

### An Investigation of Cohesive Devices on Reading Comprehension Texts in Online Media

### $^{1}$ Virgi Marlany Ibnatul Karimah and $^{2}$ Didin Nuruddin Hidayat

<sup>1,2</sup>English Education Study Program, Faculty of Educational sciences Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta Corresponding Author, e-mail: <a href="mailto:didin.nuruddin@uinjkt.ac.id">didin.nuruddin@uinjkt.ac.id</a>

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research is to analyze reading comprehension text's cohesion devices from online media. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The sample of this research is reading comprehension texts from ESL Lounge and British Council. The data were gathered using data and collection technique by Lodico (2006) and were analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory. The findings showed that the dominant grammatical cohesion devices of both websites are references. In contrast, the dominant lexical cohesion devices on both websites are repetition. Further, the dominant grammatical cohesion in ESL Lounge is to justify the writer's position and interact with their readers. Meanwhile, in the British Council, demonstrative references refer to the particular object. The lexical cohesion repetition aims to concentrate the ideas and avoid the readers becoming confused in recognizing the terms in the text.

**Keywords**: Discourse, Cohesion Devices, Reading text

### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perangkat kohesi teks bacaan dari media online. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Sampel penelitian ini adalah teks bacaan dari website ESL Lounge dan British Council. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan data dan teknik pengumpulan dari Lodico dan dianalisis menggunakan teori Halliday dan Hassan (1976). penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perangkat kohesi gramatikal yang dominan dari kedua situs web tersebut adalah referensi. Sedangkan perangkat kohesi leksikal yang dominan di kedua website tersebut adalah repetisi. Perangkat Kohesi yang dominan pada ESL Lounge untuk menyuarakan posisi penulis dan berinteraksi dengan pembacanya. Sedangkan di British Council, referensi demonstrative digunakan untuk mengacu pada objek tertentu. Sedangkan repetisi bertujuan untuk memusatkan gagasan dan menghindari pembaca menjadi bingung dalam mengenali istilah dalam teks.

Kata kunci: Wacana, Perangkat kohesi, Bacaan



### INTRODUCTION

Cohesiveness in the text has a pivotal role as the primary tool in deciding the readability variable, the harmony, and the ties between one sentence and another sentence. A state element that relates to one another and has a semantic relationship is called cohesion (Tamunobelema, 2018). Cohesion relates to semantic meaning, the relationship in the text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Cohesion is the act of sticking together. This is a term for the peculiarity of the text so that it appears as a whole, not as a random sequence of thought or sentence (Fathima & Abdullah, 2018). Cohesion accomplished by many devices or bonds included in the text. A bond relates to an example of cohesion, a term for one event set of cohesively related items (Aldera, 2016).

In linguistics, "text" refers to any part, oral or written, whatever the length, which does form a complete whole, and as a common rule, whatever our language specimens are text or not (Brown & Yule, 1983). Cohesion has the purpose of making the readers understood the text. Put merely, cohesion is an element in written discourse or text that connects elements with other text elements to create a good understanding. Grammar or structure can link the element of lexicon or vocabulary to make the text easy to understand. If grammar connects it, it

means that it used grammatical cohesion, and if vocabulary relates it, it means that it used lexical cohesion. (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Reading comprehension text is crucial since it has the implication of pedagogical in English language teaching. As we know nowadays, the development of technology made everything easy included in education. It also impacts the availability of a source of learning material on the internet. The web is the ideal medium to provide the material to students (Ahmadi, 2018). It can provide information and a source of material without limited space and time (Wasserman & Migdal, 2019). Many websites offer reading comprehension for EFL learners, for instance: British Council, ESL Lounge, English Store.

Based on the ideas from the text above, this study attempted to analyze the cohesion regarding grammatical and lexical cohesion in reading comprehension texts. There are many studies had been conducted related to cohesion in the discourse. The study from Bahaziq (2016) explored the cohesion device used in the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) sample examination of a student's essay writing. The study shows that the most grammatical cohesion device used is reference and conjunction. The study used Halliday Hasan's find and theory to



grammatical and lexical cohesion devices in the essay. However, the present study will analyze the reading comprehension text.

Another study conducted by Tambunan et al. (2019) analyzed grammatical cohesion in international news with Halliday and Hasan's theory. The result found references dominantly used included personal and comparative reference. The present study uses grammatical and lexical cohesion.

Rofigah (2019)studied the grammatical cohesion from 33 essays writing Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang. The focus of the study was on the dominant use of grammatical cohesion. The analysis technique was by organizing, reading, coding, making an interpretation, and counting grammatical cohesion. The result shows that grammatical cohesion that dominant used in the essay is reference around 61.35%. Moreover, Dewi and Jurianto (2017) analyzed the lexical cohesion devices from Kompas and Solo Post. The study used two theories proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976)Tanskanen (2006). The result shows that reiteration is the most lexical device used from two news articles.

The study above used the theory, Halliday and Hasan, to analyze the grammatical and lexical cohesion, and they focus on the type of cohesive devices in the text. However, those studies did not explore the role of dominant grammatical and lexical cohesion in the text. Hence, the present study examines the role of dominant grammatical and lexical cohesion in reading comprehension text to fill the research gap.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the lexical and grammatical cohesion devices in the reading comprehension text from the ESL Lounge website entitled: "Learn English" and the British Council website entitled "Robot Teacher" included most of the cohesion devices in the text. Moreover, this research also analyzes the function of the most cohesive devices used in the texts.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a descriptive qualitative method. The researchers descriptively interpreted the data presented the result with a description in terms that can be accompanied by data presented in tables. Suryana (2012) noted that the descriptive method aims to define those objects systemically and accurately based on truth. Meanwhile, the qualitative method can be defined as the method of study to understand how people interpret, and make sense of approach, perceptions, contexts, and the environment; qualitative analysis incorporates structured and contextual research methods (Denzin &



Lincoln, 2018).

The data was analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory. The analysis focused on the lexical and grammatical cohesion device used reading in comprehension text from the ESL lounge The sample of the study used website. purposive homogenous sampling. homogeneous purposive sample is handpicked for having a similar attribute, quantity, or aspect (Etikan, 2016). In this study, a sampling of data was purposely picked in both the ESL Lounge and the British Council websites. Both intermediate level and have four-paragraph. Both texts have similarities in terms of the level of text and total paragraph.

The study used the data collection and analysis technique proposed by Lodico (2006). Lodico states qualitative research is inductive processes. The data gathered and continuously connected to expansive forms. The stage of analysis data was: first, preparing and organizing the data. In this stage, the researchers should ensure that the data were easier to understand and analyze. Thus, in this stage, the researchers printed documents such reading some as comprehension text from online media. Second, reviewing and exploring the data. In this stage, the researchers reviewed their data by reading the notes and underlined essential Third, code data. data into categories; after examining and exploring the data, the researchers then categorized them. Fourth, interpretation of the data, the researcher summarized and explained the data that already exists collected. Fourth is interpretation data; interpretation also discusses how this study's findings related to previous studies' findings.

The researcher presents the data by giving code in each datum in classification and analysis. The example of datum number is below:

S1= sentence (refers to the sentence's number of the paragraph)

U1= unit (refers to the number of the paragraph)

# FINDING AND DISCUSSION Findings

The findings are presented into two tables, and each table is divided into two categories: grammatical and lexical cohesion. The table 1 below shows the percentage and total of occurrence. From the Table 1, the grammatical cohesion found in ESL Lounge is reference and conjunction. There are three kinds of reference found, such as personal reference, demonstrative reference, and comparative reference.

The personal reference is dominantly used in the text. Meanwhile, for conjunction, there are three kinds of conjunction found in the text. They are additive conjunction,



adversative conjunction, and causal conjunction. The additive conjunction is mostly used in the text with a percentage of 12.72%. Meanwhile, for the lexical cohesion devices, there are reiterations and collocation found in the text.

There are three kinds of reiteration, namely, repetition, superordinate, and synonym. The most dominant reiteration used in the text is repetition, with 15.52%. Meanwhile, for collocation is only 0.55%.

Table 1. Frequency of Occurrence cohesive devices in Learn English (ESL Lounge)

Cohesive Devices	Total	Frequency (%)	Dominant
Grammatical Cohesion			
Reference	34	60.71%	You (11), The (10)
Personal Reference	22	39.82%	
Demonstrative Reference	10	17.85%	
Comparative Reference	2	3.44 %	
Conjunction	8	12.72%	Or (3)
Additive Conjunction	5	8.62%	
Adversative Conjunction	2	3.44%	
Causal Conjunction	1	1.72%	
Lexical Cohesion			
Reiteration	15	25.2%	Britain (4), English (3), Language (3)
Repetition	9	15.52%	
Superordinate	3	5,08 %	
Synonym	2	3.44%	
Collocation	1	0.55%	Result, achieve
Total	59	100%	

From the Table 2 below, the British grammatical Council's cohesion is reference, conjunction, substitution, and ellipsis. There are three kinds of reference found such as personal reference, demonstrative reference, and comparative reference. The most dominant reference is the demonstrative reference with percentage of 14.14%, meanwhile, for conjunction. There are three kinds of conjunction found: additive conjunction, adversative conjunction, and causal conjunction. The additive conjunction is mostly found with a 17.17% frequency occurrence, meanwhile, substitution and ellipsis with 1.01%. Meanwhile, the lexical cohesion devices consist of reiterations and collocation. The kinds of reiteration found are repetition, superordinate, and synonym with dominant frequency occurrence of repetition 39.39%. Meanwhile, for collocation is 8.08%.

### Text 1. Esl Lounge; Learn English 1. Grammatical Cohesion

As explained in the text before, reference is defined as the relation between an element of the text and something else by reference to which it is explained in the given example.



Cohesive Devices	Total	Frequency (%)	Dominant
Grammatical Cohesion			
Reference	28	28.28%	The (11)
Personal Reference	11	11.11%	You, he, it, they
Demonstrative Reference	14	14.14%	The those
Comparative Reference	7	7.07%	Better, like, unlike
Conjunction	17	17.17%	And (11)
Additive Conjunction	13	13.13%	And, also
Adversative Conjunction	3	3.03%	But, though
Causal Conjunction	1	1.01%	Because
Substitution	1	1.01%	So
Ellipsis	1	1.01%	Can
Lexical Cohesion			
Reiteration	44	44.44%	Robot (14)
Repetition	39	39.39%	Teacher, Robot
Superordinate	4	4.04%	
Synonym	2	2.02%	
Collocation	8	8.08%	Teacher, teaching
			Stressed, tired
			Problem, solve
			Teacher, student

100%

99

**Table 2 Frequency of Occurrence Cohesive Devices in Robot Teachers (British Council)** 

It is classified into comparative reference, personal reference, and demonstrative reference (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). There are 34 occurrences of the reference with a 60.71% frequency of occurrence in the text. It includes three types of references.

**Total** 

The personal pronoun in the text is very dominant; the writer used around 22 references with the reference is "I," "you," "it," their. The most frequent occurrence in the text is the reference "you." the frequency occurrence is 18.64 %

- (u2, s1) The advantages of going to Britain seem obvious. Firstly, you will be able to listen to the language all the time you are in the country
- (u2, s2). **You** will be surrounded

completely by **the** language wherever **you** go.

Doctor, patient Doctor, diagnosing

• (u3, s1) I think you can learn in a more concentrated way than being in Britain without going to school.

The use of the personal pronoun you refer to the reader is called an exophoric reference since it is beyond the text. This secondperson pronoun begins an author-reader reference to concern a reader's perception of cohesion and gives the author a perspective.

- (u1, s2) I think you can learn in a more concentrated way than being in Britain without going to school.
- (u1, s2) **I** think that if **you** have enough time and enough money, the best choice is to spend some



time in the UK.

The personal pronoun "I" refers to the writer, its function as subject and express the writer's opinion, in the word "I" the reader about the writer's opinion and the writer's existence. It pertains to the writer and not to a protuberance participant. Its cohesive role is to present the writer's points of view, tie it with further discussions, or enact relations between opinions at distinct levels in the text.

The second place the most used in the text is the demonstrative reference "the" In the text, the use of demonstrative reference majorly used "the"

(u3, s2) **The advantages** of going to Britain seem obvious. Firstly, you will be able to listen to **the language** all the time you are in the country.

The word" the language" refers to the preceding paragraph, which is mean more specifically as the English language.

In the text, 8 of the conjunction used in the text consists of three types of conjunction. The most conjunction utilized in the text is additive conjunction, around 8. 62%. The function is to replace one piece of information or to offer alternatives. Halliday states that the additive conjunction has the role "there something more to be said in the text."

(u1, s1) Today, millions of people want to learn **or** improve their English, but it is difficult to find the best method. Is it better to study in Britain or America or to study in your own country?

The conjunction word in the phrase "learn or improve" has the function as the alternative. Here, learn or improve has a similar meaning, similar level, the author uses or in the sentence above to create the choice such as in words " Britain or America."

### 2. Lexical Cohesion

There are two kinds of lexical cohesion found in the text: reiteration and collocation. In the text, the reiteration occurs in the form of repetition, synonym, and superordinate. The most lexical cohesion is repetition around 15.52% of occurrences

The literature review explained that reiteration is the repetition of the lexical unit that is considered essential to emphasize. Some words repeated in the text such as Britain, language, country, learn, study, listen and speak.

- (u2, s1) The advantages of going to Britain seem obvious. Firstly, you will be able to listen to the language all the time you are in the country.
- (u2, s2) You will be surrounded by the language wherever you go.
- (u2, s3) Another advantage is that you have to speak the language if you are with other people. In Italy, it is always possible, in the class, to speak Italian if you want to, and the learning is slower.



The repetition "you" from the paragraph above emphasizes the reader about the author's point of view/opinion about the advantage of learning English in Britain. Another repetition in the paragraph is the words "advantage" and "language" "Britain" is repeated because it is supported the main topic discussed in the paragraph.

Collocation is the cohesion obtained through the union of lexical items that frequently co-occur (Halliday & Hasan, 1976c). There are collocations in the text, such as in the word " language-speak," "language-listen," " achieve- the result," "advantage-achieve."

- (u2, s2) you will be able to **listen** to the **language** all the time you are in the country.
- (u2, s3) you have to **speak** the **language** if you are with other people.

From the text above, the word "listen' and "speak" collocate to the word "language," .therefore make the occurrence of the word "language" cohesive.

The finding above has found the way text is tied together; however, not all of the cohesion devices used in the text, there are only four types of cohesion devices used in the text. It consists of grammatical cohesion (reference and conjunction) and lexical cohesion (reiteration and collocation). There is no ellipsis and substitution in the text.

The dominant grammatical cohesion devices in the text reference "you" and "I" emphasize the writer and reader's position. The function of "I" in the text also to highlight the writer's opinion to the reader. The word "I" is tied together with the writer's point of view, further with the text's discussion. In addition, it can be indicated that the writer was voicing their position by using "I" and "you." Furthermore, the dominant lexical cohesion utilized in the text is repetition with the most repeated words "English," "Language," and "Britain." The use of repetition to that word can support the idea or topic discussed in the text.

## Text 2. British Council: Robot Teachers 1. Grammatical Cohesion

Some references are found in this text, such as demonstrative reference, personal reference, and comparative reference; however, the dominant reference is the demonstrative reference.

In this text, the reference dominant used is "the". There are around 11.11% references used "the" in the text.

(u1, s1) If you think of the jobs robots could never do, you would probably put doctors and teachers at the top of the list.

"The" as a reference in the text above has referring object forward, and the function is modifying elements in which " the "occurs, and it is a signal of identifying



ability in specific situation (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). " the" from the sentence refers to "jobs" and "top." In this text, the most conjunction that used is additive conjunction with 13.13%,

(u1, s1) If you think of the jobs robots could never do, you would probably put doctors and teachers at the top of the list

The sentence above showing the use of additive conjunction "and" connect the "doctors" and "teacher" the function of this conjunction is to give more information that has an equal position.

### 2. Lexical Cohesion

In lexical cohesion, the most lexical cohesion used is the reiteration, with the type of repetition as the text's dominant occurrence. There is a 44.44% occurrence in the text.

The most utilized lexical cohesion is repetition, with the frequency of occurrence is 39.39%. The dominant word that occurs in the text is robot.

- (u1, s1) If you think of the jobs robots could never do, you would probably put doctors and teachers at the top of the list
- (u1, s2) It's easy to imagine **robot** cleaners and factory workers, but some jobs need human connection and creativity.

It can be seen from the sentences above, the word "robot" is repeated. It is because "Robot" is the main topic discussed in the paragraph above.

The frequency occurrence of collocation in the text is 8.08%. There is some collocation in the text such as " teacher – teaching," "teacher-student," "doctor-patient," 'doctor diagnosing," "problem-solve," 'stress-tired."

The next type of collocation is activity-related collocation; this type is collocation non-systematic, based only on associations between items. As a result, it can neither be defined precisely nor classified systematically.

(u1, s3) But are we underestimating what robots can do? In some cases, they already perform better than doctors at diagnosing illness.

Here" doctors" collocate with the word " diagnosing, "those words are related to the activity. it means the "doctors" related to doing the activity "diagnose."

The study analyzed the types of lexical and grammatical cohesion and the role of dominant cohesion devices in the text. The following discussion is presented based on the findings. Grammatical cohesion is the cohesion that included the grammar element consists of reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Based on the findings, there are some



grammatical cohesion devices in the texts. Both in ESL Lounge and British Council show the grammatical cohesion devices reference and conjunction. There is no ellipsis and conjunction found in the text ESL Lounge. However, in British Council, it is found only 1.01% substitution and ellipsis. It is similar to the result of a study from Putri (2020); the study found that the percentage substitution (0.02%), ellipsis (0.25%). It is explained that substitution and ellipsis are key attributes of spoken language and are generally rarely to "adjoining passages" (Castro & Halliday, 1995). However, in written texts, it sometimes appears, thus presumed reference is not repeated excessively.

In terms of grammatical cohesion devices, the result shows that from two reading comprehension texts with a similar result, the dominant cohesive devices in terms of grammatical cohesion from those two reading comprehensions are references. However, the difference between those two texts is the result of frequency occurrence in reference types. The dominant reference in ESL lounge is the personal reference pronoun "you"; meanwhile, the British Council's dominant reference is the Demonstrative reference "the".

ESL Lounge shows that the frequency of occurrence from reference is around 60.71% in the most dominant frequency

occurrence in the type of personal reference. The personal reference that the ESL Lounge's dominant uses are "you," the writer used the personal reference "you" to emphasize the writer and reader's position in the text. In line with this finding, Vladimirou (2007) argues that Personal pronouns have been identified as one of the authors' primary ways of voicing their position (stance), with their interacting readers. and developing their connections with the academic group that they are or seek to be participants. However, Hyland (2005) states that you and yours are currently the clearest way a writer can consider the reader's involvement. Still, outside of philosophy, these types are unusual, perhaps because they indicate a lack of participation between participants. Instead of using "you" there is a great deal by using "we" to bind the writer and reader.

Hence, in this article, the function of "you" is to voicing the writer's position and interacting with their readers. For instance:

"I think you can learn in a more concentrated way than being in Britain without going to a school.", in the sentence, we can see that the author used the word "you" to refer to the reader interacting with the reader by emphasizing their position in arguing their opinion using another personal pronoun "I."



The result from this research is different from another research conducted by Utomo (2015). The study found that grammatical cohesion reference mostly uses the pronoun "we" the pronoun "we" to persuade and invite the listener to do something. The different results of the study may have been the cause of different types of spoken and written. Bramley (2001) states that the speaker incorporates others in the utterance by using the pronoun 'we,' establishing a team with a specific identity, making others accountable for potential problems.

British Council shows the grammatical cohesion devices mostly used are references with a frequency of occurrence of 28.28%. However, the dominant use of reference is the demonstrative reference with a frequent 14.14%. occurrence of The most demonstrative reference is "the," meanwhile, "those" another reference and "that." According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), a demonstrative reference is substantially a form of rhetorical pointing in that speaker analyzes the referent by placing it on a range of proximity.

The role of demonstrative reference of "this," "that," "those," and "the" assigns to the location of something commonly some existence (person or object). They happen as components within the nominal group and pertain to the division of determiners. The article "the" is often used to refer to the

outside world conveyed by the author to the reader as an exophoric reference. It occurs when a word or phrase refers to something outside of discourse. Usually, the interlocutor already knows the meaning of the word or phrase that the speaker mentioned without explaining it first (Bahaziq, 2016). Moreover, the article "the" also refers to the particular and specific object.

In the text, the demonstrative reference "the" mostly occurs in some nominal such as "the robot," "the job," 'the ability," "the world," and "the information." For instance: British education expert Anthony Seldon thinks so. And he even has a date for the robot takeover of the classroom. In the sentence "the" indicated the particular object refers to "robot" and "the" refers to the classroom. In other words, it relates to a specific thing that the author refers to. It noted that the author used the most demonstrative reference in the text to refer or show to a particular or specific object. A similar result was found in the research conducted by Randi (2015).

The study shows that the author utilized references to give information about something. It is proven that certain object information is included in the article. The author uses such references to bring the reader to a particular object.



In terms of lexical cohesion devices, both of the text shows the similarities of dominant repetition types. There is around 15.52% occurrence in the text from ESL Lounge with the most repeated word is "Britain" "English" and "language," meanwhile in British council, there is around 39.39% frequency occurrence of repetition, with the most repeated words "Robot" and "teacher." The function of repetition can create cohesiveness in text. Repetition is an essential cohesive device. A paragraph can be entirely and coherently a whole in a sense by using repetition (Almutairi, Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Repetition is repeated in the same word (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Meanwhile, Jayetta et al. (2011) argue that repeating significant words or phrases in the article helps bind and concentrate the idea(s). Repetition also lets the reader keep focused and moving in the right direction as well. Moreover, the use of repetition of words in the text also prevents the reader becomes confused in recognizing many terms; thus, the reader keeps on their track to follow the text (Drafters, 2000).

The use of repetition in both texts creates cohesiveness and emphasizes the main idea or point of thought discussed in the text. For instance, the British Council text that utilized the word "robot" dominantly in the text has around 14

occurrences of repetition. The use repetition of the "robot" word creates understanding to center concentrated the ideas is about robots. The use of robot words creates the text's key that emphasizes pattern the reader's knowledge of the particular main discussion about the robot; in addition, it is also to avoid the reader's confusion in recognizing many terms in the text. Meanwhile, in the text in the ESL Lounge, the repetition occurs in the same occurrence of each word around four occurrences for the words "language," " English," and "Britain" utilized concentrate the ideas of the text which discuss learn English as the main discussion in the text.

In line with this study, the study from Nurjannah (2018) analyzed repetition in the advertisement. It is found the use of repetition in the advertisement is to make the names of products or brands easily to recognize and recall the readers consumers. Repetition also makes clear the link between the words and makes the body of text more communicative. It can be concluded that the role of repetition in the study is to make a clear understanding of readers towards the text. As it states that repeating the same words or phrases helps to bind and supported ideas, thus that the reader keep the focus on the right direction (Jayetta et al., 2011).



### **CONCLUSION**

The types of grammatical and lexical found consist: reference, conjunction, substitution and ellipsis, reiteration, and collocation. However, in ESL Lounge, there is no ellipsis and substitution found. In the British Council, there is only 1.01% ellipsis and substitution. The ellipsis generally found in spoken form rather than written form; however, it was found sometimes in written form; thus, presumed reference is not repeated excessively (Castro & Halliday, 1995).

The dominant Grammatical cohesion found in text ESL Lounge and British council is the reference. In ESL Lounge shows that personal reference "you" has the role to voicing the writer's position and interacting with their readers as it states that that Personal pronouns have been identified as one of the authors' primary ways of voicing their position (stance), interacting with their readers. Meanwhile, in British Council, the dominant neutral demonstrative reference "the" has the role in presenting a particular object to the reader.

The dominant Lexical cohesion found in text ESL Lounge and British Council is repetition. In ESL Lounge, the most dominant repetition is "English"; meanwhile, in the British Council, the most repetition is "robot." The use of repetition in texts has the role of supporting ideas and avoiding the

reader becoming confused in recognizing the term in the text; thus, the reader focuses on the text.

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