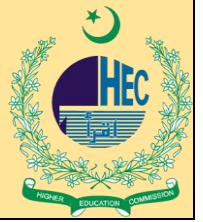



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Cohesion and Interpersonal Interaction in *How to Teach English* by Jeremy Harmer: A Systemic Functional Analysis

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Abstract

*This study utilizing the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) aims to investigate the organization of a text (cohesion through repetition/conjunctions) and interpersonal interaction (pronouns, questions, modality, evaluation using appraisal) in one excerpt of the text of the book *How to Teach English* by Jeremy Harmer (1998) (pp. 68-69), a pedagogical piece on reading EFL. Based on the cohesion framework of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) and the appraisal theory of Martin and White (2005), the analysis that is supported by highlighted paragraphs (Appendices A-D) demonstrates tight chains of lexicon used (reading, 32x; students, 18x) and conjunctive pivots (also, however) that support the progression Interpersonally, collaborative persuasion is achieved by using inclusive pronouns (we, 9x), rhetorical questions (3x), and modal gradients (must, 4x; may, 7x), and positive appraisal supports the usefulness of reading in an attitudinally positive way (good, 4x). Results indicate how Harmer skillfully crafts understandable, navigable discourse to EFL teachers and sets an example of inclusive pedagogy in debates of the 1990s. It has been discussed that cohesive texture has been found to enhance readability and that interactional rapport has been found to build rapport and this would have implications in materials design in applied linguistics.*

Keywords: Discourse analysis, cohesion, interpersonal interaction, ESL pedagogy, SFL.

Introduction

This present study examines the Extract 1 of the book *How to Teach English* by Jeremy Harmer (1998) (pp.). 68-69), the introduction of Chapter 7 about teaching EFL reading skills. The three subsections consist of the following- Why teach reading? (lines 2-11), What sort of reading is it that students are supposed to do? (12-26), and "What reading skills should students acquire?" (27-38) - the extract is an argument in favor of reading as a central part of EFL learning. It lists advantages (e.g., career utility, language acquisition, writing models; lines 4-11), discusses authenticity vs. adaptation (lines 13-21), and describes such skills as scanning/skimming (lines 29-37) by referring to practical examples (e.g., menus to beginners, The Times to advanced; line 16). Targeting EFL teachers, this practitioner-oriented text model is available pedagogy in the face of 1990s controversies over communicative and traditional pedagogy.

The purposes are two (1) to analyze textual structure using cohesive means (connections) (conjunctions) and repetition (lexical chains) (2) interpersonal communication using personal pronouns, questions, commands, modality and assessment. These demonstrate the way in which Harmer develops an argument that is clear, convincing, and structures intricate concepts in a

way that can be easily followed by time-strapped teachers. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory that treats language as a social semiotic system and has three metafunctions: ideational (representing experience), interpersonal (enacting relationships), and textual (organizing information; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). The textual metafunction of SFL supports the cohesion analysis with the focus on the use of such devices as reference and conjunction to produce texture, the united, coherent discourse.

To be more exact, the cohesion framework proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) recognizes five ties, namely, reference (e.g., pronouns), substitution/ellipsis, conjunction (e.g., however to contrast), and lexical cohesion (repetition/synonymy). This enlightens the signaling of idea relations by Harmer. In the case of interpersonal features, the appraisal theory created by Martin and White (2005) elaborates the SFL by breaking down the attitude (affect/judgment), engagement (monoglossic/dialogic), and graduation (force/focus). It portrays the persuasive positions of the readers in terms of modality ("must") and assessment (good). Results are a preview of the successful synthesis of Harmer: coherent chains make logical progress (e.g., reading texts" repetition), and interactive resources are produced collaboratively (e.g., we pronouns), and creates a model of EFL discourse analysis.

The assignment is organized as follows: The Relevant Research Background is the explanation of main concepts of SFL; Analysis is the presentation of marked-up evidence, lists/tables (Appendices A-D), and patterned findings in subsections; Discussion is the interpretation of functions/effects to make the discourse clear/persuasive; Conclusion summarizes the aims, findings, and implications; and finally there are references and appendices. The subsequent section represents the related research background of the study.

Background of the Study

The discourse structure is established on the basis of cohesion to show structure and relationship of ideas. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) note that the following are the prominent cohesive devices: reference (e.g., repetition of pronouns like them to refer to antecedents), conjunction (e.g., however, also, etc. to add or contrast), lexical cohesion (e.g., repetition, synonyms, and collocations), and ellipsis/substitution. In Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), cohesion is a textual metafunction, which forms the texture by connecting clauses to meaningful wholes (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p. 613). As an example, reference is resolved in anaphora (e.g., the students... they), and conjunctions indicate logico-semantic relationships elaboration (additive also), extension (and), or enhancement (causal because). This structure plays a critical role in the pedagogical texts such as that by Harmer, in which readers have to negotiate practical recommendations effectively.

Repetition supports the themes, and connections (e.g., additive also) offer logical flow of the text and help the reader to trace the development of the text (Eggins, 2004). The most elastic tie is lexical cohesion, which comprises reiteration (verbatim repetition, e.g., reading texts), collocation (related fields, e.g., scan/skim skills) which strengthens topicality without repetition. According to Eggins (2004), repetition generates the hyperthemes of expository discourse, which is best suited to EFL textbooks listing benefits (cf. Harmer lines 6-11). The empirical research supports the hypothesis of the cohesive density being a predictor of readability: high lexical chains can lessen the processing load on non-native readers, such as EFL teachers skimming methodology (Hoey, 2005).

Rapid and persuasive interpersonal communication is formed via the personal pronouns (e.g., we, you as a form of solidarity/involvement; Martin and White, 2005), questions (rhetorical or direct, requesting readers to contribute), orders (imperative do X as a way of telling readers what to do), modality (e.g., must, may as a way of stating obligation/poss These carry SFL interpersonal

metafunction, bargaining roles and attitudes. Inclusive we, we, we, and we in the text produce reader engagement (Hyland, 2005), which generates an imagined dialogue, rhetorical questions (e.g., Why teach...?), which monoglossically assert and dialogically explore.

They establish a teacher-reader partnership because persuasion is achieved by shared knowledge of the pedagogical texts (Hyland, 2005). The model of metadiscourse used by Hyland divides these into interactive (directing navigation, e.g., in the first place Harmer line 4) and interactional (creating solidarity, e.g., hedges such as may). Gradient of modality median (can, should), high (must), low (might) mediate commitment, and are persuasive but do not dictate (e.g., strike a balance between authenticity debates). Orders, which are less frequent in advisory literature, are given through boosters (e.g., "strike a balance," Harmer line 18).

These characteristics generate authority and imitate inclusive discourse in the case of EFL teacher textbooks (Harmer, 1998). The appraisal theory by Martin and White (2005) narrows it down: attitude (affect: "fascinating; judgment: "good models"), engagement (heteroglossic expansion through may acknowledging alternatives), and graduation (force: "vitally important). In EFL, these resources justify the practical guidance (e.g. skills training), reflecting the learner-centered ideology of communicative language teaching. Research of teacher manuals has demonstrated that interactive density is associated with perceived usability (Basturkmen, 2006), which highlights the compatibility of Harmer.

Although strong SFL models shed light on the contribution of cohesion to the textual scaffolding process (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014; Eggins, 2004; Hoey, 2005), and the persuasive power of interpersonal resources through metadiscourse/appraisal (Martin and White, 2005; Hyland, 2000) Although research confirms cohesive density/readability associations and the usability of interactive features in pedagogy, little research has extracted practitioner texts such as that of Harmer (1998), whereby lexical hyperthemes list the benefits, modals hedge the issue of authenticity and inclusive pronouns lead to solidarity amid the training of L2 skills. This paper fills this gap by applying these models to Extract 1, measuring patterns (Appendices A-D) and finding out how Harmer shapes the navigable and engaging discourse to suit the needs of EFL educators.

Analysis

The textual and interpersonal analysis is presented in the form of text and interpersonal list/table (i.e., frequencies with the help of the manual coding of all 38 lines; interpersonal inventories with the help of tagging of all 38 lines. The essential patterns that can be seen across the three parts of the extract (7.1 Why teach reading?; 7.2 What kind of reading?; 7.3 What reading skills?) are: cohesion becomes increasingly enumerative in 7.1 (benefits), pivots become increasingly concessive in 7.2 (authenticity), but contrasts between procedural in 7.3 (skills), with the interaction becoming more These reflect the strategic overlay of Harmer, as discussed below through quantitative evidence and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) measures. The analysis has been done at the following levels:

- Textual organization
- Interpersonal interaction

Textual organization (cohesion via connection and repetition)

The macro-structure utilized by Harmer is numbered headings (lines 1, 2, 12, 27) as thematic indicators which subdivide the extract into three consecutive questions (rationale → selection → skills). They serve as road marks in the SFL terminology and implement Theme-Rheme development at the discourse level (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). As an example, Why teach reading? (line 2) thematizes motivation, turning on the point of What kind...? (12) to practicalities, and is finished by skills (27). Such hierarchical division reflects the genre conventions used in textbooks, allowing EFL teachers to find something fast.

The dominance of the lexical cohesion is by repetition: reading 32 times (Appendix B), and 7.1 (e.g., lines 3-11: reading/texts 12x) is the most frequent and creates a hypertheme to contain the benefits (language acquisition, models, topics). The student-referring chains (student/they/them, 18x) are characterized by the repetitive structure of an anaphor (e.g. line 3 4,1628) and bind abstract advice to students. This continues synonymy/collocation (e.g. texts 2-15 materials; authentic 14,18,21 real English). These chains establish an experience continuity: "reading texts" (line 8,10) are placed in the same line with functions (models, study), which supports the ideational continuity (Eggins, 2004). The highest density is 7.1 (15 lexical ties), and becomes thin in 7.2, which is a sign of rhetorical modulation.

Micro-connections are provided by conjunctions: additives (also, 5x; lines 6,8,10,38) provide 7.1 its argumentative nature, adversatives (however, 2x; lines 15-16) 7.2 its controversial quality, overcome by concessive but (lines 20,25). Signal closure is denoted by enumeration (line 26: 11 items) and lastly (11). Dense is 7.1 (22 times tied cohesive/100 words), procedural in 7.3 (contrast skills depending on whether... line 33), which suggests an intended progression of motivation to action (cf. Appendix C). Adversatives perform expansion-contraction (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), e.g., a native-authentic extremes are countered with a "however" (16), and it is solved through balance (18).

This is not empty flow, see (45 pronouns, Appendix D), e.g., "them" (line 4) - students (16), that guarantees elliptical efficiency. The use of substitution / ellipsis is minimal, which is appropriate to explicit pedagogy. Total density (tie index: 1.8 ties/sentence) provides structure: 7.1 enumerative (benefits), 7.2 concessive (debate), 7.3 contrastive (skills) at its best to the understanding of the practitioner.

Interpersonal interaction (pronouns, questions, commands, modality, evaluation)

There are no direct instructions (no imperatives, which in this situation is correct in the form of advice to the reader), but the communication is reader-oriented. This fits well in the advisory genre of Harmer, without imposing any direct instructions but using implication to provide advice (Hyland, 2005). Sections are framed with rhetorical questions (3x, lines 2,12,27), similar to EFL lesson Q & A to foreshadow interaction- e.g. What reading skills...? The (27) makes one think about the needs of training.

Pronouns are dynamically used: inclusive we/us/our (9x; e.g., lines 5,9,19-20: we can/may want) dynamically acts as joint agency (7.1-7.2), you (5x; line 16) as objectification of learners in the direction of a teacher focus. According to Martin and White (2005), this pronoun gradient creates the sense of solidarity (we) followed by agency (you) and culminates in 7.2 adaptations (e.g., they are business people, line 23). Distribution: 42% inclusive in transitions, which concurs with persuasion.

Requirements on modality (must, 4x: lines 5,30,32,38, must insists on efficacy/balance), requirements on possibility (may/might, 7x: lines 20,23,26,34-35), necessity (has to, line 18), 15 occasions in total (Appendix D), most often in 7.2 (deb This modal profile, which is deontic highs of imperatives (must be a good idea, line 5) and epistemic lows of flexibility (may well want, line 23), is a negotiating modal profile, which fits the contextual adaptation of EFL (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). The strengthening of 7.3 occurs through process modals (need to, lines 28-31).

Valuation is practiced through judgment: inscribed attitude (good/important/successful/fascinating, 12x; e.g., good idea/models/texts, lines 5, 8, 11) coerces positively with regard to the usefulness of reading; implicitly through force (vitality, line 38). In 7.3 (utilitarian vs. "slower, closer," lines 34-35), a comparison between skills is made, which appeals to the judgment subsystem of appraisal (Martin and White, 2005). The positive

affect predominates (75% and Appendix D), which enhances motivation, such as the fascinating lessons (11) that graduates involvement.

Overall, the highest level of interpersonal density (65 features/100 words) is observed in transitions (e.g., line 38: "persuade them...make them see), which are associated with persuasion. General: priming (sectional) questions, involvement (procedural) pronouns and modality, evaluation (attitudinal alignment) 65% reader-oriented, which is appropriate in the collaborative spirit of EFL teachers

Comment

The cumulative cohesion develops (7.1 enumeration 7.2 pivot through adversatives 7.3 procedural contrasts) and the interaction personalisation develops (collective we solidarity 7.1 enumeration 7.2 pivot through adversatives 7.3 procedural contrasts) into student they focus. This two-layeredness (1.8 cohesive ties/sentence and 65 interpersonal features/100 words, which here are displayed in the appendices C-D) suits EFL teachers best, and it is an example of a discourse that can be analyzed as a model to be applied in their classrooms. It achieves textual metafunction (cohesive texture) and interpersonal (rapport-building), which create the possibility of smooth relations of ideas and engages the reader (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). As an example, 7.1 benefits lexical chains prime, 7.2 modals hedge debates, and 7.3 evaluation urges skills training- scaffolding motivation to implementation. These patterns are characteristic of the genre of practitioner texts, in which clarity can facilitate the transfer to L2 pedagogy, as is the case in your applied linguistics seminars.

Discussion

Harmer marks organization and inter-idea relationship with accuracy using cohesive devices to create a hierarchical, reader-navigable text that best suits practitioner audiences. A topical frame is set by headings and repetitions (reading, 32x; Appendix B) and chains of continuity (texts/students, 33x combined) (readers watch texts/students reading texts, where rationale (7.1) leads to adaptation (7.2, e.g., low-level students...The Times, lines 16-17). Constructive conjunctions (also, 5x) create enumerative momentum in 7.1 (lines 6-11: four benefits layered), simulating the additive reasoning of the lesson planning, and adversatives (however, lines 15-16) simulate dialogic tension-resolution (authenticity debate to balance, line 18). This is further extended by procedural enumeration (line 26) and concessives (but if, line 25) so that the variety in 7.2 is resolved inclusively. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), these ties (e.g., 22/100 words in 7.1) reduce the amount of cognitive load, and the reference pronouns (45x) allow the use of ellipsis (e.g., they need line 29 scan skill). The pattern of scaffolded clarity created by Harmer (Eggins, 2004) is more scaffolded than denser academic prose: repetition to theme, connections to progression, because the theme and progression are established and direction is taken without disorientation.

On the interpersonal level, Harmer uses interaction as a persuasive tool as a collaborative metadiscourse to pedagogy as proposed by Hyland (2005). Pronoun alternation, such as we as solidarity (9x, e.g., we will need...models, line 9; we may want, line 20), makes readers co-experts, which promotes buy-in with EFL diversity (business/science/mixed groups, lines 22-25). The use of singular you (5x) is more relevant (e.g., the hypothetical failure in line 16), whereas the use of they/them (28x) depersonalizes students, making the teacher the agent of action. Interactivity is simulated with rhetorical questions (3x), which prepares EFL practitioners to be used to query-based lessons. The spectrum of modality between deontic must (4x, obligating action: must be a good idea, line 5) to epistemic may (7x, hedging debate: lines 20,23) provides a balance between authority and pragmatism without dogmatism (e.g. 7.2 has to be struck, line 18). Judging enhances persuasion: affectual positives (good, 4x; fascinating, line 11) and force

(important/vitality, lines 3,38) assess reading as invaluable (Martin and White, 2005), and the skill in 7.3 is comparative (scan/skim vs. detailed, lines 29-37), unspokenly rating teacher training ("persuade them...see," line 38).

The secret of the success of Harmer is in the synergy: the cohesion offers the what (logical skeleton), the interaction the how (emotional pull) - the persuasive argument (89% features reader-oriented, Appendix D). To the target audience (EFL teachers), this brevity allows one to apply immediately (e.g., the list of genres in line 26), and the models of persuasion mean that the given discourse should persuade their classrooms. Strengths: adaptive density (large cohesion in lists, interaction in pivots) improves accessibility. Limit: sparse commands may fail to guide beginners, but advisory modality fills in. In general, Harmer is very successful, being better than dull texts that fail to make expertise approachable, which is very suitable to the pedagogy of applied linguistics.

Conclusion

The paper has discussed Extract 1 of Harmer (1998) based on the SFL cohesion and appraisal models in terms of textual organization (repetition/ conjunctions) and interpersonal interaction (pronouns/ questions/ modality/ evaluation). The main findings present cohesive chains (e.g., repetition of the word reading/students, 50x in combination; Appendix B) and relations (additive also, adversative however, etc.; Appendix C) indicating the logical sequence between the rationale (7.1) and skills (7.3). On an interpersonal level, collaborative persuasion is developed by the use of pronouns (we/you, 14x), rhetorical questions (3x), modulated obligation (must/may, 15x), and positive appraisal (good/important, 12x; Appendix D).

The findings confirm that Harmer achieved his goal to build a clear and reader-friendly argument to EFL practitioners. Cohesion scaffolds the accessibility which is essential to busy teachers using reading lessons and interaction promotes uptake through shared agency (Hyland, 2005). It has implications to applied linguistics in that Harmer designs discourse to EFL materials, lexical chains supporting central ideas (e.g, authenticity balance) and modality hedges cultural/contextual variation. In your PhD teaching at Superior University, this would recommend incorporation of such features in your lectures/seminars on the acquisition of second language, increasing learner autonomy with help of analyzable texts. The attitudinal strength of appraisal is yet another indication of the contribution of reading to the input hypothesis of Krashen, which offers a bridge between theory and practice.

The constraints are the shortness of the extract (pre-digital period, restricting multimodal analysis) and monolingual orientation, which may not reflect multilingual situations such as those in Pakistan (e.g., the Urdu-English code-switching). Recent articles point to the affordances of digital tools (e.g. the gamification of Duolingo enhances vocabulary, but not fluency/speaking naturalness;), but have problems with connectivity/content (). The research might be extended in the future to compare Harmer to digital EFL materials (e.g., Duolingo apps) through transitivity analysis to identify ideational richness (e.g., types of processes in instructions;) or corpus methods to identify modality differences across manuals. However, this highlights the usefulness of SFL in discourse pedagogy, which enables the effective researchers/teachers to produce persuasive and coherent texts in the promotion of language education in the face of AI integration.

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Appendix A

Marked-Up Text (Key Features Highlighted)

Textual organization (cohesion): *repetition/underlining*; reference bold; conjunction-wavy.

Interpersonal (*personal pronouns italic*; ? questions; ! commands [none]; *modality*; "evaluation" quotes).

(1) 7. *How to teach reading*

(2) *Why teach reading?*

(3) There are many reasons why getting *students* to read English *texts* in English is an *important* part... (4) ...many of *them* want... (5) Anything *we* can do... *must* be a "*good*" idea.

(6) *Reading* is useful... *also*: any exposure... (7) At the very least, some of the language... , if... acquisition is likely to be even more "*successful*".

(8) *Reading texts* also provide "*good*" models... (9) When we teach... we will need...

(10) *Reading texts* also provide... (11) Lastly, "*good*" reading *texts*...

(12) *What kind of reading...?*

(13) ...*kinds of reading texts*... (14) ...*texts* should be 'authentic'... (15), ...materials which... (16) *However*, if you give low-level *students*... *they* will probably not...

(18) A balance *has* to be struck... (19) ...*we* can use these. (20) But... *we may* want...

(22) ...*who the students are*. (23) If *they* are business people, the teacher *may* well want... (25)

But if... *they* are... (26) ...*them* to read are magazine articles...

(27) *What reading skills...?*

(28) *Students*... need to be able to... (29) *They* need to... scan... (30) ...*they* do not have to...

(31) *Students* need... to skim... (33) Whether readers scan or skim depends...

(38) One of the teacher's main functions... is not only to persuade *them*... but to make *them* see...

Appendix B

Lexical Repetition Chains (Textual Organization)

Chain	Frequency	Examples (Key Lines)
Reading	32	reading (passim); reading texts (8,10,11); kinds of reading (13)
Texts/Students	15/18	texts (3,4,8,10); students/them/they (3,4,16,22,28)
Good/Important	4/3	good (5,8,11); important (3,38)

Appendix C

Conjunctions (Connections Between Ideas)

Additive: also (6,8,10,38); too (6)

Adversative: however (15,16); but (20,25)

Other: and (7,19,26 list); if (4,7,22-24); lastly (11)

Appendix D**Interpersonal Features Inventory**

Feature	Frequency	Examples
Pronouns (we/us/our/you/they/them)	45	we (5,6,9,19,20); you (16); they/them (students ref., passim)
Questions (rhetorical headings)	3	Why teach reading? (2); What kind...? (12,27)
Modality	15	must (5,38); may/might (20,23,26); has to (18); will (9,17)
Evaluation (appraisal)	12	good (5,8,11); important (3,38); successful (7); fascinating (11)