

An Analysis of the Grammatical Features and Lexical Features that the Hearing-Impaired Learners Use in Writing to Achieve Cohesion

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ABSTRACT

Competence in both spoken and written English is very important for all learners regardless of their hearing ability. Previous studies reveal that hearing-impaired learners face several challenges in their written English. These challenges affect their communication, which is likely to affect their education and career aspirations. The thrust of this paper, therefore, was to identify the grammatical features and lexical features that the hearing-impaired learners use in writing to achieve cohesion. The study confined its investigation to the nature of cohesion in the hearing-impaired learners' English written texts. The data for the study was collected from the written texts of Form Three hearing impaired students sampled from three secondary schools located in Nyeri County, Nakuru County, and Machakos County in Kenya. The written texts were picked from written assignments from different subjects as well as from one free composition. The study was guided by Halliday and Hasan's theory of Cohesion to identify, describe and categorize cohesive devices in the texts. In the final analysis, this paper found out that all the cohesive devices posited by Halliday and Hasan were present, but at varying frequency. Reference had the highest frequency of occurrence and ellipsis the least. The hearing-impaired learners had challenges in writing cohesively.

1. INTRODUCTION

Although several studies have shown that the English writing skills of deaf individuals are usually inferior to those of normal-hearing peers (Wamae, 2003; Ayoo, 2004; Mang'oka, 2009; Antia, Reed & Kreimeyer, 2005; Kuntze, Golo, & Enns, 2014), there is a need for information on the exact nature of their difficulties and of the effects of different linguistic elements on writing success (Paul, 2010). A study on how the hearing impaired learners compose their texts cohesively will add more knowledge to their language acquisition as well as use. In the current study, the researcher examined how hearing-impaired learners use cohesive devices in their writing. Cohesion is concerned with the ways in which the components of a text are mutually connected within a sequence and it is important in the identification of what does and does not constitute a text. According to Halliday & Hasan (2013:5), cohesion is expressed through the three stratal organization of language.

These are semantics, grammar and vocabulary, and orthography. Meaning is realized or coded as forms, while the forms are realized as expressions. Halliday & Hasan (2013:5), treat cohesion as a set of semantic resources that link sentences with what has gone before. Since cohesion is a semantic relation between the elements in a text and some other elements that are important for interpretation, sentence boundary may not limit the cohesiveness in a text. Semantics, therefore, plays a big role in cohesion. Halliday & Hasan (2013) further claim that it is through grammar and vocabulary that users of a language can write cohesively.

Halliday and Hasan (2013) consider cohesive ties in terms of reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical items. Reference tie is used to presupposed and subsequent elements within the same text. They include personal references such as pronouns, demonstratives, and determiners. Substitution creates cohesion by replacing one item with another. A substitution tie within a text is used to replace one word for another, where the latter word in the text serves as the replacement and is used

in lieu of repeating the former word or clause in the text. Ellipsis ties maintain cohesion within a text by allowing a writer to omit an item, which Halliday and Hasan call substitution by “zero.” A conjunction tie forms semantic relations by systematically connecting what is to follow with what has gone before. Conjunction ties include; additives, causal, adversative and temporal conjunctions. Lexical ties have two sub-domains: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration creates cohesion when an item is repeated later in the text as the same word, a synonym or a new synonym of the referent, superordinate or a general word. Collocation is the inclusion of two or more words that are likely to occur within the same context. It creates cohesion through the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur (Hellalet, 2013).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The hearing-impaired learning needs to be given a lot of importance because education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality development and peace (Gatakaa, 2009). Article 3, sub-article 54 (1) b of the Kenyan Constitution (2010) provides that persons with disability are entitled to access educational institutions and facilities with persons with ability. Education ensures that persons with a disability such as the hearing impaired can compete favourably for whatever opportunity exists. As Mwenda (2010) observes, the hearing impaired follow the same curriculum with the sound in hearing hence, they sit for the same national examinations, Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and compete with them for places in institutions of higher learning such as polytechnics, colleges, and universities.

Deaf children follow the same course as their hearing peers with regard to early childhood literacy (Mayer, 2007). The hearing-impaired learners are expected to continue to develop literacy abilities proportionate with the normal hearing counterparts. Mayer (2007) adds that this has, however, not been the case because the hearing impaired learners have always trailed behind the normally hearing learners in national examinations.

Learning for the deaf in Kenya is fraught with obstacles. Studies by Ayoo (2004) and Mang'oka (2009) show that they have not acquired grammatical competence and therefore write incoherently. They have not mastered many of the basic grammar rules and parts of speech in English. Wolff (2011) claims that hearing children's vocabulary is delayed and restricted. Field (2004) and William & Mayer (2015) observe that the deaf encounter literacy problems because they do not have a strong basis of spoken language. The hearing impaired writing is

characterized by the use of a limited number of sentence structure and grammatical system. Their writing is also defective because of delayed language development compared to their hearing peers (Antia, Reed & Kreimeyer, 2005; Antia & Kreimeyer, 2015). The hearing-impaired learners begin their formal school lacking the necessary language skills and general knowledge of normal language development among their age peers (Wilbur 2000; Toth 2002).

In Kenya, most of the hearing impaired learners are segregated from the normal children. They get their education in special boarding schools for the deaf, special units attached to regular schools, and in integrated settings (Kimani, 2012). There are about 200,000 deaf children across the country (Kibiwott, 2014) but only 12,000 deaf children in 118 Special Needs schools, from primary to tertiary level in Kenya (Omulo, 2018). Most of the secondary schools are nearly established from deaf units or primary schools. Omulo (2018) and Kibiwott (2014) observe that most of these schools lack teachers and teaching aids. The scenario is made worse by the fact the Karen Technical College for the deaf is the only post-secondary institution for the deaf.

Very few deaf children go beyond standard eight because they lack the necessary communication ability to compete with their hearing counterparts (Omulo, 2018). Ngao (2005) further notes that hearing-impaired children often enter school later than their hearing counterparts and also spend more years than some of the hearing learners because they repeat several classes. Matthew (2014: 2) claims that ‘low literacy levels of graduates with HI have been seen as an element of educational wastage. This is a great loss, for a developing nation like Kenya.’

Education for the deaf is further complicated by the fact that the teachers lack sufficient proficiency in Kenya Sign Language, which is the language of instruction. Kimani (2012) observes that the lack of enough teachers affects dialogue in teaching. Although learning and teaching take place in sign language, the hearing impaired learners are assessed through reading and writing in English. Kimani (2012) agrees with Marschark (1977) that it is fundamentally wrong to judge deaf children's cognitive abilities based on the ability to read and write. Marschark (1977), as quoted in Mang'oka (2009), further observes that the hearing impaired learners have superior language production skills in sign language as compared to their skills in written English.

In spite of the fact that the hearing impaired share the same syllabus and have to compete for the same opportunities as the normal hearing learners, the hearing impaired face unique problems in their English written texts. Studies by Wilbur (1997); Quigley and Paul (1984); Wamae (2003); Ayoo (2004); Mang'oka and Mutiti (2013); and Mang'oka and Somba (2016) have highlighted the writing challenges faced by the hearing impaired learners albeit these studies have focused mainly on grammar and lexical aspects hence the need to explore semantic aspects in order to understand the hearing impaired learners literacy levels. This would help the researchers to know if semantic aspects of writing are delayed in the same manner as in syntax, morphology, and phonology (Marshark, 1994). Such semantic aspects are like the ability to use cohesive features accurately and the ability to generalize semantic relations in writing.

3. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was adopted for this study. This design establishes the existence of phenomena by explicitly describing them (Babbie, 2010; Dawson, 2002; Given, 2008). The design involves a systematic collection of data to give a clear picture of a certain situation or determine the status of the phenomenon under study. Data was collected from the written texts of hearing-impaired learners in Form Three. Halliday and Hasan model of Cohesion was used in identifying, and describing the grammatical features and cohesive features used by the learners to write cohesively. The written texts were read and the grammatical features and lexical features that create cohesion identified. A brief description of each was given.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section of the paper identifies the grammatical features and lexical features that the hearing-impaired learners used in their writing to achieve cohesion. The basic concept used in the analysis of text for cohesive devices is the tie. In this paper, the tie includes both the cohesive element and the item that the cohesive element presupposes. Halliday and Hasan (2013) describe a tie as a relation between two elements. It is worth noting that some sentences may have more than one tie as will be shown in the sentences identified in this paper. In some other cases, the presupposed item may not be in the preceding sentence but in the sentence in a distant past. It is also possible that the presupposed item may itself be cohesive, presupposing another item as observed in other studies (Aldera, 2016; Ahmed, 2010).

Several extracts from the hearing impaired learners' class assignments (SAC) and free compositions have been given as examples in the analysis. Most of the written texts from both categories were incoherent or incomprehensible. Those that were analyzed had a varying degree of coherence coupled with very many grammatical and structural errors. My locus of enunciation in this section will be to identify the possible lexical features and grammatical features used by the hearing impaired learners to mark cohesion in their writing.

Below are examples from the students' written texts. Example 1 is an extract from the hearing impaired assignment (SAC).

(1)

SAC 1

The water and mineral salts which drop from root and soils.¹The concencent salt by leave had a water from temperature and carbon (iv) oxide.² Then water had a salts from mineral drop move to roots from by leaves had a salt higher.³ The roots had a tree from leaves had a water seals and carbon (iv) oxide of conernation.⁴ To know how to do make of seals move to the root later crop from mineral and leave then crop had a leave temperature which by salt of the air.⁵ When move to the water had a drop from mineral later crop roots had a power of the tree and root than weakness.⁶ The grow had a air from leave of the branch and stem later crop to move roots up to water from drop mineral.⁷ That is why because had a water drop mineral.⁸ That is why because had a water drop a lot then roots be become big later crop of the leave from salts move to air.⁹ The leave had a air of the water move to roots from mineral get of the salt concernation higher.¹⁰ The water drop of the roots there is soil a lot use of root with water from mineral out of the salts from get salt it.¹¹ to know how to make by salts from the roots is power from soil and leaves.¹² The grow from mineral example how you know tree is tall from down search get mineral from slats.¹³ The water search get of salt how to crop from root of the air which by carbon (iv) oxide. The water had a temperature on the leave salts with water and air.¹⁴ The branch of the leave crop of roots had a strong from mineral get how to do search salts a lot from roots. The eassy mean that salt move to water of root get mineral search had a find salt higher.

As seen in the extract, the sentences in the above Biology assignment hardly make sense. None of them is grammatically correct. The learner lacks competence in the use of grammatical structures to construct meaningful sentences. The hearing-impaired learners were supposed to answer the question 'Describe how water and mineral salts move from the roots to the leaves'. As a result of their grammatical incompetence, the hearing impaired learner repeated the keywords in the question. The keywords such as *mineral*, *water*, *roots*, *leaves*, *move* and *roots* have been repeated in almost every sentence, hence raising their frequency in the text significantly. The above text, therefore, has a high frequency of reiteration. Reiteration is a type of lexical cohesion that is characterized by the repetition of lexical items, use of general terms, use of synonym, near-synonym or use of superordinate words (Halliday & Hasan 2013:278). When similar or related words are used in successive sentences, connection in both far and near positions is created (Halliday & Hasan, 2013). This repetition is given the term reiteration by Halliday and Hasan (2013). Reiteration achieves cohesion when one word refers back to another to which it is related by having a common referent.

Similar words have been repeated in example (1). There is same word repetition of the word *water* in SAC 1, sentence 2, 3,4,7,8, 9 and 16. This same word repetition creates lexical cohesion in the text. Other forms of same word repetition are in the repetition of the words; *salts* (sentences- 3, 4,5,8,10,11,12,13,14,16); *higher* (9) *crop* (5,6,7,8,13,15); *move* (6,7,9,16); *Know* (sentence-12); *mineral* (sentences 3,5,6,7,9,10,12,15,16); *temperature* (sentences- 5,14) and *drop*(sentences-3,4,6,8). The word *root* has been repeated in sentences-3,6,7,8,9,11,12,13,15,16 while *leaves* has been repeated in sentences 2,3,4,5,9,14,15 of text SAC1. *Carbon (IV) oxide* has been repeated in sentences 4 and 13 to create cohesion within the text. The words *power*, (sentence 11); *concernment*, which the learner may have wanted to mean concentration (sentence 9) have been repeated in the text. This enhances cohesion in the text.

The hearing-impaired learners also used words that co-occur in the text to create lexical cohesion in the text. The use of co-occurring words is called collocation. Collocation according to Halliday & Hasan (2013) describes the relationship between words that appear in a similar context or words that tend to co-occur. They refer it as a cover term for cohesion that results from the co-occurrence of lexical items that are in some way typically

associated with one another because they tend to occur in a similar environment (Halliday & Hasan, 2013:287). The collocations in example 1 are in most cases, only applicable in the context in which the words have been used. *Leave* collocates with *trees* and *roots* in sentences 4 and 5. *Crop* collocates with *tree*, *leaves*, and *roots* in sentence 5. *Branch* and *stem* collocate with *leave*, and *tree* in sentence 7. *Air* collocates with *temperature* as used in the context of the text in sentence 6. The verb *drop* collocates with the word *move* in sentence 6 and 10. The noun stem collocates with *root*, *leaves* and *tree* in sentence 7. *Soil* collocates with *roots*, *air*, and *leaves* in the context they have been used in sentence 10.

Another lexical feature that enhances lexical cohesion in example 1 is the use of superordinate term and synonym. A Superordinate term is a name for a more general class. It is a cohesive tie between elements by pointing to the original referent with a different lexical term while expressing the same or expanded meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 2013). The word *salt* has been repeated to presuppose *mineral salts* in sentence three. *Salt* is a superordinate of *mineral salts*. Another use of the superordinate term is in the word *mineral* in the third sentence to presuppose *mineral salts*. Synonym on the hand is a word that means exactly or nearly the same as another word. The word *strong* is a synonym of the word *power* in sentence 16.

Present in SAC 1, is the use of words that create grammatical features that enhance cohesion. A good example is the use of pronouns that create reference ties in the text. According to Halliday & Hasan (1976; 2013), grammatical cohesion includes the use of reference ties, conjunction ties, ellipsis, and substitution. The student has used the demonstrative reference *the roots* in sentence 4, 5(SAC 1:4-5). The use of a definite article before a noun establishes cohesion in a text by reference. The definite article connects identity of reference with something mentioned before. The noun *roots* refer to the word *roots* used in the previous sentence hence creating cohesion. The use of the definite article *the* before the noun *water* in sentence 6,10, 11, 13 and 15; and before *leave* in sentence 9, and before *branch* in sentence 15 help in creating cohesion. The nouns point backward to a lexical item mentioned earlier. The demonstrative pronoun *then* in the third sentence does not create a cohesive tie because it lacks a presupposed item. It is therefore erroneously used.

Another grammatical feature that creates cohesion, in example 1 (SAC 1) is the use of conjunctions. Some

of the conjunctions have erroneously been used. For example, **then** in sentence 3 and **later** in sentence 5 and 7 do not have a presupposed item. The same case applies to **when** in sentence 6. The clause **that is why because** (sentence 8) has been misused as a temporal conjunction, though it functions as a causative conjunction. The presupposed item is sentence number 7, though not clear. All these conjunctions have been used erroneously. Example 2 gives another text written by the hearing impaired learner.

(2)

SAC 3

¹The mineral salt move to roots. ²How to grow about same water mineral salt. ³Transport absorption of water and mineral salts cell sap of hair roots different between the cell sap in the water and mineral salt pressure down root hairs. ⁴The water molecules arcross the cell wall and cell membrane into the root same tree by the leave making less it. ⁵Because have not water and mineral salt They are pressure osmotic force by the absorbing cell. ⁶The root hair to osmotic same move water from the mineral salt by the leaves. ⁷Due to osmotic gradient water move from the roots to the leave. ⁸ Because of pressure down roots grow by the leave which is the soil water and mineral salt plants for their growth and cell sap in the root hairs is greater than that in the soil. ⁹Transpiration is the process by which plant loose water and mineral salt with the vapour into the low from the plant.

Example 2 is derived from the students' Biology assignment. Just like in example 1, the same words pertinent to the topic have been repeated raising lexical features considerably. The words do not combine to form a meaningful unit. This agrees with the view that the presence and frequency of cohesive ties is not an indication of good writing in all cases as observed in other studies such as Wolff (2011). The hearing-impaired learners have not acquired enough grammatical structures to write coherently. The learners, however, demonstrate a greater understanding of the topic, thus a greater variety of related words increasing collocation ties and other forms of lexical cohesion.

There are several lexical cohesive ties and few grammatical cohesive devices in example 2.

Among the markers of cohesion in example 2 are words and phrases that create lexical collocation. Similar to example 1, several keywords collocate in

example 2. The word **transport** collocates with **mineral salts**, **roots** and **water** in sentence 3, and **move** in sentence 3. The phrase **the water molecules** collocates with **cell sap**, and **water** in sentence 4. The phrase **Cell membrane** collocates with the phrase **cell wall** and **cell sap** in the same sentence. **Tree** collocates with **root**, and **cell sap** while **leave** collocates with **root** in sentence 4. The word **absorbing** in sentence 5 collocates with **absorption** in the same sentence. **Cell** collocates with **cell wall** and **cell membrane** in sentence 5. **Leaves** collocate with **root** in sentence 6. Other examples of collocation are in sentence 7; **osmotic gradient** and **osmotic force**, **roots** and **leaves**; sentence 8; **soil** and **root**, **plants** and **root**, **growth** and **grow**; sentence 9; **transpiration** and **leave absorption**, **plant** and **roots**, and **vapor** and **water**. The above examples are a clear indication that lexical items have a tendency of co-occurring. It is this co-occurrence that creates cohesion. For example, the occurrence of **cell** and **cell wall** in sentence 5 creates cohesion.

Several words and phrases have also been repeated in example 2 to create lexical cohesion. There is some word repetition of the word **water** in sentences 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Other forms of same word repetition are: **mineral salts** (sentences-3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9); **root** (sentences 4, 8,); **pressure** (sentence -5, 8); **root hair** (sentence 6, 8); **osmotic** (sentence 6) **move** (sentence 5); and **grow** (8). The learner begins sentence seven and sentence eight with causal conjunction **due to** and **because** respectively creating cohesion within the sentence but not in the text. It is worth noting that despite all the above lexical ties, the text is not grammatical. The learner's grammatical incompetence is evident in the use of the word **osmotic** without a noun. It should be used with a noun as a premodifier.

(3)

FCC 1

¹Our principal, teacher and my followed student good afternoon, I wanted to write to this happiest day in school have problem. ²First one some students were noticed a lot because the food were poor same waste time of money. ³Our class 3N have just one P.E for sports some teachers were lazy to teach us the time lessons. ⁴Many students want school uniform suffered and they steal to each other.

⁵Other things about the dinning hall that some student complained the group tables are poor because students come late same the food are few small and very poor. ⁶Many

students are very sadness and hungry because they want the shopping in school and possible we pay it. ⁷*Other students in the dormitory some are lazy to do your duty and ignored all he perfect to call his or her students.* ⁸*Some they steal their money from student dormitory and they suffered a lot.* ⁹*The class lesson assignment have more and students feel sad or tired during the teacher come late all the time accepted to tell you during the teacher come late all the time accepted to tell you that the bell rings some student were staying outside with permission on teacher duty feel sadness.*

¹⁰*Our girls dormitory some students waste time of water they not using their buckets, they just waste all time 10:00 pm at night they ignored.* ¹¹*We accepted to obey our school programmes and in Saturday night that we free true but on Sunday some student sad and angry because they want to watched television at night.* ¹²*Some student dormitory steal the school uniform everytime because I suffered a lot because we waste of time and their parent pay school fees and not find it.* ¹³*Thankful for writing this topic of my happiest day in our school*

Example 3(FCC 1) is derived from the students' free composition. The free composition gave the learners an opportunity to write freely. The students were supposed to write a composition on the topic *My Happiest Day in School*. Most of the free compositions were incoherent. The level of incoherence was very high in some text. The researcher could therefore not trace any links between them apart from the occasional repetition of the same word in several sentences. The above example is among the few that were slightly coherent but with many grammatical mistakes.

Several words that create cohesion are present in FCC1. One of the cohesive devices utilized is the use of words that collocate. As earlier mentioned, the use of collocation in data analyzed was not an indication of quality writing because the hearing-impaired learners repeatedly used the same words. A good example of repetition is in sentence 2 where the noun phrase *some students* collocates with the noun students. These two words are collocating because they share semantic relations. Collocation can occur in two ways. First, there is the bound collocation which involves constituents that cannot be separated such as *lost* and *found*. Secondly, there is semantic cohesion collocations which are mutually selective (Panahifar, 2013). In sentence 4, *school uniform*

collocates with *students* while in sentence 6, *school* collocates with *principal, teacher and students*. Other forms of collocation are *dormitory* and *school* (sentence 7); *prefects* with *school* or *students*; *lesson* and *school, students*; *bell* and *lesson, school, students*; *teacher* and *students* (sentence 9); *girls' dormitory* and *dormitory* (sentence 10); *sad and angry*; *sad* and *suffer*; (sentence 12) *school fees* and *students, same student* and *student* in sentence 12.

The hearing-impaired learner has used reiteration in example 3. There is same word repetition in the text. The word *teacher* has been repeated in sentences 2, and 9. The phrase *some students* has been repeatedly used in sentence 5 and 10. There is a repetition of the phrase *many students* in sentence 6. Other forms of same word repetition are in the repetition of the words *student* (sentence 5, 7); *perfect* (the learner meant prefect) in sentence 10; *steal, school uniform, suffered, waste* (sentence 12); and *school* in sentence 13. The hearing impaired learner has also used antonyms which Halliday and Hasan (2013:285) classify under reiteration. The words *sad* and *happiest* are in opposition. Antonyms are related by a particular type of opposition; hence they contribute to the structure of a text. Halliday and Hasan (2013:285) claim that there is a possibility of cohesion between any pair of lexical items which are in some way associated with each other in language. Reiteration is a subcategory of lexical cohesion. This helps in creating cohesion in the text.

The hearing-impaired learner has used several grammatical cohesive devices in example 3(FCC 1). Sentence two begins with the temporal conjunction *first one*. This has a similar meaning with the phrase *to begin with*. This links the earlier statement in sentence one with sentence number two. The causative conjunction, *because*, links the clauses in sentences 2 and 11 in example 3, hence creating cohesion within the sentences but not within the text. Other conjunctions used to create cohesion within the same sentence are *and* and *but*.

FCC 1:2 ²*First one some students were noticed a lot because the food were poor same waste time of money*

FCC 1:11

¹¹*We accepted to obey our school programmes and in Saturday night that we free true but on Sunday some student sad and angry because they want to watched television at night*

(We decided to adhere to our school programme and on Saturday night we were free but on Sunday some students were sad and angry because they wanted to watch television at night).

There is an error in the use of the additive conjunction **and** to link the two clauses in sentence 8- 'Some they steal their money from student dormitory and they suffered a lot'. The learner should have used the causative conjunction **because** to link the two clauses- *Some stole money from students in the dormitory because they suffered a lot*'. The learner may have wanted to give the reason why the student stole money from others.

There is the comparative reference in example 3(FCC 1). Comparative reference involves a comparison with regard to identity, similarity, difference, quality or quantity. The comparative **other things** (another thing) in sentence five presupposes the preceding paragraph. The phrase **other students** and phrase **some students** have been used as comparative references in sentences 7 and 10 respectively. **Other students** presuppose **some students** while **some students** in sentence 10 presuppose **students**. There is only one personal reference **we** in sentence 11 which presupposes the speaker and the fellow students. There is also use of ellipsis in sentence 8. ⁸*Some they steal their money from student dormitory and they suffered a lot*. This is the nominal ellipsis of the word **students** which can be recovered from the previous sentence.

(4)

FCC 5

¹*This school is fine and also best but problem with food and tourism, uniform for school miss a lot tell something about food have a lot dirty with stone small thing, miss tourism buy are a lot money.* ²*They are not happy in school please our principal some teacher are lazy to teach but miss lesson, able next time must be to best way teach a lot.* ³*They are not focus to student about education but teacher think about clothe why not education and please stop next using learning never force about clothe best using learning never force about clothe best way education your meaning making our school.* ⁴*They are marking happy a lot improve education.* ⁵*They are teacher to teach very poor sign language to teach but*

not understand from tell about subject also best way sign language know who best making student understand fast from subject. ⁶*May be our school next time change feeling in school control follow about it.*

Example (4), FCC 5, is not coherent but has a few lexical items that create cohesion. There is an erroneous use of the personal reference **they** in sentence two. The personal pronoun has no presupposed item, hence not cohesive. There is, however, good use of personal reference **they** in sentence 3 and 5. The pronoun **they** in both sentences presupposes **teachers**, hence creating cohesion within the text. The rest of the cohesive devices are in form of collocation and reiteration. Several words have been repeated in the text, generally creating cohesion within the text. Some examples are the repetition of the word **school** in sentence number 2 and sentence number 6, and **teacher** in sentence number 5. Collocation occurs in sentence two where both **teacher** and **lesson** collocates with **school**; in sentence 3 where the words **student**, **education** and **learning** collocate with **teachers** and **school**; and finally in sentence 5 where **subject** and **student** collocate with **learning** and **teacher** respectively.

(5)

FCC 17

¹*They were not happy because was assignment work lesson waste?* ²*The lesson my class lesson waste on assignment lesson.* ³*They other class P.E two any other P.E one game why we are all not happy.* ⁴*The class same free two P.E day but oppress one my class only PE games day not good.* ⁵*It was perfect asked teacher is not good, my class lesson assignment waste is time subject all not same last.* ⁶*The class form 3 other deaf school.* ⁷*The teacher said is patient was student all but I am small happy but go to dinning hall time waste last service wait of in back class soon bell in here last same continue food but then because fast in the class my class wanted must be teacher is Sign language is like tortoise do not understand teaching everything must sign well all know must subject today please, let obey teacher same student.*

⁸*The student were all happy some small please you teacher same student value action show discipline was smart.* ⁹*They were my happy nice is reaching action improved but wanted help teacher.* ¹⁰*The principal good development building and*

committee but must be school revision action principal form 3 give to student exam my class try good her or his target life to achieve action. ¹¹The class lesson assignment very boring. ¹²It was student are not happy why we all play in the class not sure read same, I do me know but some pretend student your fool teacher but I know about some boy clever pleasure e.g. happy because was not sure reading education please kick lesson assignment I do not wanted lesson assignment revision boring but. ¹³The dormitory was waste duty and students were force finding for very dirty in the boy dormitory please own work clean always. ¹⁴They some miss traveling learn form 3 trip of student all form 3 only not happy for please obey by the principal we allowed if you what do you treat agreement first student interviews. ¹⁵The principal thank you a lot happy but you are teacher lazy because like math only form 3 poor but student were exam fail not happy same. ¹⁶The principal thank you obey allowed working hand teacher must be equal all student allowed please. The principal thank you a lot...

The above text, example (5) FCC 17, is poorly written with many grammatical errors. It should be noted that the hearing impaired learners have not acquired enough grammatical structures to write cohesively and coherently. There is a high frequency of repetition and collocation. Very few grammatical ties are used in the above text. This may be due to the inability of the hearing learners to manipulate grammatical structures to achieve cohesion. The learners lack a basic grasp of English syntax. The high frequency of the same word occurring more than once in the same sentence is an indication that the hearing impaired learners have a deficiency in vocabulary.

Several words used in example (5) FCC 17 collocate. The word *class* collocates with the word *lesson* in sentence three, and *subject* in sentence five. The noun phrase *the class* collocates with the word *class* in sentence four. The word *teacher* collocates with the word *lesson*, while the word *assignment* collocates with *lesson* in sentence five. The noun *student* collocates with the noun *teacher*, while the noun phrase *sign language* collocates with the noun *deaf* in sentence number 7. Other examples of collocation have been used in sentence 9 (*reading and student*); sentence 10 (*principal and school; form three and class; exam and school; class and*

school); and in sentence 11 (*lesson and class; assignment and class*). These collocation ties play an important role in creating cohesion in the text, though there many grammatical errors. As said earlier, the occurrences of lexical items that belong to the same semantic field create cohesion. For example, the presence of *lesson*, *assignment*, and *teacher* presuppose *lesson and* are therefore cohesive. *Sign language* and *deaf* when used in close proximity create cohesion since the two words co-occur.

The other highly used cohesive tie in example (5) FCC 17 is same word repetition. The words *lesson* and *waste* have been repeated in sentence two while the noun phrases *the class*, *the teacher*, and the noun phrase *the student* have been repeated in sentence 6, 7 and 8 respectively. The word *teacher* has also been repeated in sentence 7, 8, and 9. Other same word repetitions occur in sentence 10 (*school, student*); sentence 11 (*class*); sentence 12 (*student, teacher, read, education, assignment, lesson and revision*). The repetitive use of these words creates cohesion in the sentences as well as in the text in general.

(6)

SAC 30

¹Many youths leave their land with old people. ²Where old people cannot cultivate shamba. ³Young people stronger than old people. ⁴Youth get more harvest if they cultivate shamba. ⁵The same shamba feed everyone. ⁶More food for everyone. ⁷The youth need go back home because crime in city.

SAC 30 was extracted from short answer questions in a History assignment. The learner has repeated several words in their writing. There is same word repetition of the verb *cultivate* and the noun *shamba* in sentence two and sentence four. This makes the text cohesive. The word *more* has been repeated in sentence four and six while *everyone* has been repeated in sentence five and six. Repetition has also taken the form of synonyms. The Noun phrases *many youths* and *young people* are synonymous with the word *youth*. There is also use of the conjunction *because* in sentence 7 that links the first clause with the second clause. This creates cohesion within the sentence. Comparative reference has been used in sentence three and four. These cohesive ties contribute to creating of cohesion in the text.

(7)

FCC 19

¹It was on Monday morning when my parents broke the news to me and told me that I was expected to report in school the following day which was on a Tuesday. ²As I heard that I was happy as a king even tears of joy started rolling down my shabby cheeks.

³After my father had told me that, I started preparing myself by washing clothes, polishing my shoes and washing my bag. ⁴I also neat my bedroom so that mother would not have much to do.⁵ I started imagining about life in a new school with new friends, teachers and a new class. ⁶It sounds very enjoyable as I compared with that life in primary school high school sound more enjoyable than ever been.

⁷That night I hardly slept a wink I kept on tossing myself on my bed praying that morning to approach faster so that I can go to a new school wearing new school uniform and new black shoes. ⁸After sometimes I was carried away and slept without knowing it.

⁹As morning approach I woke up early than usual and I rushed to take a shower, I took my towel and run out my bedroom without noticing that it was around 4:30am. ¹⁰**My mother** heard me rushing from there to the other room, she woke up too.¹¹ "oh! "my dear, it's very early now" she said. ¹²I assumed and go on with my business, at about twenty seconds I had finished to have a shower I rushed back to **my bedroom** and opened my **wardrobe** and I took out **my school uniform** and I put on. ¹³Then I moved near where the mirror was and I started admiring myself I looked pretty.

¹⁴**As** I was still looking myself on a mirror, I heard mother calling me to go and have my breakfast. ¹⁵So I just moved and worked out of my room walking as proud as a peacock.

¹⁶**After** having our tea then me and my father went out of the house and left mother alone. ¹⁷We started our journey at five thirty am. ¹⁸We arrived early enough I was able to see everything and I really felt very happy, **the school** was clean **teachers** were friendly and loss students were very happy when they saw me.

¹⁹I was admitted in form one and I enjoyed that day **because** I found my old

school girls who welcomed me as a prodigal son. ²⁰I felt loved, cared and I had no worries. ²¹I **this, school** what I like most is when **teachers** came in **our class** and teach as different things in every days **lessons**. ²²Am always proud of **my teachers** because they always motivate us and guide us in a good way.

²³**From when I was in form one upto now** what I have learnt is very important in my daily life am now in form 3 but I never fail to respect **my teachers**. ²⁴I will always respect **them** in all my life because if it was not them I would have not succeed upto to hear am. ²⁵I will love **my school** and **teachers** for ever in my life. Never forget my **school** and **teachers**.

Example 7(FCC 19) is the best-written composition though it has some grammatical errors. The learner tackled the subject of the composition well. Several cohesive devices are evident in the above text. The learner used several conjunctions to enhance cohesion in the text. Several temporal conjunctions have been used. The conjunction **as** has been used in sentence 2 and it presupposes the preceding sentence. The third sentence begins with the temporal conjunction **after** which presupposes the preceding sentence. ³After my father had told me that, I started preparing myself by washing clothes, polishing my shoes and washing my bag. Though there are a few spelling mistakes (e.g. **preparing, hard, approach, business, shower**), they do not affect the cohesive link in this sentence. Other temporal conjunctions used in FCC 19 are **after** (sentence 8); **then** (sentence 13) **as** (sentence 14); **after having tea** (sentence 16); and the clause from **when I was in form one** (sentence 23). These temporary conjunctions presuppose the preceding sentences. The clause **from when I was in form one** functions as a temporal conjunction because it shows when the writer learnt the importance of respecting teachers. There was only one casual conjunction used in this text (**so** in sentence 15) which presupposes the preceding sentence. **Also** has been used as an additive conjunction in sentence 4. It links what has been said to what had been mentioned earlier in the previous sentence, hence creating cohesion.

Another grammatical feature creating cohesion in FCC 19 is the use of pronouns. The pronoun **it** in sentence 3 presupposes **life in a new school**. This is personal reference used as a cataphoric reference because it points forward in the sentence for its interpretation. Another pronoun is used in sentence seven (**that night**) to presuppose **when my parents told me that I was expected to report to school the**

following day. The personal pronoun **we** has been used in sentences 17 and 18 to presuppose **the writer, mother and father**. It creates cohesion within the text. Another personal reference is the pronoun **them** used in sentence 24 to presuppose the noun **my teachers** mentioned in a previous sentence.

²¹I this school what I like most is when teachers came in our class and teach as different things in every days lessons.

The demonstrative pronoun **this** used in sentence 21 presupposes **school**. This is an example demonstrative reference that helps in identifying the referent by verbal pointing.

There are several lexical features in example 7(FCC 19) that enhance lexical cohesion in the text. Lexical cohesion utilizes vocabulary to create cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 2013). The lexical features in example 7(FCC 19) are words that are repeatedly used and other words that co-occur in the same semantic field. There is same word repetition of the nouns **school, teachers, my teachers, and class** throughout the text (sentences 5, 18, 21, 22, 25, and 26). Other words that have been repeated are **father, mother, my father, my bedroom** (sentence 12, 16, 18, 21).

Several words collocate in the context of example 7(FCC 19). The words **high school, primary school** (sentence 6), and **new school, new school uniform, my school uniform** collocate with the word **school** (sentence 6). Other collocating words are **my bedroom, my towel, my shoes** (sentence 8); **mother, my mother** (sentence 16); and **our class, our lesson, school** (sentence 21). Collocation helps a text to achieve cohesion when lexical items co-occur. The lexical items share a semantic field.

5. CONCLUSION

The thrust of this paper was to identify the grammatical features and lexical features that the hearing impaired learners use in writing to achieve cohesion. Several words and phrases created cohesiveness in the writing of the hearing impaired learners. However, the hearing impaired written texts were poorly written. In some cases, it was difficult to make sense of what they wrote. The words and phrases used fall under three cohesive devices, namely, reference, conjunction, reiteration, and collocation. The last two falls under lexical organization. There was no explicit use of substitution and ellipsis in the written text. We, therefore, conclude by observing that only three out of the five cohesive devices posited by Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Halliday and Hasan (2013) were

available in the hearing impaired learners' written texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976) posit that references, conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, and lexical- organization create cohesion in texts.

There were more lexical cohesion ties than grammatical cohesive devices used by the hearing impaired learners. Collocation ties had the highest frequency followed by same word repetition. Thirdly, was synonym, followed by general term, and the superordinate term. Reference had the highest frequency in the grammatical cohesion. This was closely followed by conjunction and substitution. Ellipsis was the least used cohesion device in the grammatical cohesive category. The high frequency of lexical cohesion was as a result of repetition of words and collocation. The hearing-impaired learners demonstrated lack of competence in the use of vocabulary. As such, and following from the discussion in this paper, lack of grammatical and lexical competence affects the writing of learners studying English as a second language.

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