



## Overrepresentation and Underrepresentation of Cohesive Devices in Iraqi EFL Learners' Translated and Free Narrative Writings

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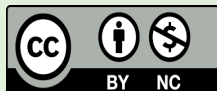
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### Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the L2 rhetorical organization of translation and free writing tasks in terms of cohesive devices used by Iraqi intermediate EFL learners in the narrative genre. To do so, 30 Iraqi intermediate EFL learners at Kufa university took part in the study. The participants were asked to translate three narrative texts from Arabic to English and write three narratives related to the general topics given to them as prompts. The narratives were coded and rated by two experts based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework. The data obtained from translation narratives were compared with a standard translation for each text. Results of the one-sample t-test performed on the scores of translation narratives indicated that Iraqi learners produce shorter passages in the target language than in the source language; however, they used significantly more times than expected for certain types of cohesive devices. Moreover, comparisons between translated narratives and free narratives indicated no significant difference between the translated and composed narratives. It is argued that patterns of cohesive devices used in English output of the Iraqi EFL learners are compatible with properties of their first language. The findings also show that, unlike English grammatical properties, cohesive devices are not a problematic area and would not lead to fossilized errors in the performance of Iraqi EFL learners.

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## Introduction

There has been a broad consensus among the researchers in the realm of writing skill that knowing how to use cohesive devices appropriately is one of the most significant skills and an indispensable necessity for making a text coherent (Cheng & Tsang, 2021). Thereby, exploration of these features has been a topic of research in writing studies (AlAttar & Abu-Ayyash, 2020; Islami, Saleh & Bharati, 2022). Thus far, research has shown that cohesiveness of a text crucially contributes to establishing apparent semantic relations between different parts of discourse. Besides, the appropriate use of cohesive devices can be regarded as a criterion for writing coherent essays (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Crossley & McNamara, 2012). However, the correct use of these devices is a challenging skill not only for EFL learners but also for more experienced writers (Crewe, 1990). By the same token, it has been widely acknowledged that the majority of L1 Arabic writers find it difficult to use English cohesive expressions properly in their writings (Abdul Rahman, 2013). Due to the low frequency of exposure to the English language, insufficient practice, and problems pertaining to teaching and learning contexts such as word-by-word translation, it has been found that even non-native English teachers use less cohesive devices than native teachers in their writings let alone their students (Hammad, 2016). Further, research has provided evidence regarding the effect of task type or genre of writing (e.g., narrative, argumentative, expository, or descriptive) on the cohesiveness of the written discourse and the way it affects writing quality (Lu, 2011). However, the majority of the studies conducted on cohesion have exclusively focused on paper writing at the higher levels and there is a scarcity of such research on writings of the less competent EFL learners. The aforementioned gap is more salient considering L1 Arabic EFL learners' use of cohesive devices in their English writings (Chanyoo, 2018). Accordingly, this study aimed at investigating the differences between intermediate Iraqi EFL learners' use of cohesive devices in narrative translations and narrative writings by analyzing their performance with reference to the framework proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

### 1. Background of the study

In Halliday and Hasan's words (1976, 4) "cohesion refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text". As Crossley, Kyle & McNamara (2016) explain, cohesion is conceptualized as linguistic cues in the text that indicate the semantic relationships between the propositions and help the reader to make connections

between the ideas in the text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) emphasize that a group of sentences can be regarded as a text, only if there are cohesive relations both within and between them. Further, they make the concept of cohesion vividly understandable by introducing their lexicogrammatical model which includes grammatical cohesion (reference, substitution and ellipsis), lexical cohesion (collocation and reiteration), partially lexical cohesion, and partially grammatical cohesion (conjunctions). To be more specific, grammatical cohesion involves the use of references including personal references (i.e., he, she, I, etc.), demonstratives (i.e., the, this, that, and those), and comparative references (e.g., so, as, equal, similar, different, otherwise, likewise).

Substitution by itself can be divided into three subtypes which are called nominal substitution, verbal substitution, and clausal substitution. In nominal substitution, a noun and noun phrase are replaced with general pronouns like 'one' and 'ones' to avoid repetition of previously used word/words (e.g.: *All the shirts look good. So, I cannot decide which one to buy.*). In verbal substitution, the auxiliary 'do' is used to avoid repetition of a verb or verb phrase, as in : *-Do you like walking in the rain? -I always do.* Finally, words like 'so', 'not' etc. are used in place of entire clauses (Mohseni & Samadian, 2019).

The other type of grammatical cohesion are conjunctions which link propositions to create texture by expressing and ordering the logical relationships within a text such that it looks meaningful to the reader. Conjunctions are generally subclassified as additive, adversative, causal and temporal.

The additive is a generalized semantic relation which denote listing and series and link sentences where items are mentioned one after another. Some conjunctive expressions of this type are: *further, furthermore, again, moreover, besides, additionally, ....* The basic meaning of adversative conjunctions is to show that something is contrary to expectation. For example: *All the figures were correct. The total came out wrong, though.* Similar conjunctions are: *yet, however, nevertheless, still, in spite of this, etc.* Causal conjunctions involve semantic relations which convey reason, result and purpose between sentences. These are words and expressions like: *so, thus, hence, therefore, consequently, for, because, accordingly, ....* And finally, Temporal conjunctions represent time relations between successive sentences. Conjunctions of this type include: *next, then, afterwards, finally, and many others.*

Lexical cohesion refers to semantic relationships between lexical items specifically between content words. The semantic relations include reiteration of the same words, synonyms,onyms, superordinates and collocations (words which tend to cluster together in various positions; e.g. *strong tea*).

It is generally observed that non-native speakers of English in colleges and universities often have difficulty writing adequate academic prose and there has been a plethora of attempts to shed light on the use of cohesive devices by L2 learners (Yang & Sun, 2012; Xi, Y, 2010; Liu & Braine, 2005; Leo, 2012). One research area which has sought to identify and solve the problems of English as a Second Language writing is contrastive rhetoric namely the study of texts written in English by native speakers of different languages to determine syntactic and rhetorical differences. For instance, Connor (1984) made a comparison between the argumentative compositions written by advanced university ESL students and that of native English writers. The results indicated that L2 learners tend to use more connectives, while they use fewer lexical cohesive devices in comparison with native speakers. In another study, Reid (1992) investigated English essays written by English native speakers and EFL learners with a variety of L1 backgrounds including Spanish, Chinese and Arabic. His aim was to find the nature of differences between native and non-native writers in the first place and on the other hand whether there were differences between non-native writers due to their L1 back grounds in terms of the rate and type of the cohesive ties used in their essays. The participants were asked to write four essays on the given topics. The corpus (768 essays) was analyzed via a computer text-analysis program which showed non-native writers significantly used less

conjunctions and prepositions than English writers, while their use of pronouns and coordination was significantly higher. Reid concludes that these results might contribute to effective pedagogy as to illuminate the norms of English academic writing for the L2 learners. Coyle (2020) investigated the effect of written corrective feedback on the use of referential cohesive ties by low proficiency L2 young writers in their collaborative narrative writings. The experimental group performed on a weekly picture cued task over a period of three months. The task required the students to work collaboratively in pairs and write a text every week based on the pictures they received. The researcher then read the texts and provided them with reformulated feedback. The control group, on the other hand, performed the same weekly task but edited their writings by themselves. Results of the study showed outperformance of the feedback group compared to the control group. In addition, Analysis of the pre and posttests' mean scores indicated significant progress in the performance of the experimental group in terms of accurate use of pronouns as well as a considerable decrease in the misuse of articles. Coyle argues that awareness of cohesion elements by itself does not directly affect the accurate use of them in L2 writing and concluded that corrective feedback might play an important role in developing skillful use of those elements. Nugraheni (2015) states that EFL learners generally pay less attention to conjunctions compared with native speakers. Moreover, 'and' and 'addition' were found to be the two most common conjunctions used by EFL learners. It was also found that the reason behind the inappropriate application of conjunctions is L1 transfer.

Yasuda (2019) found that Japanese EFL students have problems using definite pronouns and articles to make cohesion in their writing. They were not successful to use definite articles when it was necessary. Besides, they failed to use appropriate pronominal systems and they had to rely on repeating exactly the same words. In line with the results of previous studies, it was found that EFL learners frequently use conjunctive ties such as 'and' and 'now'.

Bui (2022) explored the use of cohesive devices in Vietnamese college students' writings. Lexical items were frequently used by the participants of this study. Interestingly, they showed the same pattern in the use of cohesive devices and the errors they made. The errors were associated with their misconceptions regarding some language items. It was shown that writing requirements are the most influential factors in the choice of cohesive devices.

Kim and Crossley (2019) investigated the relationship between L2 writing quality and the use of cohesive features. They found that lexical cohesion at the paragraph level played the most important role in different writing tasks. The authors stated that L2 writers who connect their ideas through referential cohesion are more probable to get a higher writing score. Moreover, they argued that the relation between cohesion and L2 writing quality depends to a large extent on different task types. Similar studies have focused on the use of cohesive devices by L1 Arab English learners. For instance, Khalil (1989) explored cohesive devices used in the expository essays written by Arab EFL freshmen. After categorizing and counting the cohesive devices, it was revealed that the participants mostly relied on repetition of the same vocabulary and they tended to overuse some connectives such as 'and' and 'also'. The study concluded that EFL learners use a limited number of cohesive devices which can specifically affect the coherence of the text and the quality of the writing in general.

Likewise, Hameed (2022) analyzed the use of synonyms as cohesive devices in the descriptive essays of Iraqi university students. The result of the frequency counts and qualitative analysis showed that Iraqi English learners tend to use different synonyms; however, they have problems with the choice of proper words. Al Khotaba (2022) compared the use and command of cohesive devices by Omani English student-teachers and native English speakers in descriptive English writing considering Halliday and Hasan's framework. A qualitative analysis of the writings revealed a remarkable difference between Arab students' and native speakers' use of cohesive devices with respect to frequency, control and variety. In English native speakers writing, there was a balance between the use and frequency of cohesive devices. However, in that of Arab students, there was an overuse of certain types especially in repetition and reference while some others were totally neglected rendering their compositions non-cohesive.

Alawerdy and Alalwi (2022) investigated the effect of explicit instruction of cohesive devices, specifically English conjunctions, to Saudi EFL learners. The participants included 43 university freshmen students who were randomly assigned to an experimental or control group. The experimental group received oral explanation of different types and functions of English conjunctions in 5 subsequent sessions. They were also required to practice these devices in recognition as well as production tasks. Paired mean difference between pre and post tests indicated significant improvement in the performance of the experimental group both in terms of accuracy of use and misuse. Further analysis of the results indicated that the quality and frequency of conjunction types had significantly changed for the experimental group rather than the control group.

In a similar study, Aldera (2016), collected 3 essays written by 8 female EFL advanced learners who were MA English students at Najran University. The topics were selected such that learners would use text structures including 'listing', 'compare and contrast' and 'cause and effect'. The analysis of the content of the essays focused on how the ideas were organized and coherently written by the learners. Results indicated that in spite of the fact that students were to some extent competent to write accurately at the sentence level yet, their writing heavily suffered from poor logical organization and lacked fundamental qualities related to cohesion, punctuation and spelling. Saud (2015) explored cohesive errors in thirty persuasive essays written by Indonesians undergraduate students majoring in English language. They had passed one course for essay writing and at end of the semester were asked to write a persuasive essay on one of the topics given to them: "promoting national tourism" or "educating people in remote areas and developing a healthy environment". The collected essay assignments were analyzed by identifying and classifying cohesive devices based on the taxonomy developed by Halliday and Hasan's (1976) and then evaluating each device to detect cohesive errors. The aim of the study was to measure the quality of essay writings in terms of these errors in the performance of EFL learners. It was hoped that the study would shed light on material development for writing skill and improve both the teaching process for the teachers and the learning process for the students. Findings showed that students had used a considerable proportion of cohesive devices in their writing. The highest rate was for Lexical cohesion (39%) followed by conjunctions (31.25%) and Reference items (29%). However, almost half of the ties used were ungrammatical: Lexica errors (43.38%), Reference errors (33.53%) and

finally conjunction ones were (23.07%). It was argued that in many cases the source of lexical errors was lack of world knowledge contrary to reference and conjunction errors which showed lack of complete mastery.

Wahby (2014) hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between knowing how to implement English cohesive ties in writing and the quality of the writing by EFL learners. To check this prediction, an experiment was devised to evaluate the quality of the students' writings and their competence in using cohesive ties properly. A close examination of the data demonstrated that those students who scored highest, were more aware cohesive ties and how to use them. On the other hand, the low-quality writing was associated with less frequent ties in their writings.

Gazzar (2006) investigated how Arab L2 English learners use cohesive lexical devices to create cohesion in their writing. The aim was to find whether any central tendencies or common features were obvious in the use of lexical devices and also to identify the difficulties Arab EFL learners face when using lexical cohesion. The findings demonstrated that Arab learners basically used lexical repetition to create cohesion in their writings. Moreover, it was found that lack of sufficient lexical knowledge led to limited lexical variety which could be traced back to limited length of exposure to English and hence a high rate of negative transfer from L1 Arabic. It was concluded that lexical knowledge plays a pivotal role in developing cohesiveness of a text.

Mohamed and Omer (2000) compared rhetorical strategies used in the writings of Arabic native speakers and native speakers of English. They found that reiteration of lexical items was very dominant in Arabic whereas, English writers preferred using synonyms and superordinates to create cohesion in their texts. Besides, other types of cohesive devices such as substitution and ellipsis appeared mostly in English texts rather than Arabic texts.

Given the fact that the majority of the studies conducted on cohesion and the use of cohesive devices by Arab students were restricted to argumentative and descriptive writing, the present research tried to fill the gap by shedding light on the use of cohesive devices in narrative translation and free writing tasks. The study is guided by three key research questions:

1. To what extent do Iraqi EFL learners use cohesive devices in their English narrative translations compared to standard translations?
2. To what extent do Iraqi Arabic EFL learners use cohesive devices in their English free narrative writings?
3. How are cohesive devices used differently by Iraqi Arabic EFL learners in their English narrative translations and free narrative writings?

## **2. Method**

This study adopted a descriptive quantitative method. The aim was to systematically obtain information to describe how the participants of the study use cohesive ties in their narrative translation and free narrative writings. The independent variable was the type of writing with two levels: translation versus free writing and the dependent variables were Iraqi EFL learners'

use of different types and subtypes of cohesive devices, namely: reference, substitution, ellipsis and lexical cohesion in the translation and free writing tasks.

## **2.1. Participants**

The participants of the study were 30 Iraqi EFL learners at the intermediate level of English language (19 female and 11 male) at Kufa University, Iraq. They were undergraduate students of English translation studies who had passed different English courses on listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary-building as well as several courses on the specialized translation of various fields and paragraph writing. They were selected from a pool of 92 students who took the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). Convenient sampling was applied to select the participants who were at the intermediate level based on the results of their performance on OQPT. The participants were from 21 to 25 ( $M = 22.7$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ) years old and spoke Arabic as their native language. Before launching the project, informed consent was obtained from all the participants.

## **2.2. Data Collection**

To gather the data, three authentic narrative Arabic texts, ranging from 120 to 250 words, were chosen to be translated by the participants into English. One of the Arabic texts was about a hairdresser; the other was a short news on a newspaper and the last one was a narrative of someone experiencing wheelchair use for the first time.

For the purpose of free writing, the participants were provided with three topics to write their narratives. The first topic was “my first school day”, the second was “the most interesting memory in my life” and the third one was “Retell a story you have read; or the story of a film you have watched”.

The study was conducted in three subsequent sessions held in one week. First, after gaining the necessary permissions, the instructor administered the OQPT to a pool of 92 EFL learners to identify the ones who were at the intermediate level of English language. Subsequently, 30 intermediate students were chosen as the participants of the study. In the next session, they were given three short narrative texts to be translated into English. Finally, the participants were required to write narratives about the three topics in the last session. There was no time limit for both types of tasks and the participants completed both task within a range 60-90 minutes.

After data collection was completed, the cohesive devices used in each of the translations and narratives were identified and counted by two expert raters applying Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) framework. If there were differences in their ratings, a third rater was asked to assess the tasks again. In addition, for the analysis of narrative translations, the raters were asked to translate the narratives individually, when after discussing minor differences, they agreed on a version as the standard translated text for each narrative. These texts were considered as the criteria to compare translations produced by students and to measure and evaluate their use of cohesive devices. As writing samples were of different sizes, frequency comparisons could not be informative enough about the quality of the writing and the use of cohesive devices. Therefore, in order to have an accurate picture of how the ties were used in the writing of the

students, mean percentages of each cohesive types per sentence were calculated both in the students' performance and the standard translations. Then, the mean percentage of each cohesive type was compared with the mean of the standard translation to find how cohesive ties were represented in the performance of the Iraqi' EFL learners. The statistical procedure for such comparisons, where the mean of one group is compared with a standard, is one sample t-tests. In one sample t-tests, the mean of the standard is set as the test-value.

Finally, the mean percentages of cohesive types in the narrative translations and free narrative writings were compared using paired t-tests, in order to identify patterns in the use of cohesive types in translation and free writings of the EFL learners.

### 3. Results

The first aim of the current research was to find the extent of using cohesive types in the translated narratives. As the first step, the mean number of sentences produced by participants for the three narratives was compared with the mean number of sentences in the standard translations. As shown in table 1, the mean number of sentences produced by Iraqi learners was 6.76 compared to 8.66 for standard texts (Table 2). Results of the one sample t-test performed on these mean scores showed a meaningful difference ( $t = 4.29$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ) which means that Iraqi learners significantly produced shorter texts than the standard translations which might lead to lesser use of cohesive devices in their production. In other words, we expected underrepresentation of cohesive ties in terms of lower mean scores in the translations of the participants.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for number of sentences in the narrative translations

Sentences per narrative	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	6.7667	2.41666	.44122

**Table 2.** One-Sample Test for number of sentences in the narrative translations

Sentences per narrative	Test Value = 8.66			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
	-4.291	29	.000	-1.89333

Given the fact that in translation tasks, writers are somehow obliged to represent what appears in the original text, we predicted Iraqi students to have underrepresented semantic relationships in texts possibly by producing less cohesive ties in their production.

In order to verify this prediction, we compared the mean percentage of each cohesive types per sentence with the related mean in the standard texts set as the standard test values. Table 3 shows descriptive statistics for each cohesive type used by Iraqi EFL learners in translating the narratives. The results of one sample t-tests performed on the mean scores showed that the mean of demonstratives and adversatives were significantly lower in the performance of the students ( $t = 3.170$ ;  $P = .004$  and  $t = 3.394$ ;  $P = .002$  respectively). However contrary to our expectation, higher rates of mean scores were observed for all other types of ties. These being significant for articles ( $t = 3.561$ ;  $P = .004$ ), comparatives ( $t = 2.964$ ;  $P = .006$ ), addition ( $t = 3.641$ ;



P=.001) and lexical devices such as synonymy (t= 4.509; P=.00) and superordinates (t- 5.198; P=.00).

**Table 3.** Mean percentages of ties per sentence in the narrative translations

Cohesive device	Mean standard	Mean	Standard Deviation	S. E. Mean	
Reference	Pronominals	2.00	2.31	1.61	.29
	Demonstratives	.80	.57	.38	.07
	Articles	.73	1.29	.86	.15
	Comparatives	1.04	1.48	.83	.15
Substitution	Ones	.04	.03	.06	.01
	So	.04	.02	.06	.01
Conjunctions	Addition	.34	.61	.41	.07
	Adversative	.12	.05	.10	.01
	Temporal	.19	.35	.24	.04
Lexical	Synonym	.19	.43	.30	.05
	Superordinate	.04	.21	.18	.03
	General	.04	.04	.09	.01

Generally, then, in spite of the fact that Iraqi learners produced shorter passages in their translations, the rate of cohesive ties did not decrease in their production. Rather, the L2 learners were using more cohesive ties than expected in translation tasks (see below for interpretation of significant decrease in the rate of demonstratives and adversatives).

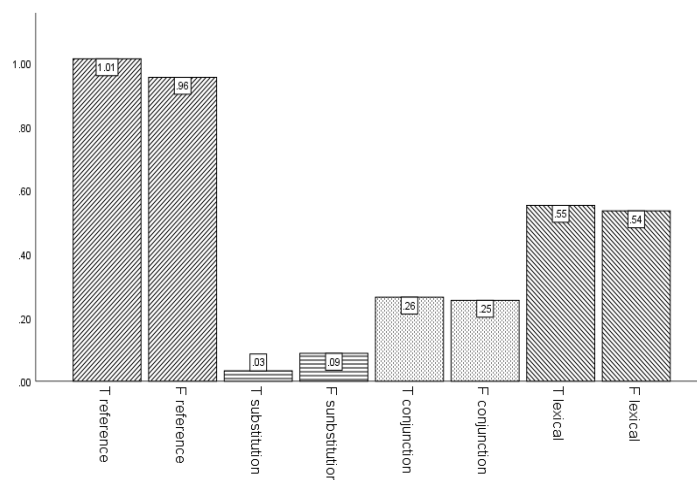
To answer the second and third research questions, mean percentages of cohesive ties per sentence in the free narrative writings were calculated (Table 4) and compared with their counterparts in the narrative translations using paired t-tests.

**Table 4.** Mean percentages of ties per sentence in the free narrative writings

Cohesive device	Mean	Std. Deviation	S. E. Mean	
Reference	Pronominals	2.1091	1.39122	.25400
	Demonstratives	.5006	.42454	.07751
	Articles	1.2101	1.03044	.18813
	Comparatives	.0540	.12515	.02285
Substitution	Ones	.0896	.12096	.02208
	So	.0847	.16069	.02934
Conjunctions	Addition	.6702	.45503	.08308
	Adversative	.0727	.12459	.02275
	Temporal	.2633	.21826	.04053
Lexical	Synonym	.3837	.38460	.07022
	Superordinate	.1567	.19805	.03616
	General	.0130	.06135	.01120

Figure 1 shows the mean scores of main cohesive types used per sentence in both tasks. The close averages of each cohesive type in the two tasks indicates similar performance of Iraqi EFL learners in translation and free writing tasks. This is confirmed statistically as results of

the paired comparisons indicated no significant difference between mean scores of cohesive ties in the narrative translations and narrative writings. To put it another way, Iraqi learners produced as many cohesive devices in the free narrative writings as in the narrative translation tasks.



**Figure 1.** Mean scores of ties per sentence in translation and free writing tasks

The current research aimed to find whether Iraqi EFL learners use of cohesive ties in English reflects a natural flow as demanded by the English language or it represents the effect of their first language. To this end, we designed a study to compare the use of cohesive devices including reference, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion in English translation of Arabic narratives and English free narrative writings produced by Iraqi intermediate EFL university students.

At first, three translation experts were asked to translate the target texts and, making modifications, if necessary, agree on a version as the standard translation for each text.

Then, two sets of comparisons were conducted. First, a number of narrative translations written by the Iraqi EFL learners were compared with the standard translations. The logic was that, similar patterns of use in these two types of translations indicate that Iraqi learners produce as many cohesive ties in English as naturally required, while different patterns of use indicate divergence from norms of cohesion in English.

The analysis of the samples in terms of the mean frequency of cohesive types used in the translations indicated that except for demonstratives and adversatives which were significantly underrepresented, all other types of cohesive ties were overrepresented in the performance of Iraqi EFL learners. The overuses were significant for articles ( $t = 3.561$ ;  $P = .004$ ), comparatives ( $t = 2.964$ ;  $P = .006$ ), addition ( $t = 3.641$ ;  $P = .001$ ) and lexical devices such as synonymy ( $t = 4.509$ ;  $P = .00$ ) and superordinates ( $t = 5.198$ ;  $P = .00$ ). On the other hand, were used significantly less than the standard texts.

Furthermore, comparison between free narrative writings and narrative translations (paired t-tests) indicated no significant difference between the two types writings. These findings suggest that overrepresentation and under representation of cohesive types is a general property of the Iraqi EFL learners writing.

A close look at the type of divergence indicates that these patterns reflect transfer of L1 Arabic grammatical properties into their English interlanguage. As for articles, specifically the definite article, it has been reported that their distribution is considerably broader in Arabic than in English. For instance, the definite quantifier 'بعض' (some) can appear with a definite noun in Arabic. So Arabic speakers might translate a phrase like 'يظن بعض الناس...' (Some people think ...) to 'some of \*the people think ...'. Similarly, phrases like 'عدة من' (a number of) can appear with definite nouns in Arabic. This might result in ungrammatical translations such as 'We met a number of \*the students' for 'We met a number of students.

Using too many additive ties such as 'and' indicates another aspect of Arabic language which seems to have affected Iraqi EFL learners' performance. This means other semantic relations such as adversatives were shown with simple connectives like 'and'. This kind of transfer explains why the use of adversatives were significantly lower in the translations of the students. However, it is not clear why ties like synonymy and superordinates were used significantly higher in the translations, while previous research indicates lexical repetition as a main property of the EFL learners' writings (but see below).

We also found that Iraqi EFL learners seldom used demonstratives like 'this'. The analysis of the writings showed that the use of pronominal demonstratives was rare in the performance of the learners. Rather, they used these reference ties mostly as demonstrative adjectives. In many cases, they were used with a noun which was a synonym or superordinate of a noun mentioned in the previous text. However, this is interestingly similar to native writers as reported by Gray (2010) who investigated the use of demonstratives 'this' and 'these' and their contribution to the development of cohesion in native English experts' writings. As he explains expert writers use pronominal demonstratives to refer to previous texts which span beyond clause boundaries comparatively less than referring to complete clauses. On the other hand, the preference of Iraqi learners to use demonstrative adjectives with nouns which had another noun as their antecedent is in a sharp contrast with the performance of native speakers who, as Gray highlights it, used demonstratives with abstract nouns such that they could refer back to extended discourse breaking the borders of not only nouns but also clauses.

The results of the current study showed that Iraqi EFL learners have learned English cohesive ties to achieve textuality in their narrative writings. Yet, contrary to expert writers who use more diverse expressions, the range of CT forms are quite limited in their writings as we found for the use of 'and' as the only form for 'additives'. Besides, the use of CTs by Iraqi EFL learners was not compatible with the norms of authentic English texts. In fact, the observed divergence in terms of overuse and underuse of English CTs indicate transfer of L1 grammatical properties rather than failure in establishing semantic relations in their writings. Further research is required to show that whether contrastive instruction of English CTs with an emphasis on grammatical features would have positive effect on L2 writers' performance. The results of this study are limited to narrative genre; studying other modes of discourse might reveal different patterns of use in Iraqi's writings, yet we predict that the effect of L1 patterns in EFL writing would be a general property in Iraqi EFL writings. This is a prediction which calls for further research in this area.

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