

**An Analysis of the Cohesive Devices of Internet Spoken Chat
Discourse**

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Abstract

This research is an investigation of the cohesive devices of synchronous private Internet spoken chatroom discourse on Yahoo! in same- sex dyadic interaction, viz. male-male and female-female. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) model, it tries to test whether or not this type of text is cohesive. Thus, it aims at presenting the various grammatical and lexical cohesive devices adopted by interactants as a way for showing connectivity within this type of text and to create a coherent structure, as a result.

The study is led by some hypotheses out of which Internet spoken chat discourse is cohesive. Besides, reference is expected to be the most frequent device among the other used devices. In addition, males are expected to utilize the cohesive devices more frequently than females.

The study has shown, among its concluding remarks, that Internet spoken chat discourse is cohesive. This is due to the frequent use of certain cohesive devices, such as reference which is in both types of interactions the most utilized device. Though ellipsis is rare in our study, a new form emerged which is not realized in the model adopted.

Key words: Text; cohesion; cohesive devices; Internet chat discourse

1. Introduction

Interest in written English discourse has grown dramatically. However, becoming a competent member of a speech community involves more than understanding its grammar and linguistic forms. Thus, longer discourse units beyond words and sentences need to be understood, too.

The studies of cohesion, one way of examining longer discourse units, have been carried out by Halliday and Hassan (1976), de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), Jackson (1990), Connor (1996), Grabe and Kaplan (1996), Yule (1996), Thorne (1997), Verschueren (1997), Grasser et al. (2005), to name just few. For Halliday and Hassan (1976), cohesion is responsible for text-forming texture (textuality). It depends on the grammatical and lexical relationships across sentence boundaries that allow sentence sequences to be understood as connected discourse rather than autonomous sentences.

2. The Problem

Due to the occurrence of multiple conversations simultaneously, chat discourse becomes intertwined with each other, and adjacent turns often

appear to be unrelated. Despite this, we believe that Internet spoken chat text, is cohesive. This is due to the availability of certain cohesive devices that can give us a clue to extract a cohesive text from this chat.

3. Aims of the Study

This study examines the textual structure of Internet spoken chatroom discourse on Yahoo!. It highlights the various grammatical and lexical cohesive devices utilized by the participants as a means for showing connectivity within the text as it gives meaning to the entire text creating a coherent structure, as a result.

It also aims at showing the importance of using cohesive devices in computer-mediated communication (CMC), viz. synchronous chat text and to understand the extent to which human interaction is affected by the mediation of computers. The study also aims at knowing the function of these cohesive strategies in CMC texts and how participants make sense of each other in a text-based virtual

environment. It should be mentioned that the study adopts the taxonomy of cohesive relationship as provided by Halliday and Hassan (1976) to establish some relationships within a text. This is due to the fact that these authors have given a comprehensive and adequate treatment of the subject, i.e. cohesion in text, and their work has become standard in this area.

4. Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. Internet spoken chat discourse is cohesive.
2. As cohesive devices, reference is expected to have the highest percentage while ellipsis is less frequent.
3. Cohesive devices are expected to be used more frequently by males than by females.

5. Data Collection

The data is taken from persons having different educational levels who used to connect with each other on chatting. It is picked up from private chat rooms. Besides, it is taken without the chatters' knowledge that they are being tested. This is done to have more authentic data. Twenty conversations were collected, all of which involve same sex dyadic interaction, i.e. male-male, or female-female; each conversation took almost 15 minutes on different topics.

6. Cohesion: Definition

Textual cohesion refers to the ways in which the components of the text (i.e. words and sentences) are mutually connected within a sequence. It occurs where the interpretation of an element in the discourse depends on that of another. That is, the one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively understood except by resource to it (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 27). Furthermore, cohesion involves a set of linguistic means for creating texture. The term "texture" refers to the property of a text of being interpretable as a whole rather than unconnected sentences (ibid). Hence, only those groups of sentences that have texture are considered to be a text. Thus, to present the notion of texture, Halliday and Hasan gave the following example: " *Wash and core **six cooking apples**. Put **them** into a fireproof dish*". The pronoun **them** in the second sentence refers back

to (or is anaphoric to) the *six cooking apples* in the first sentence. The anaphoric function of *them* ties the second sentence to the first. In order for one to understand the meaning of *them*, there must be some presupposed information, which is, in this case, *the six cooking apples* (ibid).

For de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 3), cohesion refers to the ways in which different parts of the texts, typically sentences, are linked together. Moreover, Hornby (1985: 3) argues that cohesion is the network of grammatical, lexical and other relations which link various parts of a text. These relations or ties organize and, to some extent, create a text, for instance, by requiring the reader to interpret words and expressions by reference to other words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs. It is a surface relation and it connects together the actual words and expressions that we can see or hear. In addition, Washburne (2010: 6) believes that cohesion is the quality of well-formed texts that gives them an internal unity and makes them hang together. It has a prominent role in the understanding of text structure.

7. Cohesive Devices

Halliday and Hasan (1976:5) argue that cohesion can be achieved partly through grammar and partly through vocabulary. This can result in having two different types of cohesion: 'grammatical cohesion' and 'lexical cohesion'. Both types are represented by certain cohesive devices and this is why, they divide cohesive devices into five types: *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis*, (all have a grammatical function), *lexical cohesion and conjunction*. However, they keep *conjunction* on the borderline of the grammatical and lexical cohesion with the greater tilt on the grammatical side.

Halliday and Hassan (1976: 7) opine that texts achieve their status and communicative events through the use of these five types of cohesive devices, and this is why, they believe that cohesive devices create a text (texture). They help readers understand the propositional information by providing explicit links among the ideas that the writer presents.

7.1 Reference⁽¹⁾

It is a relation between the linguistic expressions where one is referring to the other (Mendes and Mattos, 2005:2). For Hornby (1985:2), reference means items that refer to something in the text for their interpretation. Thus, reference indicates a relationship which holds between two linguistic expressions. In the words of Paltridge (2006:376), reference is the identity that an item of discourse reclaims through another item within or without the text. What is more, Akindele (2012:2) points out that referring expressions help to unify the text and create economy because they save writers from unnecessary repetition.

Furthermore, there are two ways to determine the meaning of a reference word in a text. One way is to look outside the text, and the other is to look at the surrounding text. When reference words refer to the real world, i.e. outside the text, this is called exophoric(situational) reference, whereas when reference words refer to the surrounding text, this is called endophoric (textual) reference. In other words, when the interpretation lies outside the text, i.e. in the context of situation, the relationship is called an "exophoric relationship" which plays no part in textual cohesion (Sigar, 2007: 18), while when the interpretation lies within the text, the relationship is called an "endophoric relationship" which forms cohesive ties within the text (ibid: 34). Let us look at the following examples:

e. g. Look at that (**That** refers to an object or a thing in the outside world. Since the meaning of **that** is determined by the context in which it is used, it has an exophoric i.e. situational reference).

e. g. There was a sandwich on the table. So, I ate it (**It** refers back to the sandwich; the meaning of **it** is decided through a reference which must be made to the text itself; it has an endophoric i.e.textual reference).

⁽¹⁾ Brown and Yule (1983) suggest the term "co-reference" for reference.

Besides, an endophoric reference can also be of two kinds: anaphoric where it refers back to the preceding text and cataphoric where it refers to the following text. For example, in

e.g. Look at **the sun**. **It** is going down quickly (**It** refers back to **the sun**, so it has an anaphoric reference).

e.g. **It** is going down quickly, **the sun**. (**It** refers forward to **the sun** and thus it has a cataphoric reference) (Brown and Yule, 1983:193).

In fact, there are three subcategories of references: personal, demonstratives, and comparatives (Nash, 2005: 3):

(1) Personal: a reference by means of person. This includes personal pronouns⁽²⁾, their object forms and their possessive forms.

(2) Demonstratives: They include determiners and adverbs that have locative or temporal reference or that are neutral (the definite article **the**).

(3) Comparatives: They involve adjectives and adverbs expressing comparison based on similarity, difference or quantity and quality.

e.g. *same, similar, such, bigger* (Bae, 2001:56)

Accordingly, two types of comparison can be distinguished: general and particular (specific). General comparison means comparison in terms of likeness or unlikeness without respect to any particular property. In other words, in general comparison, two things are said to be the same, similar or different without going into details; in this case, such words as "**same, similar** or **different**" are used. The following examples illustrate this point:

e.g. It is the same cat as the one we saw yesterday.

e.g. It is a similar cat to the one we saw yesterday.

e.g. It is a different cat from the one we saw yesterday (Halliday and Hassan, 1976:78).

⁽²⁾ personal pronouns include proper nouns as well: e.g., **Brandon, Ms. Rose** (Bae, 2001:56).

Particular specific comparison, on the other hand, means comparison between things in terms of a specific property with respect to quantity or quality. In other words, in particular comparison, two things are said to have more or less of this property, in this case, such words as "**more or less**", and comparative and superlative bound morphemes are used (Nash, 2005: 4). Thus, a particular comparison can be enumerative or epithet. The following are good examples:

e.g. There were twice as many people there as last night (enumerative)

e.g. He is a better man than I am (epithet)

The first example shows a comparison of quantity with an enumerative as comparative, whereas the second one exhibits a comparison of quality with an epithet as comparative (Sigar, 2007:36).

7.2 Substitution

It is the replacement of one item by another (Akindele, 2012: 4). Items commonly used in substitution in English include **do**, **one**, and **the same** (Bae,2001:56).

Since substitution can function as a noun, verb or clause, three main types of substitution can be identified: nominal, verbal and clausal. Let us look at the following examples:

e.g. I have eaten **your meal**. I must get you another **one** (Nominal substitution)

e.g. Do you **play games**? Yes I **do** (Verbal Substitution)

e.g. Does she say **there is going to be a nationwide strike**? Yes she says **so**. (Clausal Substitution) (Akindele, 2012: 4).3).

7.3 Ellipsis

This grammatical device involves the omission of a part of a sentence whose meaning will be retrievable from a preceding text (Hornby, 1985:3). Donnelly (1994:103) argues that elements of sentences are deleted because the writer believes that the reader will insert the missing elements on their own as the sentences are used. In other words, part of a sentence is deleted or omitted on the assumption that an earlier sentence or the context will make the meaning clear (Sigar, 2007: 39). That is why, Cook (1989:377) argues that we can

omit only when we are sure that the meaning can be understood without the item being omitted.

Unlike substitution, ellipsis is the absence of a word. In other words, in ellipsis something is left unsaid (Halliday and Hassan, 1976:142). For this reason, Hatch (1992:377) name this type of cohesive devices "*zero tie*" while Halliday and Hassan (1976:377) call it "*substitution by zero*". Let us look at the following example:

e.g. The horse (that was) injured in the road accident had to be put down (Hatch, 1992:377).

In the previous example, the subject of the sentence is a noun phrase having a head with pre- and post-modifications. The post-modification is realized by a relative clause. However, to apply ellipsis, this relative clause is reduced through omitting the clause marker with verb be.

7.4 Conjunction

It is a cohesive relation making logical-semantic relations between linguistic expressions. Thus, it is a way of relating linguistic elements that occur in succession, but are not related by other structural means (Nash, 2005: 5).

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 378) identify four types of conjunction. They are additive, adversative, causal and temporal:

1. Additive conjunctions can introduce new information. They can also indicate that the next piece of the text will restate what has been just said in a different way. This class includes conjunctions such as "*and, moreover, further (more), in addition, besides, in other words, that is, alternatively, or, also, similarly, likewise, by contrast, for instance, by the way*", etc.

2. Adversative conjunctions indicate that what follows is opposed to or contradicts with what has come before. This class involves such conjunctions as "*but, yet, however, rather, instead, nevertheless, as a matter of fact, on the other hand, at any rate*", etc.

3. Causal conjunctions indicate that two chunks of texts are related as cause and effect. The most common causal conjunctions are "*because,*

so, then, hence, it follows, to this end, as a result, therefore, thus, consequently, for this reason, for this purpose", etc.

4. Temporal conjunctions indicate sequence. They can also signal that two events are simultaneous. This type of conjunctions may include *"then, next, finally, and then, after that, soon, meanwhile, in conclusion, up to now, previously", etc.*

Let us see the examples below:

e.g. He has got a very good mark in the math test.

*e.g. And he has been the first in his class for the last two years
(additive).*

e.g. Yet he failed in his syntax test this term (adversative).

e.g. Because he wasn't ready completely (causal)

*e.g. Now, he feels very frustrated and thinks of leaving school
(temporal) (Nash, 2005: 6).*

7.5 Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion is a relationship between vocabularies in the text. It is a device that depends on the choice, by the writer, of particular lexical items which are related to the relevant preceding expressions through some recognizable semantic relations (Mendes and Mattos, 2005:3). In other words, lexical cohesion refers to the role played by the selection of vocabularies in organizing relations within a text. For Paltridge (2006:133), lexical cohesion refers to relationships in meaning between lexical items in a text, in particular content words and the relationship between them.

Halliday and Hasan(1976:278) divide lexical cohesion into two main categories: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration, as the name suggests, involves repetition of lexical items. A reiterated item may be a direct repetition of an earlier item, a synonym or near-synonym, a super-ordinate, or a general word. Let us consider the following examples:

*e.g. There was a great **woman**, who used to look after me when I was a kid. She used to feed me, play with me and tell me nice stories. The **woman** was my **mother** (Repetition of the word "woman" and the synonymy of the word "mother")*

e.g. I was served with **a good meal** yesterday at the party. **The food** was delicious (**Synonym**)

e.g. I bought plenty of **fruits** yesterday at the market. Thes **fruits** are **oranges, pineapples** and **pawpaw** (**Superordinate/ Hyponym**) (ibid)

As for collocation, Halliday and Hassan (1976:284) argue that it refers to the type of lexical cohesion that is achieved through "the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur". For them, any two lexical items which occur in similar contexts will generate a cohesive force if they occur in adjacent sentences (ibid: 286). Thus, this category may include synonym (climb-ascent), near- synonym (disease- illness), superordinate (boy-child); antonyms (wet- dry), converses (order-obey), complementaries (boy-girl; stand up-sit down), cohyponyms (" chairs" and "tables" both are hyponyms of "furniture"; "walk ".... "drive" both are hyponyms of "go") and proximity relations (laugh-joke; sheep- wool; congress- politician, college-study) which Halliday and Hassan (ibid: 285) explain as the cohesive effect deriving from the occurrence in proximity with each other (cf. Sigar,2007:44).

8. Data Analysis

Based on textual cohesion, we extracted from the data a set of utterances that exhibit cohesive devices. In what follows, a detailed presentation of each device together with examples are given:

1. Reference

Items which have the property of reference make, as mentioned earlier, a reference to something for their interpretation, rather than being interpreted semantically in their own right.

In a conversation between two interactants talking about a friend of them, the use of references is highlighted. The personal reference used by the first speaker is **u** which refers to the second speaker. In the same conversation, the second speaker uses other personal references, viz. **I** (used twice) and **him** respectively. The first two pronouns make a reference to the speech role, the speaker, though chat users have information available within the text, the username, to

which the pronoun refers. Besides, the personal pronoun *him* in the second turn refers to their friend. The reference is anaphoric; that is *him* (the reference item) refers to a preceding text. The referent is thus considered a signal for pointing to the *friend*:

A: *what ll u doing ?*⁽³⁾

B: *I don't know I want to leave to see him*

In another conversation between two males, talking about a girlfriend, another personal reference (a possessive pronoun) has been used by the first speaker, viz. *your* which, in turn, refers to the second speaker. At the same time, the personal pronoun *she* refers to the same girl who was mentioned in the conversation. In addition, other references are used, namely, *she* and *her*. They are personal references used by the second speaker and they refer to the same girl that was mentioned earlier:

A: *what about your girlfriend, is she coming or not ?*

B: *in fact she may come 2day if her plan took up*

In another conversation between two interactants, the second speaker uses three personal references, viz. *my* (used twice) and *me* when he is referring to one of his friend whom his brother told him about that he was hurt a great deal:

A: *what happened*

B: *my brother was calling me from the village and said that my friend ali was hearted by a gun and now he is in the intensive care*

In the previous example, these references refer to the speaker himself, while the third one *he* refers to one of the speaker's friend.

Sometimes, within reference as a cohesive device, there may appear a demonstrative reference. This is clearly shown in the following conversation about some friends and how the speaker should study with them since it is the last academic year:

A: *now what do u say?*

⁽³⁾ It should be noticed that all the extracts in the research are presented with the same mistakes committed by the interactants without any correction by the researcher.

B: of course I ll go with them because this is the last year

In the above excerpt, the first speaker uses *now* as a reference to the whole situation. In return, the second speaker uses another reference in the same utterance, viz. *this* where it refers to the year.

Similarly, in one of females' conversation, talking about the study and the problems faced, another demonstrative reference, viz. *these* is used by the second speaker; in this case, the reference word refers to "problems":

A: oh, the same problem with me. I want to find a solution for these problems.....Do u have any idea?

B: nooo

2. Substitution

Substitution is exemplified, in our data, through nominal substitution. This type of substitution involves a replacement of a noun or noun phrase with the substitutes such as *one* and *ones*. Below is an example from the chat data when two females are talking about buying a new mobile ; the second, uses "*a new one*" in her turn. Her turn demonstrates the substitution of the noun phrase "*new mobile*" with "*new one*". This element, i.e. "*one*" is used to replace the nominal element and to avoid repetition of the common noun, as a result:

A: I think I ll ask my father to buy a new mobile for me

B: If he refuse?!

A: if he refuse? I ll ask my brother to buy it for me

B: I wish that u get a new one in order to enjoy our time together

3. Ellipsis

This device, as mentioned earlier, refers to the idea of omitting part of a sentence on the assumption that an earlier sentence will make the meaning clear. The excerpt below, between two interactants talking about the iphone applications, demonstrates ellipsis of a preposition in a prepositional phrase by the second speaker. It should be mentioned that ellipsis of a preposition in PP is not mentioned in the model though it is related to phrases:

A: do u have itunes account?

B: but I made my account fee without credits card or (without) visa card

4. Conjunction

This cohesive device is used by chatters so frequently with all its types. In a conversation between two males ,when they are talking about the exam, an additive conjunction is used by the second speaker, viz. *and*:

A: what happened?

B: my brother called me from village and said that my friend ali hearted by gun shot And now he is in the intensive care

Moreover, some excerpts are realized as having an adversative conjunction. Let us look at the following example where *but* is used by a speaker talking about the apps of iphone:

A: Did you download some apps ?

B: yes .But I have some problem

Furthermore, in a conversation between two males planning to go for a picnic , the temporal conjunction *before* is used by the second speaker:

A: plz, lets go tomorrow at 10:00 o'clock,

I want to tell u sth

B: before u start I will be so busy 2morrow, I have to

In another conversation, the first speaker uses the cohesive element *because*, as a causal conjunction when he is talking with his friend about the reason behind not going for a picnic:

A: in fact I don't know

because I thing I have work

B: please try to come

5. Lexical Relations

As mentioned earlier, this cohesive device is shown through reiteration (repetition) and collocation though, in our data, it is shown through just repetition. The following example shows an instance of lexical repetition when two females are talking about one of their friends, the first repeats the pronoun "she" in her turn:

A:.....she was sad because she love u

B: oh please I don't want to talk with her

In the above- mentioned example, the pronoun "*she*", mentioned twice, refers to the same referent and this lexical repetition gives the utterance a more emphatic force.

9. Findings

Below is a summary of the frequencies and percentages of the cohesive devices found in both types of interactions:

Table1: Frequency and Percentage of the Cohesive Devices in Male-male Interactions

Cohesive Devices	Frequency	Percentage of Use
Reference	142	86.58%
Substitution	1	0.61%
Conjunction	20	13.25%
Ellipsis	1	0.61%
Lexical Relations	0	0%

Table2: Frequency and Percentage of the Cohesive Devices in Female-Female Interactions

Cohesive Devices	Frequency	Percentage of Use
Reference	155	81.15%
Substitution	4	2.09%
Conjunction	36	16.23%
Ellipsis	0	0%
Lexical Relations	1	0.52%

As can be seen in Table 1 and Table 2, reference is the most often used cohesive device and has the widest range between the cohesive elements in both types of interactions.

In the male-male interaction, conjunctions make a higher degree of occurrence than substitution and ellipsis which share the same rate of use. Lastly, lexical relations have zero realization.

Moreover, in the female-female interactions, conjunctions make their frequency more than substitution. Next to substitution comes lexical relations, while at the far end, ellipsis has zero realization. This is due to the high potential of ambiguity. In order to minimize ambiguity, female chatters favoured using full noun phrases (i.e. lexical repetitions) to make their turns as explicit as possible.

10. Conclusions

A careful study of the data shows that various cohesive devices are used to get the message across among interactants and to ensure connectivity within the text which may play a role in distinguishing the text type, i.e. CMC text. Through the analysis, it has been shown that however chaotic chatroom discourse may appear, users are able to create cohesion and communicate with each other. This raises the question as to how do chatroom users track topics and create cohesion from the intertwining turns. The answer lies, as mentioned earlier, in the use of cohesive devices. Chatroom members rely heavily on the use of cohesive devices to track and follow topics. Thus, the analysis of the textual structure of chat texts revealed that for a text to be cohesive, all its segments must be held together by some linguistic cohesive devices to form a unified whole. These devices are references, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical relations.

In the case of reference, all the types are realized to the exclusion of comparatives. As for substitution, it has been shown that only nominal substitution was used by the interactants. That is, verbal and clausal substitutions have zero realization. To talk about ellipsis as a cohesive device, the study has shown that instances of ellipsis are rare. This could be due to the fact that the devices that are much more explicit and make fewer assumptions are used more frequently than the less explicit ones. That is why, elliptical forms are common in spoken discourse. If the sender of a message chooses to use ellipsis, it is assumed by the sender that the recipient is able to recover the omitted information. However, the information that needs to be recovered must be activated within the consciousness of the recipient. It should be noticed, however, that with ellipsis, in our study, a new form emerged, viz. ellipsis of a preposition of a prepositional phrase; a case not

realized in the model adopted; this means that all the types of ellipsis have zero realization in our study. As for lexical cohesion, the interactants have succeeded in delivering their message through the use of repetition only to show emphasis throughout the text. Thus, lexical repetition could be a useful strategy in chatroom discourse when the channel of communication is noisy, or when the communicative system is relatively weak, to insure the hearer knows what the speaker is talking about.

In contrast to the last hypothesis, it has been shown that females pay their attention to present a more cohesive text. This is depicted through the frequent use of almost half of the types of the cohesive devices, specifically substitution, conjunction and lexical relations. This shows that females are more careful in presenting their messages than males. This is coupled by the fact that females never adopt ellipsis which indicates that they avoid being ambiguous in their cooperation with one another since utilizing ellipsis leads to ambiguity as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, the chats are proved to contain different interactional topics. The males' topics revolve around (postponing the exam, planning for a picnic, talking about girlfriends, talking about the admins of page ,talking about holidays, the features of the iphone, and downloading apps for iphone). As for the females' topics, they revolve around (planning for study, shopping, talking about parties, hard lectures, favourite sport, introducing oneself to another, friends, and talking about matches).

11. Suggestions for Future Research

1. Since these findings indicate the characteristics of synchronic CMC, we need to examine whether or not any difference is found between this type of interaction and the other one, viz. asynchronous CMC interaction.
2. Due to time limit and to social conventional and religious ties which limit, to a certain extent, the male- female interaction and make the collection of data from such a group difficult, another study is required to seek the uses of cohesive devices in cross-sex interactions , i.e. males-females.
3. A research is needed to study the public chat to find out the cohesive devices involved and whether or not they show any significant difference from the private chat.
4. The non-verbal features, as they enhance the linguistic quality of the interaction, is another important medium that is exploited to articulate ideas and needs an extensive investigation. As a matter of fact, interactants benefit very much from these features in their cooperation.

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تحليل الأجهزة المتماصة لخطاب الدردشة المنطوقة عبر الإنترنت

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قسم اللغة الإنكليزية/ كلية الآداب/ جامعة الموصل/ العراق

الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة وسائل السبك لمحادثات الانترنت الآتية الخاصة على الياهو! بين اللقاءات الثنائية المتماثلة الجنس، أي الذكور مع الذكور والإناث مع الإناث. واستنادا الى نموذج هاليداي وحسن في (١٩٧٦)، تحاول الدراسة أن تختبر ما اذا كان هذا النوع من النصوص مسبك. لذلك، تهدف الدراسة إلى تبيان مختلف وسائل السبك النحوية والمعجمية التي تساهم في تماسك الأجزاء مع بعضها البعض وإلى إنشاء بنية كلية مسبكة، بالنتيجة. تفترض الدراسة من بين فرضياتها ان الدردشة على الإنترنت مسبكة. إلى جانب ذلك، يتوقع أن الإشارة هي الوسيلة الأكثر شيوعا بين غيرها من الوسائل المستخدمة. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، من المتوقع أن الذكورهم أكثر من الإناث في استخدام وسائل السبك. وقد أظهرت الدراسة، من بين نتائجها، أن الدردشة على الإنترنت مسبكة. ويرجع ذلك إلى كثرة استخدام وسائل سبك معينة كالإشارة والتي، في كلا النوعين من اللقاءات، هي الوسيلة الأكثر استخداما. على الرغم من أن الحذف نادر في دراستنا، فقد ظهر شكل جديد لم يكن موجودا في النموذج المعتمد في الدراسة .