

# A Corpus-based Study of Conjunction Devices in English International Law Texts and its Farsi Translation

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## Abstract

Cohesion as an indispensable linguistic feature in discourse analysis and translation has aroused many researchers' interest. To explore the regularity in shifting conjunction devices from English into Farsi our study was designed to analyze the similarities and differences of cohesive device of conjunction between English International Law texts (ELTs) and their Farsi translation texts (FTTs). Based on cohesion theory proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976), our study was designed to analyze and compare cohesive devices in four English international law textbooks and their Farsi translations. A parallel corpus consisting of 40 ELTs and 40 FTTs was established. All the identified cohesive devices in the sample texts were categorized and the occurrence frequencies of cohesive devices were counted manually, recorded and compared. The results revealed that both ELTs and FTTs share more similarities than differences in the use of cohesive device of conjunction because of the informative function and stylistic features of law texts. The majority of cohesive devices are maintained in Farsi translation for precision, clarity and logicity. Our study will not only help international law students and law workers but also shed light on teaching and research of cohesive devices in English - Farsi translation.

**Keywords:** Cohesion, Conjunction devices, International law text, Translation

## 1. Introduction

In 1960s the emergence of text linguistics overcame the limitation of sentence-oriented study and elevated the study of language from sentence level to textual level. When text linguistics was introduced into the study of translation, the basic communicative units in translation were shifted from words or isolated sentences to texts. Cohesion as “visible network” of a text plays a significant role in organizing linguistic elements into a unified whole text and naturally becomes one of the most important subjects of text translation.

With the development of contrastive linguistics and text translation, many researchers have conducted comparative studies of cohesive devices in different text types between English and other languages and have analyzed the role of cohesion in translation. However, few studies have been reported on a comparative study of cohesion in English and Farsi law texts until now. Based on cohesion theory proposed by Halliday and Hasan and Hasan(1976), our study was designed to analyze the similarities and differences of cohesive devices in English international law texts and their Farsi translations in textbooks and to explore the regularity in shifting cohesive devices from English into Farsi.

## 2. Literature Review

### *2.1 Conjunction and Other Cohesive Relations*

Conjunction is rather different in nature from the other cohesive relations, from both reference, on the one hand, and substitution and ellipsis on the other. It is not simply an anaphoric relation. Conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of specific meanings; they are not primarily devices for reaching out into preceding (following) text, but they express certain meaning which presence of other components in the discourse.

Where is conjunction located, within the total framework of text forming relation? Instances of reference, substitution and ellipsis are, on the whole, rather clearly identifiable, perhaps usually so for linguistic phenomena; there is some indeterminacy among them, and also between them and other structural relations within a text, but this is relatively slight, and we have rarely been in doubt as to the boundaries of the phenomena being described. This is much less true of conjunction, which is not definable in such clear cut terms. Perhaps the most strictly cohesive relation that of substitution, including ellipsis. Substitution is a purely textural relation, with no other function than that of other function than that of cohering one piece of text to another. The substitute, or elliptical structure, signals in effect 'supply the appropriate word or words already available'; it is a grammatical relation, one which holds between the words and structures themselves rather than relating them through their meaning. Next in this other comes reference, which is a semantic relation, one which holds between means rather than between linguistic forms; it is not the replacement of some linguistic element by a counter or by a blank, as are substitution and ellipsis, but rather a direction for interpreting an element in terms of its environment – and since environment includes the text (the linguistic environment), reference takes on a cohesive function. A reference item signals 'supply the appropriate instantial meaning, the reference, which is already available (or

shortly to become available)'; and one source of its availability is the preceding (or following) text. With conjunction, on the other hand, we move into a different type of semantic relation, one which is no longer any kind of a search instruction, but a specification of the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before.

In a sense this is putting it rather too concretely. The conjunctive relations themselves are not tied to any particular sequence in the expression; if two sentences cohere into a text by virtue of some form of conjunction, this does not mean that the relation between them could subsist only if they occur in that particular order. This is true even of a conjunctive relation which is itself intrinsically ordered, such as succession in time; two sentences may be linked by a time relation, but the sentence referring to the event that is earlier in time may itself come later, following the other sentence, when we are considering these sentences specifically from the point of view of cohesion, however, we are inevitably concerned with their actual sequence as expressed, because cohesion is the relation between sentences in a text, and the sentences of a text can only follow one after the other. Hence in describing conjunction as a cohesive, we are focusing attention not on the semantic relations as such, as realized throughout the grammar of the language, but on one particular aspect of them, namely the function they have of relating to each other linguistic elements that occur in succession but are not related by other, structural means.

## 2.2 Types of Conjunction

Various suggestions could be taken up for classifying the phenomena which we are grouping together under the heading of conjunction. There is no signal, uniquely correct inventory of the types of conjunctive relation; different classifications are possible, each of which would highlight different aspects of the facts. We shall adopt a scheme of just four categories: additive, adversative, causal, temporal. Here is an example of each:

For the whole day he climbed up the steep mountainside, almost without stopping.

- a. And in all this time he met no one. (additive)
- b. Yet he was hardly aware of being tired. (adversative)
- c. So by night time the valley was far below him. (causal)
- d. Then, as dusk fell, he sat down to rest. (temporal)

The words *and*, *yet*, *so* and *then* can be taken as typifying these four very general conjunctive relations, which they express in their simplest form. Naturally if we reduce the many very varied kinds of conjunction to this small number of basic types, there is scope for a considerable amount of subclassifying within them. A very simple overall framework like this does not eliminate complexity of the facts; it relegates it to a later, or more 'delicate', stage of the analysis. Our reason for preferring this framework is just that: it seems to have the right priorities, making it possible to handle a text without unnecessary complication. A detailed systematization of all the possible subclasses would be more complex than is needed for the understanding and analysis of cohesion; moreover, they are quite indeterminate, so that it would be difficult to select one version in preference to another. We shall introduce some

sub-classification under search of the four headings, but not of any very rigid kind.

There is one very general distinction, common to all four types, which it will be helpful to make at the start. Consider the following pair of example:

- a. Next he inserted the key into the lock.
- b. Next, he was incapable of inserting the key into the lock.

Each of these sentences can be seen, by virtue of the word *next*, to presuppose some preceding sentence, some textual environment. Moreover in each case there is a relation of temporal sequence between the presupposed sentence and this one; both examples express a relation that is in some sense 'next in time'. We shall in fact classify them both as temporal. But the 'nextness' is really rather different in the two instances. In (a), it is a relation between events: the preceding sentence might be *First he switched on the light* – first one thing happens, then another. The time sequence, in other words, is in the thesis, in the content of what is being said. In (b), on the other hand, the preceding sentence might be *First he was unable to stand upright*; here there are no events; or rather, there are only linguistic events, and the time sequence is in the argument. Provided 'argument' is understood in its every day rhetorical sense and not in its technical sense in logic (contrasting with 'operator'). The two sentences are related as steps in an argument, and the meaning is rather first one move in the speech game is enacted, then another.

It would be possible to describe the temporal relation in terms of speech acts, the time sequence being a performative sequence 'first I say one thing, then another'. This is quite adequate for the particular example, but is too concrete for this type of conjunction as a whole. What we are concerned with here is not so much a relationship between speech acts (though it may take this form, especially in the temporal setting) as a relationship between different stages in the unfolding of the speaker's communication role – the meaning he allots to himself as a participant in the total situation. The distinction between (a) and (b) really relates to the basic functional components in the organization of language. In example (a) the cohesion has to be interpreted in terms of the experiential function of language; it is a relation between meaning in the sense example (b) the cohesion has to be interpreted in terms of the interpersonal function of language; it is a relation between meaning in the sense of representation of the speaker's own 'stamp' on the situation – his choice of speech role and rhetorical channel, his attitudes, his judgments and the like.

In 1960s the emergence of text linguistics overcame the limitation of sentence-oriented study and elevated the study of language from sentence level to textual level. When text linguistics was introduced into the study of translation, the basic communicative units in translation were shifted from words or isolated sentences to texts. Cohesion as "visible network" of a text plays a significant role in organizing linguistic elements into a unified whole text and naturally becomes one of the most important subjects of text translation.

With the development of contrastive linguistics and text translation, many researchers have conducted comparative studies of cohesive devices in different text types between English and other languages and have analyzed the role of cohesion in translation. However, few

studies have been reported on a comparative study of conjunction ties in English and Farsi law texts until now. Based on cohesion theory proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1976), our study was designed to analyze the similarities and differences of cohesive devices in English international law texts and their Farsi translations in textbooks and to explore the regularity in shifting cohesive device of conjunction from English into Farsi.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Establishment of a Parallel Corpus

Four English international law textbooks were selected according to representativity, reputation, and accessibility. They were:

1. A Modern Introduction to International Law: *Akehurst, Michael Barton* (1940). (translator: Mehrdad Seydi, 1373).
2. International Law: *Antonio, Cassese* (2005). (translator: Hosein Sharifi Teraz kouhi, 1385).
3. International Law: *Rebecca, Wallace* (2005). (translator; Qasem Zaman Khani, 1387).
4. An Introduction to International Relation: *Philip Alan, Reynolds* (1920). (translator: Jamshid Zangene, 1380).

In terms of representativity, the selected textbooks belong to law branch of the professional English textbook and include five disciplines of international law: public international law, international economic law, human rights, the law of the sea and international crimes.

In terms of reputation, four international textbooks are recommended as foreign language textbooks for international law students by many international law professors. All of translated texts were published by famous presses or central office of International law service of Iran press.

In terms of accessibility, the selected law textbooks are available in many bookstores around Iran or accessible from their publishing presses and libraries. In addition, English texts in these textbooks are adapted from “original materials” which were written by native speakers of English to keep authenticity of English in use, and their Farsi counterparts have been translated by the law professionals who have rich experience in international law texts translation and teaching.

#### 3.2 Selection of Sample Texts for the Parallel Corpus

Totally 80 sample texts including 40 English law texts and 40 parallel Farsi translations were selected from the four textbooks for the parallel corpus. The sample texts were selected in accordance with two criteria: 1) the selected ELTs are derived from five disciplines of international law: public international law, international economic law, human rights, the law of the sea and international crimes.; 2) the length of each selected ELT is about 100 ~ 250 running words.

Based on the criteria, we conducted a two-round stratified sampling in choosing the texts for the corpus. In the first round, all the ELTs which met our criteria were selected and numbered.

A total of 200 English international law sample texts were randomly selected from all the texts in the four textbooks: 60 in public international law, 50 in international economic law, and 40 in human rights, 30 in the law of the sea and 20 in international crimes. In the second round, 40 texts in all international law discipline were randomly selected from 200 texts and made up an English corpus and their parallel Farsi versions constituted the Farsi corpus. Thus, a parallel corpus of English and Farsi international law texts was established.

### *3.3 Data Collection and Analysis*

Halliday and Hasan define five types of cohesive devices in their book *Cohesion in English* (1976), which are reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. In our study conjunction devices in ELTs and FTTs were identified based on their classification. Conjunction devices between sentences stand out more clearly as they are . Therefore, it is the intersentence cohesion that is significant because it represents the variable aspect of cohesion, distinguishing one text from another. Accordingly, the present study was focused on conjunctive cohesion across sentence boundaries.

### *3.4 Procedures for Identifying Cohesive Ties*

On the basis of the Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy of cohesive ties (1976) and Halliday's further elaboration of the ties (2000), a coding scheme, as shown in Table 1, was devised to fit the need of this study. The coding scheme provides a means of representing the cohesive ties in the texts of the current analysis. Causal conjunction, for instance, is coded into C3, with C referring to conjunction and 3 to causal.

Table1. Coding scheme of cohesive devices

Reference	Pronominals	Demonstratives	Comparatives		
R	R1	R2	R3		
Conjunction	Additive	Adversative	Causal	Temporal	
C	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Ellipsis	Nominal	Verbal	Clausal		
E	E1	E2	E3		
Substitution	Nominal	Verbal	Clausal		
S	S1	S2	S3		
Lexical	same item	Synonym	Superordinate	General item	Collocation
L	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5

And then the following procedures for identifying cohesive ties in each sample text were developed and followed. 1) Each sentence in a sample text was given an index number. 2) Each sample text was read through without commenting. 3) Each sample text was reread sentence by sentence to identify and mark conjunction ties present by virtue of the coding scheme set up. 4) Each cohesive tie was checked again to make sure it was correctly classified.

A week after being codified, the 80 sample texts were looked through carefully again to check if there were any cohesive ties wrongly classified or missed.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Conjunction is rather different in nature from the other cohesive relations. Conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meanings; they are not primarily devices for reaching out into the preceding (or following) sentence, but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse.

According to Table 2, the occurrence frequency of the subcategories of conjunction demonstrated that the most frequently used devices in the sample texts of the parallel corpus were adversative device (40.54% in ELTs, 39.53% in FTTs) and additive device (32.43% in ELTs, 32.56% in FTTs) whereas causal device (21.62% in ELTs, 27.9% in FTTs) and temporal device (5.40% in ELTs, 0.0% in FTTs) were less frequently used.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of conjunction devices

Conjunction devices	ELTs Frequency (%)	FTTs Frequency (%)
<b>Additive</b>	12 (32.43%)	14 (32.56%)
<b>Adversative</b>	15 (40.54%)	17 (39.53%)
<b>Causal</b>	8 (21.62%)	12 (27.9%)
<b>Temporal</b>	2 (5.40%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	37	43

## 4. Results and Discussion

The total percentages of additive and adversative device in parallel corpus (73% in ELTs, 72% in FTTs) accounted for over half proportion of total amount of conjunctive ties. The frequent employment of these two subcategories can be attributed to their functions in legal texts. Additives are used to illustrate the propositions, add information and substantiate ideas while adversatives are employed to draw conclusions, present or explain information and make contrasts. There was no significant difference of frequencies of additive and adversative between the ELTs and FTTs, but the deference of causal (21.62% in ELTs, 27.9% in FTTs) and temporal (5.4% in ELTs, 0.0% in FTTs) frequency was obvious. Both English and Farsi emphasize the explicit means to show semantic relations between sentences or paragraphs so conjunctions are highly employed. Since legal texts are consistent in logic and well-knit in structure, conjunction device is frequently used in both ELTs and FTTs to show the logical relations between rules. Total frequencies of conjunctions in Farsi texts (43) were more than total frequencies of English texts (37). Also in all conjunctive cohesions types, except in temporal which there wasn't any frequency in FTTs, the frequencies of additive, adversative and causal conjunctions in Farsi texts were more than the additive, adversative and causal conjunctions in English parallel corpus. The reason was difference of the number of sentences in English and Farsi. In many sample texts number of sentences in Farsi was more than number of sentences in English for the nature of Farsi language to break down long sentences to more sentences contrary to English. Consequently when there are more sentences, more conjunctions will be needed to conjunct sentences to each other's.

Causal conjunctions in both English and Farsi texts were frequent similarly and nearly all

causal conjunctions in ELTs were replaced with causal conjunctions in FTTs. It means wherever in ELTs a sentence was tied to preceding sentences by a causal conjunction the same strategy was employed in FTTs. Temporal device, though used not much in ELTs two times (5.4%) and zero in FTTs, have the function of deduction and succession in two English international law texts. For example temporal conjunction *then* in the beginning of fifth sentence of English sample bellow, tied the sentence to two preceding sentences with the function of succession. But in Farsi translation in forth sentence conjunctive tie of *dar?in surat* jointed the sentence to two preceding sentences with a causal function instead of a temporal one.

### **English Text**

As to the second, the essential method of ascertaining the proper law of a contract is to treat the matter as depending on the terms of the contract, the situation of the parties, and generally on all surrounding facts, u may be that (1). parties have in terms in their agreement expressed what law they intend to govern, and in that case prima facia their intention will be effectuated by the court (2). But in most cases they do not do so (3). The parties may not have thought of the matter at all (4). Then the court has to impute an intention or to determine for the parties what is the proper law which they would have intended if they had thought about the question when they made the contract (5). No doubt there are certain prima facie rules to which a court in deciding on any particular contract may turn for assistance but they are not conclusive (6). There are thus two possible situations to be considered (7). One is that the parties have specified the law to be applied to their contract - or possibly clearly implied it; the other is that they have not done so, in which case their intentions on the point must be deduced by the court (8).

### **Translated Farsi text**

در خصوص موضوع دوم، روش اصلي تعيين قانون حاکم براي يك قرارداد، اين است که موضوع را بعنوان امري وابسته به شرایط قرارداد، وضعیت طرفین و بطور کلي همه واقعیت هاي محیطي تلقي نمایيم. (1) ممکن است طرفین در مفاد قرارداد خود تصریح کرده باشند که قصد دارند چه قانوني حاکم باشد که در اينصورت قصد طرفین در همان بادي امر توسط محکمه تنفیذ خواهد شد. (2) اما در اکثر موارد طرفین به اين شکل عمل نمی کنند و ممکن است اصلاً به موضوع نیاندیشیده باشند. (3) در اين صورت دادگاه باید قصدي را به آنها نسبت دهد یا از طرف آنها تصمیم بگیرد که اگر ایشان در خصوص مسأله به هنگام انعقاد قرارداد تأمل کرده بودند چه قانوني را بعنوان قانون مناسب منظور مي کردند. (4) بدون تردید قواعد از پیش تعیین شده اي که دادگاه براي اخذ تصمیم راجع به هر قرارداد خاص براي گرفتن کمک به آنها رجوع نماید وجود دارد، ولي اين قواعد قعطي نمی باشند. (5) بنابراین دو حالت محتمل قابل بررسی است. (6) یکی اینکه طرفین قانون حاکم بر قرارداد خود را تصریح کنند یا احتمالاً به آن اشاره روشني نمایند. (7) حالت دیگر اين است که طرفین چنین تصریحي نکرده باشند؛ در اين صورت قصدهاي آنان در خصوص موضوع باید به وسيله دادگاه استنباط شود. (8)

### **Transliteration of Farsi sample text**

Dar khosuse mozue dovvom, raveshe ?aslie t?ayyne ghānune hākem barāye yek gharārdād, ?in ast ke mozu? rā be ?onvāne ?mri vābaste be sharāyete gharārdād, vaz?eyate tarafeyn va be tore kolli hame-e vaghe?yath-hāye mohiti talaghi nemā?im.1) momken ?ast tarafeyn dar mafāde gharārdāde khod tasrih karde bāshand ke ghasd dārand che ghānuni

hākem bāshad ke dar ?in surat ghasde tarafeyn dar hamān bādie ?amr tavasote mahkame tanfiz khāhad shod.2) ?ammā dar ?aksare mavāred tarafeyn be ?in shekl ?amal nemikonand va momken ?ast ?aslan be mozu? nayandishideh bāshand.3) dar ?in surat dādghāh bāyad ghasdi rā be ?ānha nesbat dahad ya ?az tarafe ?ānha tasmim begirad ke ?agar ?ishan dar khosuse mas?ale be hengāme ?en?eghāde gharārdād ta?ammol karde budand khe ghānuni rā be ?onvane ghānune monāseb manzur mikardand.4) bedune tardid ghavāine ?az pish t?ayyn shode-?i ke dādghāh barāye ?akhze tasmim rāj?e be har gharārdāde khāss barāye gereftane komak be ?ānhā roju? Konad vojūd dārad, valli ?in ghavā?ed ghat?i nemibāshand.5) banā bar ?in do hālate mohtamel ghābele barresi ?ast.6) yeki ?in ke tarafeyn ghānune hākem bar gharārdāde khod rā tasrih konand ya ehtemālan be ?an ?eshāre-ye roshani nemāyand.7) hālate digar ?in ?ast ke tarafeyn chenin tasrihi nakarde bāshand, dar ?in surat ghasht-hāye ?ānān dar khosuse mozu? Bāyad be vasileye dādghāh estenbāt shaved.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to investigate the similarity and differences of cohesive ties of international law texts in English and Farsi. The research draws on the model of cohesion in English by Halliday and Hasan (1976) to study and analyze the cohesive devices of four English international law texts and its translation. The study attempts to provide the answer to the following question:

What are the main differences and similarities in the cohesive devices in English and Farsi international law texts?

The study finds many similarities and some mismatch between the two linguistic cohesive system related to conjunctions. On the basis of quantitative and comparative analysis, we can draw the following conclusions:

Firstly, English international law texts and their Farsi translations share more similarities than differences in the use of conjunction devices. The similarities between them mainly exist in two aspects. The three mainly used conjunction types show the same distribution tendency in both ELTs and FTTs. Besides, the overall conjunction devices, additive, adversative and causal in ELTs are used nearly as frequently as those in FTTs. These similarities can be attributed to the informative function and stylistic features of law texts. As expository writing, law texts are characteristic of formality, precision, explicitness, and logicity.

Secondly, there are some differences between ELTs and FTTs in the use of specific devices of conjunction devices, in terms of their occurrence frequencies. All types of conjunctions, except temporal, are more frequently used in FTTs than in ELTs. Frequency of additive, adversative and comparative conjunction in FTTs are more than in FTTs, because the number of sentences in Farsi texts was more and the length of them was shorter than English texts. There wasn't a tight similarity between English and Farsi texts regarding temporal conjunction in ELTs and FTTs. The findings of our study may help international law students and law workers have a better understanding of the regularity of the use of conjunctive devices in English and Farsi international law texts, shed light on their practice of international law translation, and help them lay a solid foundation for the information

rendering from the original text into the target text accurately and smoothly.

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