

Textual Cohesion

- *Five key cohesive devices*
- *Ideas for teaching them*



What makes a text a text?

A text has properties which distinguish it from a random collection of unconnected sentences. One key factor ... is the cohesive devices which connect different clauses and sentences together.

McCarthy & Carter

Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another.

Halliday and Hasan

Five major types of cohesive device

- **reference** (pronominal, adverbial)
- **substitution** (*do, so, one*)
- **ellipsis** (omission of words)
- **conjunction**
 - additive**
 - adversative**
 - causal**
 - temporal**
- **lexical cohesion/chains**

Halliday and Hasan, Cohesion in English 1976

Using Halliday and Hasan's system, identify the types of cohesive device which are underlined in the following short texts.

Some argue that we should never write 'river water' or 'soda water' as one word, and so by analogy 'groundwater' should be 'ground water'. They doubtless have a point, but if we never allowed change in the English language, we would still be writing as Chaucer did.

If you enlarge the document to its maximum size, it will be easier to read. To do so, right click the document icon and then click 'Restore'.

A very distinctive difference, however, is that at the time, Italy was fairly homogenous, whereas Germany wasn't.

Count them carefully. You have 33 friends now, yet within a few years you will have lost touch with all but a few of them.

A WOMAN'S PLACE... IN THE CLASSROOM

As Iceland entered the modern world, evolving from an agrarian society into an urban one, many tasks which had previously been carried out at home moved outside it. While Icelanders had traditionally been subsistence farmers, a new economy developed. Men entered paid employment – and sometimes women too. One such profession was teaching.

For many years teaching was the only profession which was recognised as equally suitable for both men and women – and in which the sexes had equal pay.

The idea of married women teaching was, however, not necessarily accepted. In general, married women were not expected to go out to work, but to devote themselves to the home and family. Hence many women gave up teaching when they married – some of them returning to the classroom later, if they were widowed or divorced.

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Six elements of lexical cohesion:

- **direct repetition**

*The idea of **married women** teaching was ... In general, **married women** ...*

- **synonymy**

*The meeting **began** at 9.30. As soon as it **commenced**, there was ...*

- **antonymy**

*It wasn't **fun**. In fact, it was a **nightmare**.*

- **superordination/hyponymy**

*She loves **cats**. In fact, she loves all **furry animals**.*

- **general/specific reference**

***The Coliseum** is an amphitheatre in Rome. **The building** has over 3 million visitors each year.*

- **meronymy (whole/part reference)**

*He looked at his **watch**. **The hands** showed midnight.*
holonym** **meronym

In a recent survey, **holiday-makers** voted the **Pantheon** in **Rome** as the world's best **free tourist attraction**. The **2000-year-old temple** attracts around two million **visitors** each year and is **the city's** third most popular **tourist site**. Only the Coliseum and the Vatican attract more **sight-seers**, both of which charge an **entrance fee**.

Others in the list include the National Gallery in London, Notre Dame in Paris and St Mark's Basilica in Venice.

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Docklands Light Railway

Day tripper looking for the Beatles pedestrian crossing?

Unfortunately you are at the
wrong Abbey Road. However,
*we can work it out and help you
get back* to the correct location.

Take the DLR one stop to West
Ham and change to a Jubilee
line train to St John's Wood
station.

Passengers need *a ticket to ride*.

The end.

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- 0 **A Picasso painting** has been stolen from the Musee D'Orsay in Paris.
The work of art is valued at €50 million.
- 1 **Fifty policemen** have been injured during a demonstration.
..... were trying to prevent protesters from entering Trafalgar Square.
- 2 This year's Champions League final will be between **Liverpool and AC Milan**.
..... have met before on six occasions.
- 3 Rome's most popular tourist destination is **the Coliseum**.
..... has about four million visitors each year.
- 4 **The Beatles** have once again been voted the greatest band of all time by readers of Music International magazine.
..... received almost double the votes of The Rolling Stones, who were in second place.
- 5 **A tiger** has escaped from Chicago Zoo. was last seen strolling through a shopping centre. The public has been warned not to approach
- 6 In **his** first speech to the nation, declared that the fight against poverty was the number one priority.

the animal the Fab Four the creature the officers the work of art
the clubs the 2000-year-old amphitheatre the newly-elected Prime Minister

How can we exploit a text, any text?

- **identify the cohesive devices** (all or of one category)
- **identify grammar / lexico-grammar set** (eg adjectives)
- **identify collocations / phrases**
- **identify words that create the atmosphere or tone**
- **?**

Goodbye Mum

A young man was shopping in a supermarket when he noticed that an older woman was following him. She was staring at him sadly. He moved to the next aisle, trying to avoid her, but she followed. She was still staring at him.

When he had finished shopping, he found himself behind her in a long check-out queue. Her shopping trolley was completely full. She continued staring and this made him feel very uncomfortable.

Finally, she spoke. 'I'm sorry for staring,' she said, "but you look exactly like my son, who died just two weeks ago. He used to do his shopping here. I thought for a moment that you were his ghost." Tears appeared in her eyes. She repeated several times that the young man looked exactly like her son. Then as she got to the check-out, the woman asked 'As a favour to me at this terrible time, would you say 'Goodbye mum' to me as I leave? I know it may seem strange, but it would make me feel so much better. The young man thought for a moment and agreed to her request.

She gave him a tearful smile, waved and picked up her heavy bags. 'Goodbye mum!' he said, waving back

Identify the cohesive devices

Goodbye Mum

A young man was shopping in a supermarket when he noticed that an older woman was following him. She was staring at him sadly. He moved to the next aisle, trying to avoid her, but she followed. She was still staring at him.

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She gave him a tearful smile, X waved and X picked up her heavy bags. 'Goodbye mum!' he said, waving back

Re-tell the story using these words:

he

shopping

when

she

supermarket

but

himself

aisle

finally

his

check-out

then as

her

queue

as

you

trolley

me

bags

it

Help the teacher!

Identify the adjectives

Goodbye Mum

A **young** man was shopping in a supermarket when he noticed that an **older** woman was following him. She was staring at him sadly. He moved to the next aisle, trying to avoid her, but she followed. She was still staring at him.

When he had finished shopping, he found himself behind her in a **long** check-out queue. Her shopping trolley was completely **full**. She continued staring and this made him feel very **uncomfortable**.

Finally, she spoke. 'I'm sorry for staring,' she said, "but you look exactly like my son, who died just two weeks ago. He used to do his shopping here. I thought for a moment that you were his ghost." Tears appeared in her eyes. She repeated several times that the young man looked exactly like her son. Then as she got to the check-out, the woman asked 'As a favour to me at this **terrible** time, would you say 'Goodbye mum' to me as I leave? I know it may seem **strange**, but it would make me feel so much **better**. The young man thought for a moment and agreed to her request.

She gave him a **tearful** smile, waved and picked up her **heavy** bags. 'Goodbye mum!' he said, waving back

What do these words describe?

young

terrible

older

strange

long

better

full

tearful

uncomfortable

heavy

**Identify the
verbs**

was shopping

noticed

following

staring

moved

trying to avoid

staring

had finished

found

continued staring

etc

Identify
words that
create the
atmosphere,
mood or tone

Goodbye Mum

A young man was shopping in a supermarket when he **noticed** that an older woman was **following** him. She was **staring** at him **sadly**. He moved to the next aisle, **trying to avoid** her, but she followed. She was still **staring** at him.

When he had finished shopping, he found himself behind her in a long check-out queue. Her shopping trolley was completely full. She **continued staring** and this made him **feel** very **uncomfortable**.

Finally, she spoke. 'I'm sorry for staring,' she said, "but you look exactly like my son, who **died just two weeks ago**. He used to do his shopping here. I thought for a moment that you were his ghost." **Tears appeared in her eyes**. She repeated several times that the young man looked exactly like her son. Then as she got to the check-out, the woman asked 'As a favour to me at this terrible time, would you say 'Goodbye mum' to me as I leave? I know it may seem strange, but it would make me feel so much better. The young man thought for a moment and agreed to her request.

She gave him a **tearful smile**, waved and picked up her heavy bags. 'Goodbye mum!' he said, waving back

Identify
useful
collocations
/ phrases

Goodbye Mum

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... The man was thinking about what had happened when the cashier told him that his bill was £150.

‘There must be a mistake. I only have three items,’ the young man said.

‘Yes,’ replied the cashier, ‘but your mother said that you are paying for hers too!’

Fairy tale ending

Pamela Bromley was born in Manchester, UK in 1930. As a child, her favourite possession was a book of fairy tales, which she used to read all the time. When Pamela was ten years old, she and her family moved to the United States. The family took only one suitcase and Pamela had to leave her precious book behind in the UK.

Many years later, when Pamela was in her sixties, she was thinking about what to buy as a birthday present for her eight-year-old granddaughter. One afternoon, as she was passing a small second-hand bookshop near to her house, Pamela decided to get her a book. While Pamela was looking in the children's section of the bookshop a big smile suddenly appeared on her face. On the shelf, was a copy of the book of fairy tales that she had loved so much as a child back in the UK. And when she opened the book, she saw her name and her old address inside. It was the very copy that she had had as a child.

In 1930

as a child

when Pamela was ten years old

many years later

when Pamela was in her sixties

one afternoon, as she was passing ...

while Pamela was looking ...

suddenly

when she opened the book

favourite possession

book of fairy tales

precious book

small second-hand

bookshop

the very copy

born

passing

used to read

decided

moved

was looking

took

appeared

had to leave

had loved

thinking about

opened

saw



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