

## **An Analysis of Cohesive Devices in “The Drunk Text” Song by Henry Moodie**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The employment of cohesive devices in the lyrics of Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text" is examined in this research utilizing a qualitative descriptive technique, with an emphasis on how cohesion is created and how these devices support the text's unity and meaning. In order to detect cohesive techniques like reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion, the official lyrics were gathered as data and analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework of cohesion. The results indicate that the most common mechanisms are lexical cohesiveness and reference, whereas replacement and ellipsis are less common. These unifying strategies are essential for connecting concepts, preserving thematic coherence, and boosting the lyrics' emotional expressiveness. This work advances the discipline of discourse analysis and offers a deeper knowledge of how cohesion functions in song lyrics as a kind of written discourse by applying cohesion theory to contemporary popular music texts.

**Keywords:** Cohesive Devices; Song Lyrics Analysis; Discourse Analysis

### **INTRODUCTION**

In both oral and written conversation, language is crucial for expressing meaning, feelings, and concepts. Cohesion, or the language strategies employed to link sentences and ideas inside a document, is one crucial component that promotes effective communication. Cohesion has been extensively addressed in discourse studies as a crucial component that aids listeners or readers in comprehending a text as a cohesive whole. Few studies have examined cohesiveness in creative texts like song lyrics; most prior research on cohesion has been on formal texts like academic writing, news stories, or speeches. As a result, it is still unclear how cohesive devices operate differently in artistic and emotionally driven texts, where meaning is often implied rather than explicitly stated. Therefore, more research is still needed to understand how coherent devices work in song lyrics, particularly in modern popular songs. Song lyrics are an intriguing subject for coherence analysis since they frequently and subtly convey emotions.

Cohesive elements including reference, conjunction, and lexical repetition are important for preserving coherence in brief texts, according to a number of earlier

research. However, previous studies have not sufficiently explained how these cohesive devices function together to construct emotional meaning in song lyrics, nor how they guide listeners' interpretation beyond surface level understanding. Problems, however, occur when listeners comprehend songs on an emotional level without realizing how language components influence that comprehension. This disparity highlights the need of examining coherent strategies in song lyrics to uncover the language construction of meaning. The song "The Drunk Text" by Henry Moodie, which utilizes straightforward yet repeated vocabulary to convey emotional storytelling, is the subject of this study. Based on Halliday and Hasan's theory, the goal of this study is to examine the many cohesive devices employed in the song lyrics and to describe how these devices support textual coherence and meaning. An introduction, a review of the literature, a study methodology, findings and discussion, and a conclusion make up this work. Therefore, the research seeks to answer the following questions, What types of cohesive devices are used in the song lyrics of "The Drunk Text" and How do these cohesive devices contribute to the coherence and meaning of the song.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework employed in this study as well as earlier research on cohesion analysis are covered in this part. Cohesive devices have been studied by many researchers in a variety of discourse contexts, such as academic texts, news articles, speeches, and literary works. These studies consistently demonstrate the critical role cohesive devices play in establishing textual unity and assisting readers in understanding relationships between ideas. Repetition, reference, and lexical cohesiveness are commonly employed to highlight emotions and themes, according to studies on song lyrics. Nevertheless, the majority of these research frequently concentrate solely on identifying coherent device types and investigate older songs, traditional poetry, or lyrics with more formal frameworks. On the other hand, there are still few evaluations of cohesiveness in the lyrics of modern popular songs, especially those with straightforward language and poignant narratives. In contrast to previous cohesion studies, this one focuses on a contemporary popular song and emphasizes how cohesive devices work to create emotional coherence and meaning rather than just pointing out their existence. As a result, this study offers fresh perspectives on how cohesiveness functions in contemporary song lyrics that are often listened to by audiences.

The idea of cohesiveness put out by Halliday and Hasan is the primary hypothesis used in this investigation. Cohesion, according to Halliday and Hasan, is the semantic connection that links one textual piece to another. Grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion are the two main categories into which they divide cohesive devices. Reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction are examples of grammatical cohesion, whereas repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and collocation are examples of lexical cohesion. By connecting phrases and sentences, these cohesive devices allow a text to be understood as a cohesive whole rather than as discrete parts.

### **Previous Related Study**

The first previous study comes from Ditharifiasari et al, (2022) cohesion analysis in song lyrics using Halliday and Hasan's approach has been covered in a number of earlier works. Nine Coldplay songs from the Ghost Stories album Always in My Head, Magic, Ink, True Love, Midnight, Another's Arms, Oceans, A Sky Full of Stars, and O, were examined for grammatical and lexical coherent devices in one pertinent research. The information was obtained from Coldplay's official website and subjected to a qualitative analysis. The results showed that the lyrics had both lexical and grammatical coherent techniques. Reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction were among the grammatical coherent devices found; personal reference was the most prevalent kind. This study demonstrates how cohesive techniques are crucial for preserving textual coherence in song lyrics. However, the study primarily focuses on identifying and classifying cohesive devices without deeply explaining how these devices contribute to emotional meaning or listener interpretation, which limits its analytical depth.

Referential cohesiveness was the topic of a similar research titled "An Analysis of Referential Cohesive Devices Used in Songs Written by Maher Zain." Khairun Nasir et al (2022), The researcher examined seven tracks from Maher Zain's Salam album using a qualitative method and Halliday and Hasan's theory. The methods developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana were used to examine the data. The most common cohesive device, according to the data, was personal reference, which was followed by demonstrative reference; possessive pronouns were not present. This study emphasizes how referential coherence enhances song lyrics' meaning and intelligibility. Nevertheless, the analysis is limited to referential cohesion alone and does not explore other cohesive devices or their interaction in constructing overall textual coherence.

Another previous study is from Lidinillah & Meinawati (2021), this qualitative research focused on lexical reiteration, including repetition, synonyms or near-synonyms, super ordinates, and generic terms, utilizing Halliday and Hasan's theory of lexical coherence. The results showed that broad words, synonyms, and repetition were often employed, but superordinate terms were not. Lexical cohesiveness serves to highlight meaning, bolster emotional signals, and guarantee consistency in song lyrics, according to the study's findings. However, by concentrating solely on lexical cohesion, the study does not address how grammatical cohesive devices might complement lexical strategies in forming cohesive and meaningful song lyrics.

### **Cohesion**

This research is grounded in Halliday & Hasan (1976) Theory of Cohesion, as proposed in Cohesion in English. This theory explains how a text achieves unity and meaning through semantic relationships that link words, clauses, and sentences into a coherent whole. In this framework, cohesion refers to the linguistic ties that

enable readers or listeners to interpret a text as connected rather than as a collection of isolated sentences. Halliday and Hasan classify cohesion into two main types: grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion, both of which form the core theoretical basis of this study.

The use of grammatical resources to link textual elements is known as grammatical cohesion. Halliday and Hasan define grammatical cohesiveness as the use of conjunction, ellipsis, substitution, and reference. In order to minimize needless repetition, reference entails using pronouns or demonstratives to allude to or anticipate textual parts. Conjunctions indicate logical relationships like addition, contrast, or cause and effect, whereas substitution and ellipsis replace or omit language elements that may be deduced from the context. These devices assist readers follow the flow of ideas and guarantee coherence between clauses and sentences. In modern discourse studies, this theoretical framework is still often used to explain coherence in spoken and written texts.

On the other hand, lexical coherence concentrates on the relationships between vocabulary elements in a text. It is accomplished by collocation and repetition, which includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and superordinate words. Key topics are reinforced by repetition and semantic similarity, and topical consistency is preserved by collocational patterns. By connecting concepts through word choice rather than grammatical structure, lexical cohesiveness is essential to maintaining meaning across a document. Recent discourse research has continued to employ Halliday and Hasan's lexical cohesion approach to examine how lexical patterns support overall textual coherence and interpretability.

The current study analyzes the lyrics of Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text" using Halliday & Hasan (1976) coherence theory, which is based on this theoretical framework. In order to establish popular music texts as a valid type of written discourse within discourse analysis studies, this study looks at both grammatical and lexical cohesion in order to show how cohesive devices work together to generate unity, continuity, and expressive meaning in song lyrics.

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Samples**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to investigate coherent devices in song lyrics. Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text" serves as the main source of data for this study. Words, phrases, and sentences with lexical and grammatical coherent devices make up the data. The song lyrics were sourced from a reliable and reputable source to guarantee data correctness and dependability. In qualitative discourse analysis, a single text can be sufficient when it is examined in depth, as the primary aim is to achieve analytical richness rather than statistical generalization.

The song "The Drunk Text" was specifically chosen for coherence analysis because of its lyrics' frequent recurrence and distinct emotional storyline. This feature enables the researcher to investigate how cohesive devices work to provide meaning and textual coherence in a comparatively brief written text. By concentrating on a single song, coherent patterns that could be missed in a larger but less focused corpus can be thoroughly and methodically examined. Based on the theory of Halliday and Hasan, the analysis only considers grammatical and lexical coherence. Reference (personal, demonstrative, and comparative), conjunction, substitution, and ellipsis are indicators of grammatical coherence, whereas repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and collocation are indicators of lexical cohesion. When a linguistic unit contributes to the link between phrases or sentences and exhibits a clear semantic relationship with another element in the text, it is classified as a cohesive device.

The process of analysis entails locating every instance of cohesive devices in the lyrics, categorizing them based on their kind, and analyzing how they contribute to coherence and meaning. A methodical and thorough examination of the cohesive devices used in the song lyrics is made possible by this study strategy. The study guarantees analytical concentration and depth, which are crucial for qualitative cohesion analysis, by restricting the data to a single song. This research attempts to offer a thorough and organized analysis of cohesiveness as a linguistic phenomenon in contemporary popular song lyrics by concentrating on a particular modern song.

### **Instruments and Procedures**

A document analysis checklist based on Halliday and Hasan's theory of cohesiveness served as the study's main research instrument. The checklist is a useful tool for identifying, classifying, and recording cohesive devices in the song's lyrics. It is divided into two main categories: grammatical cohesion, which includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, and lexical cohesion, which includes repetition, synonymy or near-synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, superordinate words, and collocation. These criteria provide systematic and consistent data analysis by identifying and categorizing words, phrases, or sentences that make up cohesive devices. The checklist was created directly from Halliday & Hasan (1976) well-established theoretical framework, and its validity was confirmed by consulting earlier cohesion studies that used the same model. The categories' proper representation of acknowledged coherent devices in discourse analysis is made possible by this theoretical foundation.

Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text" was chosen for the research process, and the official lyrics were acquired from a trustworthy source. Using the checklist, the lyrics were closely inspected to find and categorize instances of lexical and grammatical consistency. In order to reduce misclassification and guarantee consistency in data interpretation, the identified cohesive devices were verified by multiple readings of the lyrics. In order to clarify how each cohesive device adds to

the coherence and significance of the song lyrics, the discovered data were subsequently subjected to descriptive analysis. This simplified process guaranteed that the analysis was carried out in a targeted and systematic way in compliance with the goals of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis used in this study is qualitative descriptive. Following the collection of information from the lyrics of Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text," a methodical study was carried out to find and look at coherent devices in the text. Words, phrases, and sentences with grammatical and lexical coherent devices make up the data, according to Halliday and Hasan's idea. The study was rigorously directed by well-defined theoretical categories to reduce interpretation bias, guaranteeing that all detected data were assessed using uniform and impartial standards. For example, grammatical reference was identified in the lyric "*I wonder how you would reply,*" where the pronouns "I" and "you" function as personal references that point to the speaker and the addressee, maintaining participant continuity across the song.

Data reduction was the initial step in the data analysis process. Only linguistic components that directly contribute to cohesiveness such as references, conjunctions, repetitions, and other pertinent lexical items were chosen at this point. The theoretical framework prohibited words or sentences that did not serve as coherent devices. Each chosen item was compared against Halliday and Hasan's criteria of cohesiveness in order to minimize subjectivity and guarantee that inclusion choices were grounded in theory rather than interpretation or intuition.

Classifying and presenting the data was the second step. Grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion were the two primary categories into which the chosen data were divided. Reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction were examples of grammatical cohesion, whereas repetition, synonymy or near-synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, superordinate terms, and collocation were examples of lexical cohesion. In order to demonstrate patterns of coherent device usage in the song lyrics, the data were then arranged and presented descriptively. To preserve dependability and lessen researcher bias, consistent categorization techniques were used throughout the investigation. For instance, emotionally related words connected to regret and longing were identified as collocation because they frequently appear together to maintain the song's emotional tone, while repeated references to past actions were categorized as lexical reiteration.

Making conclusions was the last step. At this point, the results were analyzed to clarify how cohesive devices support the lyrics' emotional expression, coherence, and literary unity. Interpretations were based on observable linguistic evidence from the text rather than subjective judgments or feelings toward the music in order to further reduce interpretive bias. This method of analysis guarantees a clear and

methodical comprehension of coherence as a linguistic characteristic in modern song lyrics.

## **RESULT AND DISUSSION**

### **Grammatical Cohesion**

The results show that the most common cohesive method in the lyrics of "The Drunk Text" is grammatical cohesiveness, especially personal reference. Pronouns like "I," "you," and "it," which frequently allude to the speaker and the addressed individual throughout the song, are the primary means of personal reference. The line "I wonder how you would reply," for instance, demonstrates the usage of "I" and "you" as intimate allusions that preserve participant continuity and enable listeners to follow the emotional exchange between the speaker and the addressee. The results show that reference especially personal reference in the form of pronouns that refer to previously stated participants is the most commonly employed grammatical coherent technique. This result is in line with other research on song lyrics, including the analysis of Sholah & Yunus (2023), which similarly found that the most common grammatical cohesiveness approach was personal reference. In both situations, personal reference serves to keep the story moving forward and lead listeners through the song's emotional development.

Conjunction is another crucial grammatical cohesion technique in the song, in addition to reference. In the line "but I still remember it said," the conjunction "but" serves as an adversative conjunction that denotes a difference between the feelings of the present and the recollections of the past. This conjunction improves the song logical flow and links topics across lines. Even while ellipsis and replacement are less common, their sparing application nonetheless promotes conciseness by preventing needless repetition, which is common in lyrics of emotionally charged songs. These findings are consistent with research on Ditharifiasari & Putri (2022), which highlights the importance of grammatical consistency in preserving coherence and clarity in lyrics that are emotionally charged.

### **Lexical Cohesion**

Another cohesive devices found is lexical cohesion, one of the most salient cohesive devices found in Henry Moodie's song "The Drunk Text." Based on the qualitative descriptive analysis of the song lyrics, lexical cohesion is realized mainly through repetition, synonymy, and semantic relatedness, which function to maintain coherence and intensify emotional meaning.

The most frequent form of lexical cohesion found in the song is repetition. A clear example is the repeated clause "I wish I was", which appears several times across the lyrics, such as "I wish I was who you drunk texted at midnight" and "I wish I was the reason you stayed up late." This repetition serves to emphasize the speaker's persistent longing and emotional dependency. According to Halliday and

Hasan's cohesion theory, repetition strengthens textual unity by constantly reactivating the same lexical item, ensuring that the listener remains focused on the core emotional theme. This finding supports on Risdianto (2016), who found that repetition in song lyrics functions as a powerful tool to highlight emotional intensity and thematic emphasis.

Synonymy, which helps prevent repetition while maintaining semantic continuity, is another type of lexical coherence seen in the song. For example, the speaker's emotional state is described by the phrases "scared" and "afraid." Despite their linguistic differences, both terms allude to emotional vulnerability and terror, resulting in a unified emotional representation. This bolsters the claim made by Ditharifiasari & Putri (2022), that synonymy enhances emotional expressiveness while preserving coherence in emotionally charged texts. Collocation is another important lexical cohesive device found in the song. The phrases "ruin our friendship" and "keep a friend" demonstrate collocational cohesion, as both expressions commonly occur within the same semantic field of interpersonal relationships. These collocations highlight the speaker's internal conflict between romantic feelings and the fear of damaging an existing friendship. According to Halliday and Hasan, collocation contributes to cohesion through habitual lexical associations that are recognized by language users. This finding shows that collocation in the song not only maintains coherence but also reinforces the theme of emotional restraint and relational boundaries.

The results of this study show that cohesive techniques are important for both creating emotional meaning in modern song lyrics and connecting linguistic aspects. Pronoun use is a crucial tactic for fostering closeness and emotional immediacy between the speaker and the listener, as seen by the predominance of personal reference. This bolsters the claim that, rather than just arranging textual structure, grammatical cohesiveness serves as a crucial narrative element in song lyrics, directing listeners through emotional experiences. These results are in line with those of Sholah and Yunus (2023), who discovered that the most common grammatical coherent technique in song lyrics was personal reference. Personal references support participant continuity and emotional engagement in both investigations. However, by demonstrating how personal reference functions within emotionally straightforward and minimalistic lyrics a feature of modern popular music this study expands on earlier studies. This study shows that cohesiveness may be successfully attained by simplicity, although previous research frequently concentrated on songs with more intricate or metaphorical vocabulary.

The frequent use of conjunctions especially negative ones like "but" shows how composers create tension and emotional contrast. This result is consistent with the findings of Ditharifiasari & Putri (2022), who highlighted the significance of grammatical coherence in preserving intelligibility in writings that are emotionally charged. Conjunctions in "The Drunk Text" intensify the lyrics' emotional effect by expressing an internal struggle between logical reasoning and emotional instinct.

The predominance of repetition in terms of lexical cohesiveness supports Risdianto (2016) make a conclusion that repetition is a key tactic for highlighting themes and emotional intensity in song lyrics. The study's novel discovery, however, is that repetition in contemporary popular songs serves as a purposeful integrated strategy that improves memorability, emotional resonance, and audience comprehension rather than just as stylistic adornment. This study challenges the notion that intricate metaphors are required for lyrical depth by demonstrating that simple, repetitive language may nonetheless attain great discourse coherence.

This study's emphasis on a single-song qualitative analysis, which enables a more thorough and in-depth investigation of cohesive devices, is another significant addition. Although this method restricts generalizability, it offers significant insights into the micro-linguistic mechanisms underlying cohesiveness. This is both a benefit and a drawback of the research. The primary drawback is that the results cannot be applied to all genres or song lyrics. Therefore, in order to find more general patterns of cohesive device usage, future study should examine a bigger corpus of songs from other artists and musical genres.

Implications: By demonstrating the applicability of Halliday and Hasan's cohesion theory to the analysis of contemporary creative works, this study advances discourse analysis and applied linguistics. Additionally, it has educational significance because song lyrics may be utilized as useful teaching tools in language schools to introduce coherence principles. In order to investigate how language structure interacts with emotion, meaning, and audience perception, this study also urges future researchers to combine cohesion analysis with other discourse techniques, such as pragmatics or stylistics. Overall, this study shows that cohesive devices serve as crucial mechanisms for textual coherence, emotional expression, and meaning formation in "The Drunk Text." This study contributes to our knowledge of cohesiveness as a dynamic linguistic trait in contemporary song lyrics by contrasting its results with those of other studies and emphasizing its distinct focus on contemporary popular music.

## CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, cohesive devices play a crucial role in establishing coherence, unity, and meaning in Henry Moodie's song lyrics "*The Drunk Text*." Both grammatical and lexical cohesion were identified, with repetition emerging as the dominant lexical device and personal reference as the most frequent grammatical device. Grammatical cohesion, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, contributes to the organization of ideas and narrative clarity, while lexical cohesion such as repetition, synonymy, and superordinate terms strengthens emotional and thematic expression in the lyrics. These cohesive devices not only connect words and phrases but also enhance listeners' comprehension and emotional engagement with the song. This suggests that cohesiveness serves as a crucial mechanism for shaping and conveying emotional meaning in modern popular music, rather than just being a structural

element. The results imply that when cohesive techniques are properly employed, even lyrics with basic language can produce great discourse coherence.

The results validate that cohesiveness is an important linguistic characteristic in contemporary music discourse and are in line with earlier research on song lyrics. Nevertheless, the fact that this study only looked at one song raises the possibility of more research. The concentrated analysis enables a greater understanding of how cohesiveness functions inside a single, emotionally charged text, rather than restricting the study's contribution. In order to find more general patterns of coherent device usage, future research may examine a wider corpus of modern song lyrics from other artists or genres. Further insights on how cohesiveness changes throughout time may also be obtained by comparing songs from other musical genres or from earlier and more contemporary songs. In addition, future research may integrate cohesion analysis with other discourse approaches, such as pragmatic or stylistic analysis, to explore how cohesive devices interact with meaning, emotion, and audience interpretation. Overall, this study highlights the importance of cohesive devices in song lyrics and offers a valuable reference for further research in discourse analysis and applied linguistics. It also reinforces the relevance of cohesion theory as an effective analytical framework for understanding meaning construction in modern creative texts.

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