

ABSTRACT

The present study is a qualitative analysis of reference items in six agricultural texts of the **factual genre** with a heuristic or descriptive objective. It identifies patterns and relationships **among reference** items, and determines their contribution to **cohesion**. Halliday's and Hasan's principles are applied to identify cohesive reference items and to calculate their percentage occurrence in each text.

The findings suggest that the major flaw in Halliday-Hasan's principles (1976) on reference items lies in their rejection of reference **WITHIN** the sentence. This weakness is explained by Martin's reference chains (1992), which indicate that reference items can retrieve information **through forward as well as backward** reference in the **SAME** sentence, thereby denoting that the percentage values of cohesive items **would** be **considerably higher** if this aspect had been considered in Halliday-Hasan's method.

The **factual genre** [and especially the agricultural field] was chosen for this study because of the relatively **limited** amount of research done on it.

It is hoped that the insights gained from this study may help learners, teachers and researchers of English as a **Second Language**, who are specializing in a scientific discipline at secondary and tertiary level.