



ISSN: 0976-3031

Available Online at <http://www.recentscientific.com>

International Journal of Recent Scientific Research
Vol. 6, Issue, 4, pp.3484-3487, April, 2015

*International Journal
of Recent Scientific
Research*

RESEARCH ARTICLE

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF COHESIVE DEVICES IN ENGLISH AS THE SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING SKILLS

Sumia Yahia Salim Mohamed¹ And Ali Khalid Mudawi²

¹Sudan University Of Science And Technology-College Of Languages

²Sudan University Of Science And Technology-College Of Education

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 5th, March, 2015
Received in revised form 12th,
March, 2015
Accepted 6th, April, 2015
Published online 28th,
April, 2015

Key words:

SUST, EFL, Control Group and
Experimental Group.

Copyright © Sumia Yahia Salim Mohamed and Ali Khalid Mudawi. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the effectiveness of using cohesive devices and writing strategies in developing EFL learners' writing skills. The researcher has adopted the quantitative method as well as the questionnaire and test as tools for collecting data relevant to the study. To bring to the light the importance of cohesive devices in writing skills. The sample of this study comprises of (100) first year students who study English at (SUST). They were divided equally into two groups: control group and experimental group. The experimental group was given a test and the second group was given a test but after they had been taught how to use cohesive devices in writing skills. The marks obtained from the two tests were compared. From one hand, the results have revealed that the experimental group encountered difficulties in using cohesive devices in writing skills. From the other hand, the control group performed slightly better.

INTRODUCTION

It has always been the concern of English teachers to help their students perform as well as the natives in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. To come to this end, a lot of research has been done to find out some specific features which are used by native speakers and as a result help non-natives to get as much closer as possible to native ones. In writing, the teaching and practice of cohesion has become a regular part of many teaching programs. It has been found that one of the characteristics of mature native speaker writing is that the writer's sentences will relate to each other in non-linear ways. Writers who fail to connect what they are saying in any particular sentence to what they have said earlier are likely to be open to the shifting from one topic to another. We should therefore, encourage those who are learning to write, to think of their writing non-linearly, that is they need to make connections between what they are currently saying and what they have previously said and later intend to say. Cohesion is a semantic notion referring to relations of meaning between elements of a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Salmani Nodoushan, 2003, 2007a). According to that definition, an analyst examines a range of phenomena which contribute to the cohesiveness of the text which might be grammatical or/and lexical. Normally, we can recognize a text as a sentence or a group of sentences because we can see a clear relationship of ideas unfolding. Yet how can we identify what makes a text

cohere? What differentiates a cohesive grammatical unit from a random collection of sentences? The main theoretical basis for this teaching experiment is the cohesion theory of Halliday and Hasan(1976).

Cohesive relationships between words and sentences have certain definable qualities that allow us to recognize the super sentence. These are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction Since their theory is a complicated system containing a large number of contents, some of which are still controversial and are in fact ambiguous; some parts of their theory are not included as teaching contents and basis for statistical analysis, though.

Aims and scope of the study

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using cohesive devices in developing writing skills. The scope of the study is limited to Sudan University of Science and Technology, college of languages, first year students of English language, who encountered problem in using cohesive in the test.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Normally, we can recognize a text as a sentence or a group of sentences because we can see a clear relationship of ideas unfolding. Yet how can we identify what makes a text cohere?

*Corresponding author: Sumia Yahia Salim Mohamed
Sudan University Of Science And Technology-College Of Languages

What differentiates a cohesive grammatical unit from a random collection of sentences? The main theoretical basis for this teaching experiment is the cohesion theory of Halliday and Hasan(1976). Cohesive relationships between words and sentences have certain definable qualities that allow us to recognize the super sentence. These are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction Since their theory is a complicated system containing a large number of contents, some of which are still controversial and are in fact ambiguous; some parts of their theory are not included as teaching contents and basis for statistical analysis, though. The purpose of this study is to determine if training courses in writing can cause a change in the learners' use of cohesion in their writing. To narrow down the research, only one aspect of grammatical cohesion in addition to the lexical cohesion was taken into consideration by comparing the differences between the pre- and the post-writing performance of the students taking an IELTS training course.

Lexical cohesion refers to the reader –perceived unity of text achieved by the author's usage of words with related meaning (Halliday and Hassan, 1976).Grice (1975) argued that to make conversation move on smoothly, the participants should cooperate with each other to make themselves understood .Considering the lexical cohesion, we can think of repetition synonyms, Super ordinates and general words. There is a traditional advice to avoid repetition, which can be harmful unless it is supplemented by something more. Instead of repeating the exact same word, a writer cans use another word that means the same or almost the same; it is also possible to use the lexical cohesion devise of super ordinate which is a more general term or an umbrella term of the specific lexica. The last form of lexical cohesion is the General word which is a higher level super ordinate that can almost cover everything. Learners should not be encouraged to say the same thing over and over again but they should be advised to make a connection between what they are currently saying and what they said before (Cutting, 2002; Salmani Nodoushan, 2007b). There is always the possibility of cohesion between any pair of lexical items which are in some way associated with each other in the language” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). It is very common for long cohesive chains to be built up out of lexical relations of this kind (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Xin-hong (2003) classified contextual meanings similarly into meanings of presupposition, meanings of situational context, and common knowledge of communication participants. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) are among the first to make a difference between “sentence meaning” and “utterance

International Journal of Language Studies (IJLS), Vol. 4(2), 2010 | 3 meaning”. Sentence meaning is the surface meaning of the sentence, while utterance meaning is the real intention of the speaker. Grice (1975) argued that to make conversation move on smoothly, the participants should cooperate with each other to make themselves understood (SalmaniNodoushan, 2006).

Methodology of the study

The researcher uses two samples for this study:

Firstly: 1st year undergraduate students at Sudan University of Science and Technology (both males and females)

Secondly: Sudanese teacher of English from various universities who responded to questionnaire and they are as follows according to tables, below:

Tools of the study

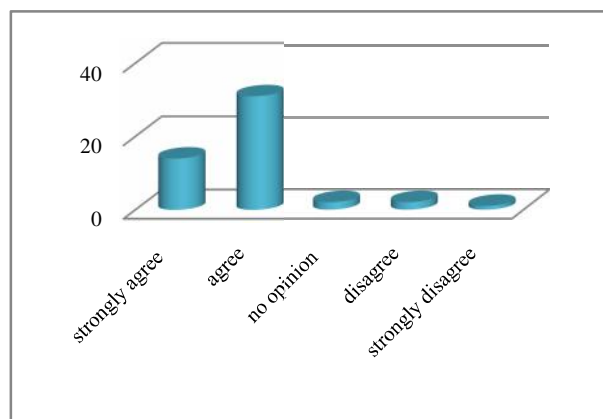
The researcher used two tools to collect the information of the study. One includes the questionnaire which was given to the Sudanese English teachers whom were selected randomly. The other tool was pre-test and post-test which were given to the 1st year undergraduate students of Sudan University of Science and Technology. The researcher chooses hundred students as the sample. They were divided into control group which is given test after treatment by learning the principle of cohesive devices in the second language. The other group was an experimental group encountered difficulties such as recognizing sentences. But the control group has performed better than the experimental group. The researcher used the descriptive methods and questionnaire as a tool in the collection of relevant data and information in purposing this study – population of this study is drawn from Sudan University of Science and Technology, college of languages, first year students of English language which is composed from (100) students. They have divided equally into two groups as such: control group and experimental group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher used both the questionnaire and test as tools in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed two tests (pre-test and post-test) to identify the problems encountered by first year students in using cohesive devices in writing skills so as to come up with solutions to solve problems that encountered them. The tables below are going to illustrate what has been stated earlier.

Table No1 The students' abilities have positive affect in the writing skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	14	28.0%
Agree	31	62.0%
No opinion	2	4.0%
Disagree	2	4.0%
Strongly disagree	1	2.0%
Total	50	100.0%



From the table and figure above that the distribution of the sample by the statement as follows strongly agree by (28%) agree by (62%) no opinion by (4%) disagree by (4%) Strongly Disagree by (2%).The calculation of the strongly agree and agree show high percentage (90%).

Accordingly, this justifies that those students do not need to be trained in terms of writing skills.

Table No 2Hand writing task inside the class affects positively the students writing skill

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	16	32.0%
Agree	25	50.0%
No opinion	5	10.0%
Disagree	4	8.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	50	100.0%

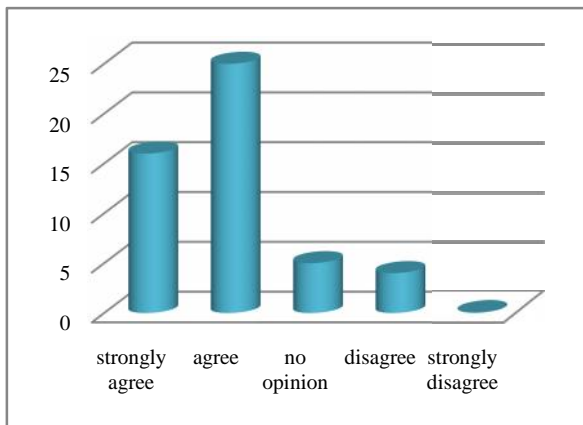


Figure 2 Hand writing task inside the classroom affects positively the students writing skills.

From the table and figure above that the distribution of the sample by the statement as follows strongly agree by (32%) agree by (50%) no opinion by (10%) disagree by (8% Strongly Disagree by (0.0%). The calculation of the strongly agree and agree show high percentage (82%).

Accordingly, this justifies that those students need to be trained in terms of writing skills.

Table No.3 Methods aims and evaluating procedures followed by English teachers affect the student’s communicative competence.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	23	46.0%
Agree	21	42.0%
No opinion	4	8.0%
Disagree	2	4.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	50	100.0%

From the table and figure above that the distribution of the sample by the statement as follows strongly agree by (46%) agree by (42%) no opinion by (8%) disagree by (4%) Strongly Disagree by (0.0%). The calculation of the strongly agree and agree show high percentage (88%).

Accordingly, this justifies that those students need to be trained in terms of writing skills.

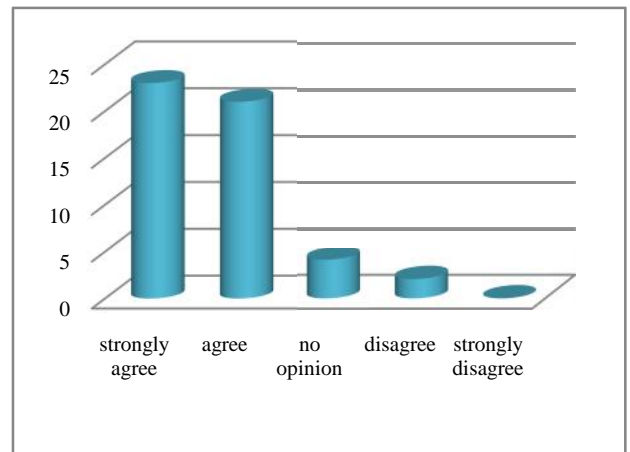


Figure No.3 Methods, aims and evaluating procedures followed by English teachers affect the students writing competence.

Table No.4 The nature of English language has decaling of standard among the students in their writing skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	9	18.0%
Agree	27	54.0%
No opinion	8	16.0%
Disagree	6	12.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	50	100.0%

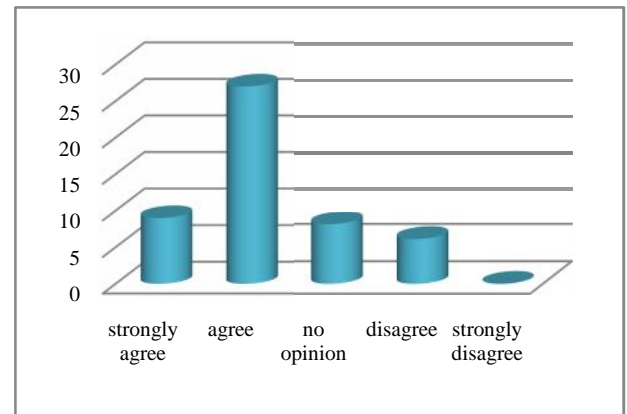


Figure No. 4 The nature of English language has led to decline in the standard of writing skills among the students.

From the table and figure above that the distribution of the sample by the statement as follows strongly agree by (18%) agree by (54%) no opinion by (16%) disagree by (12%) Strongly Disagree by (0.0%). The calculation of the strongly agree and agree show high percentage (72%).

Accordingly, this justifies that those students need to be trained in terms of writing skills.

The data collected was analyzed in relation to the study hypothesis. The data was collected by questionnaire which had given to teachers of English showed that there is lack of effectiveness in using cohesive devices in English writing skills. Also analyzing the data collected from the two tests which had been given to learners of English exclusively, first year students at SUST showed that there is lack of effectiveness in using cohesive devices in English writing skills such as cohesive and coherent of sentences.

Table No 5

No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi- Square	df	Sig	Scale
1	The students' abilities have positive affect in the writing skills.	4.10	0.814	66.600	4	0.00	agree
2	Hand writing task inside the class affects positively the students' writing skills.	4.06	0.867	23.760	3	0.00	agree
3	Methods, aims and evaluating procedures followed by English teachers affect the students. communicative competence.	4.30	0.789	29.200	3	0.00	agree
4	The nature of English language has led to decline in the standard of writing skills among the students.	3.78	0.887	22.800	3	0.00	agree

Table No6 Test

No	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	21	17.5
2	17	16.5
3	17	15
4	17	14.5
5	16.5	14.5
6	16	14.5
7	16	14
8	15.5	14
9	15	14
10	15	14
11	15	14
12	11	14
13	14	13.5
14	14	13.5
15	13	13.5
16	13	13
17	12	13
18	11	13
19	11	13
20	11	13
21	10.5	13
22	10.5	13
23	10	13
24	10	13
25	10	12
26	9	12
27	8	12
28	8	12
29	12	12
30	7	12
31	8	12
32	8	12
33	7.5	12
4	7	11
35	7	11
36	7	11
37	7	11
38	7	11
39	6	10.5
40	6	10
41	6	10
42	6	10
43	5.5	7.5
44	5.5	9
45	5	8
46	5	8
47	5	7.5
48	4	7.5
49	3	7
50	3	8.5

Table No7 Paired Samples Test

Pair	No	Mean	Std. deviation	T test	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre-test	50	10.9	4.38	-5.713	49	0.00
Post-test	50	12.01	2.38	-	-	-

The marks obtained from the pre- test and the post- test for all participants were analyzed and compared statistically by using T-test. The analysis showed that the p-value (0.00) of T-test is

less than significant level (0.05) that means there is statistical difference between pre and post-test.

The researcher used both the questionnaire and test as tools in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed two tests (pre-test and post-test) to identify the problems encountered by first year students in using cohesive devices in writing tests so as to propose ways of overcoming these problems. The marks obtained from experimental group and control group in post-test were compared, the analysis emphasized that there is statistical difference between experimental and control group in post-test.

Note from the table above is that the T-test (-5.713) significant value (0.00) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there are statistically significant differences in the degrees of students in pre-test and post-test.

REPORT DISCUSSION

After comparing and analyzing the sub-hypotheses with the main hypothesis. The researcher has arrived at the fact that the total average of the sub-hypotheses is about (86.2%) which implies that the main hypothesis is achieved. The significant differences between the pre- and post-tests indicate that there is slightly difference between the degrees. Therefore, this indicates that Sudanese students at the first year students at Sudan University of Science and Technology face difficulties in writing coherent sentences.

References

1. Grice, H. P. 1975. Logic and conversation. In: Cole, P. & Morgan, J. L. (Eds.), Syntax and semantics 3: Speech acts.
2. New York Halliday, M. A. K. & R. Hasan. (1976). Cohesion in English. London:US-China Education Review, ISSN1548-6613, USA Jul. 2007, Volume 4, No.7(Serial No.32)
3. Salmani Nodoushan, M. A. (2007b). Thinking on the right path. *Training Journal* May 2007, 37-40.
4. Searle, J. R. (1969). Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Xin-hong . (2007). Application of English cohesion theory in the teaching of writing to Chinese graduate students. *US-China Education Review*, 4,31-37.