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Title

Teaching Connectives: A Discourse Analysis Approach
The case of First Year Master Students in Linguistics at KMUO

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Dedication

To my lovely father

To my patient mother

To each member of my family

To who care about me

Nora

To my dearest parents and family

To my closest friends

To everyone who care about me

Khadidja

Abstract

Developing the writing skill is one of the crucial goals EFL learners aim to achieve. However, they usually encounter problems in making their texts cohesive. This study sets as its main goal to identify the role of connectives in building text cohesion; it also tackles the issue of discourse analysis. This is because discourse analysis in this study is adopted as an alternative approach to the teaching of connectives. In order to confirm the suggested hypothesis, we opted for a quasi-experimental method which is consisted of a pre-test, one lecture, and a post-test. The tests were administrated to 20 students of First Year Master students in linguistics at KMUO. After analyzing the different problems EFL learners may face when writing such as memorizing the use of certain connectives and putting them down on papers, or being unaware of the importance of context in using and interpreting connectives. Finding out the solution to these difficulties is what discourse analysis can provide since its cornerstone is cohesion.

Key words: Discourse Analysis, Cohesion, Writing Skill, Connectives.

List of abbreviations

DA: Discourse Analysis

EFL: English Foreign Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

FL: Foreign Language

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Introduction

1. Research background

Having a high ability to write is one of the crucial goals EFL learners aim to achieve. This enables them to deal with many different tasks they may face in their future professional life. Developing communicative competence by means of writing does not involve only the knowledge of grammatical and lexical aspects of language (linguistic knowledge), but rather integrating also the non- linguistic knowledge (Bruce, 2010, p, 10). As well, it is neither a matter of combining sentences to put them down on papers, nor a matter of mastering the grammatical rules to assume that the written text could be received as an entity. It is how to organize sentences to produce coherent text in which cohesive relations appeared explicitly (Bryne, 1988). In this regard, present classroom teachers focus on the importance of teaching cohesive devices such as connectives in developing discourse competence as a part of the overall, communicative competence.

Connectives are introduced within different frameworks; they were presented within Halliday and Hassan taxonomy on cohesion and coherence who consider them as linguistic devices that indicate thematic relation (Halliday and Hassan, 1976). Connectives have, therefore, an important role in discourse processing and interpretation (Meyer,Brandt, and Bluth, 1980). Like other kinds of cohesive devices, connectives enable the reader to obtain the relation between the sentences which are in turn organized in the presence of connectives to form the texture of a piece of writing. Connectives have been a major focus of written communication teaching, however, the approaches to teaching them have changed through time. That is why EFL teachers have shifted the attention to finding out the valuable approach to teaching connectives since the traditional ones seemed to be inadequate to meet the learner's needs. They consider the distinction between sentence and text as their basic starting point. That is, they distinguish between the structural role of the cohesive words and their cohesive role ignoring the role of context in the interpretation of their meaning (Schiffrin, 1987).

Traditional views consider the teaching of connectives as the teaching of grammatical conjunctions and linguistic connectors. Students memorize them and put them in different situations. Put it another way, before the advent of discourse analysis, connectives were seen as conjunctive items that presuppose the existence of other elements in the discourse (Halliday and Hassan, 1976). This is important indeed, but what learners are in need of is to be exposed to different writing genres and structures. Hence, other approaches have emerged to cope with the learners' needs.

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The integration of communicative competence into EFL teaching in general and the advent of discourse analysis approach in particular made things change. Integrating discourse analysis into language teaching helps learners to communicate effectively by means of writing; it helps them to look for the skills needed to put their previous knowledge into action (Cook, 1989). Discourse analysis studies language in terms of function and form. That is to say it goes beyond the formal aspects of language to involve the context and purpose of use (Brown and Yule, 1983). And this is what EFL learners are in need of. They need to be aware of using discourse markers appropriately taking into account the purpose and the context of use. In this regard, researchers believe that teaching connectives would be better taught within a discourse analysis framework. We will examine how connectives can be better taught within a Discourse analysis framework. But before turning to this issue we would like, first, to explore the importance of connectives in enhancing written communication in general, and in discourse coherence in particular. In other words it is worthy to examine extent to which it enhances connectives can be better taught within discourse analysis approach.

2. Research problem

EFL learners are required to do many writing tasks such as writing essays or dissertations; they are in want of mastering how to write coherently to be competent enough when communicating. For this reason, they do not need to have only knowledge about certain cohesive devices such as connectives then memorize their use. This is important no doubt, but what learners need actually is how to bring both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge when using these connectives. Put it more simply, they are in need of mastering how to be aware of coherence relations taking into account the context within which they are located. And this is what discourse analysis focuses on. To achieve this goal, it is suggested therefore, connectives should be better taught within discourse analysis framework.

More than at any other time, and in a time where different cultures are getting closer to each other, to communicate by means of writing requires EFL learners to use social and cultural conventions coupled with their linguistic knowledge. Using connectives appropriately to achieve writing ability is one of the difficulties EFL learners usually encounter when writing. First Master students do not make any exception; they have a lack of how to use connectives within different contexts. This study sets as its main goal to identify the importance of teaching

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connectives appropriately in developing discourse competence of First Year Master students at KMUO. It suggests an alternative approach to the teaching of these linguistic devices, namely, connectives.

3. Research question

The main questions this research attempts to answer are:

1. To what extent is the awareness of using connectives useful in FL writing?
2. How does teaching connectives benefit from discourse analysis?

4. The purpose of the study

With the failure of traditional approaches in meeting FL learners' needs in general and the integration of discourse analysis into the curriculum in particular, EFL teachers have started looking for an alternative way to teach connectives as a part of cohesive devices, which in turn lead to the creation of written discourse coherence. The present study aims at suggesting a discourse analysis approach to the teaching of connectives. It aims, as well, at examining whether or not the suggested approach is appropriate in achieving that goal.

5. Research hypothesis

The main hypothesis in this study is that a discourse analysis approach is appropriate for the teaching of connectives.

6. Research method

This study is conducted on First Year Master students in Applied Linguistics and ESP at Ouargla University. The subjects were chosen because the academic studies they are undertaking require doing much writing in their specialty. Thus, they are likely to encounter problems when writing.

Though there are different approaches to conduct research. We opted for a quasi-experimental method. This is of course due to the nature of the problem at hand. To collect data, a questionnaire was distributed in order to elicit general information from our sample about the use of cohesive devices in building cohesion, a pre-test and a post-test were designed

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to measure the development the students made after the training session. Finally conclusions were drawn and suggestions made as well.

7. Structure of the study

This dissertation is divided into two sections. The first section represents the theoretical part of the dissertation. It is devoted to a review of related literature; it focuses upon the role of connectives in building text cohesion, as well as it examines how connectives can be taught within discourse analysis. Whilst the second section is devoted into two chapters: the first chapter presents the methodology and data collection. It also explains the methods and the tools used in the analysis of the findings. This chapter is followed by general conclusion. The second chapter includes the pedagogical recommendations and general conclusion.

8. Limitations of the study

In spite of the significance of the present study, it does have some limitations; we encountered some hurdles that affect the conducted work. The first connectives t obstacle is that we cannot pretend that we have encountered all the different problems EFL students may face when using connectives. This is because selecting one group of students out of the total large number of students at KMUO was not really effective, so there is no possibility to generalize the findings unless if further researchers make use of the same research tools to have the same results.

The second limitation is time constraints. The researchers have no sufficient time to distribute the pre-test, the post-test, and the questionnaire.

Preparedness of the participants was an effective factor that limited this study. They were demotivated to do both the questionnaire and the pre-test at the same time. Also, some of the participants who undertake the pre-test refuse to do the post-test, and this affects the results negatively. Since we do such things with our teachers before, and we sometimes don't want to answer the other's questionnaires, we suggested to the researchers to choose the appropriate time where the participants are motivated and prepared.

Definitions of key terms

Discourse analysis: “discourse analysis is concerned with the study of relationship between language and context in which it is used” (McCarty, 1991.p.05). Discourse analysis is an effective approach that helps both teachers and learners, it lefts an important role in the teaching programs (Demo,2001).

Cohesion: according to Halliday and Hassan (1976), "the concept of cohesion is a semantic one. It refers to relation of meaning that exists within the text, and that define it as text "(p.4).

Connectives in written text, connectives are the formal markers that make relationships between ideas explicitly appeared, and hence, enable the reader to make connection between what has been said and what is about to be said (Brown & Yule,1983).

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As language scholars, teachers and learners around the world increasingly call for enhancing writing skill, adopting the appropriate approach to teaching is a much needed and welcome bracer for EFL teachers. Although EFL learners seek to master the four macro-skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking), the writing skill is of a great importance. They are at crossroad whether to do further studies or to access to professional careers. Traditionally, writing was considered merely as the reinforcement of learning grammatical and vocabulary knowledge that help to sustain oral correctness (Martínez-Flor, Usó -Juan & Solor, 2006). This is how writing was taught before. However, this method does not help the learner to write cohesively and appropriately; learners when writing are not communicatively competent. In this chapter we will introduce the concept of discourse analysis. For the reason that discourse analysis, in this study, is considered as an alternative approach that would help in enhancing the learners' use of cohesive devices, particularly connectives, when writing in FL. Before turning to this issue we would like, however, to talk in brief about which linguistic elements EFL writer should use to produce a cohesive and unified text. As well, we will take a closer look at the role of connectives in building discourse structure.

1. Writing in foreign language

In the light of traditional view mentioned earlier, students were asked to master the grammatical rules such as verb agreement, sentence structure, and the mechanics such as punctuation and spelling (Raimes, 1983). This means that they were required to master, only, the grammatical and syntactic structures regardless of whether or not the text is informative and communicative. Writing, instead, is the production of written words that help in shaping a text which in turn must be interpreted and read to set a place for communication (Celce-Murcia, and. Olshain, 2000). It helps students to connect their writing language to literacy resources that are available in higher education to produce written texts (Lillis, 2001). Thus, having a high level of writing ability is something that EFL learners aim to achieve, particularly, those whose professional and academic success depend on the extent to which they are able to communicate effectively by means of writing. The demand that writing make on the writer coupled with the nature of writing tasks make it a complex process; that is why it may seem difficult and problematic for many FL learners(Hedge, 2005). And despite the many years devoted to developing this skill, writing communicatively is an ability that hinders us (Tribble, 1996). This difficulty may be due to many reasons. It may result from a failure to use the cohesive devices appropriately when building discourse cohesion, or from an unawareness about the role of using

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cohesive devices such as connectives in producing a text which is linguistically accurate, yet socially and culturally relevant. Hence, the writer has to select appropriate grammatical patterns coupled with appropriate selection of vocabulary and sentence structures in order to build a unified and cohesive text.

To sum up, writing in foreign language is the most frequently used task in EFL classes, it aims, at the first sight, at improving the learners' writing through the appropriate use of linguistic elements such as linking devices. As Harmer (2001) points out, writing skill has finally been recognized as an important skill for language learning. He lays stress on this claim saying "*the reason for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language includes reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most imply writing as a skill in its own*" (p.79).

2. Linguistic aspects of writing

If we accept that the teaching of writing to communicate aims at enabling the learners to use linguistic elements appropriately, it becomes imperative that teaching writing for EFL classes should be directed at this purpose. This is because any writing task entails the use of different types of knowledge. Among these types there is linguistic knowledge or linguistic competence. It includes knowledge of grammar and lexis and how to use them in building sentences which result in a cohesive whole. It is probably unnecessary to point out that one will face any problem when writing in the target language, but it is worthy to cite the many problems the writer may encounter when undertaking a writing task. Some of these difficulties are related to grammar, lexis and organization of sentences into a unified unity (Allen, 2005). Hedge (2005) on the other hand, claims that these kinds of difficulties become more frequently when writing in a foreign language. In the following few lines, this dissertation will tackle, as its main purpose, some of these difficulties FL learners usually encounter when writing, how these deficiencies hinder the learner's communicative development, and how to be aware of using them when writing.

2.1. Grammar and lexis

No language exists without grammar; yet no language can be used out of grammar. The term grammar refers to the unconscious linguistic system of a particular language. It is concerned with the arrangement and the combination of different words to produce meaningful sentences. Southerland & Katamba(1996) use the term grammatical competence to talk about linguistic competence which consists of several components: (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics). Thornbury (1992), as well, defines grammar as the study of morphology and syntax. Students are required to raise their awareness of the language system.

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It is better, for them to look at grammar as a means that provides understanding of relation to meaning, of meaning to function within context (Dowing, 2006).

If we turn to the question why grammar is important when creating a written text, it is worthy to bring what have been cited in the previous researches and works about the role of grammatical competence into the picture. Ur (1999) argues that the mastering of the rules of a language enables the learners to be competent when communicating i.e. it helps them to be good processors of the language. That is why, the teaching of grammar should embrace language structures, meaning and function (Widdo, 2006). On the part of the learners, grammatical constructions enable them to apply how certain sentence patterns should be put together. In short, restricting the scope of teaching grammar to how grammatical items and sentence structures are correctly established helps the learners to write more cohesively when performing writing tasks.

Writing as a process does not stand by its own as an isolated process. To write means to gain enough knowledge through reading in order for your writing to be relevant, varied, and appropriate. Bean (2011) argues that inadequate knowledge of vocabulary hinders reading comprehension of many learners. And, having a difficulty in comprehending a text's vocabulary means being unable to communicate using large number of words. That is why poor writing results from a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Lexis was defined as the list of words that a language has. It is considered as one of the linguistic elements that characterizes the communicative text. It may seem difficult because learning vocabulary is far from simple. It includes, as Qian (1999) cited, (i) knowing its pronunciation and orthography, (ii) morphological properties.....(cited in Hudson, 2007,p.233).thus, undertaking a writing task entails a knowledge of all these rules coupled with an ability of having as various words as possible.

2.2. Organization of written text

As was pointed earlier, the mastery of the grammatical rules enables the learners to organize words into sentences. Now we will tackle the issue of how to organize sentences into a cohesive text. In doing this, we shall look at the linguistic elements which make sentences hang together to form a coherent whole. Producing a cohesive text is based primarily on using linguistic elements to connect ideas. Nunan(1993) defines these linguistic elements as the cohesive devices that help in building discourse structure. In spite of being aware of the importance of cohesive ties in organizing the written text, EFL learners usually encounter problems when using them in building the text organization. For Hedge (2005), most of the

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problems related to the organization of written text can be resulted from a failure to use cohesive relations correctly to create a unified whole.

3. Cohesion

Earlier, we mentioned briefly the way in which sentences are organized to form a text. Although we said that these sentences should be organized in an explicit way are relevant to one particular topic, we did not lay stress on how the organization of these sentences to create a text is done. From here on, the attention will be directed at exploring the way in which different sentences are combined to form a text. Before tackling this issue, we would like to answer the following questions. Are the sentences related to each other? Does the combination of haphazard sentences enable the piece of writing to be received as a text? Should the connection between sentences appear explicitly? Coming to an answer to these questions would not be achieved until we bring the notion of cohesion into the picture. According to Halliday & Hassan (1976) a text can be received as a text if there are cohesive ties within and between the sentences that form it. They continue to say that these linguistic ties create a texture. Hence, a text has a texture, and this is what makes it different from something that is not a text. They claimed that cohesion is created when the comprehension of some elements in discourse is dependent on that of the others by illustrating the following example:

“Wash and core six cooking apples .Put them them into a fireproof dish”

(From Halliday and Hassan)

Beagrande& Dressler (1981), on the other hand, argue that “*cohesion concerns the ways in which the components of the text are the actual words we hear or see are mutually connected within a sequence*”.(p.11).

In the light of the traditional view, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) determine cohesion as the use of ties and devices to link all the propositions in text, such devices are elements or units of language that make the sentences hang together to form a text. To put it another way, teaching cohesion, traditionally, relies typically on identifying which features and characteristics and text properties that distinguish the text from disconnected sequences of sentences (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). Thus, cohesion means the use of cohesive relations to connect ideas and sentences together. Halliday and Hassan present text connectedness i.e. cohesion in terms of five categories of cohesive ties respectively “*reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical ties*” (Hatch, 1992 p.223).

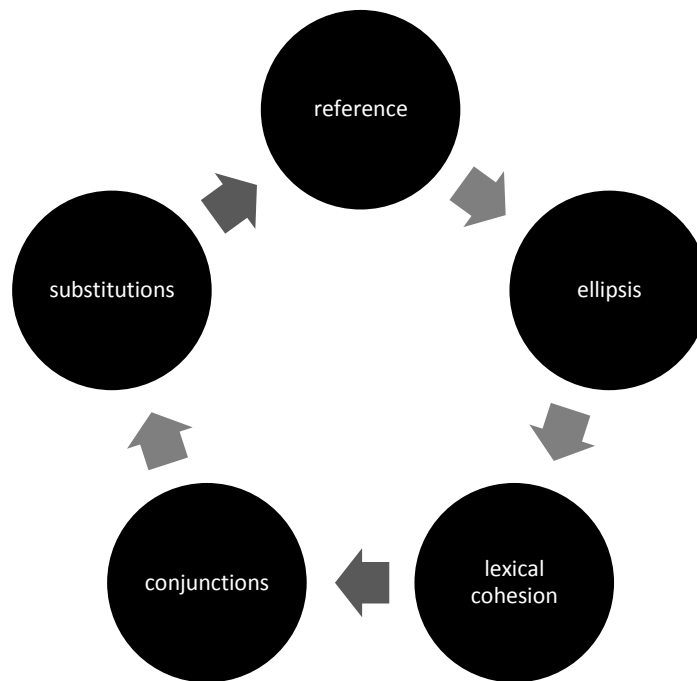


Diagram 01: types of cohesion

3.1. Conjunction

It can be viewed now, that sentences which form a text are not organized in a vacuum, but rather they are related to create a unified text. As well, it can be noticed that in building cohesion, one should use certain elements like the ones introduced by Nunan (1993) as cohesive devices or text forming devices. They relate sentences to form semantic unit. “Cohesive ties between sentences stand out more clearly because they are ONLY source of texture” (p.09). Cohesive devices are classified under three broad types: reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). If we turn to the subject of our study, we shall typically restrict our focus on one kind of these types, namely, conjunctions.

A Conjunction is a cohesive device that differs from ellipsis and reference. It is used to link what is going to be said to what has already been said. It can be only interpreted through reference to other parts of text (Nunan, 1993). Conjunction is defined as one of the most important elements of text forming devices. It requires a textual sequence, and signals the relationships that are linked to other parts of text (McCarthy, 1991). *“They do not signal information present in the text. They rather signal by means of formal markers the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what have been said before”*.(Baker,1991,

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p.190). Holding the same point of view, Halliday & Hassan (1976) point out that conjunctive elements are cohesive but in an indirect way. In contrast to their specific meaning, they express certain interpretations that presuppose the existence of other components in discourse.

3.2. Connectives(conjunctions)

Connectives were introduced as conjunctions by Halliday & Hassan (1976), cohesive devices by Schiffrin (1987), logical connectors by (Leki, 1989), logical devices by (Byrne, 1982), discourse connectives or discourse markers by (Blakemore, 1987), and discourse markers by Fraser (1999). For the sake of consistency, they are all viewed as “connectives” in this study. Connectives are one of the linking ties that establish relations between clauses and phrases. They are words that connect ideas within written texts. For and wide, the term connectives has been defined in a number of different ways: Brown & Yule(1983) argue that, a in written text, connectives are the formal markers that make relationships between ideas explicitly appeared, and hence, enable the reader to make connection between what has been said and what is about to be said.

According to Bryne (1982), connectives *mean “... words or phrases which indicate meaning relationship between and within sentences”* (p.18). Halliday & Hassan (1976), as well, gave a detailed explanation of connectives in terms of logical and semantic relations they present. This theoretical view driven from their taxonomy of cohesive ties still has a major significance for many current research studies. Harris (1968) concludes the above claims by saying that connectives belong to the basic of language structure. This is in brief how connectives are viewed from different points of view; they were introduced, merely, as means of identifying and demonstrating the semantic relations between the sentences of a text.

3.3. Types of connectives

Halliday & Hassan taxonomy on coherence relations and cohesive devices represents a significant model in cohesion research. They base their studies on the thematic relations indicated by certain linguistic devices, namely, connectives (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). Holding the same view, McCarty (1991) classifies these connectives into four main types: respectively, additive, adversative, causal and temporal. In their taxonomy, Halliday& Hassan (1976) illustrate their classifications in the following way: words such as “and”, “or”, “in other words” are referred to as additive. Words such as “but”, “however”, “yet” are classified as adversative and which do indicate concession. While words like “because of”, “therefore”, “as a result” are

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classified as casual connectives; Words such as “after that”, “first”, “finally” are categorized as temporal because they represent relations between two successive stretches of language.

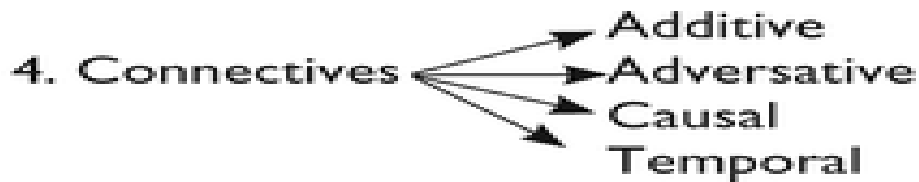


Diagram 02: Different types of conjunctions

(from Halliday and Hassan, 1976)

As a matter of terminology, and to some extent more specifically, connectives may house other classifications such as sequencing connectives as “before” and “after”, emphasizing connectives such as “indeed” and “particularly”, comparing connectives as “otherwise” “and” “whereas”, and qualifying connectives like “unless” and “as long as”.

3.4. Importance of connectives in writing

Using connectives appropriately and correctly reflects the extent to which the produced text reaches communication. This is because if one uses them appropriately, they will function as text organizers which help the text’s processor acquiring it as a connected discourse. Zamel (1983) and Virtanen (2004) emphasize the importance of connectives in identifying the semantic relations between the parts of the text. Hartnett (1986) argue that connectives, when they are widely used by a good writer, enhance the comprehensibility of the text; nevertheless, they may cause confusion when they are used by non-competent writers. In short, connectives play an important role in text processing and interpretation (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980).

EFL learners do not make any exception; they are required to write cohesive texts. When they undertake writing tasks for the sake of communicating, they are likely to face problems as mentioned earlier. They do have failure in the use of connectives in building cohesion. They are in need of mastering the way of building relationships across sentences. In this regard, in this study, we provided short definitions and illustration of the main important aspects this research focuses on. We have presented the ways of organizing sentences into text, ways of

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building text cohesion using cohesive devices. We took a closer look on one kind of these linguistic ties, namely, connectives, and we discussed their significance in building texture, from one hand, and in making the flow of reading go smoothly by the reader, on the other hand. In what follows, we will discuss the different approaches to connectives.

3.5. Approaches to teaching connectives

Connectives are taught from different perspectives. EFL teachers do their best to find out the appropriate approach to teaching these linguistic devices. Now, we will review the different approaches that influence the teaching of connectives

3.5.1. Formal approach

The teaching of connectives was considered merely as the teaching of the surface relations between sentences. According to this approach, sentence patterns are the main interest of writing sessions. The reason behind this claim was motivated by the fact that language is a string of compositions within which the syntactic level of analysis is of greater importance (Chomsky, 1965). Simply put, building cohesion, under this approach, relies on the teaching of syntactic structures and sentence patterns. Learners are required to master the grammatical rules in isolated sentences. Cohesive devices are taught in separate sentences focusing on their syntactic forms regardless of their meaning i.e. they were taught out of their social context (Leech, 1983).

Although it can be assumed that the teaching and the learning of cohesive devices, including connectives, under this approach, stressed the development of organizing sentences into unified texts, connectives were taught in merely structural approach within which neither the context of use nor the purposeful function of these ties are involved. For such approach, if the produced text is not cohesive, it means that it consists of structurally unrelated propositions, *“That’s why most of the traditional grammar tasks were focusing on structures”* (Celce-Murcia, 1991, p.460). In fact, a formal approach to teaching connectives deals, in greater detail, with the syntactic aspects of language. This is important no doubt, but the learner, here, is considered only as a passive receiver whose role is just to memorize certain lists of cohesive devices then putting them in different contexts.

3.5.2. Cohesion markers

Like the work reviewed thus far, Halliday & Hassan’s (1976) analysis on text cohesion is embedded within a larger framework that impacts upon the analysis of cohesive devices. In

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contrast to formal approaches whose main focus was the sentential level and how to organize sentences syntactically, Halliday & Hassan's theoretical framework takes step further and suggested functions for those devices. They proposed that these cohesive devices help in building text through which they demonstrate semantic relations within sentence structures.

The traditional approach, in which Halliday & Hassan's analysis is located, aims at making interaction between syntax, semantic and meaning. That is to say, they made a clear distinction between sentence and text. Halliday (1985) stressed on the importance of the three mentioned dimensions and functional aspects when attempting to account for how language is used. Carrell (1982), as well, argued that cohesive devices are said to be related semantically. All in all, what makes any piece of text meaningful is named texture. Texture is the basics of cohesion and semantic interdependence because without texture the text is viewed as randomly separate sentences (Crane, 2000).

To this end, the cohesive relations, through which cohesion is achieved, are introduced in the surface structure and the meaning established between the sentences. But this way of analysis does not enable the learner to communicate effectively since s/he cannot arrive at an appropriate interpretation of the writer's intended meaning; under this approach, learners are not yet aware of what is beyond.

3.5.3. Discourse approach

Though there were various approaches and methods that have been adopted and proposed by instructors so as to enable the learner to use linguistic devices appropriately in building discourse cohesion, only the new comer approach, namely, discourse approach helps the learner write cohesively since it enables the FL learners to communicate by means of writing. Grammar in the communicative approach cannot be taught or learnt at the sentential level; it should be used as an instrument to create comprehension in a written discourse. The impact of this approach has resulted in the fact that grammar should not be taught separately nor be viewed as a set of rules. That is why "The ultimate goal to learn grammar for FL learners is to be aware of the structure and functioning of the language system. This awareness remains useless unless it is made operational communicatively, viz. if the learner does not capitalize on it in performing various communicative acts" (Chaouki, p.36). Hence, the teaching of grammar should encompass language structure, sentence patterns, meaning and use.

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The analysis of discourse markers which was embedded within the view of discourse is not only a unit of language, but rather a process of social interaction (Schiffrin, 1987). In other hands, these discourse connectives are identified as sequentially dependent units that bracket sequences of talk that add meaning to discourse. Because it has been influential and its difference continues to affect the current research, Fraser's (1990) perspective on discourse markers is based upon the differentiation between content and its intended meaning. This is because "when an expression functions as a discourse marker, has its exclusive function in the sentence" (Fraser. 189). This way of analysis enables the text processor to read between the lines getting the intended meaning of the writer. As well, it helps the in comprehensibility of discourse. Yet, as what we have put focus on, teaching and learning connectives within a pragmatic approach raise the awareness of FL learners of the use of discourse connectives appropriately in building cohesion, taking into account the meaning and the context of use to which these cohesive devices are related.

4. Discourse analysis

This part is devoted to discourse analysis, we will define discourse analysis and its elements .After that we will introduce the teaching of connectives within discourse analysis framework.

4.1. Definition of discourse analysis

The term discourse analysis was introduced for and wide within different frameworks. Suffice it to say that the word "discourse analysis" (Henceforth, DA) means different things for different scholars and linguists. For McCarthy (1991), it means the study of language in relation to its context; it covers different disciplines including linguistics, semiotics, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. Whilst for researchers such as Fairclough (1989), Foucault (1980) "discourse analysis" means the study of how people use the language to achieve certain communicative goals. For Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), as well, DA is "...*the study of language in use that extends beyond the sentence boundaries*" (p.04).

Discourse analysis is an approach that has recently been adapted by language teachers within different frameworks. It is as what Platridge (2006) reports:

"Discourse analysis focuses on knowledge about language beyond the word, clause, phrase and sentence that is needed for successful communication. It looks at patterns of language across text and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural context in which it is used. Discourse analysis considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. It examines how the use of

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language is influenced by relationship between participants” (p.02). He continues to say "discourse analysis examines both spoken and written discourse texts"

In this study, because we are interesting in identifying the appropriateness of DA in teaching cohesive devices for First Year Master students, we will adapt the definition made by Cook (1989) that discourse analysis is the study of the way stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social, and psychological context are meaningful for their users. That is to say, how the language would be unified and meaningful if it occurs in an appropriate context. The choice is motivated by the fact that this definition will help us identifying how a cohesive text should be.

4.2. Elements of discourse analysis

Cohesion is one of the most important elements of discourse analysis, and to achieve cohesion students must involve an emphasis on fulfilling cohesion in real contexts

4.2.1. Cohesion

Cohesion, as it is mentioned earlier, concerns the way in which sentences are organized to build the texture of a text. It has a significant role in making any piece of writing united. Said otherwise, "*cohesion refers to the way that text makes sense syntactically*" (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p.16). Traditionally, cohesion has been neglected; the focus was on the sentence level, that is to say, sentences were studied in isolation (Cook, 1989). This is how cohesive relations were studied before the advent of discourse analysis. But this kind of analysis is inadequate because it still focuses on the formal properties of language rather than achieving meaning (Cauthlard, 1977). The dissatisfaction with these approaches raised through time as it was viewed that language is not merely a set of rules to be applied. There emerged, therefore, the new approach which broke with the explicit teaching of uncontextualized sentences. By virtue, what EFL learners are in want of, actually, is how to be aware of supra-sentential features when establishing discourse cohesion. As a consequence, linguists have become aware of the use of context and language function.

Yule (1996) lays stress on the importance of discourse structure which it focuses; he continues to say, on the main elements that can shape a well-stretched text. If we accept that: "*discourse analysis is taken to be the investigation into formal devices used to connect sentences together*" (Allen & Corder, 1974, p. 2000).As a definition of discourse analysis, it becomes

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imperative that teaching cohesive devices, as building blocks of discourse cohesion, should be directed at this purpose. Learners need to be aware of the context in which the piece of language occurs; as teachers, we should teach grammatical forms in relation to meaning and social functions not in isolation from their contexts of use. This is because grammatical cohesion is one way of having cohesive discourse; it provides an over view of discourse analysis and its relation to cohesion. In brief, any piece of written discourse has given regularities to be followed. Yet any piece of written discourse must be treated in a way that ensures the text unity, namely, cohesion.

5. Teaching connectives within discourse analysis approach

Unlike English native speakers who are less likely to face problems in building cohesive relations within written discourse, EFL learners may find it much more difficult to establish these relations using cohesive devices. Widdowson(2007). reports that the use of cohesive devices makes the text to be meaningful by relating structures together. McCarthy (1991) holds the same view, saying *“we shall consider some regularities in well-formed text and how the structuring of sentences has implication for the progress of whole text”* (p.25).

Connectives, as one of these text forming devices, were reviewed, earlier, as cohesive ties that help in the comprehensibility of a written text. According to Schiffrin (1987), discourse markers are of great importance in matching both the informational unities in the actual discourse with the informational unities in the previous discourse. It is probably unworthy to point out that connectives can be approached from a great variety of directions; but since the focus of traditional approaches was restricted to the surface structure; *“the focus of instruction rarely moved beyond the sentence level”* (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000, p.460), the traditional approach does not enable the learners to communicate by means of writing; i.e., the learner is a passive receiver in his learning. His role was restricted only to acquiring the given information and producing an output which should be similar to what he had received. This method of teaching grammatical cohesion is neither sufficient nor effective.

With the advent of discourse analysis approach things have changed. The appropriate use of cohesive devices has been considered as a fundamental component of good writing. However, recently, researchers and linguists have shifted their attention to the analysis of these cohesive

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devices. It is suggested, hence, that connectives would be better taught within a discourse analysis framework.

According to Byrne (1982), connectives are “words” or “phrases” that demonstrate meaning relationship between or within sentences. That is to say, teaching connectives as a matter of memorizing a list of words and putting them in different contexts does not seem to fit the students’ need. Despite this formal way of teaching them, connectives need to be taught in context, taking into consideration the purpose and the function of use. That is why it is claimed that connectives have twofold discursive function: argumentative and interactive (Boulet et al, 1985).

Leech & Svartvik (1994:177) point out, that connectives are the cohesive signposts in discourse that lead to comprehend the text by signaling how its successive units are combined with each other. Kehler (2002) as well, reports that the interpretation of utterances within certain discourse can be achieved if we discover how these utterances are connected to each other. Connectives do not create relationships in themselves, but rather they express cohesive relation that existed in the writer’s thinking. They function just as indicators of the relationships. That is to say, they should be taught within and beyond the level of sentences in order for the reader to arrive at an appropriate interpretation of the intended meaning of the text producer, and this is what discourse analysis calls for. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) argue that teaching writing skill, including text cohesion, from a discourse analysis perspective entails shifting the pedagogical attention from linguistic performance to pragmatic perspective.

Hai (2004), on the other hand, states that “*knowledge of phonology, vocabulary, and grammatical patterns is not sufficient for them to communicate effectively in the target language.*” (p.38). He stresses on the fact that learning the system of the language (grammar, vocabulary...) is important, no doubt, but it is not sufficient. We need to be aware of how to arrive at the exact meaning of a sentence in the context in which it is located (ibid).

To sum up, “*Language is context-sensitive. This means that, in the absence of context, it is very difficult to recover the intended meaning of a single word or phrase*” (Thornbury, 1999, p.69). The suggestion that adapting discourse analysis in the teaching of connectives is motivated by the fact that several researches have emphasized on; (Mauranen, 1993; Altunay, 2009) point out that the misuse and overuse of connectives in written discourse create a mismatch between the intended message of the writer and what s/he does convey in his/her piece of writing.

Conclusion

In this chapter we talked about the writing difficulties EFL learners usually encounter when undertaking writing tasks, we provided issues related to the notion of cohesion and how sentences are combined to create a texture. Then, we mentioned in brief the different approaches to the teaching of connectives and what significance they have on the learner's communication. We arrived, finally, how connectives are viewed from discourse analysis perspective, how this communicative approach can enhance the teaching of such cohesive devices, and how the implication of discourse analysis principles into the use of connectives help the EFL learners, in particular, to build cohesive discourse which is linguistically accurate, socially and culturally relevant.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Introduction

In order to collect data about student's awareness of cohesive ties used in building text unity, two instruments were used. To meet the objectives of the research questions, all the items in the questionnaire were collected and divided into three sections. Later, they were answered by twenty (20) students. Then, a pre-test, one lecture, and a post-test were administrated to them.

This chapter presents the analysis and the interpretation of data gathered to confirm or refute the proposed hypothesis: a discourse analysis approach helps to enhance the students' use of connectives.

1. The sample

The present study took place at the Department of English, UKMO, during the academic year 2016/2017. A group of twenty (20) MA students of First Master took part in this study. They are selected randomly from both sexes: males and females. The paired sample way is opted because the control group is the experimental one. The participants are out of a total number of thirty three (33) students. Age and gender are not taken into consideration. They share the same learning background since they are EFL learners.

2. The Method

In order to confirm the effectiveness of teaching connectives under discourse analysis approach, a quasi-experimental method is opted for conducting this study. Questionnaire was administrated to gather data. Then an experiment was conducted on first master students of Linguistic using a pre-test, one lecture, and a post-test. Such a method helps the researchers to study the changes and the variance in the individual's performance.

3. Means of Research

In this study we gathered data from two (02) sources: a questionnaire, and an experiment. The use of the questionnaire was chosen to collect data. This questionnaire helped us to get quantitative or qualitative findings. A good amount of data was gathered. Two tests and one lecture were assigned to 20 students in an experiment, and then the comparison of the two tests was made.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

4. The students' questionnaire

The questionnaire is administrated to twenty (20) students with the help of our supervisor. The sample chosen was twenty (20) students out of a total number of thirty three (33) First Year Master Students in linguistics at Kasdi Merbah University. The data gathered from the questionnaire were analyzed using percentages and frequencies. This questionnaire consisted of three (03) sections which are related to the proposed hypothesis. It also presents the students' opinions on the methodologies used by their instructors. These sections are:

Part one (01): aims at eliciting general information about the English level of the participants.

Part two (02): aims at giving detailed information about the main aspects used when writing in FL.

Part three (03): aims at exploring if the methodologies used by the teachers in the teaching of cohesive ties are effective and fruitful.

4.1. Analysis of the questionnaire

General information

Q1: What is your gender?

Gender	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	2	10 %
Female	18	90 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 1. Participants' Profile

Table (01) shows that almost all the class are females (90 %) while only (10 %) of them are males.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Q 2: What is your level of English?

Options	Number (N)	Percentages (%)
Intermediate	6	30 %
Upper intermediate	11	50 %
Advanced	4	20 %
Total	20	100 %

Table (02): The students' level of English

Table (02) indicates that even though the participants are from both sexes, they share the same background. (30%) of them said that they have an intermediate level, while (50%) consider their levels as upper-intermediates. Only (20%) of them stated that they have an advanced level.

Q3: how long have you been studying English?

Options	Number	Percentages
6	5	25%
11	12	50%
12	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Table (3): Years of studying English?

Table (3) indicates that the majority of participants (50%) have been studying English for about 11 years, while (25%) of them stated that they studied for 6years, (15%) of students say that they have been studying it for about 12 years.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

2. Writing in FL

Q1: How do you rate you level?

Table (4) shows that half of participants (50%) have a good level, while (45%) of them saw that they have an average level and only few of them (5%) said that they have a poor level.

Options	Number	Percentages
Poor	1	5%
Average	9	45%
Good	10	50%
Advanced	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Table (4): Students' level in English

Q2: Are you aware of the importance of writing in FL?

Table (5) shows that the majority of students (65%) are aware of the importance of writing academically. However, only (35%) of the participants answered that they are to some extent. (35%) of the participants are not aware of the importance of writing in FL because they did not benefit from the traditional methods on which their teacher relies. Hence, they need to be motivated to practice much more writing.

Options	Number	Percentages
Yes	13	65%
No	0	0%
To some extent	7	35%
Total	20	100%

Table (5): Students' answers about the importance of writing

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Q3: How many hours do you practise writing per week?

Table(6) indicates that(55%) of students stated that they practise writing for just one hour, while only few of them(35%) said that they practise it for two hours. Only (10%) of the students said that they practise it for over three hours. These results indicate that under the traditional approaches, the students are given instructions on a mode of written discourse, and then they are given a particular topic about which they are asked to write in few opportunities to practice.

Options	Number	Percentages
1 hour	11	55%
2 hours	7	35%
Over3 hours	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Table (6): Opportunities' rates for practising writing per- week

Q4: What are the important aspects that you should care about when writing?

Table (7) reveals that only few of the respondents (25%) select organization. But most of them (75%) claimed that grammar is the most important aspect when writing. No one of them mentioned lexis.

Options	Number	Percentages
Grammar	15	75%
Lexis	0	0%
Vocabulary	0	0%
Organization	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Table (7): Students' opinions on the important aspect when writing

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Q5: Is grammar the most difficult element in writing?

Table (8) represents a significant convergence in ratios. (40%) of students said that they agree (35%) of them strongly agree however only (25%) of them chose to be neutral.

Options	Number	Percentages
Agree	8	40%
S. Agree	7	35%
Neutral	5	25%
Disagree	0	0%
S. Disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Table (8): students' views on the importance of connectives in writing

Q6: In building your text cohesion which element is of greater importance?

Table (9) indicates that the participants differ in selecting the important element when building text cohesion. Meanwhile (75%) agreed that cohesion is the important element, (25%) agreed that the organization of the written text is more important.

Options	Number	Percentages
Organization	5	25%
Lexis	0	0%
Genre	0	0%
Cohesion	15	75%
Total	20	100%

Table (9): Students' evaluation of the importance of the elements mentioned.

Q7: Reorder these linguistic devices by importance:

The results from table (10) show that there exists a contradiction in the students' opinions. The majority of students (60%) chose connectives to be the important aspect, whereas (30%) of them selected lexical cohesion. Only (10%) of participants chose ellipsis. This is contradiction due to the different views the students have about the topic.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Options	Number	Percentages
Connectives	12	60%
Ellipsis	2	10%
Lexical cohesion	6	30%
Total	20	100%

Table (10): Students' preferences as to what linguistic tie has much importance

III) Methodologies used by the teachers

Q1. On which aspect does your teacher focus when writing?

Option	Number	Percentages
Cohesion	5	25%
Coherence	5	25%
Both	10	50%
Total	20	100%

Table (11): Participants' views on aspects focused on by their teachers.

Table (11) reveals that students have different views when selecting which of the aspect the teachers give much importance. That is why a significant convergence was noticed. (25%) of students opted for the aspect of cohesion. While the same number (25%) of them opted for coherence, however (50%) of the respondents selected both of them.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

Q2. Does your teacher put you in the context before asking you to write?

Option	Number	Percentages
Yes	15%	75%
NO	5%	25%
Total	20%	100%

Table (12): The opportunities given by the teachers in contextualizing the topic

The results obtained from table (12) display heavily that the majority of participants (65%) agree that they are put in the context by their teachers, whereas only (35%) disagree.

Q3. Does your teacher train on you how to make your writing cohesive?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Table (13): The amount of training the teacher provides the students with.

The findings show that most of students (70%) agreed that they have been trained by their teachers on ways of keeping a text cohesive, whilst only (30%) of them said that they are unaware of how to write cohesively. Even though they have the same teacher, yet they have different views .This variation leads to different statistics.

Q4. Do you like learning cohesion under the supervision of your teacher?

Option	Number	Percentages
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Table (14): Students' opinions about the methods of teaching cohesion.

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A large number of respondents (85%) did not agree, they don't like to be restricted to the teacher instruction which is based heavily on repeating certain structure. (15%) agreed, as it is shown on table (14).

Q5. Connectives as one of the cohesive devices have an important role to achieve cohesion.

Option	Number	Percentages
Yes	20	100%
No	0	0%
Both	20	100%

Table (15): Students' awareness of the importance of connectives.

As it is shown on table (15) that all students (100%) strongly agree that they know and they are aware of the importance of connectives in achieving cohesion. Despite of the variations mentioned in each of the previous statistics, the participants assumed that connectives have much importance.

Q6. Do you practice the use of connectives in each writing task?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%
Both	20	100%

Table (16): The amount of using connectives when practicing writing tasks.

Table (16) shows that (75%) of participants practise the use of connectives in every writing task. However, (25%) said that they do not practise them in each piece of writing they made.

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Q7. Do you think that the failure of using connectives appropriately is due to the fact that they are used out of context?

Option	Number	Percentages
Yes	14	70%
No	6	30%
Total	20	100%

Table (17): Students' views on the causes of misusing connectives.

Table (17) shows that the majority of students (70%) agreed that using connectives inappropriately is due to a lack of context. However, when they were asked to justify their answers they were unable to explain. On the other hand, only (30%) of the participants said that they are not agree.

Q8. Have you any further suggestions about teaching connectives to enhance the writing skill.

The majority of students suggested the idea of giving much time and opportunities to contextualize the use of connectives. Some of them suggested giving much time to practice academic writing, whilst few of them asked for designing academic writing module.

4.2. Findings and discussion

First, we tackled the issue of writing in FL. Half of the respondents (50%) have a good level, while only (45%) of them said that they have an average level. However, when they are asked if they are aware of the importance of writing in FL, the majority of students (65%) agreed. The most of them (55%) said that they have few opportunities to practise academic writing. It seems that they really need to be provided much more opportunities for practise. The obtained results from (Q4+Q5) indicate that most of students (75%, 40%) agreed that grammar is the most important and difficult element when writing in a FL. Concerning Q6, the majority of participants (75%) see that cohesion is the most important aspect in building a unified text while only (25%) of them claimed that organization has much more importance.

Although the participants insisted that they are aware enough of the different elements used when writing in EFL contexts, they still face some difficulties and deficiencies when doing writing tasks. Actually, they know clearly that the most difficult step is building cohesion, that's

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why more than half of them (60%) choose connectives to be the important element when practicing text cohesion.

Later, we were concerned with eliciting the students' points of view about whether or not the methodologies used by their teachers are fruitful. (50%) of respondents answered with (both cohesion and coherence) when they were asked about which aspect has much emphasis of their teachers. Meanwhile, the majority (75%) of them answered Q2 with (yes). (85%) of students preferred learning cohesion in a different way from that adopted in the past within which the grammatical structures are presented separately and out of context. When they were asked about the importance of using connectives in making the text unity (100%) of students answered with (yes). So, subjects in this study know the different grammatical elements needed when producing cohesive texts, but what they lack is how to use them within different contexts.

5. The description of the experiment

5.1. The experiment

The experiment was carried out using one lecture and two tests. A pre-test was assigned to 20 first year MA students. It aimed at evaluating the writing level of the students under observation during the first semester. In this pre-test, participants were asked to write a short text about the advantages and disadvantages of using technology in the classroom. The test aimed at asking students to write about a given topic was. It was given within a limited time but most of the participants gave their papers on time.

After discussing the results of the pre-test, a lesson was planned on cohesion in writing, focusing on the use of certain cohesive devices, connectives. Then the lecture was explained to the participants. The lesson is prepared according to the suggested approach. The aim of this approach is to raise the students' awareness about the notion of context and making them notice the importance of context in producing and interpreting written texts.

The lecture was done in fifty minutes. Students were given a topic and were asked to discuss it. They were asked about their knowledge of cohesive devices, particularly connectives. In order to activate their schemata knowledge, they were provided; read and pick up the different connectives used by the writers. After explaining the reasons of using connectives in producing cohesive texts, students were given scrambled sentences and were asked to reorder them using connectives given to them to complete the text. The students interact with the the activities and they were helpful.

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After the lecture, a post-test was administrated to the students. They were asked to write a cohesive text about how to manage their classrooms as future teachers in order to measure their progress in using some connectives. The task was given in a restricted time, but the majority of texts finished within the time allotted.

5.2. The procedures

For the sake of analyzing the scores in this study, we followed three (03) steps: gathering, identifying and describing data. In the identification phase, the analysis was based on the correction of both tests. Whilst in the description phase, the analysis was done based on the comparison between the students' scores in the two tests: the pre-test and the post-test. After the implementation of the lesson plan in the classroom and integrating data from discourse analysis i.e. focusing on contextualizing the use of connectives, it was noticed that the levels of students were different when comparing the two tests.

5.3. The analysis of the pre-test results

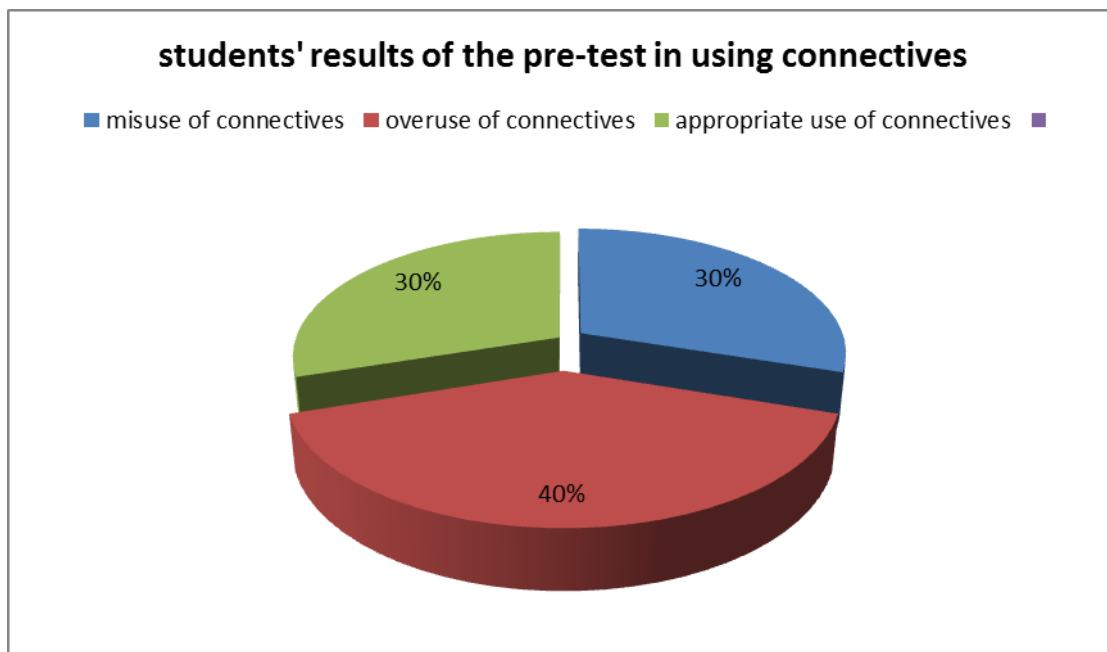


Figure (03): Percentages of the pre-test.

This figure shows the percentages of the student's use of connectives. It indicates that (40%) of the participants make an overuse of connectives when they write, (30%) of them make a misuse

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

when using those cohesive devices. However, (30%) of the participants use the connectives appropriately in their pieces of writing. This may be because they are unable to use those ties within different contexts, or due to the failure of the approach used by their teachers to use connectives appropriately.

5.4. Interpretation

The pre-test was administered to 20 students. They were asked to write an argumentative text in which they account for the advantages and disadvantages of using technology in the classroom. The results obtained from this test showed that although the majority of students can identify the different types of connectives, they do not know how to contextualize their use. They are unable to make their writing cohesive using minimum number of connectives. That is why most of them make an overuse of connectives when they write. They think that the more connectives are used, the more their writing is cohesive.

5.5. The analysis of the post-test

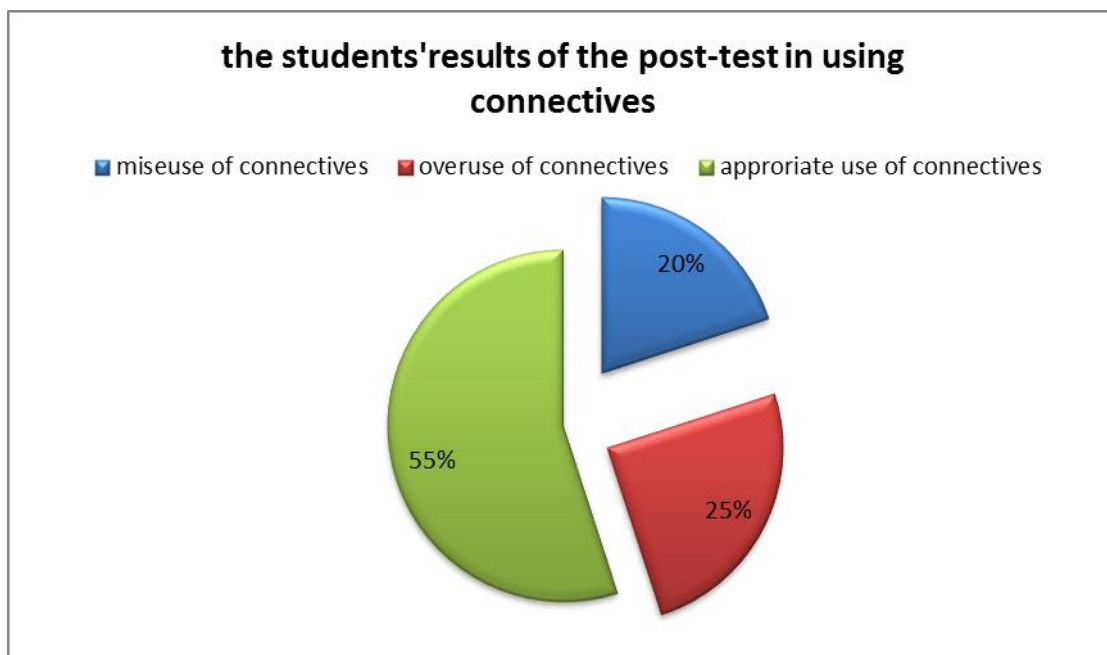


Figure (04): Percentages of the post test

Figure (04) shows the percentages of the students' use of connectives. The green portion (55%) represents the students' appropriate use of connectives, whilst the red portion (25%) represents the students' use of connectives in a way that is less than the usual. Only (20%) of the students (the blue portion) make an overuse of connectives in their texts.

5.6. Interpretation

Figure (5) shows the students' performance in the post-test. Students were asked to write a cohesive text in which they talk about the different techniques used in classroom management. They were divided into 3 categories; the majority of them 55% (who are presented by the green portion) are able to use connectives appropriately, while only 20% of the participants misuse the connectives given in the session (the blue portion), 25% make an overuse of connectives when writing.

5.7. Comparison of the pre-test and the post-test

The figure below indicates that the students' use of connectives has improved in the post-test as it shown:

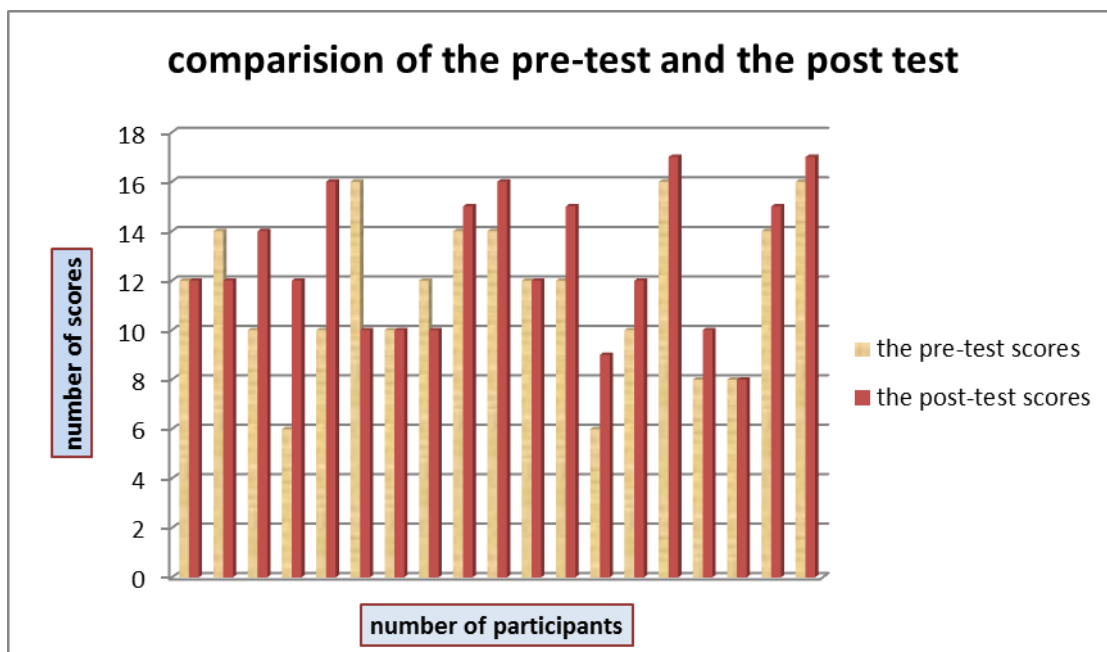


Figure (5): The comparison of the two tests.

5.8. Comparing the pre-test and the post-test by means of T-test:

In order to confirm the results and the hypothesis proposed in this study, we opted for identifying the T- test. But before doing so, some terms should be clarified in order to fully comprehend them.

Mean: is the average. It is calculated by adding up all the values, and then divide them by the number of participants as it is shown:

$$d = x = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

sd= is the standard deviation. It is used to show how much the scores far from the average.

$$Sd = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N} - d^2}$$

T°: it is used to check the effectiveness of the hypothesis. It is calculated as below:

$$t_{n-1} = \frac{d}{\frac{sd}{\sqrt{N-1}}}$$

N : the total number of the participants

df: degree of freedom.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

T-Test:

N	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores	D	d ²
1	12	14	-2	4
2	12	12.5	-0.5	0.25
3	14	16	-2	4
4	10	13	-3	9
5	16	17	-1	1
6	10	12	-2	4
7	16	18	-2	4
8	10	11	-1	1
9	12	12	0	0
10	14	15	-1	1
11	14	16	-2	4
12	12	12	0	0
13	12	15	-3	9
14	6	9	-3	9
15	10	12	-2	4
16	6	12	-6	36
17	8	10	-2	4
18	8	8	0	0
19	14	15	-1	1
20	17	17	0	0
			Σd=-33.5	Σd ² =95.25

Table (18): Scores of Pre-test and Post-test

$$d = \frac{\Sigma d}{N} = \frac{-33.5}{20} = -1.67$$

$$sd = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma d^2}{N} - (d)^2} = \sqrt{\frac{95.25}{20} - (-1.67)^2} = 1.93$$

$$t_{n-1} = \frac{d}{\frac{SD}{\sqrt{N-1}}} = \frac{(-1.67)\sqrt{19}}{1.93} = -2.57t^\circ$$

Data Collection and Analysis of the Findings

$$t^{\circ} = -2.57$$

$$\text{df: } N-1 = 20-1=19$$

As it is observed t_0 is greater than 2.57. It is unlikely that the results could have arisen by chance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that discourse approach may enhance the students' use of connectives. The probability that the difference between the two means arose by chance is less than 0.05 or 5% i.e.95% sure.

5.9. Validity

Graziano&Raulin(2004) ,as quoted in Marczyk,DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005), states that: "Validity is an important term in research that refers to the conceptual and scientific soundness of a research study" (p. 158). It is calculated through using "The Edge Comparison Method".

5.10. Reliability

Marczyk,DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005) declare that "reliability refers to whether the measurement is consistent" (p.10). Therefore, we replicate the pre-test and the post-test for the second time to the same participants and we get the same results.

Conclusion

The aim of this practical part is to confirm the hypothesis put forward earlier that a discourse approach enhances the use of connectives among first year MA students in linguistics. In order to check the effectiveness of such a prediction, a questionnaire, a pre-test and a post-test were administrated to the subjects in this study. The analysis of the results is based on the students' answers in the questionnaire and the scores in both tests. The results reveal positively that the introduction of discourse analysis in the teaching of connectives. The hypothesis is, then confirmed.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Having a high ability to write within academic contexts entails a high awareness to produce cohesive texts. Such awareness helps the writer to produce an appropriate piece of writing. That's why; mastering the grammatical rules of a language is not only the important element when writing in a FL. It seems to be insufficient for EFL learners who are involved, for most of the time, within written communication. Producing an appropriate and unified text is based primarily on the appropriate use of cohesive devices. Because of their importance in establishing meaning relations, cohesive devices are taken to be the main focus of teachers when teaching text cohesion. To this end, EFL teachers have done their best to teach those cohesive ties in the appropriate way.

In this study, we aimed at suggesting that discourse analysis approach is appropriate for the teaching of cohesive devices, particularly, connectives. In this regard, we started with reviewing the related literature. In this chapter, we dealt with defining connectives, identifying their role in building cohesion, and presenting the different types of them. We reviewed how connectives were taught before by reviewing the traditional approaches to teaching connectives. Then we took a closer look at the alternative approach suggested in this study, namely, discourse analysis, its definition, its elements (cohesion), and how it is helpful for the teaching of cohesive ties. Finally, we moved to the main point in this study which is discourse analysis and connectives. We mentioned some views about the teaching of connectives within discourse analysis framework.

Because we are attempting, when conducting this research, at examining whether or not a discourse approach is appropriate for the teaching of connectives, the results obtained from the questionnaire and both tests reveal that the majority of students know how to use connectives but in separable way; what they are struggling with is how to contextualize the use of those connectives i.e. this is because they are not aware of the importance of context in interpreting connectives which helps, in turn, the text to be received as a cohesive unity. For a reason or another, they do not practice much writing tasks; they are in need of being involved in communicative tasks i.e. not to be asked to write about a given topic under the supervision of the teacher. They also face some difficulties to keep the communication; this is may be due to the teachers who are not acquainted with finding out the appropriate approach to teaching these devices, or because they were asked, for the most of the time, to memorize the use of certain connectives to put them down within different contexts

Conclusion

To arrive at a solution for these communication problems, discourse analysis is likely to be the appropriate approach that can provide such a way out. For this reason, the suggestion we made that discourse analysis is the appropriate approach to the teaching of connectives is accepted, since all the mentioned problems such as a misuse or an over use of connectives, an unawareness of the context within which these connectives are located, or inability to use these connectives implicitly in a way that helps the reader to interpret the meaning without looking for what is written on the page. All of these problems can be solved by discourse analysis since its cornerstones are cohesion and coherence

Pedagogical Implication

From the previous discussion, it is remarked that even though EFL learners have writing sessions where they are asked to write in an academic contexts, they face some difficulties when doing a writing task. This is because the writing skill is taught without giving importance to the context and the meaning of the items of the language. Students are unable to produce cohesive texts when they are involved in writing tasks which entail the use of certain techniques and strategies. This is because either the teachers use inappropriate methods, or they are unaware of discourse analysis conventions that may help them enhance their learners' writing achievement.

Because the aim of this study is to enhance the student's level and to make their writing more cohesive, the following suggestions would be of helpful to teaching connectives.

First, teachers should raise their awareness of discourse conventions in order to develop their teaching methods.

Second, teachers need to identify the lack and the difficulties their students might face concerning the use of connectives and try to reduce them. Hence, they need to design syllabus that include all the types of connectives focusing on meaning and use.

Third, since the core objective of a discourse approach is to enable the learner to communicate effectively, teachers should opt for authentic materials in their classes and find out the appropriate activities that fit the learner's needs i.e. activities that focus on communication.

Last but not least, Teachers can use several activities (scrambled sentences, word drawing, etc..) to enhance their teaching process concerning the use of cohesive devices in writing, and encourage students to interact more.

Finally, the module of Academic Writing should be taught in three semester rather than one

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Appendices

Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and Languages

English section

Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of our dissertation .Its main thrust is to see to what extent connectives are important in enhancing foreign language writing. It aims at eliciting the students' attitudes towards the methodology used by their teachers to teach connectives, thus we have chosen some of you to be our research sample.

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to read then answer the following questions. Please Put **(X)** in the appropriate box. You are greatly thankful for your participation.

I. General Background

1. Your gender

Male

Female

2. What is your level in English?

Intermediate

Advanced

Upper intermediate

3. How long have you been studying English?

.....

Appendices

II. Writing in foreign language

1. How do you rate your level in writing skill?
 Poor Good
 Average Advanced
2. Are you aware of the importance of writing in foreign language?
 Yes No To some extent
3. How many hours do you practice writing per week?
 1 hour 2 hours over 3 hours
4. What is the important aspect that you should care about when writing?
 Grammar Organization
 Vocabulary Lexis
5. Is grammar the most difficult element when writing in a foreign language?
 Agree Strongly agree
 Disagree Strongly disagree
 Neutral
6. In building your text cohesion which element is of greater importance?
 Organisation Genre
 Lexis Cohesive devices
7. Reorder the following linguistic devices by importance.
 Connectives ellipsis lexical cohesion

III. Methodologies used by foreign language teachers

1. On which aspect does your teacher focus on when writing?
 Cohesion Coherence Both
2. Does your teacher put you in the context before asking you to write?

Apendices

Yes

No

3. Does you teacher train on you how to make your writing cohesive?

Yes

No

4. Do you like learning cohesion under the supervision of your teacher?

Yes

No

5. If your answer is NO, please add any further suggestions

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Connectives as one of the cohesive devices, have an important role in establishing cohesion

Yes

No

Justify.....
.....
.....
.....

7. Do you practice the use of connective in each writing task?

Yes

No

8. Do you think that the failure of using connectives is due to the fact that they are used out of context?

Yes

No

Justify.....
.....

Apendices

.....
.....

9. Have any further suggestions or recommendations?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Apendices

5m	<p>pictures, write down what the pictures show in a form of a short passage using connectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T selects some sentences containing the connectives (and, although) and writes the conjunctions in different colors on the board. <p><u>Analysis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sentence 1+and+sentence 2 (addition) ▪ Although +Sentence +sentence 2 (addition) 	L L L	L L	Learners write
10m	<p><u>Stating the rules</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ And is a coordinator, it expresses similarity. ▪ Although is a subordinator, it expresses contrast. ▪ The teachers shifts her learners’ attention to the difference between “however” and “although”. She explains for them that “however” has the same meaning as “but” and it can stand at the beginning of the sentence with a comma after it, whilst “although” can’t do this. 	L T T	L	
20m	<p>Stage Three : Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T distributes handouts that contain the same text ,then asks the following questions orally: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which sentences contain connectives? Which connective does the journalist use to express express addition? 2. Does the connective “And” help in the comprehensibility of the given passage? How it acts? 3. In which sentence does the author express negation or opposition? Can it stand in the middle of the sentence? 4. Could you replace it with another connective? 	T	L	Learners take notes
10m	<p>Stage Four: Produce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of the lesson and in a form of 	L	L	

Apendices

	<p>summary, the T provides the learners with the benefits and importance of using connectives in building discourse cohesion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• T lays stress on the importance of the using “and” and “although” in making the sentences hang together.• Connectives play an important role in text processing and interpretation .They need to be learnt in context.• The T insists on the notion of context and how it can enhance the use of those connectives.	<p>L</p>	<p>Learners revise</p>
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