

## **University Learners' Lexical Cohesion Techniques Focusing on English and Kurdish Languages**

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DOI: 10.53103/cjess.v2i3.37

### **Abstract**

This research aimed to analyze the role and significance of lexical cohesion in making sentences more coherent. The research also seeks on comparing the Kurdish and English lexical cohesions respectively. For doing that, the research found out that both departments of English and Kurdish languages have more familiarity with the use and functions of reiteration than the collocations. The total number of cases of reiteration in the English department was 29 and in the Kurdish department 23; however, the number of collocations in the English department was 30, but in the Kurdish department only 3 cases. As both languages do have lexical cohesion academically, the cause of the limited number of collocations in the Kurdish department refers to the lack of students' skills of writing and their familiarity with the lexical cohesion usages. Students of the Kurdish department have more familiarity merely with reiteration than collocations. Therefore, they ought to study the elements of lexical cohesion to make their writings more coherent and meaningful.

Keywords: Cohesion, Lexical Cohesion, Coherent, Reiteration, Collocation, Kurdish Lexical Cohesion

### **Introduction**

This research aims to illustrate the term lexical cohesion through both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. This research defines and categorizes lexical cohesion. The objective goal of this research is to compare the usage of lexical cohesion in both Kurdish and English languages. As mentioned before, cohesion has a great influence on organizing ideas that make them understandable in speaking and writing tasks. However, this research only looks at the role and dependence of lexical cohesion in writing tasks by EFL students of Raparin University. It also aims to illustrate the theory of the

concept and discourse. However, the major aim of this research is to investigate the techniques of students in using lexical cohesion. For this reason, the University of Raparin is chosen as the base of data collection.

### **Research Questions**

This research might provide an answer to multiple questions, however; the main answer of this research goes to the question of "To what extent lexical cohesion has relied on while doing writing tasks". Another considerable question that the research will answer is "To what extent do Kurdish and English languages use lexical cohesion to strengthen the meaning of their writings." Besides these questions, the research defines the elements and the roles of lexical cohesion in both languages, it also provides ratio to their usages.

### **Research Significance**

The conduction of this research is significant because of two factors. The first factor goes for the fact that lexical cohesion is important to sequence words and ideas that construct meaningful texts for the readers. Hence, it is vital to have research on the topic, so that students and readers could have sources of the subject and learn about its role and dependency. The second factor relates to the lack of sources regarding the Kurdish language in terms of lexical cohesion. In other words, the concept seems weird to them even. This research is a tool for providing data for the ratio of dependency and usages of the lexical cohesion in the Kurdish language. More than that, the research compares the usage of lexical cohesion between Kurdish and English languages, so it gives a view to know if there are any similarities or contrasts between the two languages.

### **Research Scope and Limitations**

The finding of this research cannot be generalized to all Kurdish speakers and texts. The reason for this relates to the fact that the base of data collection for this research is the university of Raparin in which only 30 samples were collected and analyzed, so the ratio of the participants is limited which cannot be representative of the Kurdish texts. The limitations were the lack of sources regarding the lexical cohesion in the Kurdish language, and categorizing the types of the lexical cohesion in the Kurdish language.

### **Research Background**

One might not know the importance of cohesion in language organization, but it can simply be explained that they are the key to all meaningful sentences. To illustrate this more, let's imagine that the ideas of the author seem like the skeleton of a human, then, the

lexical cohesion is the blood. Further, if the lexical cohesion seems like the blood of the skeleton of ideas, then, the grammatical cohesion is the blood vessels (Wang, 2019). With that being said, ideas, texts, and elements of grammar are all chained. Besides that, writing is a crucial skill that every student should have, yet, it seems difficult for most students (Dania, 2018). To write well, some elements are required to be followed by the writer. For example, the writer should have a clear mind to think about what to write and how to write. Moreover, after thinking, and writing the first draft with references, it is required for the writer to edit and rewrite the draft. The purpose of doing these sequences processes is to make the text cohesive by making continual and relative paragraphs to each other. There are two types of cohesive devices, lexical cohesive and grammatical cohesive, (Bahaziq, 2016). As mentioned before, both have a great impact on the meaning and structuring of the text. Through these two kinds of cohesion, the readers can get the direction of the text as simple as they can because the cohesions put relations between the paragraphs. Not only for readers, but the two types of cohesion are also an advantageous element for the writers as they organize the ideas and the themes of the text for the readers. Cohesive devices are also important in the academic writing (Chanyoo, 2018). Students mostly submit their papers to the instructors, through these academic papers, the quality of thinking and organizing the students' minds would be expected and estimated by the instructor.

## **Literature Review**

### **Discourse**

One of the aspects of sentence connections is discourse. Discourse is not only linked to the organization of scientific works, but also to the consumption of the whole skills in conducting an article in a particular language (Orji, 2019). To clarify this more, currently, most EFL learners do have the capability of writing sentences correctly, with correct vocabulary spells, and reasonable ideas. However, they lack the ordered structure of the writing. There is also no logic between sentences and paragraphs. All these correspond to the lack of knowledge of discourse. Students have to have pre-knowledge of the themes and background of the subject of the article that they are assigned to do so. With that step, students can comprehend the discourse through the systematic application of the knowledge of the subject in which students can organize and apply all their ideas reasonably to the context.

With that being said, discourse is the theory of interpreting the text. In other words, the text is the process of writing and combining the words and sentences, which show nothing without discourse analysis. To illustrate this, it is the discourse analysis that depicts the logical interpretation of a text to the reader and that forces the reader to think about what the text is about. Furthermore, the strength and importance of the discourse leads to the arguments and refutations of the readers to the contexts (Li, 2013). Take an example,

when you read the text that is titled as "Consequences of Raining", from the title, you get the themes of the flood, farming, and/or even car accidents, but when you keep reading the text, you see the theme of oxidations. From that point, the discourse analysis that you as a reader have pushed you to state the refutation against either the title or the elimination of the theme because it is not the natural rain that causes oxidation but acid rain, so the title does not fit the points of it. This shows that discourse is the principle of analyzing and interpreting texts based on logical understanding.

### **Definition of Lexical Cohesion**

As defined above, lexical cohesion is the blood that moves and functions in the skeleton of the text. Grammatical elements and rules are also defined as the blood vessels. These three are the chained aspects for conducting articles with logical and academic thoughts. Lexical cohesion is the theory that focuses on the textual meanings and interpretations (Liyana, 2014). The more the text is cohesive, the more meaningful and logical the text would be. For doing that, the writer should consider the best vocabulary that fits the texts, grammatical skills should be aligned as well, and ideas should be organized and linked to each other. Lexical cohesion has two types, such as reiteration and collocations. Simply, reiteration is the repetition of the words or lexical elements, and the collocation occurs when the used word has association and linkage to the other words in the preceding sentences or lines. The two types would be illustrated in the next sections in detail.

### **Theory of Cohesion**

There are strong relations between the theory of cohesion and the text. Thus, their separation is quite impossible to be done. The text is the unified form that is expressed either verbally or through writing (Treuer, 2013). When the text is not unified, then it is counted as "non-text", which means the texture depends on the cohesive relations amongst linguistic elements. Cohesion belongs to the relationships of meaning that exist in the text and elements that define the written pieces as a text (Wang, 2019). Hence, the occurrence of cohesion refers to the reliance of discourse elements' interpretation on another. For example, "To boil eggs, you should first put them into the pot and fill it with cold water". In this statement, the reader can understand that "them" in the second part of the sentence is referring to the "eggs" in the first part of the sentence. Plus, the reader can also realize that the pronoun "it" belongs to the "pot" in which both are mentioned in the second part of the sentence. This is how some elements of discourse depend on the other that combined the sentences with meaningful words and the sentences become a text. To clearly distinguish between text and non-text, see the example below.

- If you want to ask for a Pizza, just call ABCD pizza shop. They will deliver it to you soon.
- The car was red. The child cried. I play football.

The first example is counted as a text because there is cohesion between the sentences and words. They all are designed to give one idea which is asking for a pizza. However, the second one has just sentenced not a text because there is no cohesion between them as they all share different contextual meanings and interpretations.

### **Types of Cohesion**

#### **Grammatical Cohesion**

The concept of cohesion has two major types. The first type is grammatical cohesion which is divided into four types. The second type is lexical cohesion (Wang, 2019). To clarify this more, as the name of the type suggested, the grammatical cohesion is set based on the grammatical elements in which each of them unites the other. The four types of grammatical cohesion are illustrated in the following sections.

#### **Reference**

Reference is the situation in which one element cannot be interpreted without reliance on another element of that text. The referring devices that refer the element to the actual thing of the text are ought to be pronouns, determiners, comparatives, and demonstratives. Furthermore, the reference has two types, exophora “situational” and endophora “textual” (Hubackova, 2013). To clarify more, situational reference recommends the reader to deduce the illustrated referent through thinking beyond the text. For example, "That phone is expensive". To understand the meaning of this statement, the reader should imagine the situation to understand what and which phone is expensive, so the answer is not given in the text itself. Unlike situational reference, textual reference depends on the text itself. There are two classifications of textual reference, such as anaphora "To preceding a text" and cataphora "To following a text" (Bahaziq, 2016). Anaphora reference happens when a word relates to another word that comes before in the text. For example, Bander is waiting for the bus. His car crashed. "His" refers back to Bander thus "His" is the anaphoric reference. Unlikely, cataphora reference goes forward to another element that is mentioned and stated in the following sentences. For instance, "As soon as she arrived, Sahand visited her friends". In this sentence “she” is the cataphora reference that follows Sahand.

### Substitution

This type of grammatical cohesion is occurring when an element or a word is replaced by another element for the sake of preventing repetition. The distinction point between substitution and reference is that reference is based on the meaning of the words while substitution is based on the relations between words (Silvia, 2010). Furthermore, substitution has three genres. Nominal for example is the process of substituting nouns, or groups of nominal come with another noun. The key elements of this sort are one, ones, and same. For example, "This Ice Cream tastes delicious, I ask for another one". Here, the word Ice Cream is substituted by the word "one". The second genre is verbal substitution which covers the action of substituting a verb or groups of verbal with another verb, (Silvia, 2010). In this type, the replacing verb element is "Do". For example, "Bander challenges Sahand to write an essay before he does." In this context, the verb of writing is substituted by "does". Additionally, the last type of substitutional cohesion is clausal substitution in which the words are substituted by either so or not. For instance,

A: "Do you think the weather is going to be rainy tomorrow?"

B: "No, I don't think so."

As it is considerable, the word "so" substituted the clause "is going to be rainy."

### Ellipsis

Ellipses is another type of grammatical cohesion that functions when an unnecessary element is eliminated in the text since it was already mentioned in the same context. There is no replacement for the eliminated word in this sort. However, the item still makes sense for the readers. There are three types of ellipses, such as nominal in which the noun is omitted (Hubackova, 2013). For example, "My friends hate scientific classes. Both hate math." In this sentence, "my friends" is omitted and not replaced by any words, but still makes sense for the reader that the next sentence is still about the friends. In the verbal type of ellipsis, the verb is eliminated. For example, "Have you washed the clothes?", "Yes, I have." In this example, the verb "washed" is omitted. Additionally, in the clausal ellipses, the clause is deleted. To illustrate this, "Who drove my car?" "Bander did." Here, the clause "drove your car" is deleted.

### Conjunction

The last type of grammatical cohesion is titled conjunction in which they are words that function as linking elements between words, and clauses. The difference between conjunction and other types of grammatical cohesion, conjunction shares the logical relations between sentences (Al-Khalidy, 2018). In other words, it has nothing with the words and their constructions, but the logical interpretations. There are four types of

conjunction. The first one is called additive conjunctions. This type combines aspects in which they provide similar ideas, or point to the preceding sentence of the text, such as furthermore, in addition, moreover, etc. Furthermore, adversative conjunctions provide contrasting ideas and results of the preceding sentences to the text like however, but, whereas, while, although, etc. Additionally, causal conjunctions show factors, outcomes, or even the purpose of the sentence, such as so, thus, therefore, hence, etc. the last type of conjunctive cohesion is temporal that shares the sequences of something's happening like finally, then, next, soon, etc.

### **Lexical Cohesion**

#### **Reiteration**

Reiteration is occurring when two things have the same referent that is either repeated or has similarities with the meanings of the text. There are three forms of reiteration, such as synonymy that deals with words that share the same meaning like smart and clever, shine and bright, use and consume, depend and rely, fat and heavy, etc (Hellale, 2013). On the other hand, antonyms deal with the words that share contrasting meanings in the text like big and small, high and low, hot and cold, long and short, peace and conflict, day and night, etc. Additionally, superordination is either hyponymy or meronymy. Hyponymy is relations between the words that the first one is too broad while the second one is specific. For example, food is co- hyponymy of Pizza. However, meronyms are the relations between items, for example, speaker and screen are co-meronyms of the item of phones. To clarify this more, the phone is superordinate with the speaker and screen.

#### **Collocation**

Collocation is the process of chaining and linking the vocabulary aspects in which co-occur together. This covers the linkages of adjectives and nouns, verbs and nouns, and odd cases (Laybutt, 2009). For example, "fast charger" is the combination of fast which adjective, and charger which is a noun, or "run out of time" run is a verb while out of time is the noun phrase. Further, the odd cases include "male", and "female" in which male occurs in both females that relate to women and males that relate to men. The same thing is correct for "men" and "women".

### **Cohesion and Coherence**

The scholarly writings required are analyzed and interpreted through the elements of cohesion and coherence. As those sorts of writings are planned writing in which the writer invested himself in organizing and strengthening the text (Liyana, 2014). However, in other sorts of writing like optional writing, there are also the aspects of cohesion and

coherence. But the ratio of dependency of coherence and cohesion is higher in the planned texts as they are more organized and unified in all manners. However, the two concepts are quite confusing, so not all people can figure out which is which, hence they should know about the distinction between the two. To clarify this more, the definition of coherence states insistency on logic and consistency, so the text should be understandable in terms of meaning. On the other hand, cohesion is the process of setting up the whole elements of the text. Cohesion is the base element of the coherent. For further illustrations, if the cohesive elements are unified properly, then the text can be coherent. However, if they are not attached and organized well, then the text might be cohesive, but not coherent (Karadeniz, 2017). For example,

“Bander played DJ to start dancing at the party. Sahand published an article against her political party. She does not know which article should be used with countable nouns.”

In this example, the sentences are lexically correct as they are joined to create a small paragraph. And the lexical repetition is occurring in the words "party" and "article", and the collocations of "political party". Hence, this text is cohesive, but not coherent since there is no clear meaning behind the paragraph. Thus, the cohesive elements are not used properly. The cohesive devices are divided into two types as mentioned above, the grammatical cohesion, and lexical cohesion, in which all together tie each other properly to create an understandable interpretation of the text.

### **Lexical Cohesion in Kurdish**

As stated in the introductory section of the research, the research is going to compare the lexical cohesion between Kurdish and English languages, so let's know what constructs the Kurdish lexical cohesion.

The Kurdish language is quite similar to the English language in terms of lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion also exists in that language (Salih, 2014). To clarify this more, there is a reiteration which is a type of lexical cohesion in English and is available in Kurdish as well. For example, “Azad kwreki karamaya. Aw hamisha karakani ba lehatwyi anjam dadat.” In this Kurdish sentence, it is visible that the words "Karama" and "Lehatw" are synonyms and share the same meaning in both sentences, so the text is understandable. Plus, "Azad" is also substituted by the word "Aw" which is the third person pronoun. This type of cohesion is referred to as grammatical cohesion. Considering more on the context of lexical cohesion, “La warzy zstan awi sard bash nya bo xwardnawa, boya bashtra awy garm bxwretawa.” In this sentence, the words "sard" which means “cold” and “garm” which means "hot" are antonyms used in the two parts of the sentence and make it more comprehensible for the readers. Additionally, the superordination type of reiteration can be found as well. For example, "Xwardnawa" and "Shir", in which the first one is the general and broader than the latter one, so the “Xwardnawa” roles as co- hyponymy of



“Shir”. Further, “Barg” and “Par” are the co-meronyms of “Partwk”. Hence, “Partwk” is the superordinate of “Barg” and “Par”. More than that, the second type of lexical cohesion which is collocation can also be found in the Kurdish language (Ali, 2021). For example, “Swr gull” is composed of the linkages of adjective and noun, and “Jwan kar” in which “Jwan” is adjective and “Kar” functions as a noun. The second type of collocation is the linkage of verb and noun, like “Kawtn waz” or “Shar xwaz”. In these examples, both words “Kawtn” and “Shar.” Additionally, the odd cases of collocation type of lexical cohesion cover the examples of “Bra” and “Brazhn”, and “Zhnbra”.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

This research is designed to compare the lexical cohesion in both Kurdish and English languages. For this reason, the research depends on the writings of the students from Raparin University in the English and Kurdish departments. The result would depict the effects of lexical elements in the creation of texts in both languages.

#### **Research Instrument**

The instrument of this research is observation. For data collection, the research relies on observing the samples of students of Raparin University. Then, the data would be analyzed based on the linkages and ties of cohesive elements.

#### **Data Collection**

To collect data about the use of lexical cohesion in both languages of Kurdish and English, students from both departments of Kurdish and English were asked to write an essay about a topic. The students were given sufficient time and a particular title so that students can use their writing skills properly. Considering the huge numbers of students and restricted time for conducting research, only 20 students were assigned to write the essay; 10 students from each department participated.

#### **Data Analysis**

For analyzing the data regarding the lexical cohesion in English and Kurdish languages, 20 papers of students were analyzed. The students were asked to write an essay regarding "migration". After giving them half-hour, the papers were collected to be analyzed. The analysis focused on the functions and roles of lexical cohesion and its elements. Then, the results of the samples would be categorized based on the types of lexical cohesion and their role in shaping the meaning of the sentences. Each paper was

examined to figure out the patterns of lexical cohesion, then they were classified based on their typology. After classifications, the results were illustrated by tables.

### **Results and Discussions**

To discuss the results, the tables are taken as the source of this content. Accordingly, Kurdish lexical cohesion occurs in the essay formats. That provides the conclusion that both English and Kurdish languages have the concept of lexical cohesion practically. However, the occurrence of lexical cohesion in the English language is more frequent. To clarify this more, Table 1 illustrates that students from the English department of Raparin University conducted 29 lexical cohesions as the form of reiterations. As mentioned earlier, reiteration is grouped into three types, such as synonyms, antonyms, and super ordinations. As the table illustrates the number of repetitions in the reiteration type is mostly recorded in synonyms. To clarify this more, out of 10 papers regarding migration, 14 times students used synonyms in their sentences. For instance, they used the words illustrate and explain as synonyms in the compound sentences, sovereignty, and liberation as synonyms, marriage, and engagement, migrate and resettle, home and state, etc. All of those were used together to combine the sentences and strengthen the meanings of the sentences. That was also helpful to readers to comprehend the context without reading repetitive words.

Antonyms were not much less than synonyms, their number of repetitions is 9 times. As further illustrations, some words they used as antonyms were freedom and suppression, sovereignty and lack of liberation, being accessible and being denied, migrants and civilians, etc. As the words show contrasting meanings, they were used to describe the comparisons between migrants' home state and their asylum states. Hence, the use of antonyms was a wise choice to make cohesion between sentences. In addition to the types of reiteration, 6 times the super ordinations were recorded, such as free courts, good health system, high standards educational system, and so on in which they all together are the meronyms of the high qualified civil structures. Furthermore, students also used hyponymy which is another type of superordination. For example, they used the term Europe which is a broad name, and then they narrowed it down to the UK. What brings the research results is that students are aware of the significance of the usage of lexical cohesion, and they frequently use them in their writings to strengthen the connections between sentences.

Table 1: Reiteration

Types of Reiteration	Number of Repetitions
Synonym	14
Antonym	9
Super Ordination	6

The other kind of lexical cohesion is collocation. The rate of repetition in this type is lower than the reiteration. For further illustrations, the collocation type is also grouped into three major types, such as adjective nouns, verb nouns, and odd cases. According to Table 2 of this research, out of 10 papers, only 3 cases of adjectives and nouns were recorded, such as paved roads, and the number of repetitions of verb nouns was recorded more which was equal to 6. For instance, they used words like figure out and out of time. However, the number of odd cases was the highest ratio of repetition among all the subgroups. The number of odd cases recorded in 10 papers regarding migration is 21 times. Most commonly used are women and men, and males and females.

Table 2: Collocation

Types of Collocations	Number of Repetitions
Adjective Noun	3
Verb Noun	6
Odd Cases	21

The total of recorded cases of lexical cohesion in the English Department out of 10 papers written on migration was 59 cases. 29 cases were recorded as reiteration while the rest was on collocation which is 30 cases. To clarify this more, students are more familiar with the use of reiteration than collocation to tie their sentences even though the number of using collocations was higher. Students have more familiarity with using synonyms and antonyms than using adjectives nouns and verb nouns. As the number of occurrences suggests, there are more repetitions in reiteration than collocation. When it comes to odd cases and super ordinations, students recorded only 6 cases of using superordination. However, if they were asked to write essays with detailed information, then that records might be escalated. In most of the sentences, they started with a general topic but did not narrow them in the second part of their sentences so they were not being recorded as super ordinations. However, since the topic included women and men which are examples of constituting odd cases, the number of repetitions was high. Overall, students of Raparin University from the English Department have more familiarity with using reiteration than collocations in their writing exercises.

As the research aimed to compare the English and Kurdish lexical cohesion, students from the Kurdish department were participated and asked to write a paragraph regarding migration in the Kurdish language. Although it was mentioned that lexical cohesion is also available in the Kurdish language and has an important role in combining sentences, the rate of using it in that research was restricted. In other words, students recorded lexical cohesion mostly from the reiteration, not the collocations.

The research corresponds this to the lack of students' quality writing process and skills. Table 3 illustrates that antonym was used mostly by the Kurdish department students in which its number of repetitions is 9 times. For example, they used words like مهترسیدار و نیشتییمان و ناراوگه, ناشتی و جهنگ, هۆکاری ئهرینی و نهرینی, سهلامهت خهڵکی کوردستان و گهنجانی کورد بهتایبهتی, and etc. However, the second-highest rate of repetition goes for the superordination by 8 times of occurrence. For example, they used the hyponymy through words like سهروهت و سامان و خانو, ئۆتۆمبیل, داهاتی زۆر, نابوری خراب و نهپونی موچهی جیگیر و هند.

Additionally, the use of synonyms in the English language was recorded with the highest number of repetitions while in the Kurdish language it received only 6 times and the least number of repetitions. Examples of words used as synonyms in Kurdish papers were like سهخت و دژوار, ژيانی خوش و ژيانی باش, سهروهتی زۆر و پارهی زۆر و هند. Meanwhile, the repetition of superordination was the least in the English department; however, in the Kurdish writings, it is being recorded as the second highest and got repeated 8 times.

Table 3: Reiteration

Types of Reiteration	Number of Repetition
Synonym	6
Antonym	9
Super Ordination	8

As mentioned above, the collocation was not relied on by the students of the Kurdish department to connect their sentences. The only type that was used in collocation was adjective and nouns which happens only 3 times. The other two types were never used in those 10 papers. This reflects the fact that Kurdish students do not know the collocations as the lexical cohesion, but only reiterations.

Table 4: Collocation

Types of Collocation	Number of Repetitions
Adjective and Noun	3
Verb and Noun	0
Odd Cases	0

### Conclusion

The research has found that both languages of English and Kurdish have lexical cohesions academically. Lexical cohesion has a crucial role in strengthening the meaning and the themes of the texts in both languages. The two types of lexical cohesion, reiteration, and collocation both have three subgroups, and each of them can be found in both languages. These elements significantly influence the text to be rich in vocabulary by reducing repetitive words, providing clear meaning, and enabling more academic pieces of writing. The result of this research figured out that, in comparison to the lexical cohesion between English and Kurdish languages, students of the English department had more familiarity with both types of lexical cohesion in which their total number was 59. However, students from the Kurdish department had more familiarity with reiteration than collocation in which their total number was 26, and only 3 cases represented the collocation.

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