

Cohesion Analysis of “A Rice Sandwich”

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「A Rice Sandwich」の結合性分析

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of cohesive features in “A Rice Sandwich”, a short story written by Sandra Cisneros. The cohesion analysis identifies a range of different cohesive features in the story including pronominal reference, lexical cohesion, conjunctive cohesion, demonstrative reference, ellipsis and nominal substitution. In addition, the analysis highlights two key passages in the text in which the narrator has conflicts with other main characters. The results of the analysis allow the story to be mapped onto two standard patterns of narrative text organisation: lack/lack liquidated (L-LL) and situation/problem/response/evaluation (SPRE). Finally, the paper includes two consciousness-raising worksheets that are based on the cohesion analysis. These worksheets are designed to raise student awareness of cohesive features, and also facilitate the teaching of narrative organisation models.

1. Introduction

1a. The Text and the Course

This paper contains an analysis of one of the short stories that students read during an Authentic Reading course that I taught at J. F. Oberlin University. The course included six short stories, representing a range of genres such as fable, fantasy and science fiction. Several criteria were used to select the stories: each was written by a well-known author and exhibited interesting literary or linguistic features; the content was relevant to Japanese students; the language level was appropriate for intermediate-level learners; and finally the stories were all very short. The latter point was critical as the course involved only 21 hours of contact time (Lazar 1993, 51-55). This paper presents an analysis of cohesive features in one of the stories, “A Rice Sandwich”, written by Sandra Cisneros. The first aim of the analysis is to identify examples of cohesion that may usefully be brought to the attention of students. The second aim is to see what light these cohesive features cast on the overall organisation of the narrative.

1b. Analysis Procedure

The text of “A Rice Sandwich” was converted into electronic form to facilitate analysis. Electronic scanning is preferable to re-typing, but in this case scanning was not possible because the original hard copy was printed on a grey background. The text therefore had to be typed in manually, and is reproduced in Appendix 1.

Whilst making the general comment that the “analysis of narrative texts may be undertaken from a whole host of linguistic perspectives”, Simpson (1997, 116ff) demonstrates how a text – in his case one of Hemingway’s vignettes – can be effectively analysed using the frameworks of cohesion and Labov’s natural narrative. The analysis in this paper follows a similar procedure, and takes as a starting point the definitions that Simpson (1997, 198) provides for **cohesion** as “a term describing the ways in which elements in a text are bound together”, and **cohesive ties** as “semantic links that operate within and across sentences”. The analysis also draws on the description of cohesion by Halliday and Hasan (1976), and refers to subsequent work by McCarthy (1991), Hoey (1991 & 2001) and Bloor and Bloor (2004).

Many different cohesive features are found in “A Rice Sandwich”, with several often occurring within a single sentence. This is in accordance with the observation by Bloor and Bloor (2004, 93) that all the main types of cohesive tie can operate simultaneously in a single text. In this paper I have chosen to focus on one cohesive feature at a time, presenting definitions and examples as they arise. The first stage of the analysis considers pronominal reference because this feature is readily accessible by students, and it incidentally helps to highlight two key passages in the story. Each part of the story is then examined in turn for other features including lexical cohesion, conjunctive cohesion, demonstrative reference, ellipsis and nominal substitution. The final stage of the analysis

uses the results of the cohesion analysis to help map the story onto standard patterns of narrative text organisation.

1c. A Comment on Genre

Although earlier described as a short story, “A Rice Sandwich” is in fact a single chapter of the Sandra Cisneros novella “The House on Mango Street”. The works of Cisneros can be difficult to classify. The Random House Academic Resources website, for example, suggests that individual chapters of “The House on Mango Street” may be variously thought of as stories, character sketches, or vignettes.¹ On the other hand, Kay and Gelshenen (2001, 217) choose simply to describe the book as a collection of short stories.² The latter approach has been followed in this paper, so that “A Rice Sandwich” is considered to be a complete text in its own right. The analysis that follows therefore limits itself to examining cohesive ties found *within* the story and does not address links with the rest of the book.

2. Analysis of the Text

2a. Pronominal Reference throughout the Text

In their classic study of cohesion, Halliday and Hasan (1976, 37) differentiate between three types of cohesion by reference: personal, demonstrative and comparative reference. This section deals with the first type, **personal reference**, defined as “reference by means of function in the speech situation, through the category of PERSON” (ibid 1976, 37). Personal reference includes personal pronouns, possessive determiners and possessive pronouns. However, Halliday and Hasan (1976, 45) later point out that this term “might seem a little misleading, as the system includes not only ‘impersonal’ meanings... but also reference that is truly non-personal, reference to objects.” Identifying the same three categories of cohesive reference, Bloor and Bloor (2004, 94) likewise note that personal reference “does not always involve people”. The pronoun “it” in line 39 of “A Rice Sandwich”, for instance, is an anaphoric reference to a letter. In order to avoid this inconsistency the following analysis uses the alternative term **pronominal reference** to describe the phenomenon by which pronouns co-refer with a nominal group.

There are a total of 98 pronominal references in the text, of which 55 refer to the narrator, Esperanza. As for the other main characters, there are 8 pronominal references to Esperanza’s mother, Mrs. E. Cordero, and 10 to the school principal, Sister Superior. The pronominal references to the narrator are distributed throughout the text, occurring in all paragraphs except the first and fourth. These references are a thread through the narrative, clearly showing that the story is told from “a first-person participant point of view” (Berger 1997, 129). Interestingly, the narrator’s name occurs only once, in paragraph nine. Bloor and Bloor (2004, 93) observe that reference by pronouns has “a very strong cohesive force” as the reader is “forced to mentally identify the linked nominal

in order to make sense of the text.” In this case there is only one linked nominal so the effect is to throw a spotlight on paragraph nine, which turns out to contain the letter that is the key to the story.

By combining pronominal references with the nominals to which they refer it is possible to construct **identity chains** for the characters of a story. Hoey (1991, 15-16) defines an identity chain as being “made up of cohesive ties that all share the same referent(s)”, and goes on to point out the importance of the interaction between such chains. Table 1 has identity chains for the three main characters, showing all pronominal and nominal references to these characters as well as the paragraphs in which they occur. Paragraphs one and four are noteworthy for the absence of any references to the main characters. By contrast, paragraphs two and nine both contain references to all three of them.

The shading in Table 1 highlights two distinct passages of the story in which Esperanza engages with the other characters: the first occurs when she argues with her mother between paragraphs two and six; and the second occurs when she has a conflict with the Sister Superior between paragraphs seven and twelve. The start of the story and these two key parts of the narrative are analysed in the following sections of this paper.

| Paragraph | Chain 1 Esperanza’s mother | Chain 2 Esperanza | Chain 3 Sister Superior |
|-----------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | Mother | My, I, my, my, me, I | Principal |
| 3 | she, I, me | me, I | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | You, my, you, you | I, I, I, my, I, me, me, my, favourite daughter, I, me | |
| 6 | mother, mother’s | my, I, my | |
| 7 | | I, me, you, you, I, I, my, I | Sister Superior, her |
| 8 | | I, me, My, I, my | Sister Superior |
| 9 | I, Mrs. E. Cordero | Esperanza, she, she, she, she | Sister Superior, you, you |
| 10 | | You, You, your, your | she, I, I, my |
| 11 | | me, I, I, my, I, me | she, she |
| 12 | | I, you, I, I, I, my | She |
| 13 | | I | |

Table 1: Identity chains for the main characters.

2b. Cohesion at the Start of the Story

Paragraph one contains no references to the narrator, or the other main characters. Instead it initiates the exposition phase of the plot by introducing some minor characters, the “special kids”

who are allowed to eat lunch at school, as well as by introducing one of the main places in which the story is set, “the canteen”. This section examines paragraph one more closely, and identifies cohesive ties – especially lexical cohesive ties – that link it to paragraph two.

Bloor and Bloor (2004, 99) define **lexical cohesion** as “the cohesive effect of the use of lexical items in discourse where the choice of an item relates to the choices that have gone before.” Lexical cohesion comes in several different forms and may involve the use of repetition, synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms or collocation. Despite the short length of paragraphs one and two (46 and 43 words respectively), they are linked by a number of lexical ties. The following words are found in both paragraphs: “get”, “canteen”, “mother(s)”, “home” and “far”. These are examples of **repetition** or **reiteration**, which Bloor and Bloor (2004, 99) consider to be probably the strongest form of lexical cohesive tie. The prepositional phrase “in the canteen” is also repeated (lines 2 and 7). The author indicates that this is important by following the first occurrence with a further repetition of “the canteen” marked with an exclamation mark. As for other ties, there is a structural similarity between the prepositional phrase “around their necks” in the first paragraph, and “in my head” in the second, which is strengthened by the associative link between the nouns “necks” and “head”. An additional similarity is that the final words of the two paragraphs are homophones: “to” and “too”.

For all the similarities, though, a sense of contrast exists between the paragraphs. Whereas the first one introduces *minor* characters, the second introduces the three *main* characters of the story: the narrator, her mother and the school principal. This contrast is quietly echoed by the intrasentential conjunctive, “but”, near the start of the second paragraph, and perhaps also by the antonymous link between the words “far” and “close” in lines 3 and 5. The clearest manifestation of this contrast is shown by the pronominal references: the first paragraph only contains third-person references to the “special kids”, whilst in the second the majority of pronouns (six out of eight) are first-person references to the narrator, Esperanza. Thus the separation that Esperanza feels from the other children in her school is emphasised.

2c. Cohesion in Paragraphs 2–6

As previously noted, paragraphs two to six depict an argument between Esperanza and her mother. There are 28 pronominal and 4 nominal references to these two characters, but curiously not one of these is found in paragraph four. Just as the first paragraph was shown to be linked by lexical cohesive ties to the second, so paragraph four is linked to the text which follows and precedes it, but there is again a sense of contrast with the surrounding text. In addition to the pronominal references, this contrast is realised through the use of superordinates and hyponyms.

Rutherford (1987, 189) defines **hyponymy** as “the relation between a class of things (e.g. *wars*) and a token of that class (*American Revolution*).” An example of hyponymy occurs in paragraph three with the nominal group “You kids” functioning as a superordinate to the names of three of

Esperanza's siblings in paragraph four: "Nenny", "Kiki" and "Carlos". These names are further linked to 7 pronominal references in the same paragraph. Another co-hyponym of "You kids" is found in paragraph five: "favorite daughter", referring to Esperanza. This in turn links to 10 pronominal references within the same paragraph.

In the third paragraph the mother complains dramatically (whilst "pointing the butter knife") about the amount of work that would be involved if she had to provide all her children with lunch bags. She uses the word "everybody" as a synonym for "You kids" to strengthen her argument, and also implies that her children are all the same insofar as they "like to invent more work". Esperanza refutes this implication by clearly differentiating her sister and brothers from herself, a differentiation that is reflected in the distribution of the co-hyponyms: paragraph four contains the references to Esperanza's brothers and sister, and paragraph five only refers to the narrator herself.

Other interesting examples of cohesion appear in this section. Esperanza's counter-argument opens with the first word of the fourth paragraph, "But", operating intersententially as an **adversative conjunction**. Bloor and Bloor (2004, 98) provide two examples which serve to contrast "However" used as an *intersentential* conjunctive adjunct with "but" used as an *intrasentential* linking conjunction. Whilst these examples indicate usage appropriate for academic papers, Cisneros has chosen a much more informal register for "A Rice Sandwich", in keeping with the age of her narrator, and the use of "But" as an intersentential cohesive tie is an illustration of this informal register. The paragraph continues with two examples of **parallelism** which, following the format of Hoey (2001, 55-58), are reproduced in Tables 2 and 3.

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Line 13 | She | doesn't | want to eat at school |
| Lines 16-17 | They | don't | want to eat at school |
| Constants | Person(s) | negative | want to eat at school |
| Variables | which person(s) | — | — |

Table 2: First example of parallelism from paragraph four.

In the first example of parallelism the clauses "she doesn't want to eat at school" and "They don't want to eat at school" act together as a strong rebuttal of the mother's claim in the previous paragraph that "everybody will be wanting a bag lunch". In the second example the clauses "she likes to go home with her best friend Gloria" and "They like to stand out in the cold" echo the mother's earlier statement that "You kids just like to invent more work for me." Although "want" and "like" are not synonyms, there is a closeness in meaning between them that strengthens the cohesive ties between the clauses in which they occur.

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lines 13-14 | She | likes to go home | with her best friend Gloria |
| Line 17 | They | like to stand | out in the cold |
| Constants | person(s) | like(s) to do something | prepositional phrase |
| Variables | which person(s) | what they like to do | — |

Table 3: Second example of parallelism from paragraph four.

The end of the fourth paragraph and start of the fifth are linked by repetition of “Spartan(s)”. Closer examination, however, reveals a strong contrast between “300 Spartans” (line 19) and “no Spartan” (line 20) as Esperanza points out how different she is – in being “anemic” and weak – from her hardy brothers. The contrast is furthered by the absence of any repetition of the word “want” in the fifth paragraph. There is an occurrence of “like”, but inside the pattern “you/like/me” which points back to the third paragraph, not the fourth. By saying “You would see me less and less and like me better” Esperanza provides a neat and positive riposte to her mother’s earlier complaint that “You kids just like to invent more work for me.” This bond between the third and fifth paragraphs is strengthened in other ways: by repetition of the word “lunch” (lines 9 and 22); by the antonymous relationship between “more” (line 12) and three occurrences of “less” (lines 22-23); and by the weaker antonymous link between “night” (line 10) and “noon/3pm” (lines 23 and 25).

Finally, near the end of paragraph three the superordinate “work” links to several co-hyponyms including two in paragraph five: “make...lunch” and “dishes to wash”. The first of these is in turn a superordinate to the hyponym “cutting bread into little triangles” back in the third paragraph, which is itself elaborated in the instructions relating to sandwich preferences that follow. These superordinate-hyponym links and the other cohesive ties in the text around paragraph four help create the impression of a sustained and eloquent counter-argument centred on Esperanza differentiating herself from her siblings in order to win over her mother. Little wonder that the mother gives in and allows her daughter to take a bag lunch to school!

2d. Cohesion in Paragraphs 7–12

A number of different cohesive devices are found between paragraphs seven and twelve. This part of the story sees Esperanza take her letter and lunch to school but then get sent to the principal’s office because she is not one of the regular “canteen kids”.

There are 14 occurrences of “and” in this section. This repetition is not in itself significant since “and” is not a lexical word, but four occurrences are of interest since they feature sentence-initial “and” acting as an intersentential **additive conjunction**. Halliday and Hasan (1976, 233) observe that whilst sentence-initial use of “and” is widely frowned upon in written English, the word “is used cohesively, to link one sentence to another, and not only by children”. They also show how in narrative fiction this usage may occur at the “boundary of dialogue and narrative” (ibid 1976, 235).

Such is the case with the instances listed in Table 4, where each sentence-initial “and” coincides with a transition from dialogue back to narrative.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Lines 32-33 | “you, who sent you here?” And since I am shy, I don’t say anything... |
| Lines 34-35 | “Go upstairs and see her.” And so I went. |
| Lines 47-49 | “Which one is your house?” And then she made me stand up on a box of books... |
| Line 55 | “you go home.” And I said “yes”... |

Table 4: Dialogue-narrative boundaries marked by intersentential conjunctive “and”.³

Another type of cohesion, **ellipsis**, is defined by Cook (1989, 156) as the “omission of clauses, phrases, or words which can be recovered from context or from elsewhere in the discourse”. Instances of ellipsis between paragraphs seven and twelve are shown in Appendix 2. The ninth paragraph again stands out as it is the only one in this section not to feature ellipsis, indicative of the switch to a more formal register appropriate for a letter written to a school principal. McCarthy (1991, 46) notes that ellipsis assumes that omitted items are “easily recoverable” from the context and is “therefore natural in speech situations where a high degree of contextual support is available”. Appendix 2 illustrates the contrast in this section of the story between the conversational style of the narrative and the formality of the letter.⁴

McCarthy (1991, 43) identifies three main types of ellipsis - clausal, verbal and nominal - each of which is illustrated in Table 5. The instance of clausal ellipsis features an intrasentential link which exemplifies “the area where ellipsis overlaps with what is often treated under the grammar of coordination” (ibid 1991, 45). There is another intrasentential link in the example of verbal ellipsis, but the nominal ellipsis example features intersentential cohesion, with omitted nominal groups in the second and third sentences forming anaphoric cohesive ties to the first sentence. Ellipsis throughout the text helps create an economic narrative style and, by removing unnecessary repetition, also strengthens the effect of desired lexical repetition and parallelism.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Clausal ellipsis (lines 29-30) | ...mornings always go by slow and this day especially {the morning goes by slow}. |
| Verbal ellipsis (lines 36-37) | ...one because he did something in class, the other because he didn’t {do something in class}. |
| Nominal ellipsis (lines 45-46) | That’s only four blocks. Not even {four blocks}. Three {blocks} maybe. |

Table 5: Examples of three types of ellipsis, with omitted words in parentheses.

A number of other cohesive features are found between paragraphs seven and twelve. Whereas ellipsis is the omission of an item, **substitution** is “the replacement of one item by another” (Halliday

and Hasan 1976, 88). Lines 47-49 contain three instances of nominal substitution in which “house” is replaced by “one”. The last of these substitutions combines with the demonstrative pronoun “that” to provide an example of **demonstrative reference**, which Halliday and Hasan (1976, 57) describe as “essentially a form of verbal pointing”. In this case the principal is literally pointing at a specific house and asking Esperanza if she lives there. This section also has numerous instances of demonstrative reference realised by the definite article. In line 33, for example, “the letter” forms cohesive ties with the earlier expression “my mother’s letter” (line 27) and the synonym “a note” (line 6). This is **endophoric reference**, or “reference to something *within the text*” (Bloor and Bloor 2004, 94). There is, however, no previous co-referent when the principal mentions “the boulevard” in line 45. This is **exophoric reference**, or “reference *outside the text*” (ibid 2004, 94), in which definiteness is supplied by the situation in which the dialogue takes place. Finally, “the other” in line 37 is a **comparative reference** which can only be made sense of by referring to the nominal group “two kids” and the substitution “one” that appear earlier in the same sentence.

2e. Cohesion between the Start and End of the Story

The final stage of the cohesion analysis addresses ties between the first two paragraphs and the last two. These ties include lexical repetition of words such as “canteen” and “home”, as well as an example of hyponymy, with the repeated superordinate “kids” in paragraph one linking to the co-hyponyms “boys” and “girls” in the final paragraph. There are also two instances of **meronymy**, where “lexical items are related as whole to part” (Eggs 1994, 102). Firstly, “head” in paragraph two links with the co-meronyms “necks” and “nose” in paragraphs one and twelve respectively. Secondly, “sandwich” in paragraph one links with “bread” and “rice” in paragraph thirteen. In addition, a chain of **alliteration** runs through these paragraphs, with repetition of the initial [k] sound linking key lexical words: kids, keys, canteen, canteen, kids, close, could, canteen, could, could, Kleenex, canteen, cried, cold (Lazar 1993, 44). This alliteration is discussed further in the following section.

2f. Organisation of the Narrative

Using the results of the cohesion analysis, the story can be compared with two standard models of narrative organisation: lack/lack liquidated (L-LL) and situation/problem/response/ evaluation (SPRE). The first of these comes from the study of fairy tales and is illustrated in Table 6 (Berger 1997, 85). The simple L-LL model shows that “A Rice Sandwich” features a lack that is ultimately liquidated, albeit partially as Esperanza is only allowed into the canteen for one day. The story exhibits some characteristics of classic fairy tale structure, but not others. It does not open with the words “Once upon a time”, nor end with a hero and heroine living “happily ever after”. On the other hand, it does centre on the actions of a heroine, Esperanza, who tackles clearly defined

dilemmas played out within a “basic bipolar structure” (ibid 1997, 84-87). Furthermore, although the opening phrase “The special kids” does not establish temporal distance, it does serve a similar purpose in terms of creating psychological (and indeed physical) distance between Esperanza and the other children. Thus one reading of the story is that it simultaneously borrows from and plays against the traditional structure of fairy tales.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Lack: | Esperanza is not one of the special kids who eat lunch in the school canteen (paragraphs 1-2). |
| Lack liquidated: | Esperanza is allowed to eat her rice sandwich in the school canteen for one day only (paragraphs 12-13). |

Table 6: L-LL model of narrative organisation applied to “A Rice Sandwich”.

The second model, the problem/solution model, has in various elaborations been widely used to analyse research theses as well as narrative texts. Hoey (2001, 123ff) makes use of a situation/problem/response/evaluation (SPRE) framework to analyse narrative texts, pointing out limitations to this kind of application as the model may not account for all sections of a given story, which may actually not contain a “problem” component (ibid 2001, 145). Coulthard (1994, 8) outlines two ways in which the model may become more complicated: the first entails “embedding a complete four-part [SPRE] structure inside one of the components of another structure”; the second arises when the evaluation is negative and is followed by a restating or modification of the problem, creating a recursive SPRE structure. The SPRE model therefore allows for a much more detailed analysis than the L-LL model.⁵

Table 7 shows three SPRE cycles in “A Rice Sandwich”. The first occurs between paragraphs one and six, and is triggered by Esperanza’s mother saying “Oh no” (line 8) to her daughter’s request, thereby negatively evaluating the situation and inviting a response. The response is positively evaluated by “Okay, okay” (line 26) and the first cycle is brought to a close. At this point in the text there is what Hoey (2001, 54-55) terms an **episode boundary**, with several elements signalling the start of a new episode in the narrative: a sentence-initial conjunctive “and” (line 26), which Halliday and Hasan (1976, 235) note typically indicates “a total, or almost total, shift in the participants from one sentence to the next”, is immediately followed by the temporal adjunct “the following morning”, which clearly marks a change of time frame. The location switches from home to school, and there is also a change of characters with the Sister Superior replacing the mother, as mentioned previously in the discussion of identity chains, and shown in Table 1.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| <u>SPRE Cycle 1</u> | |
| Situation: | The special children eat lunch in the school canteen and Esperanza wants to join them (paragraphs 1-2). |
| Problem: | Esperanza's mother will not let her because it would entail extra work (paragraphs 2-3). |
| Response: | Esperanza argues that it would actually mean less work for her mother, who would end up liking Esperanza more (paragraphs 4-5). |
| Evaluation: | After 3 days the mother allows Esperanza to take lunch to school (paragraph 6). |
| <u>SPRE Cycle 2</u> | |
| Situation: | At lunchtime Esperanza joins the children lining up outside the canteen (paragraph 7). |
| Problem: | A nun challenges her because she does not usually eat in the canteen (paragraph 7). |
| Response: | Esperanza holds out the letter from her mother (paragraph 7). |
| Evaluation: | The nun sends Esperanza to the school principal (paragraph 7). |
| <u>SPRE Cycle 3</u> | |
| Situation: | The principal reads the letter which explains that Esperanza wants to eat lunch in the canteen (paragraphs 8-9). |
| Problem: | The principal says that she lives too near to eat in the canteen (paragraphs 10-11). |
| Response: | Esperanza starts to cry (paragraph 11). |
| Evaluation: | The principal allows her to eat in the canteen for one day only (paragraphs 12-13). |

Table 7: SPRE model of narrative organisation applied to “A Rice Sandwich”.

The second cycle is contained within paragraph seven and is framed by the following parallel structures found in lines 31-34: “Everything is fine until...” and “This is no good, she says, till...”. Although Esperanza’s response is negatively evaluated by “no good”, the expectation of a positive outcome later in the text is raised when the nun goes on to say, “...till Sister Superior gives the okay”. Meanwhile the negative evaluation triggers a recursive SPRE cycle, with the problem restated through the letter in paragraph nine (Coulthard 1994, 8).

In the final SPRE cycle, Esperanza’s purely emotional response has mixed results: it is evaluated positively in paragraph twelve when the principal says that Esperanza “could stay”, but in paragraph thirteen the words “cried”, “greasy” and “cold” all exhibit negative semantic prosody. Esperanza eventually gets what she wants, but it is only for one day and is not what she expected. In fact, using key lexical words from the alliterative chain at the start and end of the story, it is possible to summarise the first paragraph as “special kids with keys eat in the canteen”, and the last paragraph as “Esperanza cried and ate her cold and greasy sandwich in the canteen”. In short, Esperanza is not a “special kid” with a key but she manages to get a letter allowing her to

temporarily join the other children.⁶

The SPRE model clearly provides a more detailed analysis than the L-LL model. There are numerous other frameworks for narrative organisation including Labov's framework of natural narrative, which was referred to in the introduction. (See also Hoey 1994, 27, and 2001, 142ff.) The models used in this analysis, however, suffice to provide two different levels of textualization of the underlying narrative structure, one simple and the other more complicated, and both more accessible to students than the original text (Coulthard 1994, 9).

3. Pedagogical Implications

Appendices 3 and 4 contain two consciousness-raising worksheets based on the cohesion analysis. Taking the episode boundary in line 26 as an appropriate dividing point, Task A includes the first half of the story up to paragraph six, and Task B includes the second half. Following Willis (2003, 223), the worksheets are designed for use after the story has been read and processed for meaning. Students identify pronominal references and their referents, then use this information to answer questions relating to the narrative.

Although these worksheets only address pronominal reference, when used with students in the Authentic Reading course they served as a springboard for discussion of other aspects of cohesion relevant to second language learners, such as over-production of "and" (Rutherford 1987, 91), and ways of avoiding direct repetition through the use of synonyms, antonyms, superordinates and hyponyms (McCarthy 1991, 71). They also provided a base from which to present the L-LL and SPRE narrative models. Students may lack these **schema**, or "organised representations of background knowledge" (Short 1996, 231), in which case, as Hoey (2001, 167) points out, texts become more difficult to read. Indeed, Short (1996, 231) goes so far as to say that "one important aspect of the work of English departments revolves around giving students the requisite schematic knowledge-base for responding sensitively to texts distant from them historically and/or culturally".

4. Conclusion

The first aim of this analysis was to identify examples of cohesion in "A Rice Sandwich" which might usefully be brought to the attention of students. The analysis identified a high density of cohesive devices in the text including: co-reference (pronominal, demonstrative, comparative, exophoric, endophoric, anaphoric and cataphoric), lexical cohesion (repetition, synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, meronyms and association), conjunctive cohesion (additive and adversative), ellipsis (clausal, verbal and nominal), substitution, parallelism and alliteration. As for the second aim, two models of narrative organisation were successfully applied to the story. Finally, a task was designed and used to raise learner awareness of these cohesive features and also the way in which the narrative is organised. The approach of starting the analysis with pronominal reference

and then progressing to other cohesive devices before concluding with narrative organisation proved effective. It would be interesting to apply this procedure to other short stories in order to test whether or not it is worthy of more general application.

Notes

- 1 Random House Academic Resources for “The House on Mango Street” are available at: <http://www.randomhouse.com/acmart/teacherguides/houmantg.html>
- 2 “A Rice Sandwich” is one of the stories featured in the second volume of the authentic literature textbook series written by Kay and Gelshenen (2001, 216-224).
- 3 Cisneros has a minimalist approach to punctuation which does not extend to the use of speech marks. These have been added to the text in Table 4 to make clearer the dialogue-narrative boundaries. The sentence-initial instances of “and” have also been highlighted, and paragraph boundaries ignored. In addition to the examples listed in Table 4, the earlier part of the story includes three instances of “and” acting as an additive conjunction (lines 2, 21 and 26). The absence of speech marks make it difficult to determine whether or not the second and third of these occur at dialogue-narrative boundaries, but the first certainly does not. All three instances do, though, coincide with what Halliday and Hasan (1976, 235) more generally describe as a “shift in the participants from one sentence to the next”.
- 4 The letter in paragraph nine does, however, contain some elements characteristic of a conversational register, such as the expression “I hope to God”. A search for this expression in the 100-million word British National Corpus yielded twelve occurrences: six from dialogue (or internal dialogue) in books, two from a television broadcast, and four from recorded conversations. The British National Corpus is accessible at: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>
- 5 There is some variation in terminology with, for instance, Coulthard (1994, 8) preferring the term “solution” to “response”. On the other hand Hoey (2001, 124) reasons that “Solution ... is inappropriate since what is expected is the description of something done to deal with the Problem, not necessarily something that was *successful* in dealing with the Problem”. An important if subtle distinction, and hence in this paper, which deals not with a research thesis but with a narrative text, the term “response” has been used.
- 6 The keys that the “special kids” wear around their necks (line 1) are a metaphor for the access they have to the canteen, access denied to Esperanza. In place of a key she has a letter with which she hopes to enter this forbidden world. There are three occurrences of “letter” (lines 27, 33 and 39) before the letter itself is reproduced in paragraph nine, and there is perhaps an indirect phonic parallelism between these occurrences and the phrase “let Esperanza” (= “let her”) in line 41, as if the letter is pleading on behalf of Esperanza for the principal to “let her” eat in the canteen.

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Appendix 1. "A Rice Sandwich" by Sandra Cisneros

The story is reproduced below, with line numbers indicated on the left and paragraph numbers on the right. The text is unaltered except for the letter between lines 41 and 43 which has been condensed into a single paragraph so as to facilitate the analysis. (The same alteration is made by Kay and Gelshenen 2001, 218-219.)

- The special kids, the ones who wear keys around their necks, get to eat in the canteen. The canteen! Even the name sounds important. And these kids at lunch time go there because their mothers aren't home or home is too far away to get to. [1]
- 5 My home isn't far but it's not close either, and somehow I got it in my head one day to ask my mother to make me a sandwich and write a note to the principal so I could eat in the canteen too. [2]
- 10 Oh no, she says pointing the butter knife at me as if I'm starting trouble, no sir. Next thing you know everybody will be wanting a bag lunch - I'll be up all night cutting bread into little triangles, this one with mayonnaise, this one with mustard, no pickles on mine, but mustard on one side please. You kids just like to invent more work for me. [3]
- 15 But Nenny says she doesn't want to eat at school - ever - because she likes to go home with her best friend Gloria who lives across the schoolyard. Gloria's mama has a big color T.V. and all they do is watch cartoons. Kiki and Carlos, on the other hand, are patrol boys. They don't want to eat at school either. They like to stand out in the cold especially if it's raining. They think suffering is good for you ever since they saw that movie *300 Spartans*. [4]
- 20 I'm no Spartan and hold up an anemic wrist to prove it. I can't even blow up a balloon without getting dizzy. And besides, I know how to make my own lunch. If I ate at school there'd be less dishes to wash. You would see me less and less and like me better. Everyday at noon my chair would be empty. Where is my favorite daughter you would cry, and when I came home finally at 3 p.m. you would appreciate me. [5]
- 25 Okay, okay, my mother says after three days of this. And the following morning I get to go to school with my mother's letter and a rice sandwich because we don't have lunch meat. [6]
- 30 Mondays or Fridays, it doesn't matter, mornings always go by slow and this day especially. But lunch time came finally and I got to get in line with the stay-at-school kids. Everything is fine until the nun who knows all the canteen kids by heart looks at me and says: you, who sent you here? And since I am shy, I don't say anything, just hold out my hand with the letter. This is no good, she says, till Sister Superior gives the okay. Go upstairs and see her. And so I went. [7]
- 35 I had to wait for two kids in front of me to get hollered at, one because he did something in class, the other because he didn't. My turn came and I stood in front of the big desk with holy pictures under the glass while the Sister Superior read my letter. It went like this: [8]
- 40 Dear Sister Superior, Please let Esperanza eat in the lunch room because she lives too far away and she gets tired. As you can see she is very skinny. I hope to God she does not faint. Thanking you, Mrs. E. Cordero. [9]
- 45 You don't live far, she says. You live across the boulevard. That's only four blocks. Not even. Three maybe. Three long blocks away from here. I bet I can see your house from my window. Which one? Come here. Which one is your house? [10]
- 50 And then she made me stand up on a box of books and point. That one? she said pointing to a row of ugly 3-flats, the ones even the raggedy men are ashamed to go into. Yes, I nodded even though I knew that wasn't my house and started to cry. I always cry when nuns yell at me, even if they're not yelling. [11]
- 55 Then she was sorry and said I could stay - just for today, not tomorrow or the day after - you go home. And I said yes and could I please have a Kleenex - I had to blow my nose. [12]
- 60 In the canteen, which was nothing special, lots of boys and girls watched while I cried and ate my sandwich, the bread already greasy and the rice cold. [13]

Appendix 2. Ellipsis in Paragraphs 7–12

Instances of ellipsis between paragraphs seven and twelve are indicated below by the insertion of parentheses {}. Actual reconstruction of the missing text is complicated by the absence of speech marks in the story. Looking at paragraph twelve, for example, there is a transition from reported to direct speech somewhere between “said I could stay” (line 54) and “you go home” (line 55), but exactly where this transition occurs is not clear and so neither is it clear which words are ellipsed.

- 30 Mondays or Fridays, it doesn't matter, mornings always go by slow and [7]
this day especially {}. But lunch time came finally and I got to get in line
with the stay-at-school kids. Everything is fine until the nun who knows all
the canteen kids by heart looks at me and {} says: you, who sent you here?
And since I am shy, I don't say anything, {} just hold out my hand with the
letter. This is no good, she says, till Sister Superior gives the okay. Go
35 upstairs and see her. And so I went {}.
- I had to wait for two kids in front of me to get hollered at, one because [8]
he did something in class, the other because he didn't {}. My turn came and
I stood in front of the big desk with holy pictures under the glass while
the Sister Superior read my letter. It went like this:
- 40 Dear Sister Superior, Please let Esperanza eat in the lunch room because [9]
she lives too far away and she gets tired. As you can see she is very skinny.
I hope to God she does not faint. Thanking you, Mrs. E. Cordero.
- 45 You don't live far, she says. You live across the boulevard. That's only [10]
four blocks. {} Not even {}. {} Three {} maybe. {} Three long blocks away
from here. I bet I can see your house from my window. Which one {}? Come
here. Which one is your house?
- 50 And then she made me stand up on a box of books and point. That one {}? [11]
she said pointing to a row of ugly 3-flats, the ones even the raggedy men
are ashamed to go into. Yes, I nodded even though I knew that wasn't my
house and {} started to cry. I always cry when nuns yell at me, even if
they're not yelling {}.
- 55 Then she was sorry and {} said I could stay - {} just for today, {} not [12]
{} tomorrow or {} the day after - you go home. And I said yes and could I
please have a Kleenex - I had to blow my nose.

Appendix 3. Pronominal Reference Task A

"A RICE SANDWICH" (Paragraphs 1-6)

- Underline all the pronouns (eg: I, my, mine) in the paragraphs below. Who/what does each pronoun refer to? Write E for Esperanza, M for her mother, P for the principal, or O for other.
- Circle any nouns or proper nouns that refer to a main character (eg: Esperanza).
- When you have finished, check your answers with a partner who has the same paragraphs.

The special kids, the ones who wear keys around their necks, get to eat in the canteen. The canteen! Even the name sounds important. And these kids at lunch time go there because their mothers aren't home or home is too far away to get to. [1]

My home isn't far but it's not close either, and somehow I got it in my head one day to ask my mother to make me a sandwich and write a note to the principal so I could eat in the canteen too. [2]

Oh no, she says pointing the butter knife at me as if I'm starting trouble, no sir. Next thing you know everybody will be wanting a bag lunch - I'll be up all night cutting bread into little triangles, this one with mayonnaise, this one with mustard, no pickles on mine, but mustard on one side please. You kids just like to invent more work for me. [3]

But Nenny says she doesn't want to eat at school - ever - because she likes to go home with her best friend Gloria who lives across the schoolyard. Gloria's mama has a big color T.V. and all they do is watch cartoons. Kiki and Carlos, on the other hand, are patrol boys. They don't want to eat at school either. They like to stand out in the cold especially if it's raining. They think suffering is good for you ever since they saw that movie *300 Spartans*. [4]

I'm no Spartan and hold up an anemic wrist to prove it. I can't even blow up a balloon without getting dizzy. And besides, I know how to make my own lunch. If I ate at school there'd be less dishes to wash. You would see me less and less and like me better. Everyday at noon my chair would be empty. Where is my favorite daughter you would cry, and when I came home finally at 3 p.m. you would appreciate me. [5]

Okay, okay, my mother says after three days of this. And the following morning I get to go to school with my mother's letter and a rice sandwich because we don't have lunch meat. [6]

| Questions | Paragraphs 1-6 | Paragraphs 7-13 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Which characters appear most often? | | |
| 2. How do these characters interact? | | |
| 3. What problem(s) does the narrator have? | | |
| 4. How does she respond to the problem(s)? | | |
| 5. Which paragraph features all three main characters? | | |
| 6. What is the function of this paragraph? | | |

- Answer the questions above about your section of the story.
- When you have finished, check your answers with a partner who has the same paragraphs.
- Finally, find a partner who has the other part of the story and ask him/her the questions above.

Appendix 4. Pronominal Reference Task B

"A RICE SANDWICH" (Paragraphs 7-13)

- Underline all the pronouns (eg: I, my, mine) in the paragraphs below. Who/what does each pronoun refer to? Write E for Esperanza, M for her mother, P for the principal, or O for other.
- Circle any nouns or proper nouns that refer to a main character (eg: Esperanza).
- When you have finished, check your answers with a partner who has the same paragraphs.

Mondays or Fridays, it doesn't matter, mornings always go by slow and this day especially. But lunch time came finally and I got to get in line with the stay-at-school kids. Everything is fine until the nun who knows all the canteen kids by heart looks at me and says: you, who sent you here? And since I am shy, I don't say anything, just hold out my hand with the letter. This is no good, she says, till Sister Superior gives the okay. Go upstairs and see her. And so I went. [7]

I had to wait for two kids in front of me to get hollered at, one because he did something in class, the other because he didn't. My turn came and I stood in front of the big desk with holy pictures under the glass while the Sister Superior read my letter. It went like this: [8]

Dear Sister Superior, Please let Esperanza eat in the lunch room because she lives too far away and she gets tired. As you can see she is very skinny. I hope to God she does not faint. Thanking you, Mrs. E. Cordero. [9]

You don't live far, she says. You live across the boulevard. That's only four blocks. Not even. Three maybe. Three long blocks away from here. I bet I can see your house from my window. Which one? Come here. Which one is your house? [10]

And then she made me stand up on a box of books and point. That one? she said pointing to a row of ugly 3-flats, the ones even the raggedy men are ashamed to go into. Yes, I nodded even though I knew that wasn't my house and started to cry. I always cry when nuns yell at me, even if they're not yelling. [11]

Then she was sorry and said I could stay - just for today, not tomorrow or the day after - you go home. And I said yes and could I please have a Kleenex - I had to blow my nose. [12]

In the canteen, which was nothing special, lots of boys and girls watched while I cried and ate my sandwich, the bread already greasy and the rice cold. [13]

| Questions | Paragraphs 1-6 | Paragraphs 7-13 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Which characters appear most often? | | |
| 2. How do these characters interact? | | |
| 3. What problem(s) does the narrator have? | | |
| 4. How does she respond to the problem(s)? | | |
| 5. Which paragraph features all three main characters? | | |
| 6. What is the function of this paragraph? | | |

- Answer the questions above about your section of the story.
- When you have finished, check your answers with a partner who has the same paragraphs.
- Finally, find a partner who has the other part of the story and ask him/her the questions above.