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## INFORMATION

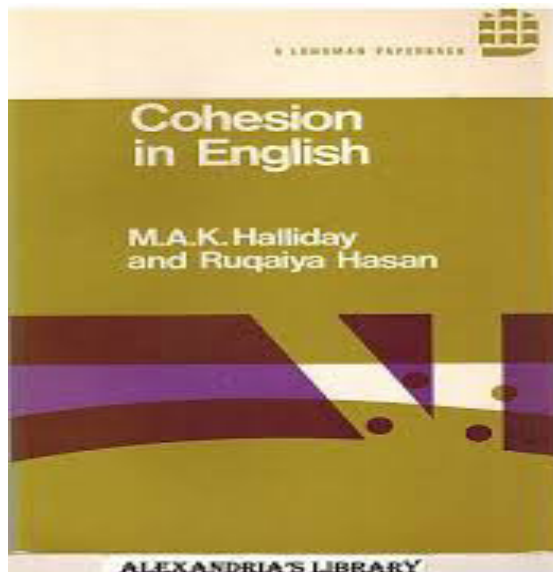
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### COHESION IN ENGLISH

M.A.K. Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan  
Longman Group Limited London, 1976

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#### 1. Introduction

The book under review is about cohesion in English which had been outlined by M.A.K. Halliday in his writings on stylistics, and the concept was developed by Ruqaiya Hasan in her University of Edinburgh doctoral thesis. The book was first named as *Grammatical Cohesion in Spoken and Written English, Part I* with earlier chapters by Ruqaiya Hasan, Communication Research Center (University College London) and Longmans, Green & Co, Programme in

Linguistics and English Teaching: Papers, No.7, 1968 which consisted of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in their original form. Then the later chapters were jointly written by both Ruqaiya Hasan and M.A.K. Halliday, and were prepared for publication in the follow-up series (School Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching: Papers Series II). Nevertheless, they came to a decision that the earlier chapters would be revised and the two halves be published as a book. The revision was undertaken by M.A.K. Halliday, who also added the last two chapters.

*Cohesion in English* is 340 pages long in eight chapters. The first chapter introduces the concept of cohesion. Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

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describe five major sorts of cohesion, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The final chapters – chapters 7 & 8 – refer to the meaning of cohesion and the method for the analysis of cohesion in a text. An overview of the eight chapters in this book is provided hereafter.

## 2. A journey of the book

Chapter 1, *Introduction*, discusses in details the properties of cohesion which include the terms relating to cohesion, e.g. the definition of text, texture, ties and cohesion, the relationship between cohesion and linguistic structure and context. The chapter highlights the definition of the text which is a unit of language in use, not defined as a grammatical unit and by its size. In addition, a text is envisaged to be some kind of super-sentence, a grammatical unit that is larger than a sentence. Therefore, cohesive relations are not concerned with structure. They may be found just as well within a sentence. The reason why they attract less attention within a sentence is because of the cohesive strength of grammatical structure. The idea is illustrated in the following example: *If you happen to meet the admiral, don't tell him his ship's gone down*. In this example, *him* and *his* in the second half have to be decoded by reference to the admiral just as they would have had to be if there had been a sentence boundary in between. It can be concluded that relations of meaning exist within the text and the two elements, the presupposing and presupposed, are at least potentially integrated into a text to produce cohesion relations.

Chapter 2, *Reference*, is interesting to read when the authors underline the differences between endophoric and exophoric reference. For the former, the referent is not in the immediate context but is assumed by the speaker/writer to be part of a shared world with knowledge or experience. In the meantime, exophoric reference refers

to the occurrence of pronouns when a word or phrase refers to something outside the discourse, and the use of exophoric reference requires some shared knowledge between two speakers or between writer and reader(s). Moreover, the chapter refers to situational reference to exophora or exophoric reference and textual reference to endophora or endophoric reference respectively. Therefore, context plays a key role in making sense of the text. What we call context-bound (context-dependence) depends on exophoric reference and less context-bound (free of the context). The chapter also introduces some categories of reference consisting of personal, demonstrative, and comparative. All these types of reference are illustrated in details in (pp. 38, 39). Notably, the chapter lists some particular kinds of personal reference which does not refer to a single thing or subject but a fact (p. 52), an instance of text reference and a process, an instance of extended reference. The reference is defined to be exophoric which is interpreted by the context of situation or may be cataphoric, linking up with what follows. Regarding demonstrative references, their expressions occur as adjuncts, typically at the beginning of a clause, which are known as discourse adjuncts. With regard to comparative reference, what intrigues me is a clear classification consisting of general (deictic) comparison and particular (non-deictic) comparison. Basing on these distinctions, language users would be able to make use of appropriate comparative references to express identity, similarity, difference, numerative or epithet. The authors suggest that the classifications of reference and reference items in the language are based on the criterion of reference potential without regard to the endophoric/exophoric distinction and their place in the linguistic system has to be dependent on the generalized concept of reference not on the particular concrete form

that it takes incorporated into the text.

The beginning of chapter 3, *Substitution* makes a clear distinction between substitution that is a relation on semantic level and reference, a relation on lexico-grammatical level. Another difference between substitution and reference is the former has the same structural function whereas the latter has the grammatical function that may be slightly different from that of its referent. The last part of the chapter describes several particular types of substitution such as nominal, verbal and clausal. In terms of nominal substitution, pronouns such as *one* or *ones* are used as substitute which presupposes some noun that is to function as Head in the nominal group and is always accompanied by some modifying element which functions as defining in the particular context. In this chapter, the authors make it easy to figure out the forms of *one* or *ones* in which *one* is attached as Head, used with definite and indefinite articles. Looking at these classifications, readers would be able to master the rules of using *one* or *ones*. Besides, the chapter adds one more use of *one*, which is used as a cardinal number, indefinite article and pronoun rather than substitution. In addition to *one/ones being, do the same* and *be the same* are used to substitute either a noun or an adjective. Apart from nominal substitution, *do* is used as verbal substitution. To clarify, the authors show several similarities between nominal substitute and verbal substitute in which they are parallel in the structure. That is to say the thing in nominal group is a person, creature, object, institution or abstraction of some kind whereas in the verbal group it is typically an action, event or relation. Another interesting point I have found out from reading the chapter is the unambiguous definition of elliptical and substitute forms with substitution by *zero* and with the use of *do* respectively. In addition, the authors point out the conditions of use of the verbal substitute where it is used more in speech than in writing and in British than

American English. To illustrate, examples are given in the following sentences (1) *I've been very remiss about this - I think we all have been, at times.* (2) *Paula looks very happy. She always used to do, I remember.* Similarly, the word *do* has other uses rather than substitute, naming lexical verb *do*, general verb *do* and verbal operator *do*. The set of related words *do* can be shown in such examples as *What's John doing these days?* This question could be answered as follows (1) *John's doing a full-time job.* (2) *That'll do him a good* (3) *I'm glad he's doing something* (4) *Does he like it there?* (5) *He likes it more than I would ever do.* These instances contain the lexical verb *do*, the general verb, the pro-verb, the operator, and the substitute. It can be concluded that verbal substitute *do* is almost always anaphoric: it may presuppose an element within the same sentence as itself, so there is already a structural relation linking the presupposed to the presupposing clauses; but it frequently substitutes for an element in a preceding sentence, and therefore it is, like the nominal substitute, a primary source of cohesion within a text.

The last section of this chapter is about the clausal substitution. The chapter claims that the substitution “do” is not only a verbal substitute but also may extend over other elements in the clause. The verb *do* comes close to functioning as a substitute for an entire clause, which can be shown in the example *The children work very hard in the garden. They must do.* Besides, the word *so* presupposes the whole of the clause. This idea can be found in the example *Is there going to be an earthquake? - It says so.* Also, the authors list the three environments where clausal substitution occurs such as report, condition and modality, each of which takes either of the two forms, positive or negative; the positive is expressed by *so*, the negative by *not*. It can be said that the reported clause that is substituted by *so* or *not* is always declarative whatever the

mood of the presupposed clause. In the case of substitution of reported clauses, reports and facts are distinguished clearly in which the former are lexico-grammatical structures and the latter are semantic structures. The final part of the chapter describes the similarities among the types of clausal substitution where a modalized clause and a reported clause are similar in meaning while a conditional clause is semantically related both to a reported one and to modalized one. Another similarity among these three types is the property of being at one remove from (statements of) reality; they are hypothetical. To conclude, this chapter presents the three types of substitution: nominal, verbal and clausal, each of which provides book users a wide view of properties for using substitutes appropriately. In brief, substitution forms discuss a textual relation; the primary meaning is anaphoric. Besides, the use of substitution forms helps speakers or writers avoid repetition in both spoken and written texts, which creates smooth flow of utterances and texts.

In chapter 4, the author states that ellipsis and substitution are theoretically similar to each other. As presented in chapter 3, ellipsis is simply “substitution by zero” or “something left unsaid” but “understood nevertheless” (p. 142) but it is helpful to treat the two separately for practical purposes. Illustration of the point can be seen in the sentences *Hardly anyone left the country before the war* or *Joan brought some carnations, and Catherine some sweet peas*. In the chapter, the authors show the condition with the use of presupposition in which ellipsis occurs. Especially, the chapter also deals with various genres of ellipses such as nominal ellipsis, verbal ellipsis and clausal ellipsis. The first two types mentioned are ellipses related to words and phrases while the last type is related to ellipsis at clausal level. In this chapter ellipsis is considered an anaphoric relation because omission takes place within a text, which means

that when the item is omitted from the structure of the text, it can still be understood.

If chapters 2, 3, and 4 see reference, substitution and ellipsis as a means of cohesion, chapter 5, **Conjunction** reminds the readers of a very popular type of cohesion used in academic writing which is called conjunction. The authors have a thorough discussion about structural equivalents on conjunctive relations that include time sequence and adversative sequence. Examples could be viewed in *After the battle, there was a snowstorm* (p.228) and *Although he was very uncomfortable, he fell asleep* (p. 229). Notably, the chapter lists different types of conjunction according to the four categories: additive, adversative, casual, and temporal whose examples can be found in pp. 238, 239. Besides, the end of the chapter brings me a new insight into conjunction which uses some redundant language such as *now, of course, well, surely* and *after all*, and also uses intonation ranging from tone 1 (the falling) to tone 4 (falling-rising) as a function of cohesive device. It is believed that conjunctions help speakers/ writers to maintain a strong flow of communication in both ways of verbal and written communication, which plays an important role in academic and scientific contexts. In the previous four chapters, the authors have described the four main types of grammatical cohesion, namely reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Also, chapter 6, **Lexical cohesion** provides another picture of cohesive relations which is lexical cohesion, the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary with the use of the class of general nouns that are generalized into human noun, place noun and fact noun. Furthermore, general words have been viewed as REITERATION that involves the repetition of a lexical item with different kinds like synonym, near-synonym or superordinate. At the same time, the chapter deals with the most problematical part of lexical cohesion that is

achieved through occurrence of a different lexical item systematically related to the first one such as a synonym or superordinate.

The last two chapters, chapters 7 & 8, *The meaning of cohesion & The analysis of cohesion* explain the meaning of cohesion and the general principles of analysis for cohesion. Chapter 7 states that the general meaning of cohesion is embodied in the concept of text, which helps to create text that reflects three different kinds of relation in language, other than the relation of structure, that link one part of a text with another, naming relatedness of form, relatedness of reference semantic connection. Chapter 8 ends the book by discussing the general principles for analyzing cohesion. According to this chapter, the rule for the analysis of cohesion is to analyze the ties which diverge from the simple to idealized type. Examples are (1) *The last word ended in a long bleat, so like a sheep that Alice quite started.* (2) *She looked at the Queen, who seemed to have suddenly wrapped herself up in wool* (p.330). In sentence (2), *she* refers to Alice in sentence (1). This is the simplest form of presupposition, relating the sentence to that which immediately precedes it; we shall refer to this as an IMMEDIATE tie.

From my point of view, M.A.K Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan's book provides readers with deep insights into the different concepts of cohesion with various categories like reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The book also brings the readers the whole range of cohesion analysis that is considered a criterion to evaluate whether a text is cohesive or not. M.A.K. Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan's book can also be a highly recommended reading for those who are interested in the study of both Vietnamese and English cohesion from systematic functional perspective. This is because it offers an overview of cohesion in English which can be used to compare with the later study of cohesion in Vietnamese.

### 3. Contribution of the book

*Cohesion in English* by M.A.K Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan is an invaluable scholarly reference for teachers, students and researchers of linguistics, especially those who are concerned about using cohesion in both spoken and written English. Although the book was published a long time ago, the book provides the readers with a better understanding of different detailed types of cohesion in English. It is a must-read for those who want to analyze and compare the uses of cohesion in English with that in Vietnamese. In terms of visualization, the book represents key concepts which reflect various types of non-structural relations that link one part of a text with another.

*Cohesion in English* deals with an essential part of the linguistic system devices for text construction, the group of meanings that are specifically associated with relating what is being spoken or written to its semantic context. This book studies the cohesion that arises from semantic relations between sentences. Reference from one to the other, repetition of word meanings, the conjunctive force of *but, so, then* and the like are considered. Furthermore, it describes a method for examining and coding sentences, which is applied to specimen texts.

The book has also been said to show how grammatical system of reference works within and between sentences and changed linguistics. Halliday and Hasan have moved on to bigger and better descriptions of English. Cohesion allows a description of language that extends up as far as the structure of each society but is all based on the same fundamental notion of meaning being created through choice." Another example to the influence of Halliday and Hasan's *Cohesion in English* is that it incorporates distinct views in approaching discourse and may vary the classifications of text analysis.

### 3.2. Critique

*Cohesion in English* by M.A.K. Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan has been considered a great and a must-read book for teachers, students and researchers studying both spoken and written English. By text, Halliday and Hasan mean any sample of discourse whose meaning and function are apparently independent of other discourse which forms a “unified whole”. The concept of a text is intuitively powerful as the concept of a sentence—we know when a string of sentences makes a text.

### 4. Application of the book

This book is, as mentioned above, highly recommended to those who work in the field of language education and academic writing. The book has successfully covered every aspect of cohesion in English by exploring the concepts and conditions in which cohesion could be used. Every chapter of the book is useful for cohesion studies in discourse, especially Chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6. They can be invaluable scholarly references for linguistic users, researchers and classroom teachers as well.

The bulk of the book is devoted to a quite detailed description of the linguistic resources in English that can establish cohesive ties between sentences. These are relations of dependence between elements in different sentences such that the dependent term cannot be effectively interpreted except by resource to the other term. The book brings to the readers the range of corpus analysis, assisting them as they make their way into the theory of cohesion.

#### About the authors

**M.A.K. Halliday** (1925-2018) was a renowned British-born Australian linguist, teacher, and proponent of neo-Firthian theory

who viewed language basically as a social phenomenon. He was professor of linguistics and then emeritus professor in linguistics at the University of Sydney, Australia. He is well-known as the chief architect of the world-widely recognised system functional theory. He worked in various regions of language study, both theoretical and applied, and was concerned with applying the understanding of the basic principles of language to the theory and practices of education. For more detail, visit [http://www.ello.uos.de/field.php/TheoryModelMethod/MAK\\_Halliday](http://www.ello.uos.de/field.php/TheoryModelMethod/MAK_Halliday).

Born in 1931 in Pratapgarh, India, Hasan took her undergraduate degree at the University of Allahabad in English literature, education and history in 1953. Her elder brother Zawwar Hasan who was working as a journalist in Pakistan brought her and the rest of the family to Lahore in 1954. From 1954 to 1956, she was a lecturer at the Training College for Teachers of the Deaf, in Lahore, Pakistan. In 1958, she completed an MA in English literature at Government College Lahore, the University of the Punjab. From 1959 to 1960 she was a lecturer in English language and literature at Lahore’s Queen Mary College. With a British Council scholarship, Hasan went to Edinburgh where she completed a postgraduate diploma at the University of Edinburgh in applied linguistics. In 1964 she completed her PhD in linguistics, also at the University of Edinburgh. The title of her thesis was “A Linguistic Study of Contrasting Features in the Style of Two Contemporary English Prose Writers”. The authors were Angus Wilson and William Golding. She drew on Halliday’s early work, in particular, his “Categories of the Theory of Grammar” paper, which had been published in 1961.