

التنظيم النصي والتفاعل بين الأشخاص في الخطاب الأكاديمي المكتوب

بشتيوان عبدالله صابر

قسم الإنتاج و الصحة الحيوانية ، كلية علوم
الهندسة الزراعية، جامعة صلاح الدين،
أربيل، العراق

Pishtiwan.saber@su.edu.krd

ياسين محمد عولا

قسم وقاية النبات، كلية علوم الهندسة
الزراعية، جامعة صلاح الدين،
أربيل، العراق

Yassen.awla@su.edu.krd

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Textual Organisation and Interpersonal Interaction in Academic Written Discourse

Yassen Muhammad Awla
Salahaddin University, College
of Agricultural Engineering
Science, Department of Plant
Protection

Pishtiwan A. Saber
Salahaddin University, College of
Agricultural Engineering Science,
Department of Animal Production
& Health

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المخلص

تبحث هذه الورقة في أنماط التفاعل التي يستخدمها الكتاب في السياقات الأكاديمية. يتحقق هذا التواصل الفعال من خلال استخدام أدوات ووسائل معجمية-نحوية متنوعة مثل التماسك والانسجام والاستبدال والإحالة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، توضح الورقة كيف يؤسس الكتاب العلاقة مع القراء لخلق تواصل فعال وناجح.

تركز الورقة على جانبين من الخطاب المكتوب. أولاً، تفحص التنظيم النصي—كيف ترشد النصوص القراء عبر بنية المعلومات باستخدام الإشارات الانتقالية والعلامات الخطابية لإظهار كيفية ارتباط الأجزاء المختلفة من النص ببعضها البعض. ثانياً، تستكشف التفاعل بين الأشخاص داخل النصوص المكتوبة، وتفحص كيف يتفاعل الكتاب مع القراء من خلال التعليق والتقييم لأعمالهم. يستخدم الكتاب استراتيجيات مثل ضمائر القارئ وتمثيل الأدوار، حيث

يضعون القراء كمستفسرين بينما يأخذون هم دور المجيب. تبحث الورقة بشكل أعمق في مدى تطبيق سمات التنظيم النصي والتفاعل بين الأشخاص على البيانات المختارة.

Abstract

This paper investigates the modes of interaction employed by academic writers to establish effective communication with their readers. The study utilizes Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory of cohesion and coherence and Hyland's (2005) interactional model of metadiscourse, it adopts a functional-linguistic framework to examine how writers construct meaning and interpersonal engagement in academic texts. The data was taken from an article entitled "How to teach Reading" by Jeremy Harmer. Using a qualitative content analysis, the study explores two key aspects: (1) the textual organization of discourse—how writers employ cohesive devices, transitional signals, and discourse markers to guide readers through information structure; and (2) the interpersonal interaction between writers and readers, as reflected in the use of stance markers, reader pronouns, and evaluative expressions. The analysis was conducted through a combining approach of manual discourse analysis with quantitative frequency counts to identify recurring linguistic patterns. The findings reveal that successful academic writers strategically balance textual cohesion with interactive engagement to construct clarity, credibility, and reader involvement. The study concluded in order for academic writing to be effective, writers need to integrate cohesive organization and interpersonal strategies to achieve certain communicative purpose.

1.Introduction

When writers produce a text, they do so systematically and purposefully, not by haphazardly collecting irrelevant ideas. Their main purpose is to convey their ideas and opinions to readers in a clear and organized way. Writers guide readers through their choice of linguistic features—such as references, substitutions, conjunctions, repetition, and lexical relations—to show how different parts of a text are related and cohere as a unified whole.

Beyond guiding readers through language, writers also construct relationships with their intended audience and interact with them. They achieve this by projecting roles onto readers (such as questioner) while assuming complementary roles themselves (such as answerer), and by using reader pronouns to establish connection. This interaction occurs when readers successfully understand the conveyed message. To achieve these interactional purposes, writers employ lexico-grammatical resources such as modality and evaluation.



This paper emphasizes two aspects of written discourse. First, it examines **textual organization**—how texts guide readers through information structures using transitional signals and discourse markers to demonstrate the relationships between different text segments. Second, it explores **interpersonal interaction** in written texts—specifically, how writers interact with readers by commenting on and evaluating their own work, using reader pronouns, and enacting complementary roles. The paper further investigates the extent to which these interaction features are applied in the selected data.

2.Literature Review

When people communicate, they do not produce isolated, decontextualized utterances; rather, they construct unified texts to convey their messages in ways that are understandable and clear to their addressees. As Halliday and Hasan (1976:1) explain, "the word TEXT is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole." Thus, a text encompasses both spoken and written forms of any length. Texture: Cohesion and Coherence

Halliday and Hasan further identify the defining characteristic that differentiates a text from a non-text: texture, which binds the text together as a unified whole. Texture is achieved through two complementary elements:

Cohesion refers to the internal linguistic structure of the text—the grammatical and lexical ties that connect different parts of the discourse. These include references, substitutions, conjunctions, repetition, and lexical relations that create surface-level connectivity.

Coherence depends on readers' interpretation of the text based on their socio-cultural and situational background knowledge. It represents the underlying semantic unity that makes a text meaningful beyond its grammatical connections.

2.1 Cohesion

Cohesion is one of the essential components of the text. It is the relationship or connection between words and sentences or within the text 'cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some elements in the discourse is dependent of that on another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by resource to it' (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 4). So, it can be said that there is a co-referential and semantic relationship between the elements of the text. Generally, three main types of cohesion are mentioned in literature. They are grammatical, lexical and conjunctions. Grammatical cohesion is



the grammatical relationship between words. It can be represented in different terms such as:

Reference: is the commonest ways of showing cohesion. It is used when words are used to refer to words used in other places within the text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) distinguish two types of references. Endophoric 'referring to a thing identified in the surrounding text' and Exophoric reference 'referring to a thing independently of the context of situation' (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:32). The former is referred to as textual and the latter as situational.

a-Three blind mice, three blind mice.

See how they run! See how they run!

b- doctor Foster went to Gloucester in a shower of rain

He stepped in a puddle right in the middle and never went there again.

c-There were two wens upon there.

Another came, and there were three.

In (a) *they* refer to three blind mice; in (b) *there* refers to Gloucester; in (c) *another* refers to wens. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:32).

Endophoric reference is further subdivided into anaphoric and cataphoric. Anaphoric reference occurs when the referent has already been mentioned earlier, while cataphoric happens when the referent has not yet been mentioned but will be shown in the next clause or sentence. (Eggs, 2004:34-35).

Look at the sun, it is going down quickly (It refers back to the sun)

It is going down quickly, the sun. (It refers forward to the sun)

Lexical cohesion: Unlike grammatical cohesion which has syntagmatic relation, lexical cohesion has paradigmatic or semantic relationship between various elements in the text. Lexical cohesion is represented by repetition of the words or phrases, lexical relation of words such as synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, and collocations. Eggs (2004, 42) states that lexical cohesion refers to how the writers use the lexical content items such as verbs, nouns, adjective and adverbs to focus on the topic consistently under discussion. For example, if the topic is about mouse, the words related to the topic are likely to be rodent, tail, cheese, squeak even computer.

2.2 Conjunction

Conjunction is connecting two sentences or clauses by means of conjunction words such as (and, but) or conjunctive adverbs (however and therefore). Conjunction does not make sense unless the reader looks at the first clause or sentence (Jones, 2012: 50). Halliday (1976, 246)





classifies Conjunctions into four groups. Additive conjunctions, which add information to the previous clause such as and, furthermore, further, in addition (to that), also, moreover, not only that but, besides. The second type is called adversative or contrastive because they contrast the previous clause such as but, however, yet, though, on the other hand. The third type is known as causal such as so, thus, hence, therefore, consequently. Finally, those are called temporal or sequential conjunctions like then, after that, next, firstly, subsequently, finally.

2.3 Coherence

Another important aspect of texture is coherence. Coherence is defined as 'the text's relationship to its extra-textual context (the social and cultural context of its occurrence)' (Eggins, 2004: 24). Based on this definition, it could be argued that linguistic features do not always help to arrive at the correct meaning but the reader's interpretation of the message can help to decode the intended meaning by taking into consideration their 'interpretive framework' (Jones, 2012: 53). However, this does not mean that cohesion and coherence work separately but they are rather complementary. Georgakopolou and Goutsos (1997, 16) suggest that a text could not be fully understood unless it is related to the context it was produced. Sometimes, a text might fully have all cohesive devices but may not give any meaning because the reader cannot interpret and decode its meaning.

The Austrian composer Mozart was a musical genius. He has got a swimming pool. It actually tingles your skin o tell you it's working. Water would then come out of the fountain such as the one shown here. And that is why dogs still chase rabbit.

Although the text is meaningless but it is not without cohesion. The sentences are connected by the use of pronouns, substitutions and conjunctions but it is impossible to make sense of it because it is incoherent. (Thornbury, 2005:35). Therefore, it can be argued that while cohesion is the surface feature of texts, coherence is the outcome of interaction between readers and text.

3. Interpersonal Interaction

The main aim of communication is to interact and keep a good relationship with people. When People use language they not only describe things and situations but they communicate with each other for other purposes such as sharing information and having influence on each other's attitude and thinking. To fulfil this aim different resources such as

lexico-grammatical features are used as Thompson states ‘interaction is an inherent part of language use means that there must be aspects of grammar which can be identified as enabling us to interact through language’ (Thompson, 2004: 45)

In order to manage interaction in written discourse, writers adopt two interwoven approaches; the information-based approach and function-based approach. The former has to do with how writers take into consideration anonymous readers’ background knowledge and interest and how they meet their needs by guiding them through textual clues. As Thompson and Thetela, (1995: 104) explain, readers significantly shape the writer’s stylistic and rhetorical choices because writers anticipate the needs, expectations, and reactions of their intended audience, which in turn influences how they construct their texts. The latter approach pertains to the way writers in one way or another explicitly interact with the readers by means of projecting roles for the readers such as questioner and considering themselves as answerer and giving their opinion and judgments on the proposition through some linguistic resources such as Modality and Evaluation. Unlike the first one it can be argued that this approach focuses on how writers engage and drag readers into a text to ‘influence the reader’s reaction and behavior’ (Thompson and Thetela, 1995:104).

4.Modality and Evaluation

One of the grammatical devices commonly used by writers as a signal of interaction and interpersonal features is modality. Modality can be defined as "the speaker/writer's stance toward the message communicated" (McCarthy and Carter, 1994: 102). It is related to the writer's assessment of certainty, probability, and possibility of the proposition, as well as their degree of commitment. Apart from modal verbs, modality can also be expressed through modal adjuncts such as *possibly, probably, certainly, likely, definitely, and willingly*.

Thompson (2004) divides modality into two types. The first is **modalization** (information): when the purpose is to exchange information, modality relates to how valid the information is in terms of probability and usuality. The second type is **modulation** (goods-and-services), which includes obligation—the degree of requirement on the part of the addressee (such as permissible, advisable, or obligatory)—and willingness—the speaker's inclination to achieve a goal (such as ability, willingness, and determination) (Thompson, 2004: 67).





Both modulation and modalization can be classified in terms of the degree of strength they express. For example, high requirement can be interpreted as obligation or necessity (e.g., *must*), mid requirement as advice (e.g., *should*), and low requirement as permission (e.g., *can*) (Lock, 1996: 205).

The child Might be hers. (Probability)

She often went there. (Usuality) (Modalisation)

You should go now. (Obligation)

I will give you a hand. (Willingness) (Modulation)

Modality can have different functions. They are often exploited for various purposes such as to disguise responsibility and show writer's opinion objectively, to appease the command and request politely and to avoid face threatening so as to fulfil their goals. Moreover, to convince the reader and addressee for example, in scientific discourse which tends to be objective and precise implicit or explicit modality is employed to achieve its aim.

There has been much controversy among researchers about evaluation and Modality as different approach or the same, but modality overlaps with Evaluation in the sense that they both expresses speaker's attitude and opinion toward a proposition 'Any Modality unless it is reported as coming from someone else is a sign that in some way the speaker is expressing the personal view rather than objective fact' (Thompson, 2004:73).

Unlike modality, which relies on an intricate grammatical system, evaluation operates primarily through lexical choices within specific grammatical structures. Thompson (2004: 75) describes evaluation as the means by which writers convey their feelings and perspectives about entities to their readers. Hunston and Thompson (2000: 5) provide a more comprehensive definition, characterizing evaluation as "the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about."

The nature of evaluative language extends beyond simple binary judgments. While evaluation often involves positioning entities along value scales—such as good versus bad or desirable versus undesirable—it encompasses a broader range of emotional and attitudinal expressions. Martin (2005: 42) identifies three key dimensions of evaluative language:

affect (emotional responses), judgment (ethical assessments), and appreciation (aesthetic valuations).

The effectiveness of evaluation depends significantly on how it is integrated into discourse. Evaluation exerts greater influence on readers when embedded implicitly within clauses rather than stated explicitly. Writers achieve this through conjuncts such as *and* and *but*, or subordinators such as *because* and *although*, which signal shared assumptions between writer and reader about what information will follow (Hunston and Thompson, 2000: 9).

Hunston and Thompson (2000: 21) identify three primary linguistic markers of evaluation in texts. The first involves comparison, realized through comparative adjectives and adverbs, adverbs of degree (*very*, *extremely*), and limiting expressions (*just*, *only*, *at least*). This category also includes various forms of negation, both grammatical (*never*, *not*, *hardly*) and lexical (*fail*, *lack*).

The second marker comprises subjective and personal indicators that reveal the writer's stance. These include modal verbs and related expressions of certainty or uncertainty, manifested through particular adverbs, nouns, and verbs. Additionally, sentence adverbs, conjunctions, and marked syntactic structures—such as extraposition with *it* and *there*, or pseudo-cleft constructions—signal evaluative positioning.

The third marker focuses on the inherent value attributed to evaluated objects, whereby the writer's choice of descriptive language itself conveys assessment and appraisal.

Lastly, evaluation is recognized by the attributed value of the objects. (Hunston and Thompson, 2000:21)

5.Evaluation and Engagement

In their discussions, writers always expect objection and disapproval from the readers. In order to avoid that they exert their ultimate effort to develop a persuasive tool to convince the potential readers. Good writers not only express their attitudes and comments on the messages, but also try to drag readers into the discussions and arguments to persuade them such as using reader pronoun and questions.

Hyland (2005, 182) suggests that reader pronouns *you* and *your* is the most obvious and direct way of speaking with the readers as if they are present in the text. However, she maintains that using inclusive *we* the





(reader and writer together) is more prevalent in academic written discourse because it shows agreement on a shared understanding of knowledge between the reader and writer.

Another important technique of interaction is question which is a typical feature of reader involvement in interaction. That is writers deliberately arise questions in the text supposedly from the readers 'They arouse interest and encourage the reader to explore an unresolved issue with the writer as an equal, a conversational partner, sharing his or her curiosity and following where the argument leads' (Hyland, 2005 :185)

6. Data and Methodology

The data were collected from pedagogical coursebook for ESL teachers entitled "How to teach Reading" by Jeremy Harmer. Using a qualitative content analysis, the study explores two key aspects: (1) the textual organization of discourse—how writers employ cohesive devices, transitional signals, and discourse markers to guide readers through information structure; and (2) the interpersonal interaction between writers and readers, as reflected in the use of stance markers, reader pronouns, and evaluative expressions. The analysis was conducted through a combining approach of manual discourse analysis with quantitative frequency counts to identify recurring linguistic patterns.

7. Analysis and Discussion

The data is an excerpt of a section entitled (How to teach reading) taken from a textbook for EFL teachers known as 'How to teach English'. It was noticed that the writer is trying to address the intended readers potentially teachers and learners.

The data consists of (38) lines divided into three sections. For the purpose of the analysis each section is going to be focused separately in order to apply the emerged criteria in terms of textual organization and interpersonal interaction.

In the first section entitled (why teach reading?), both aspects of written discourse; textual organization and interpersonal interaction can be seen throughout the extract. That is to say, the writer uses some textual features to guide his readers and flow the information smoothly. To fulfill this purpose, some prominent lexico-grammatical features are identified such as cohesive devices which lead to the text appear as a meaningful coherent unit. As Thompson (2005, 104) suggested that writers construct roles to the anonymous reader as a questioner and assuming themselves as answerer, this could be applied on the opening headlines as if readers ask (How to teach Reading) and (why teach reading?) this paves the way

for the writers to explain their views by answering and elaborating the question.

Numerous cohesive devices and both grammatical and lexical features are widely used such as reference and repetition of words and phrases, lexical semantic relation and conjunctions. In the first paragraph, the writer uses cleft-structure to hook the readers and draws their attention and expectation about the reasons that follow. Therefore, the readers are fully engaged in the first sentence. In addition to that, as indicated in the Literature review the most prevalent grammatical cohesion (Reference) has been extensively employed such as the use of pronoun *them* in sentence (4, 5 and 9) which are anaphoric references referring back to *student*. Apart from grammatical cohesions, the section contains lexical word relations such word similarities between (career and Job) and repetition of words like (read, English, student, study, writing, acquisition, and teaching) as well as lexical relation between the items such as teaching, teacher, student, language, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation...etc. which all participate in keeping the unity of the text because they are all related to the same semantic field. Moreover, some conjunctions are used between the sentences and even within paragraphs which facilitate the text transition of the ideas such as sequential conjunctions (in the first place, lastly) and additive conjunction (too, also, also) in paragraph two and three and four that indicate the additional usefulness of reading texts. In terms

of interpersonal interaction, it can be argued that the writer more or less makes interaction with the reader by commenting on the propositions, his judgments and giving his opinion about the status of affairs for example (*must be a good idea, is a good thing, and is useful*) which express his attitude towards the entity. Other evaluative features are presented through modal verbs and modal adjuncts such as (*acquisition is Likely, we will need to*) the writer wants to use objective implicit modality to mitigate the probability and obligation respectively. Furthermore, the writer has used inclusive pronoun *we* to persuade the reader and involve them directly in discussion and arguments like (*anything we can do, we will need to, we construct*) the pronoun *we* here is an inclusive one which refers to both writer and reader together.

The same pattern of analysis will be followed in the second section of the data. The title is (What kind of reading should students do). Again, this starts with a question as if from the imagined readers. From the first sentence, reader's full attention is drawn to the discussion and controversy about the kind of reading that students should do. So the



readers can predict what the main focus of the section will be on through the textual clue used in the opening sentence. The writer keeps his focus on the unity of the first paragraph by using some synonyms like (discussion and controversy) and antonyms such as (artificial and authentic). Moreover, he has skillfully used the transitional signal from one sentence to another and even between the paragraphs such as (However) in the opening sentence of the paragraph which contrasts with what he has indicated in the previous paragraph. It can be argued that this section contains most arguments which are well developed through using other techniques such as using reader pronoun (You) and in line (16) which indicates that the writer is obviously addressing the readers in order to convince them. He also benefits from discourse markers to add and contradict his arguments in order to entangle the readers in persuasive and engaging argument like (on the one hand... on the other) line (18) and (but) line (20) and (25). There are definitely some cohesive devices such as reference in line (16) (Them) is an anaphoric reference to *the Times* or *the Guardian*. And (them) in (16, 17 and 26) refer back to student. The aim of that is the writer mentions someone or something and keeps track of them by using pronoun reference. Additionally, the text sounds as a whole unit because the writer has cleverly repeated the lexical related words to keep his emphasis on the unity of the topic consistently like (Authentic, Artificial, oversimplified, and adapted, students)

In terms of Interpersonal interaction, the writer in some lines gives his attitude, opinion and thinking about the entities for example in (15) he refers to traditional teaching material as *artificial, comical and untypical*. The most popular examples are using modal operator and modal adjuncts for instance, in (16) he, uses *certainly* to show his degree of certainty about the authenticity quality of both newspapers. Other examples of modality can be found in the same line *will probably* is the combination of modal operator with modal adjuncts to show the degree of certainty and probability. It is also noticed that the majority of modality used in this section are related to probability and obligation. This shows the writer's intention in convincing the reader about the entities because he does not want to explicitly but he rather uses phrase and modal verbs to reduce the responsibility of what he is expressing in this way he can affect the readers and persuade them about his argument. Modality is used both objectively and subjectively for example in line (18) *a balance has to be struck* the obligation is combined with passive voice. The writer probably wants to mask the responsibility of his utterance and to avoid a face threat which is a skilful strategy to persuade the reader. In addition to

modality which are used to express writer's attitude and opinion about some issues, other evaluative devices such as relative clauses, negative words and adverbs are used like *never, at all, not*. Moreover, some lexical words and phrases like *convoluted* and metaphorical use of *the style will finish them off* shows his attitude and his intention of using rhetorical language to convince the reader.

The last section entitled 'what reading skills should students acquire' is a kind of solution proposed by the writer and imaginatively from the readers. The writer uses inclusive *we and us* pronoun to include himself and the reader in one common dilemma. Like the previous two sections some prominent cohesive devices and interpersonal features are identified such as the cohesive devices (references, conjunctions, repetition of content words, lexical semantic relation...etc.). Moreover, the writer continuously intrudes the message and commenting on the proposition. He has employed some modal verbs to achieve this aim and some lexical words that have evaluative function for example in (28, 29, 31), the modal (need to) and (do not have to) are used which is low in terms of the degree of tension to express the obligation or necessity. He has deliberately employed this so that he can reduce the degree of requirement on the part of the reader. There are other hedging words such as (may, will, can) to reduce the rate of objection he is likely get from the reader. Generally, whenever modality either through modal verbs or modal adjuncts is used in a text, the writer gives his opinion and judgment about the entity, the opinion might be good or bad or certain or uncertain desirable and undesirable ...etc. which eventually leads to interaction with the reader.

8. Conclusion

This paper has examined two essential aspects of written discourse: textual organization and interpersonal interaction. Both dimensions were explored in detail and found to be significant complementary features that writers commonly employ to guide readers through their texts and establish meaningful engagement with them.

Regarding textual organization, the analysis demonstrated that writers strategically deploy cohesive devices and discourse markers to create reader-friendly texts. These linguistic features provide clear navigational cues, signaling relationships between ideas and indicating the direction of the argument. The data revealed numerous instances of textual organization features that explicitly guide readers through the discourse structure.

Concerning interpersonal interaction, the study found that writers employ modality and evaluation to construct relationships with their audience.



Textual Organisation and Interpersonal Interaction in Academic Written Discourse

Through these resources, writers express their stance, convey their degree of commitment to propositions, and present judgments on various issues related to their topic. This interpersonal dimension enables writers to not only inform but also persuade and engage their readers.

The application of both theoretical frameworks to the data under investigation revealed that the writer skillfully integrated textual organization and interpersonal interaction strategies to develop coherent and persuasive arguments. By combining effective discourse structuring with strategic expressions of modality and evaluation, the writer successfully guided readers through complex ideas while simultaneously establishing credibility and building rapport with the audience. These findings underscore the interdependent nature of textual organization and interpersonal interaction in producing effective written discourse.

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