical ties.

nn) *I ilusiono (think about) to be in a big football teams such as: Italy, Germany and Portugal and other equipment that make me famous or world-renowned.*

oo) *(...) nice moment has many beautiful things to look at and I think a country that has many nice things to come out for the day.*

pp) *For achieve my dreams I have the support from my family but also I have that strive and focus in achieve my goal proposal.*

In sample (nn) both words are joined by the conjunction “or” which determines the use of a similar word to reformulate something expressing it in another manner. (oo) and (pp) both have the purpose of reinforcing the information presented by using similar words.

qq) *My plans to follow study to pass the year and to gather in eleven and to pass for study in the Sena a course technique for more advance search work and to gain the live to have a family and be happy with them for rest of life's ahead. Those are my plans or purposes.*

rr) *To have my house and my own car to finish the race (career) and have a stable job such as business or a fixed establishment. I see my future life I look great in a house with a nice car and a good woman, dreamed that work is my life.*

Both samples need the observation of previous information to relate the vocabulary used by students to refer to the same aspects. In (qq) both terms are sharing the same connotation and summarize the total event, whilst (rr) is more emphatic in terms of the job. Although the sentences presented grammar and semantic mistakes, the words used to narrate their compositions accomplished what Halliday and Hasan (1976) determined about the cohesive relation that can only be established by reference into the text.



6.3.2 Antonym

An antonym is the opposite meaning of a word; according to Hasan (1984) an antonym could be categorized into three different groups: firstly, graded antonyms which measure the level of the meaning of the words, the common examples reveal the degree of variation of opposite words (fat and thin, poor and rich, etc.); secondly, complementary antonyms which are words where it is impossible to have a middle part, and there are only two possibilities (e.g. man or woman, wet and dry, etc.). Finally, relational antonyms, in which in order to establish a relation both must exist (e.g. lost and found, left and right, etc.).

In the research study the findings revealed a significance similarity to synonyms, since in the antonyms there was no remarkable difference between the first text and the second and third texts presented by the students but with the structural intervention. In all of the texts it was possible to determine specific cases of antonym in the same line written. The following statements show the uniformity in the vocabulary used by students in order to enlighten their written process:

ss) (...) behave judicious in social service because I'm neglecting that

tt) The worst is that when no one believes in you not only a heart decays but also gives you strength to achieve this goal, and achieve what you desire.

uu) I dare to dream about my future with great imagination without limits on what I want I'll get... being applied and I will achieve this sooner or later

In samples (ss) and (tt) the use of graded antonyms is highlighted due to the difference between the words stated by students without having a complete change in the level of meaning from the words. In the case of (uu) the use of complementary antonyms helps the student to emphasize in the accomplishment of their plans.



7. CONCLUSIONS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the contributions presented along the research study, centering on each of the categories and subcategories established along the data analysis, involving the arrived findings and the derived discernments. It also considered aspects such as the pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research.

7.1 Conclusions of the Research Study

The main aim of this research was the description and analysis of cohesion devices in students' written compositions through the use of a thematic blog. Cohesion is seen as an interpretation of parts in a written or oral discourse; alongside this study the linguistic labor is presented as an organized analysis of cohesion ties from a textual perception. Consequently, cohesive ties constitute in the consistency which establishes the difference inside elements from the texts.

As a means of qualifying the cohesive devices it was possible to use some of the categories and subcategories established by Halliday and Hasan (1976) and apply them into the study, taking into account the data collected through the writing process of the thematic blog. This categorization permitted the clear understanding of the research and how the analysis was recognized. In chapter seven the aims of the study were clearly exposed, not only because there was a detailed description and analysis of the use of cohesive devices, but it also demonstrated the categories and systematized the information gathered through the study. Three categories were formulated and explained. The first one was the use of reference cohesion to determine the relation to personal and demonstrative references. The second was the conjunctive cohesion category subjected to the use of additive, adversative, causal and temporal connectives. The final category was the lexical cohesion, in which results revealed the use of synonyms and antonyms in written productions.

With respect to reference cohesion the difference between the first written composition was significant in comparison to the second and third written compositions. When students worked alone, their compositions presented cohesive errors in the use of



personal and demonstrative references, not only in the wrong use of words, but also in the lack of them. However when students received instructions about connectors and grammar structure in class, they started to think about the proper use of references and although not all the sentences had an accurate structure, most of them improved significantly with respect to the use of personal coherence. This revealed that in spite of being explained as another figure from Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy, these topics proved that the reference cohesion had a positive effect on written compositions.

With respect to conjunctive cohesion, the results revealed an evident positive effect on students' written compositions when they attempted the explanation of linking words in the second and third texts. These results went beyond the initial part where the connectives were limited, concluding that writing accuracy could improve during a class explanation. Concerning the use of conjunctive cohesion, this study could also conclude that the improvement of students' written paragraphs was due to the explanation of connectors given in a class

The lexical cohesion results revealed significant progress with the use of synonyms and antonyms. These results were homogeneous along with the three moments of the student's compositions.

The application of lexical, conjunctive and reference cohesions were meaningfully related to an improvement of writing quality, especially in the cases of the second and third texts. However this does not mean that spontaneous writing, performed at the beginning of the study, was not an important aspect to be considered, because it also revealed that students made good use of it, not with the same dedication as in other texts, but in a natural manner that gave the individual a low-control process.

7.2 Teaching Implications

This study proposed some important pedagogical implications. Initially in the analysis of cohesive ties of the students' compositions seen from a qualitative perspective, since most of the researchers quoted state of the art work on cohesive devices or errors that quantified the data and made statistical findings. Furthermore, it demonstrated that cohesion can be taught in schools without determining the social



status, which fosters the organization and uses enrichment elements for the language learning practice. Finally, the use of cohesive devices created in students the necessary awareness of logical structures that could be applied to written documents where they could express themselves properly.

Another important pedagogical implication derived from this study was the implementation of virtual resources to generate interaction between students and the use of a second language. The creation of a blog page to encourage students to write, produced a new learning environment, most of them had not had any real contact with the language and their use of Virtual Medias had been reduced to social net pages, for that reason to get them immersed in writing with their second language was a great aim developed in this study. In addition to this, the change of attitude from students who had a passive role inside classroom was evident, since they became the most participative in the blog posts, not only for their punctuality but also for the pertinence of their texts. It could be concluded that these sources made changes in the students' attitude towards the class and fostered them to participate in their own language learning process.

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Some recommendations could be taken into account for developing further research about the analysis of cohesion in written texts. Firstly, the population could be widened and participants could be recruited throughout the whole learning process, to determine how students from different ages and levels of English interact with the language and use the cohesive devices to produce their own texts. More formal types of writing such as essays or projects could be implemented in order to increase their academic level, taking into account the different subjects studied in school age and students' motivational topics to write on. To conduct some of these studies it would necessary to work with more participants and gather more data to analyze.

Secondly, this research was focused on the study of cohesion in written texts; however it did not work using the normal relationship between cohesion and coherence. A similar process could be conducted to examine that relationship and how it affects the quality and quantity of cohesion devices in the coherence of a text.



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Thirdly, this study was developed in a Spanish mother tongue context, where the use of a second language for daily activities was relatively uncommon. An interesting aspect to research would be to discover how living context influences both the accuracies and the mistakes made by students in relation to the use of coherence and cohesion in a foreign language.



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APPENDIXES



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APPENDIX A

BLOG PAGE

Blog Page Initial Page





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Blog page: Spontaneous writing: What are your future plans?



MY ENGLISH BLOG

IMPROVING YOUR WRITING

- home
- FUTURE PLANS
- DREAMS
- TRAVEL
- Blog

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS??? (1001)

June 4, 2014



SUM UP IN A PARAGRAPH WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS!!!

DON'T FORGET TO WRITE YOUR FULL NAME, AT THE END OF YOUR COMMENT!!!!

Tags: 1001



25 comments ▾

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1002
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-  YOUR BEST HOLIDAY!!!
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June 9, 2014



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Blog page: Use of Connectors: Do you dare to Dream?



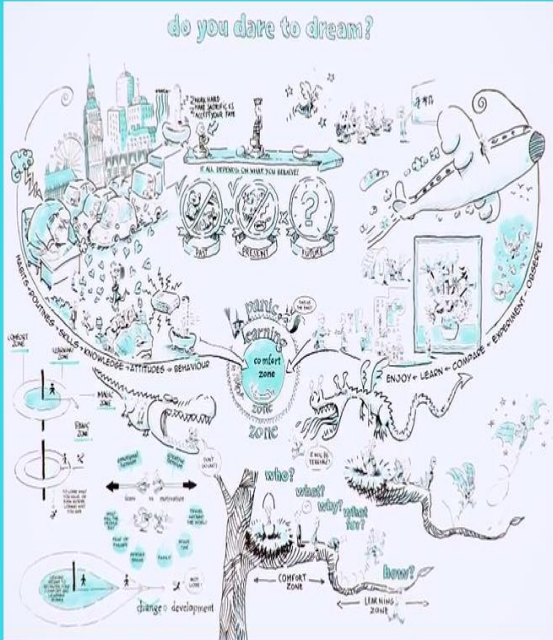
MY ENGLISH BLOG

IMPROVING YOUR WRITING

- home
- FUTURE PLANS
- DREAMS
- TRAVEL
- Blog

DO YOU DARE TO DREAM??? (1001)

June 9, 2014



What are your dreams?
How will you get your dreams?
How do you dare to dream your future?

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June 9, 2014
-  [DO YOU DARE TO DREAM??? \(1001\)](#)
June 9, 2014
-  [WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?? \(1002\)](#)
June 4, 2014
-  [WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?? \(1001\)](#)
June 4, 2014



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Blog page: Where will you go if you have enough money?



MY ENGLISH BLOG

IMPROVING YOUR WRITING

- home
- FUTURE PLANS
- DREAMS
- TRAVEL
- Blog

YOUR BEST HOLIDAY!!! 1001

June 23, 2014



WHERE WILL YOU GO IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY ???

Think in the perfect place to have a perfect Holiday, if you don't have any idea, you can help with the pictures in page Travel. Then comment what are your reasons to choose that place, the activities which will be done along day and night and your companion!!!!

GO AHEAD, IT IS ALLOWED TO DREAM!!!!



25 comments ▾

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June 23, 2014
- DO YOU DARE TO DREAM??? (1002)
June 9, 2014
- DO YOU DARE TO DREAM??? (1001)
June 9, 2014



APPENDIX B

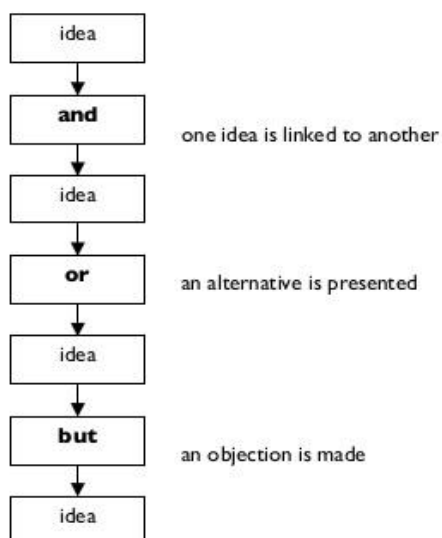
CONNECTIVE GUIDE WORKED IN CLASS



LINKING WORDS AND PHRASES

Most pieces of formal writing are organised in a similar way: introduction; development of main ideas or arguments; conclusion. Linking words and phrases join clauses, sentences and paragraphs together.

A piece of writing or text may include the following:





Connectives

The main linking words and phrases are grouped below according to the similarity of their meaning to the three basic connectives *and*, *or*, *but*. Some can be used to link paragraphs and others can only be used to link ideas within a paragraph.

		1 enumeration (points in order)	
		2 addition	i reinforcement ii comparison
1 and	{	a listing	
		b transition (leads to a new stage)	
		c summary (gives a summary or conclusion)	
		d reference (refers to what was said before)	
		e example	
		f result (the consequence of what was said before)	
		g place (refers to things in or outside the document)	
		h time (refers to other studies)	
2 or	{	i reformulation (expresses something in another way)	
		j replacement (expresses an alternative)	
3 but	{	k contrast (presents a different view)	
		l concession (agrees that something is good, with limitations)	

I. and

a) Listing

1. **Enumeration** indicates a *cataloguing* of what is being said.
Most lists use clearly defined groups of words:

first,	furthermore,	finally,	
one	a second	a third	etc.
first(ly),	second(ly),	third(ly), ...	etc.
to begin/start with,	in the second place,	moreover,	to conclude,

above all	}	mark the end of an <i>ascending</i> order
last but not least		
first and foremost	}	mark the beginning of a <i>descending</i> order
first and most importantly		



2. **Addition** to what has been previously indicated.

i. **Reinforcement** (includes confirmation):

above all	indeed
actually	in addition
additionally	moreover
again	not only . . . but also . . .
also	notably
as well (as)	obviously
besides	particularly
especially	specifically
further	then
furthermore	too
what is more	

ii. **Comparison** (similarity to what has preceded):

also	in the same way
both . . . and . . .	likewise
correspondingly	similarly
equally	too

b) **Transition** (can lead to a new stage in the sequence of thought):

now
regarding
turning to
with respect/regard to

as for
as to

often used when discussing something briefly

c) **Summary** (a generalisation or summing up of what has preceded):

altogether	then
hence	therefore
in brief	thus
in conclusion	to conclude
in short	to sum up
overall	to summarise



d) Reference (refers back to previous sentences):

and	mainly
as follows	mostly
chiefly	namely
for instance	notably
for example	or
in other words	particularly
in particular	such as
including	that is

e) Example:

for example
for instance
such as
to illustrate
as an illustration
to demonstrate

f) Result

(expresses the consequence or result from what is implicit in the preceding sentence or sentences):

accordingly	now
as a result	so
as a consequence	so that
because of	the consequence is
consequently	the result is
for this/that reason	then
hence	therefore
in order that	thus

g) Place:

above	in front
adjacent	in the background
at the side	in the foreground
behind	there
below	to the left
elsewhere	to the right
here	



h) Time:

after a while	now
afterwards	once
at last	presently
at that time	previously
at the same time	shortly
before	simultaneously
currently	since
earlier	soon
eventually	subsequently
finally	then
formerly	thereafter
in the meantime	until
in the past	until now
initially	whenever
later	while
meanwhile	

2. or

i) Reformulation (expresses something in another way):

better
in other words
in that case
rather
that is
that is to say
to put it (more) simply

j) Replacement (expresses an alternative to what has preceded):

again
alternatively
another possibility would be
better/worse still
on the other hand
rather
the alternative is



3. but

k) Contrast

by (way of) contrast
conversely
in comparison
in fact
in reality
instead
on the contrary
(on the one hand) ... on the other hand ...
then

l) Concession (indicates that the previous view is accepted with reservations):

admittedly	in spite of
after all	naturally
all the same	nevertheless
although	no doubt
although this may be true	nonetheless
at the same time	notwithstanding
besides	only
despite	still
doubtless	under certain circumstances
even if/though	up to a point
even so	while
however	yet

The information in this leaflet is based on Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik, 'Sentence Connection' in *A Grammar of Contemporary English* from Jordan R.R. 1990 *Academic Writing Course*, 2nd ed., Collins ELT, London; and Parks, A.F., Levernier, J.A. and Hollowell, I. M. 1996, *Structuring Paragraphs: A Guide to Effective Writing*, Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston, pp. 117 – 118.



APPENDIX C

CHART OF QUANTIFIED DATA

Frequency of use of cohesion devices.

Type of cohesion	Subcategories	Blog 1	Blog 2	Blog 3
Reference cohesion	<i>Personal Reference</i>	9	10	8
	<i>Demonstrative Reference</i>	6	12	9
Conjunctive cohesion	<i>Additive</i>	10	19	22
	<i>Adversative</i>	4	8	9
	<i>Causal</i>	4	8	8
	<i>Temporal</i>	3	9	5
Lexical cohesion	<i>Synonym</i>	2	4	5
	<i>Antonym</i>	2	5	5

(Based on Halliday and Hasan's Taxonomy, 1976)