

Grammatical Cohesion: An Analysis of Reference in O. Henry's 'The Romance of a Busy Broker'

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with analyzing cohesion through reference. This study examines the utilization of references in one of O. Henry's works. Halliday and Hassan's (1976) theory of cohesion serves as the foundation for Henry's short story "The Romance of a Busy Broker." It uses a mixed-method approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods, to analyze the story. The study tries to identify the most frequently used type of reference and determine whether narration or dialogue contains a higher frequency. Additionally, it also seeks to examine the way references contribute to the unity and continuity of the story. Despite the presence of all types of references in the story, the analysis reveals that personal references, accounting for 80% of references, are the most frequently used type. Of these, the narration accounts for 59% and the dialogue for 29%. The next thirty percent of references are demonstratives, while the last five percent are comparatives. Furthermore, it is discovered that the narration – which employs references at percentages of 71 and 29 in the dialogue – has the highest usage of references. Therefore, these references are used, especially personal ones, to avoid repetition and maintain the story's cohesiveness and smooth flow. These findings suggest that references are important for constructing a cohesive and engaging narrative and maintaining storytelling unity and continuity.

KEY WORDS: Grammatical Cohesion, Reference, Cohesion, Halliday and Hassan, Short Story

1. INTRODUCTION:

The term "text," regardless of its length, refers to any spoken or written passage of language that forms a coherent whole. Halliday and Hasan declare that text is constituted by a set of interconnected sentences. If a passage is composed of a set of unrelated sentences, it cannot be called a text since it does not form unity and doesn't have continuity between the sentences (Halliday and Hasan (1976). Beaugrands and Dressler claim that what differentiates a text from a random group of sentences is the quality of textuality (1981). Therefore, it is essential for a text to have texture, as without texture, it would be just a collection of isolated sentences that have no link to one another (Rahma et al., 2022). Textuality arises from seven defining characteristics of a text.

These characteristics include cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981). However, this study deals with cohesion especially grammatical cohesion, and further limits its scope to reference as a kind of grammatical cohesion.

Cohesion, according to Widdowson (1996), is the ties that are used to connect linguistic units that form a text. He argues that it is the process of linking together the parts of any text by the use of different kinds of pro-forms. Astuti, Antari, & Mulyawan (2017) believe that cohesion is one of the key aspects of language that explains how sentences are interconnected. Mawa (2010) adds that cohesion occurs when the interpretation of certain elements in a text relies on the interpretation of the other. One element presupposes the other, which means that it cannot be effectively interpreted without reference to it. So, cohesion is conveyed partially through grammatical cohesion and partially through lexical cohesion. This indicates that there are two distinct categories of cohesive devices: grammatical and lexical.

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Hamidah (2012, cited in Warid and Lail, 2021) states that lexical cohesive devices deal with cohesion between or among sentences because of lexical choice. Lexical cohesive devices cover repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, and antonymy. However, the grammatical cohesive devices deal with cohesion between or among sentences because of grammatical factors.

So, how is grammatical cohesion expressed? The answer is through grammar. Johnstone and Eisenhart (2008) classify grammatical cohesion into "Reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction." This is identical to Halliday and Hassan's classification of grammatical cohesion.

Through grammatical cohesion, the structure of a text is formed, which results in a coherent unit of sentence. As stated by Putri (2021), grammatical cohesion involves the structural form of discourse. These grammatical elements are crucial in conveying the meaning of a text. Telaumbanua (2021) declares that grammatical cohesion is a marker that involves the use of linguistic elements to connect ideas between sentences. So, it can be interpreted that grammatical cohesion is a means of connecting between sentences or between language elements between one another so that a relationship is formed in a discourse (ibid). This study focuses on the analysis of the reference and types of reference in a short story entitled "The Romance of a Busy Broker."

Reference is important information that links two words. Referencing in written texts, like short stories, novels, or any other kinds of texts, shows the way the writer introduces the participants and keeps track of them in the document. Thus, the role of reference, particularly in writing, is to refer to participants without mentioning their names but rather by referring to them with another word that still has a connection or link (Uru et al., 2021; Hidayat, 2016). As stated by Shahnaz and Imtiaz (2014), creating links in the meaning of a text is the primary goal of referencing. It is emphasized by Afifi (2001, cited in Alwan, 2020) that employing reference prevents repetition and leads to summarization. It also clarifies the meaning of something previously mentioned, avoiding ambiguity. That is why Lyons (1968) considers reference to be one of the most important and prevalent devices in texts because of its ability to create linking bridges among textual parts. Halliday and Hassan (2014) emphasize that "what characterizes the reference is the specific nature of the information that is signaled for retrieval", that is, "the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that are being referred to." Accordingly, "cohesion lies in the continuity of the reference, whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time." They (2014) divided reference into three major forms: personal references, demonstrative references, and comparative references.

Personal reference includes personal pronouns like (I, he, him, she, her, It, they, and we) and possessive pronouns like "mine, yours, his, hers, its ours, theirs" to help keep the conversation clear, and possessive adjectives like (my, his, her, their, its, our).

Demonstrative reference is reference by means of location on a scale of proximity (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Demonstrative reference is essentially a form of verbal pointing. They are classified into nominal demonstrative, which includes (this, these, that, and those); adverbial demonstrative, which consists of (here, there, now, then); and definite article (the).

Comparative references are indirect references by means of identity or similarity (Halliday and Hasan, 1976), such as "same, equal, similar, different, else, better, more," and adverbs like "so, such, similarly, otherwise, so, more" make direct references to things.

2. RELATED RESEARCH

There have been many researchers who have studied cohesion. Each one of them focused on investigating different types of cohesive devices; some focused on studying both types of cohesion, and some focused on only one type or one subtype. Similarly, there have been many studies on reference as a type of grammatical cohesive device, which will be discussed in this section. One of the studies that investigated references and reference types in texts is Devi, Rajeg, and Pratiwi (2023) who examined references in the Lyrics of Nicole Zefanya's Songs, and Asroriyah, (2021), who examined the use of references in English news article published by The Jakarta Post and New York Time. They concluded that all types of references are present, but personal references are the most common, followed by demonstrative and comparative references. Almost similar findings were obtained by Wirawan, Udayana, and Rahayuni (2018), whose study focused on analyzing reference use in Donald Trump's speech Transcript. They found that Donald Trump's speech Transcript contained two different kinds of references: demonstrative and personal, where personal references were the most common.

Another study was conducted by Abbas (2020); he attempted to analyze the use of grammatical cohesive devices in relation to narrative techniques in the story of Joseph from the Holy Quran. And observed that the most frequently used type of grammatical cohesive device is personal reference. He also discovered that the dialogue part of the story contains the most frequent use of grammatical cohesive devices in general and references in particular.

Other research, such as that by Abed (2022), who investigated different types of grammatical cohesion in two short stories, came to the conclusion that while all

types of grammatical cohesion are used in the stories, references are the most frequently utilized. Warid and Lail (2021) have conducted additional studies. They aimed to describe the type and function of the "reference of grammatical cohesion" used by Nawal El-Saadawi in her novel. Rahman and Latief (2021) tried to find which kinds of cohesive devices are mostly utilized by students of English department of University of Muhammadiyah Makassar in their descriptive texts and to discover the students' abilities in making their texts coherent. These previous studies examined the application of cohesive devices in different contexts.

However, by utilizing a different approach and having different goals, this research sets itself apart from earlier studies. The current study specifically aims to identify the most frequent reference type used in Henry's short story and determine whether references are more common in the dialogue or the narration. It also explores the ways in which these references support the overall coherence and unity of the story. Besides, no researchers have focused on comparing the story's narration and dialogue when it comes to reference use. This study tries to answer the following questions:

1. Which type of reference (personal, demonstrative, or comparative) is most frequently used in Henry's "The Romance of a Busy Broker"?
2. How is the distribution of references different between the narration and dialogue of the story?
3. In what ways do references contribute to the unity and continuity of the story?

3. METHODOLOGY

With a particular focus on reference, this study comprises a thorough analysis of grammatical cohesion. To investigate the use of reference in Henry's story, this study uses a mixed-methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) to achieve greater insight. To analyze the data, the theory of cohesion in English is used, which was proposed by Halliday and Hassan in 1976. The study begins with reading the whole story several times to get a full understanding of its context and content. Many sorts of references are identified and documented throughout these readings, offering an initial qualitative insight into how they are used and distributed throughout the text. To systematically detect and extract all instances of references within the story, AntConc software was used for the quantitative analysis. The software facilitated the counting and classification of these references into distinct types and sub-types as proposed by Halliday and Hasan, such as personal reference (personal pronoun, possessive adjective, possessive pronouns), demonstrative reference (selective nominal demonstratives, definite article, adverbial demonstratives), and comparative reference (general,

particular, and superlative). To conduct a detailed analysis and answer the research questions, the data obtained from AntConc was imported into Microsoft Excel. All reference types and subtypes were determined, and in addition, their frequencies were also calculated. To calculate their frequencies, Excel, was used to find the percentage of each category and subcategory of reference in the story as a whole and then extract this percentage for references and types within the narrative and dialogue. To visually represent the reference distribution and frequency, the researcher created charts, which help interpret the quantitative data. By integrating qualitative insights with quantitative data, this study attempts to give a detailed, clear, and comprehensive analysis of reference use in "The Romance of a Busy Broker" highlighting its role in creating cohesion within the narrative.

4. SHORT STORY

The story by Henry (1995) entitled "The Romance of a Busy Broker" is the data for the study. The researcher pays attention to every single word, phrase, and sentence of the story that exhibits references. Short story is one of the literary works that usually serves in text form. It communicates the author's thoughts and emotions to the reader. Short stories, like any other kind of literary work, also use many linguistic or lexical elements to give clear and concise information that the reader understands as a whole. Cohesive devices are essential for every type of text to ensure comprehension and meaning for the reader. Without these devices, the reader may struggle to connect the ideas and may become confused (Abbas, 2020). In The Romance of a Busy Broker, the writer uses third-person narration and dialogue. To maintain the readers' interest, the author must use references whenever necessary to link the sentences and paragraphs, as well as ensure that the story flows smoothly and avoids repetition. In order to gather data from the data source, the researcher carefully reads the story to identify and highlight various types of references. Then, the researcher analyses the data based on types of reference as grammatical cohesion, classifies the data into types of reference, describes the data based on the types of reference, and concludes based on the findings.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The story that is analyzed is one of O. Henry's short stories entitled "The Romance of a Busy Broker". In this section, the data is used to answer the research question. First, it starts with revealing the frequencies of each type and sub-types of reference, then gives examples, which are taken from the story, for each type to further explain how different types of reference contribute to the unity

and continuity of the story. The following tables and figures show the result of the analysis:

Table 1
Frequency of Personal Reference in "The Romance of a Busy Broker"

Sub-Type	Narration		Dialogue		Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	
Personal pronouns	83	47	51	29	76
Possessive Adjective	35	20	5	3	23
Possessive Pronouns	0	0	2	1	1
	118	67	58	33	

Table 1 shows the frequency of personal references in both the narration and dialogue of the story. It demonstrates that the most frequent use of personal reference is personal pronouns. This finding is consistent with Asroriyah (2021) who found that the most frequently used type of personal reference is personal pronouns. In the current study, the use of personal pronouns counts for 47% of the narration and 29% of the dialogue of the story this is because the story is mostly composed of narration where the most used personal pronoun is "he", followed by "she, her, it, and him." The author's use of these pronouns suggests a third-person point of view, where the narrator refers to the characters using third-person pronouns rather than first-person (I, we) or second-person (you). However, this differs from Abbas's (2020) findings; he found that personal pronouns score first in the dialogue part of the story.

So, the use of personal references in The Romance of a Busy Broker indicates that the author favors the use of personal references to give a deeper insight about the characters, events, and places to connect the various parts of the narrative.

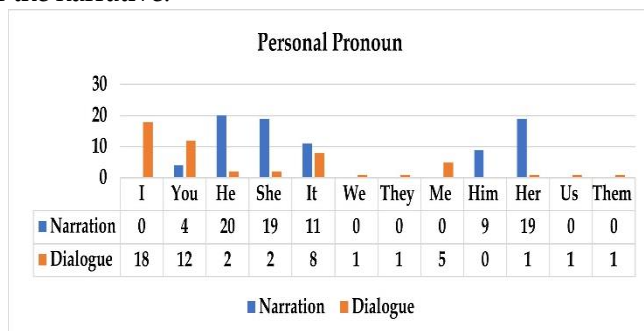


Fig. 1. The Use of Personal Pronouns in "The Romance of a Busy Broker".

For instance, extract 1, a paragraph from the story, employs three personal pronouns: "she," the subject of the sentence twice, and "her," the object of the sentence, both of which refer back to "the young lady." If the noun

phrase; "the young lady", is repeated in every sentence instead of using the pronoun "she," the text would lack cohesion, and the ideas wouldn't flow smoothly. That is why the writers uses pronouns to avoid repeating the noun phrase that was mentioned earlier.

Extract 1

"The young lady had been Maxwell's secretary for a year. **She** was very beautiful, and very different from most other secretaries. Her hair always looked plain and simply. **She** did not wear chains or jewels. Her dress was gray and plain, but it fitted **her** very well. On her small black hat was the gold-green wing of a bird."

Personal pronouns also appear in the dialogue but with less frequency. As illustrated in Figure 1, the most frequently encountered use of personal pronouns in the dialogue is the first-person singular pronoun "I," which is absent in the narration. 29% use of personal pronouns in the dialogue complements the narration, resulting in a cohesive and dynamic storytelling style. The use of these pronouns enhances the narrative's coherence by making it easier for readers to understand who is speaking and who is listening. Extract 2 below is a dialogue between two participants, a woman and a man. In the dialogue, some personal pronouns appear, and each one refers to something or someone. In the first part of the extract the pronoun "you" appears multiple times, referring back to Miss Leslie, the listener, while the pronoun "I"; the speaker, appears several times referring back to Mr. Maxwell. Other references that are used are "they," and "them"; they both appear once and refer back to Maxwell's co-workers, and, "me" refers back to Mr. Maxwell himself who is the speaker. In the second part where Miss Leslie speaks, two pronouns are used and they are "it, and we"; "it" is used twice and is the subject referring back to "business," and "we" is the first plural pronoun that refers to Miss Leslie and Maxwell. The pronouns ensure continuity in the conversation, linking each statement to the respective speaker and the previous context, thereby maintaining the flow and cohesion of the dialogue. They reflect the need of participants to refer back to others and themselves through the use of these personal pronouns within the dialogue context.

Extract 2:

"Don't **you** understand?" said Maxwell. "**I** want **you** to marry **me**. **I** love **you**, Miss Leslie. **I** wanted to tell **you**. So, **I** took this moment when **I** wasn't too busy. But **they're** calling **me** now. Tell **them** to wait a minute, Pitcher. Won't **you**, Miss Leslie?"
"I know now," **she** said, softly. "**It's** this business. **It** has put every-thing

else out of your head. I was afraid at first. Don't **you** remember, Harvey?
We were married

Possessive adjectives follow personal pronouns in their usage. The analysis reveals a lower usage of possessive adjectives compared to personal pronouns. Although both possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns appear in the story, the possessive adjective is the most frequently used; the writer prefers to use possessive adjectives instead of possessive pronouns because narrations need detailed and descriptive sentences. Possessive adjectives are more integrated into descriptive sentences, whereas possessive pronouns often require additional context to clarify their meaning. As Figure 2 presents, all the possessive adjectives are absent in the narration except "her," which appears 19 times, followed by "his," which appears 16 times. In the dialogue, the use of "my," "you," and "her" occurs less frequently. Figure 3 demonstrates that the only possessive pronoun that is employed in the dialogue is the possessive pronoun "hers," which appears twice in just one utterance. However, the narration part does not contain any of these pronouns.

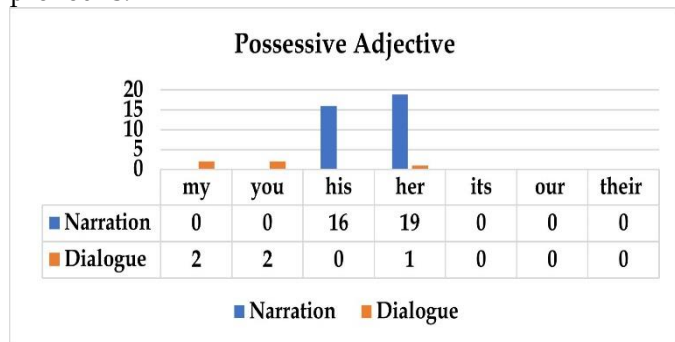


Fig. 2. The Use of Possessive Adjective.

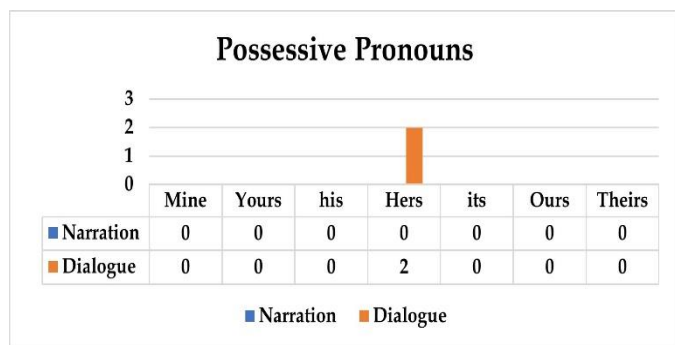


Figure 3: The Use of Possessive Pronoun.

Extract 3 shows three usages of the possessive adjective "her." They all demonstrate possession and indicate that the eyes, face, and expression belong to a female character, linking back to her and adding to the story's cohesion.

Extract 3

"On this morning, she seemed to shine softly. **Her** eyes were dreaming but bright. **Her** face was warmly colored, and **her** expression was happy."

Table 2
 Frequency of Demonstrative Reference in "The Romance of a Busy Broker"

Subtype	Narration		Dialogue		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	%
Selective Nominal Demonstratives	7	9	7	9	18
Definite Articles	42	53	6	8	60
Adverbial Demonstratives	10	13	8	10	23
	59	74	21	26	

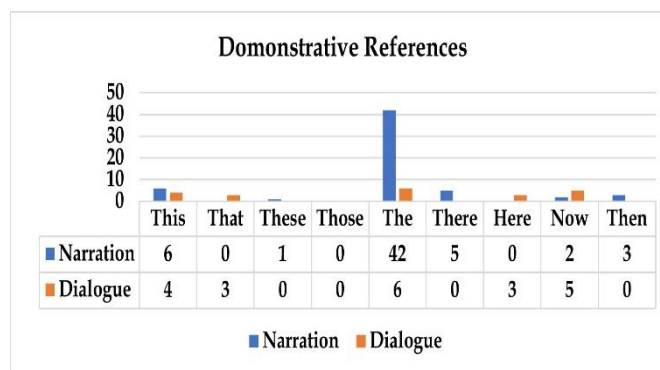


Fig. 4. The Use of Demonstrative References.

Table 2 and figure 4 present the use of demonstrative references. The definite article (the), as shown in figure 4, is used more frequently than the other types of demonstrative references. The narration, as shown in figure 4, shows 53% use of the definite article "the," and that highlights its role in specifying and identifying specific entities, thus providing clarity and precision in the narrative. For example, extract 4 shows the use of three definite articles that identify and define a specific world, smell, or location rather than general ones.

Extract 4:

"**The** smell seemed almost to make her stand there before him. **The** world of business grew smaller and smaller. And she was in **the** next room – twenty steps away."

However, the dialogue part shows that the eight percent use of definite articles reflects the tendency of spoken language to rely more on context and shared knowledge between participants, reducing the need for explicit specification. Extract 6, which is the dialogue between two participants, shows the use of the definite article "the" twice, the first use of "the" indicates specific tasks

that are already known by the speaker and the listener. The second use of "the" denotes a specific role that requires a replacement.

Extract 5

"He did," Pitcher answered. "He told me to get another one. Several are coming to talk to us this morning. But it's now after nine. Not one has appeared."

"I will do **the** work as usual," said the young lady, "until someone comes to fill **the** place."

The lowest frequency of demonstrative reference type is selective nominal demonstratives. In both dialogue and narration parts, the selective nominal demonstratives are used equally, accounting for (9%); the story rarely specifies particular items or entities among a group or within the immediate context. In extract 7, the word "this" refers to a particular moment in time, making it clear to what moment Maxwell is referring. This helps the reader comprehend the exact timing of his declaration. Through the use of "this," Maxwell connects his present action (taking a moment to express his feelings) to the ongoing events in the story.

Extract 6

"Don't you understand?" said Maxwell. "I want you to marry me. I love you, Miss Leslie. I wanted to tell you. So, I took **this** moment when I wasn't too busy. But they're calling me now. Tell them to wait a minute, Pitcher. Won't you, Miss Leslie?"

For example, extract 7 presents the use of adverbial demonstratives like "**there**," which specifies the location of the letters and papers; "**now**" specifies the current time; and "**here**" specifies the current location. These demonstratives assist the reader in orienting themselves within the physical and situational contexts, providing clear spatial distinctions that enhance understanding.

Extract 7:

"Then he began to look at the many, many letters and other papers waiting **there** for him."

"Maxwell moved his chair against the wall. **Now** he was like a dancer. He jumped from the machine to his table to the door and back again."

"You are losing your mind, Pitcher," said Maxwell. "Why should I tell you anything like that? Miss Leslie is a perfect secretary. She can keep the job as long as she wants it." To the young lady he said, "There is no job **here**."

Table 3

Frequency of Personal Reference in "The Romance of a Busy Broker"

Subtype	Narration		Dialogue		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
General Comparison	7	54	0	0	54
Particular Comparison	6	46	0	0	46
Superlative Comparison	0	0	0	0	0
	13	100	0	0	

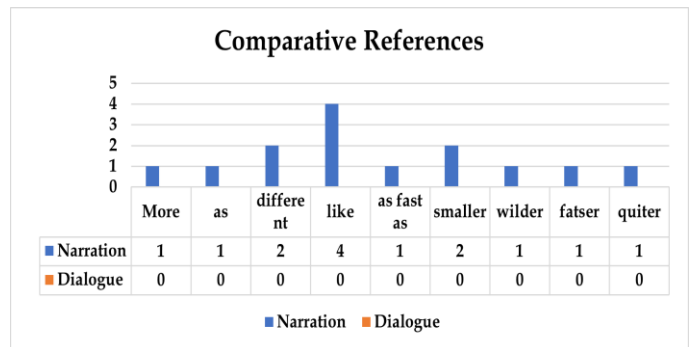


Fig. 5. The Use of Comparative Reference.

Table 3 demonstrates the use of comparative references in the story, and figure 5 shows the comparative words like "**more, as, different, like, as fast as, smaller, wilder, faster, quitter**", and their frequency to compare entities in the story. Their use in the story differs significantly between the narration and dialogue. The dialogue does not employ any form of comparative reference. The narration shows 54% use of general comparison. While particular comparison appears 46% in the narration, however, superlative comparison is not used in either part of the story. Compared to other types of references; personal reference and demonstrative reference, comparative references show the lowest frequency in the story as is also found in the study by Devi, Rajeg, and Pratiwi (2023) and Asroriyah, (2021). The lack of comparison in the dialogue suggests that the characters in O. Henry's story do not frequently use comparative language in their conversations, possibly reflecting more straightforward communication styles.

Extract 8

"Pitcher's face now showed that he was alive. The other men who worked in the office jumped around **like** sailors during a storm. And there were storms in the business world, fearful storms. Every storm was felt in the broker's office."

In extract 11, the comparative reference “like” is a general comparison, and it links the physical actions of the men (jumping around) to the broader theme of “storms in the business world.” This helps the reader see the connection between individual behaviors and the larger context, thus unifying the narrative.

Table 4
The Overall Use of Reference in “The Romance of a Busy Broker” by O. Henry

Reference Types	No.	%
Personal Reference	176	65
Demonstrative Reference	80	30
Comparative Reference	13	5

Table 5
The Overall Use of Reference in “The Romance of a Busy Broker” by O. Henry in the Dialogue and Narration

Cohesive device	No.	%	Story’s....
Reference	190	71	Narration
	65	29	Dialogue

So, based on the analysis of references in “The Romance of a Busy Broker” by O. Henry, several insightful observations can be drawn. The results indicate different patterns of using different reference categories in the story narration and dialogue parts. Table 4 indicates the overall usage of references in the story. As can be seen, the table presents the most frequent use of references as personal references are %65 because they are important for a smooth flow of the narrative and avoiding repeating characters' names, which can be tiresome and disrupt the reading experience. The table also presents the use of demonstrative references, which comes in second place. And the use of comparative references is less than both personal and demonstrative references. Such findings align with the results of Devi, Rajeg, and Pratiwi (2023), and Asroriyah (2021) who also discovered that personal reference is the most used type of reference, followed by demonstrative references and comparative references. It is also found that the narration part of the story contains the most use of reference which counts for 71%. Unlike the study conducted by Abbas (2020) who noted that the dialogue part of the story of Joseph from the Holy Quran contains the most use of reference.

However, using demonstrative references 30% and comparative references %5 with less frequency does not mean they are not significant in making the text cohesive, but according to Halliday and Hassan, personal references are used more frequently than other types of references; using personal references makes communication more efficient. Instead of repeating

names or nouns, personal references allow for more concise and fluid language (1976).

6. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, based on the grammatical cohesion in element reference, the researcher found that “The Romance of a Busy Broker” has varying usage levels of reference types. Cohesive tools are essential writing tools that must be utilized to ensure the quality of one's work. Cohesion can be used to write good texts, as demonstrated in Henry's short story. Through the use of references – personal, comparative, and demonstrative – which serve to connect one sentence to another, a reader can understand the text easily without encountering repetition. These cohesive devices link the sentences, providing the text with a cohesive and coherent texture.

The researcher discovered that personal references are the most dominant type, accounting for 65% of the overall story, followed by demonstrative references at 30%, and comparative references at 5%. Among the sub-types of personal references, personal pronouns are the most used, making up 83% of the narration and 29% of the dialogue. The majority of pronouns used in the narration are third-person singular pronouns, such as “he,” “she,” “her,” “it,” and “him,” with “he” being the dominant one. In the dialogue, the most used pronoun is the first-person singular “I,” followed by the second-person singular “you.”

The definite article “the” accounts for 53% of the narration, making it the dominant demonstrative reference. Comparative reference items occur less frequently than other references, with none of the comparative references appearing in the dialogue. All comparative words appear in the narration, with “like” being the most dominant. The story does not include any superlative comparisons. Additionally, concerning the overall use of references in both the dialogue and narration, the study concludes that the narration has the highest use of references, comprising 71%, while the dialogue accounts for 29%.

Finally, it can be said that the writer of “The Romance of a Busy Broker” has a good understanding of reference. As Johnson (2017) revealed that writers have the responsibility of using cohesive devices to show connection between the ideas in a text. And this can be performed through grammar or vocabulary; grammatical or lexical cohesive devices. So, Henry effectively created cohesion through the use of references, even though some references are less frequent, the text maintains cohesion primarily due to the use of personal references.

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