Exploring Cohesive Devices in Essay Writing of Third Year Students of English at Mohamed Lamine Debaghine , Setif 2 University

استكشاف روابط الاتساق في مقالات طلبة السنة الثالثة انجليزية بجامعة محمد دباغين

سطيف 2

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Abstract:

 This study aims at exploring cohesive devices in third year EFL students' essays at Setif 2 University. A sample of 40 essays of third year students was taken for a corpus analysis. Findings revealed that lexical cohesion was the most employed one, followed by reference. Encountered errors in using cohesive devices caused a lack of cohesion in their writings. The most common errors were categorized into overuse of repetition of the same words, misuse of conjunctions, and inappropriate collocations. Pedagogical implications were provided for more insights about cohesion to be applied in writing classes.

Keywords: Cohesive devices, Students' essays, lexical cohesion, writing classes, cohesion

مُلَخَّصُ البَحْثِ

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف أدوات الاتساق في كتابة المقالات الخاصة بطلبة السنة الثالثة انجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية في جامعة سطيف 2. تعمدت هذه الدراسة اخذ 40 مقالا كعينة من طلبة السنة الثالثة بغية القيام بدراسة تحليلية. كشفت النتائج أن التماسك المعجمي كان الأكثر استخدامًا، يليه المراجع. إن الأخطاء المرتكبة عند استخدام أدوات الاتساق أدى إلى غياب الاتساق في مقالاتهم. من بين الأخطاء الشائعة: التكرار غير المرغوب فيه فيما يخص بعض الكلمات، والتوظيف السيئ لأدوات الربط في غير موضعها المناسب، والعبارات الركيكة غير الملائمة .كما تم تقديم بعض المقترحات البيداغوجية لمزيد من الأفكار حول الاتساق ليتم تطبيقها في فصول التعبير الكتابي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أدوات الاتساق، مقالات الطلبة، اتساق المعنى، فصول التعبير الكتابي، الاتساق.

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Introduction

Writing is a fundamental skill for EFL learners as it is required for their academic purposes. This includes essay writing, writing dissertations, and research papers. Although they have learnt English for years, learners still confront different writing problems such as: punctuation, coherence, and cohesion. The problems seem to be salient when it comes to cohesion and coherence, particularly cohesion in students essay writing, or once again, cohesive devices use.

1.Background, Statement of the Problem, and Objectives of the Study

Based on Halidday and Hasan framework (1976), Cohesion is achieved through the appropriate use of the cohesive devices, which are: Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis, Conjunctions, and lexical relationships. Among the problems students struggle in their writing, is the use of cohesive devices in essay writing, since writing seems to be a complex productive task, as Nunan (1989)claimed, "*It is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language*" (p.12). In addition, Richard and Renandya (2002) claimed:" there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. The difficulties lie not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these notions into legible texts". (p303).The two notions of coherence and cohesion appear together to make a good writing as Halliday and Hassan (1976,1989) stated that cohesion and coherence are two fundamental textual features in any piece of writing and the writing genres in general. Tansken (2006) stated that learning to include cohesion is extremely important; therefore the study of cohesion is required in both, the written documents and in speeches. Writing is very crucial for any language learning and because of the problems that are faced in essay writing. This study intends to highlight the notion of textual cohesion among the teaching and the learning environment. From the preliminary interviews with teachers of the written expression and academic writing module at the English department, it was revealed that students fail to use cohesive devices appropriately; therefore, our main concern in the present investigation is to draw a clear picture about students' writing of essays and how cohesive ties are used.

Research Questions

1. How are cohesive devices used in the students essay writing?
2. What are the problems faced in using cohesive devices among their writing?

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2. Review of Related Literature
2.1 Essay Writing
It is a combination of connected paragraphs that develop the main idea (Ruetten & Smalley, 1994). They could be three or more paragraphs depending on the subject or the topic of the essay. All the types of essays comprise three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. An essay could be descriptive, narrative, and argumentative (Hyland, 2002).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined cohesion as: "*the set of possibilities that exist in the language for making text hang together" (p. 18*). Cohesion appears only when the interpretation of a set of features being dependently related to one another Hinkel (2003) conceptualized cohesion as: "*the connectivity of ideas in discourse and sentences to one another in text, thus creating the flow of information in a unified way" (p.279*). Halliday and Hasan (1989) explain further that cohesion is a set of elements that create meaningful relationships other than the grammatical structure. This means that both the grammatical organization of sentences and the meaningful relationships are required for the readers understanding and interpretations of a text, using cohesive devices that can be categorized into five groups: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. These categories are thoroughly explained below.

2.2. Coherence
Lee (2002) defines coherence as the relationships between different ideas in a specific text, which are linked in order to create meaningful discourse. Castro (2004) defines coherence as the connection or the link in a specific text, linking ideas and keeping the flow of thoughts meaningful and clear for audience (the reader). Coherence involves the readers understanding of a specific text (OReilly & McNamara, 2007).

2.3. Halliday and Hassan Classification of Cohesive Devices (1976)
Cohesive devices include lexical cohesion, reference, substitution, Ellipsis and conjunction Boardman and Freedenberg (2002) claimed: *"There are many ways to help give paragraph cohesion……..coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, prepositions, and transitions. Transitions are a very common type of linking word. They are words or phrases that help to connect sentences to one another". (*p36). Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify these cohesive devices into two fundamental types which are: grammatical and lexical cohesion.

Table 1
Detailed Description of Types of Cohesive Devices

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Reference		
RP Pronominals	he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, they, them, their, theirs	
RD Demonstratives	this/these, that/those, here, there	
RA Definite article	the	
RC Comparatives	same, identical, similar(ly), such, different, other, else, additional	
Substitution		
SN Nominal	one/ones, the same, so	
SV Verbal	do, be, have, do the same, do so, be so	
SC Clausal	so, not	
Ellipsis		
EN Nominal	quite a few (quite a few people)	
EV Verbal	Why should I? (Why should I recognize her?)	
EC Clausal	Yes. (Yes, I have a photograph of this girl.)	
Conjunction		
CA Additive	and, nor, or, or else, furthermore, in addition alternatively, that is, thus, likewise, in other words,	
CD Adversative	yet, though, only, but, however, on the other hand, instead, on the contrary, rather, at least, either case,	
CC Causal	so, then, therefore, consequently, with this in mind for , because, it follows, arising out of this, to this end, under the circumstances,	
CT Temporal	then, next, just then, before that, in the end, first/originally/ formerly, at once, soon, next time, meanwhile, until then, up to now, from now on	
CO Continuative	now, of course, well, anyway,	
Lexical Cohesion		
LA Repetition	repetition of the same word	
LY Synonym	solitude(being alone), pain(hurts)	
LU Superordinate/General	floating out(wafting out), exit(door	

2.3.1. Grammatical Cohesion
As it is explained in illustrated in table 01, grammatical cohesion includes reference, substitution, Ellipsis and conjunction.
2.3.1.1. Reference
Reference is achieved only when one item in a text refers to another element which can be easily interpreted and inferred by the audience (the reader).reference can be divided into three subtypes: pronominal, demonstratives, and comparatives.
2.3.1.2. Substitution
Substitution is replacing one term by another in a text. Substitution has three categories, which are: nominal, verbal, and clausal.
2.3.1.3. Ellipsis
Ellipsis, substitution by zero, refers to the omission of an item, which is understood from the preceding context (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Ellipsis

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can be divided into three subtypes, which are: nominal, clausal, and verbal. Examples on each type of ellipsis are provided in table1.

2.3.1.4. Conjunction

Conjunction refers to one of the cohesive devices, which links clauses. Halliday and Hasan (1976) point that conjunctions: *express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse", p226.* Conjunctive relations are also called conjunctive ties. They include also coordinating conjunctions and Conjunctive or prepositional phrases. Conjunctions can be divided into four categories: additive, adversative, causal, and temporal. Each one of the preceding categories is divided into subcategories which are used for different functions.

2.3.2. Lexical Cohesion

According to Flowerdew and Mahlberg (2009)**,** lexical cohesion has a relation with the meaning in a specific text in which the lexical features link and connect each other and other cohesive devices to maintain the text or the continuity of it. Lexical cohesion, as McCarthy (1991) stated, involves the repetition of a noun or phrase or the use of a noun phrase that is related to the preceding noun phrase. Nunan (1993) explains lexical cohesion claiming :*"Lexical cohesion involves the background knowledge of the reader or listener .... Collocation patterns, for example, will only perceive by someone who knows something about the subject at hand"* **(***p3).* Lexical cohesion has a strong connection with vocabulary choice .It can be divided into two types, which are reiteration and collocation.

2.3.2.1. Reiteration

Reiteration means either restating an item in a later part of the discourse by direct repetition or reasserting its meaning by exploiting lexical relations (McCarthy, 1991). Reiteration involves the use of repetition, synonym (including near- synonym and antonym) super-ordinate/hyponymy and general nouns.

2.3.2.2. Collocation

Collocation refers to the restrictions on how words can be used together. Nunan (1993) confirms this view when he says that:" *Collocational patterns will only be perceived by someone who knows something about the subject at hand*."(p30). Halliday and Hasan (1976) stated that collocation pertains to lexical items that are likely to be found in the same environment. Collocation is a set of lexical items, which are associated within a text .For example the weather: hot, cold, warm, sunny, cloudy, and rainy. These items belong to the same lexical environment „"weather"". Collocation encompasses opposites, synonyms, near synonyms, pairs of words from the

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same ordered series (Monday, Tuesday…), as well as pairs drawn from unordered lexical sets (dollar/cent, north/south, hyponyms).

2.4. Views and Studies Related to Cohesive Devices in EFL Essay Writing

According to Castro (2004); Chen (2008), Crewe (1990), Fan et al (2006); Kanno (1989); Sadighi (2012) and other researchers, the common problems of EFL essay writing concerning the use of cohesive devices are overuse ,underuse ,and misuse of conjunction. The other type of errors concerning the use of cohesive devices is lexical cohesive devices misuse. According to them, the limited choice of lexical items, misuse of collocation, and the unrelated or redundant reiteration were noticed in the previous studies.

Based on the application of Halliday and Hasan book (1976), Johnson (1992) and Zhang (2000) found that there is no difference in the use of cohesive devices in a good and weak writing. Others showed that highly rated essays are different from low rated ones in the use of cohesive devices. He proved that highly scored compositions contain more cohesion than low scored ones (Jafarpur, 1991). Furthermore, it is commonly believed that highly scored essays include more lexical collocations than do low scored ones. They also found that lexical cohesion is the most commonly used category in both good and weak essays followed by conjunction and reference (Johns, 1980; Zhang, 2000).

Some of cohesive devices were used wrongly or insufficiently, and this may be associated to the insufficient direct exposure to the English and the misuse of these affected or even broke the coherence of the text (Olateju, 2006; Khalil, 1989; Wikborg, 1990). Irwin (1982) proved how experienced readers use cohesion in text and showed that the increase in the number of cohesive devices, in turn, can improve readers‟ comprehension. That is to say, reading books enhances cohesion in students‟ writing. These studies emphasized that cohesion is an important underlying notion of any type of writing and that L1 and L2 English learners have an extreme difficulty in using cohesive devices. Novice writers will use more cohesive devices to produce a superficially logic text, but actually there may be no logicality in their writing. This means logicality or the writing quality may have nothing to do with the excessive use of cohesive devices.

Lee (2002) investigated how cohesive devices were used in the compositions of 107 Chinese undergraduates, and found that lexical devices were used most frequently; however, conjunctions and reference devices were used less. Some cohesive devices included ambiguity in reference, overuse and misuse of conjunctions, and limited use of lexical cohesion. In the same

vein, Olateju (2006) investigated written texts, by examining the students at different writing sessions, and found that students were not competent in using cohesive devices.

3. Research Design

This study is exploratory in nature. It explores the use of cohesive devices in third year EFL students' essay writing at Mohamed Lamine Dabagine Setif 2 University. The population of the current study has been chosen for two logical reasons. The first reason is that third year EFL students are graduate students, and they have studied English for over than 10 years, which means they are supposed to be good at writing essays. The second reason is that they have already studied cohesion and cohesive devices in essay writing during second year, so they have experienced writing essays for the whole second semester. The participants were forty nine 40 EFL third year students at the department of English, Setif 2 University. The study was conducted at the beginning of their sixth semester of the graduate program 2019/2020.

3.1. Data Collection and Research Instruments

Corpus analysis is qualitative instrument that was employed in order to gather the necessary information to serve the goals of this research paper.

3.2. Corpus Analysis

Corpus can be defined as collection of any kind of text that could be written or spoken. It is used for linguistic analysis. It helps to analyze language errors for instance. In this research, it is used to explore and analyze the use of cohesive devices in students' essays. Corpus analysis was used to answer the research questions .The participants were invited to write an essay as a test by their teacher in charge of teaching the writing course. They were not informed that their writings would be the data for research purposes; hence, they tried best to write because the writing results were supposed to be marked as an exam. Because of that, they performed the way they usually do. 40 essays were selected for a corpus analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedures

As shown in table 2 below, taxonomy of cohesive devices proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) of cohesion framework was employed for data analysis due to its comprehensive and well-developed taxonomy. However, substitution and ellipsis were not counted in the corpus analysis because of the difficulties faced in analyzing these two cohesive ties that are mainly developed in spoken discourse rather than the written form.

Halliday and Hasan's (1976) model in most part, tended to exclude substitution and ellipsis devices and focus on the rest of the features (Liu & Braine, 2005; Zhang, 2000). It may be attributed to the fact that most studies

on cohesion deal with writings and rarely with spoken discourse. Analysis of qualitative data was conducted using content analysis. Content analysis refers to the approach that is used for analysis of qualitative data in which the responses are clustered or coded (Barbour, 2008).That is to say, the written essays were analyzed qualitatively. Descriptive analysis was followed in which the use of a coding method following Halliday and Hasan coding of cohesive devices was employed.

Table 2

Coding Of Cohesive Ties (Halliday & Hassan,1976)

Types of cohesive devices			Code
Grammatical cohesion	Reference (R)	Personal reference	R1
		Demonstrative reference	R2
		Comparative reference	R3
	Conjunction (C)	Additive conjunction	C1
		Adversative conjunction	C2
		Causal conjunction	C3
		Temporal conjunction	C4
Lexical cohesion	Reiteration (L)	Repetition	L1
		Synonym/near	L2
		Super ordinate /hyponym	L3
		General noun	L4
	Collocation		L5

4. Analysis of Students' Essays and Discussion of Findings

A thorough description of cohesive markers is provided by dealing with both types of cohesion: Grammatical and lexical cohesion.

4.1 Global Analysis of the Students' Essays

Generally speaking, students employed both grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion (reference and conjunction) and lexical cohesion (reiteration and collocation).The results obtained in this analysis reported that lexical cohesion was the most employed one, specifically, repetition. Then, reference (personal reference was dominantly used .Conjunctions were not as dominant as repetition and personal reference. Moreover, additive conjunctions were the most applied in comparison with other conjunctions, followed by causal then temporal conjunctions. In addition, ellipsis was totally absent as it was pointed that it is mainly related to speaking rather than writing; however, the focus of this study is basically on writing. Furthermore, substitution was less employed.

4.2. Grammatical Cohesion

Table 3

Grammatical Cohesion Co- occurrence in Students' Essays

Number of essays	Cohesive Devices and their Frequencies/Co-occurrence in Students' Essays: Grammatical Cohesion						
	R1	R2	R3	C1	C2	C3	C4
1	27	07	/	21	02	03	01
2	24	06	/	18	02	03	05
3	19	15	/	06	01	01	01
4	21	16	/	21	04	04	/
5	17	13	/	17	01	07	06
6	17	12	/	15	01	03	05
7	23	11	/	11	01	05	03
8	16	15	/	25	/	03	05
9	14	10	/	12	01	02	02
10	17	04	/	12	02	02	03
11	22	12	/	06	01	07	05
12	19	14	/	13	02	02	02
13	14	07	04	09	/	03	02
14	18	15	/	07	02	03	03
15	25	06	/	06	01	02	02
16	37	16	01	14	01	13	06
17	25	04	04	05	01	05	02
18	38	16	/	06	02	07	04
19	12	10	/	07	02	06	01
20	18	03	02	12	/	01	03
21	22	14	01	08	02	04	05
22	35	23	/	08	01	02	/
23	30	17	/	10	01	07	/
24	20	10	/	08	01	05	01
25	32	08	/	08	/	08	01
26	20	07	/	21	/	03	05
27	23	12	02	16	01	03	02
28	24	23	04	11	01	01	06
29	25	14	03	16	/	07	01
30	22	18	/	11	03	03	05
31	29	16	02	12	02	06	01
32	25	17	01	11	03	05	02
33	30	10	03	07	04	02	04
34	29	22	05	20	01	07	05
35	26	13	06	12	05	02	03
36	35	11	04	21	02	06	01
37	20	13	02	06	04	05	06
38	22	12	03	15	02	03	01
39	30	16	05	14	05	05	03
40	25	20	07	10	03	07	04
TOTAL	1002	711	61	525	67	170	118

Table 3 displays results of grammatical cohesion co-occurrence in students' essays. It presents frequency of each cohesive tie according to students use while writing their essays. **Personal reference was overused.** It was the most employed cohesive tie that was noticed in students' writings. Students kept using the personal pronoun "they'', ''their'' as it appears in appendix A and almost in all the appendices, followed by demonstrative reference, then comparatives .This confirms students' weaknesses in expressing their ideas appropriately and clearly. Their attempt to convey their

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ideas in a cohesive essay writing in English as a foreign language was not successful and their Arabic thinking was extremely obvious in expressing their ideas. Furthermore, in some of essays, reference was used inappropriately which proves the students weakness in expressing their ideas clearly as it appears in the following sentences (01, and 02)

1) *It is a dangerous phenomenon that we live **it** in our daily life*
   It is a dangerous phenomenon that we live in our daily life

2)*There is no doubt that cigarette smoking is harmful and **it** damages lungs.*
   There is no doubt that cigarette smoking is harmful and damages lungs .

a. Substitution and Ellipsis

Substitution was less used and nearly absent in the students' essays. This might be explained to the fact that substitution is mainly related to speaking, and it is hardly to be applied in writing, despite the fact that the students are not native speakers and English is a foreign language; it might be also explained to the fact that English is not used or practiced in the students' environment, starting from the educational setting like university; students seem to skip the idea of practicing this language at university. Ellipsis was totally neglected in the students' essays   because it is mainly related to speaking.

b. Conjunctions

Generally, the students used only simple conjunctions or one –word conjunctions rather than prepositional conjunctives. The most repeated conjunctions are: and, but, because, or, so, first, second .This is perhaps explained by students' lack of knowledge of other conjunctions and their use. In addition, **underuse** of some types of conjunctions was apparent in students' writing such as: Adversative, Temporal, and causal. Adversative conjunctions were less used followed by Temporal, causal.

I. Overuse of conjunction

Overuse of the additive conjunction '' and '' was observed in the students' essays. Students seem to over-rely on the additive conjunction '' **and**'' to express addition rather than the association of various additives. This may be explained with   the students' lack of confidence in using other additive conjunctions in their writings as it appears in the following passage:

*Smoking is an expensive habit**, and** it should be banned**, and** restricted in almost all public places it has been shown to be dangerous to health on both smoker **and** non- smoker, it can be reduced human daily performance **and** it can lead to bad skin**, and** bad smelling clothes……..*

The overuse of additive conjunction '**Also'** was also noticed in one of the essays. This conjunction was used several times when there is no need for such a use as it appears in the following extract:

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*"It makes the smoker feel more energized for a little while, **also** he feel tired it can **also** weaken his sense of taste".*

The first 'Also' is employed to express addition; however, the second one is overused, which means there is no need for such repetition. In addition, the previous sentence was ill- formed. The sentence should simply appear as it follows:

"*It makes the smoker feel more energized for a little while (a short period of time), after that he will feel tired as it can affect his sense of taste negatively".*

Overuse of the causal conjunction '***So'*** was detected; the first 'so' is used to express result however the second one is useless and should be replaced by 'as a result' to avoid such a needless repetition as it appears in the following extract:

***So** it makes the smoker feel more energized for a little while also he feel tired it can also weaken his sense of taste and smell **so ,** food may become less enjoyable **, so** this may lead him to stop eating…*

The ***overuse of because*** *was* detected in the students' corpus. It was used wrongly and inappropriately when there is no such a cause relation to be expressed, but instead an addition should be expressed as it appears in the following extract:

"*People should stop smoking because it would make their life so much better **because** they will be able to live longer and healthier life".*

*People should stop smoking because it would make their life so much better **as** they will be able to live longer and healthier.*

In addition, the misuse of "So" was used to express result when there is a cause relation instead of a result as it appears in the following extract:

*"Third smoking is expensive **so** the smoker spends a lot of money in cigarettes…"*

Third smoking is so expensive because ………….

Moreover, '**So'** is used to express result when there is no result expressed in the following, but instead it can be omitted and replaced by 'when' to express condition and illustrate things as it follows:

" *Third smoking is expensive so the smoker spends a lot of money in cigarettes; **so** when the smoker spent money on cigarettes, it means…."*

=Third smoking is expensive so the smoker spends a lot of money in cigarettes. When the smoker spent money on cigarettes, it means….

II. Misuse of conjunctions

Misuse of conjunctions was detected in the students' essays, especially prepositional conjunctives; as it appears in the following sentence '**so'** is used inappropriately to express consequence when there is no need for

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a consequence which should not appear in such a way and should be omitted like when saying:

'' **so despite the fact that''** as it appears below.

" ***So despite the fact*** *that smoking is a dangerous habit to pick up, many people choose to do It''.*

=***Despite the fact that*** *smoking is a dangerous habit, many people still………………….*

Thus to sum up as it is presented below.

*"**Thus, to sum up**, Smoking can cause a number of diseases…."*

=***To sum up***, *smoking……………….*

The misuse of **'Also'** was noticed in students' essays. It was used to express addition when there is no addition to be expressed, so it should be omitted as it appears in the following extract:

*"Second, it can damage his appearance because smoking **also** leads to thinning hair in both women and man".*

The misuse of **'but'** was observed in the students' writings. It was used to express contrast when there is no need for that, but instead there should be a consequence or result to be expressed using '**So**'' for example, or it could be fixed by omitting ' but' totally from the sentence to be expressed as the following extract:

*"So despite the fact that smoking is a dangerous habit to pick up many people choose to do it .**But** smokers should stop smoking because smoking damages their …….* "

= Despite the fact that smoking is a dangerous habit to pick up, many people choose to do it. *So* smokers should stop smoking because smoking damages their …….

Misuse of **'So'** appears in one of the students' essays. It was used to express consequence, but it was supposed to be a causal relation using' because 'instead of 'so' as the following sentences (1, 2, and 3) demonstrate:

1) It affects the health of the teeth and guns **so** it can cause tooth loss…….
   =It affects the health of the teeth and guns ***because*** it can cause tooth loss…….

2) It harms nearly every organ of the body, **so** smoking cause lung cancer……
=It harms nearly every organ of the body ***because*** smoking cause lung cancer……

3) Even if he knows that it is harmful for his health, *so* he wastes all his money in buying it.
 =Even if he knows that it is harmful for his health, he still waste all his money buying it

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Misuse of 'And' was noticed in the students' essays; it was used to express addition instead of causal relation that should be expressed as the following sentence:

*"There is no doubt that cigarette smoking is harmful **and** it damages lungs….. "*

*=There is no doubt that cigarette smoking is harmful **because** it damages lungs ....*

4.3. Lexical Cohesion

Lexical Cohesion Co- occurrence in Students' Essays is shown better in table 04 below.

Table 4

Lexical Cohesion Co- occurrence in Students' Essays

Number of Essays	Cohesive devices and their Frequencies/Co–occurrence in the students' Essays: Lexical Cohesion				
	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
1	35	01	07	/	02
2	38	02	07	/	06
3	30	01	12	/	02
4	28	/	06	/	07
5	24	01	/	/	03
6	14	03	13	/	02
7	41	01	10	/	10
8	29	05	09	/	14
9	35	/	10	/	08
10	46	05	12	/	26
11	30	04	06	/	05
12	32	02	08	/	07
13	27	04	07	/	11
14	34	03	11	/	12
15	13	06	12	/	06
16	30	05	09	/	20
17	18	03	08	/	09
18	25	05	07	/	12
19	33	07	06	/	10
20	23	04	05	/	05
21	27	03	/	/	01
22	25	03	/	/	01
23	19	01	/	/	01
24	22	/	/	/	/
25	17	/	/	/	/
26	24	/	/	/	01
27	19	/	/	/	01
28	16	02	/	/	/
29	24	02	/	/	02
30	17	05	/	/	01
31	27	04	/	/	02
32	35	14	/	/	01
33	37	02	08	/	01
34	36	05	09	/	07
35	38	01	08	/	08
36	47	09	15	/	01
37	14	02	03	/	02
38	28	/	04	/	18
39	17	/	04	/	/
40	29	04	06	/	05
TOTAL	**1150**	**128**	**123**	**0000**	**130**

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Reiteration

Reiteration is discussed in terms of students' use of repetition and English collocations.

a)Repetition

The students **overused repetition** of the same words like the word **smoking** and some **personal pronouns** in addition to unnecessary repetition of some sentences and expressions, which should be omitted as it appears in the following extract:

"Smokers should get rid of this bad phenomenon because it is harmful for them, it is harmful in the sense that it is attacks……"

The students' **excessive use of repetition** explains and illustrates their limited choice of vocabulary (lexical items). This was found in previous studies (Lee, 2002; Castro, 2004; chen, 2008; Crewe,1990; fan et al, 2000). The same problem was detected concerning **Synonym, general noun, hyponym, and antonym.** They were less employed or **underused** in the students' writing as Khalil (1989) found in his study, the Arab students' writings and cohesive devices use**.** This might be contributed to the fact that they have a limited vocabulary.

B) Collocation

As it was noticed in the students' essays, collocation was **less used** or used **inappropriately** in their writings; this may be explained with the fact that the participants are not native speakers, and English is a foreign language in addition to the students' lack of exposure to it as Khalil (1989) and Wikborg (1990) pointed in their studies. **Collocation** was used **inappropriately/ wrongly** in their essays, and generally the participants used their mother tongue expressions in their writings which researchers refer to it as negative transfer as shown in the following sentences which are detected from the students essays (redundant and misuse of collocation):

It affects **the health of the teeth.**

The person's life is so expensive.

Smoking is an expensive habit.

Smoking is a small word, but it has a large meaning.

For example, they cannot take their families to eat in restaurants.

One of the major problems today that attracts our society is smoking.

They need money for necessary staffs useful ones not for this later but instead they Spend it to destroy their health.

Remember that:' if you can dream it, you can do it ''

They may find it hard to pay electricity, gas and water or telephone bills

Many of them see it as a mean to realize from their problems

Also teeth became very stained which lead him shy to smile and talk

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*Cigarettes which become **so expensive now***
*By The **pass of time***
*Nobody wants to die .all human **wants to live as much longer as they can***
Essay organization is one of the crucial components that characterize good writing. Students were found to neglect essay structure. Among the errors that students committed in their essays is that they did not respect essay structure that includes: introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. The students introduced short paragraphs of 01, 02 sentences and conclusions of 5, or 6 sentences and different paragraph sizes (10 lines) and in some cases, the introduction is totally absent. Moreover, students expressed incomplete sentences which lead to ambiguity in meaning.

5. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Pedagogical implications and recommendations that were obtained in the present study are insights that might be helpful for teachers of writing module and other modules because writing is crucial developed productive skill in EFL classes. Foremost, the findings gained, from the analysis of students' essays have illustrated and shown that the students commit errors in using cohesive devices such as: overuse of repetition of the same words, which is the result of limited vocabulary (lexical items), hence there must be a call for using synonyms, super ordinate, antonym of the words and create a balanced use to overcome such a problem. Results have shown that the students confront problems concerning the use of conjunctions in their essays. It has been found that *one- word* or *simple conjunctions* are mostly occurred in their essays such as: *'and', 'or', 'because', 'but'*, rather than *prepositional conjunctives* because of the *lack of knowledge* about them and their use. This might be solved through providing the students with essays that contain different cohesive devices errors in which the students are asked to read these essays, and detect/ sort out the errors and self correct them with the assistance of the teachers .Another tactic that can be used is providing the learners with two essays, the first one consists of cohesive devices with errors, and the second one contains correct use of cohesive devices. The students then compare the two essays and assimilate cohesive devices. *Overuse of personal reference and underuse of demonstrative reference* has been most commonly observed in students' writing. This can be modified by creating a balance use between the two previous types of references through using a variety of demonstrative and personal references when necessary.

6. Suggestions for Further Research

As long as the current study was conducted, and particularly conducting a corpus analysis of third year EFL students' essays, EFL students face problems in using cohesive devices in essay writing as they face

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problems in almost all the writing characteristics that qualify a good essay writing. A great deal of observed errors and problems should take into account by writing teachers, decision makers and syllabus designers, and future researchers. Coherence is one of the problems that EFL seem to face in their writing as long as the current research conducted cohesion, which is one of the characteristics for achieving a coherent essay. In addition, Coherence and cohesion are inter-related; hence, they should not be investigated separately because there is no chance to speak about cohesion without referring to coherence since cohesion characterizes coherence. Moreover, spelling mistakes is another issue, which is noticed in the students' essays .Punctuation was also missed or used inappropriately. Some paragraphs are left without any marked punctuation. Furthermore, grammatical mistakes were such as: shift in tenses; using tenses wrongly, the grammatical error 'S' of third person singular (both omission of ''S'' with she, he, it, or addition of 'S' to other personal pronouns are all serious problems that EFL teachers and researchers should study. Another grammatical error that has been observed in the students' essays is shift in tenses and mixture in using them. Mother tongue interference among EFL writings comprises thinking in Arabic (mother tongue) and translation to (the target language) English language. For future studies, researchers should take all the available essays to be studied and analyzed in order for generalization of the findings as generalization of the findings require studying large samples.

General Conclusion

The present study has attempted to explore the use of cohesive devices in students' essay writing. Corpus analysis of Third year EFL students' essay writing show problems, errors, and difficulties faced along with using cohesive devices. In addition, the obtained results also show considerable agreement with the reviewed studies in the literature. It is worth mentioning that throughout this study, it was expected to raise both the teachers' and students' attention about the use of cohesive markers in essay writing and the appropriate use of English cohesive ties in establishing good essay writing. In this study, more insights are given about the appropriate use of cohesive devices to establish cohesive essays. Therefore, teachers should pay more attention to the notion of cohesion and should raise students' attention to appropriate English use of cohesive ties as they should provide more practice in writing classes. Syllabus designers of the course should give extra sessions for the writing courses. The corpus analysis has shown how cohesive ties were employed and what are the errors encountered among third year EFL students' essays at Mohamed Lamine Dabaghine Setif 2 University. Among the errors that were detected are both lexical cohesion, which has to do with

vocabulary choice and lexis, and grammatical cohesion, which is related to grammar. First, students committed some errors concerning lexical cohesion. They *overused repetition* of the same word, which is due to their limited choice of lexical items and poor register of vocabulary. The latter caused '*misuse of synonyms'* and *antonyms* as it appears in the appendices. Moreover, students inappropriately used English collocations. This is accordingly related to lack of exposure to the target language and their Arabic thinking or the interference of mother tongue and dialects (Arabic, and kabyle) in their writing performance. Second, students committed some errors concerning grammatical cohesion. One of the most common errors among their essays is the overuse of personal pronouns rather than other types of references such as: demonstratives (this, these, that, those).In addition, it was observed that students *underused prepositional conjunctives* followed by the absence of *Ellipsis, and substitution*. Eventually, other problems related to joining sentences and balance of paragraph length was no exception in students' essays.

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