

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Problem:

Language is enriched with an extensive set of lexical and grammatical forms that can be employed for expressing diverse concepts and, consequently, forming texts. Writers select a particular lexical / grammatical form that they sense to be the most effective expression in the communicative context. In fact, they choose the particular forms that help the addressees to detect the linking relations in the text, and to build a coherent mental model of the text content. Coherence is regarded as an essential factor for the well-formedness of texts. It is the element that helps in distinguishing connected texts which make sense and can be interpreted from those which do not. The present study is concerned with investigating how writers achieve coherence in their texts. The investigation is carried out through examining the coherence relations that hold between text parts.

The text type that is used for the analysis is the narrative text. This type of text entails that every part should fit with and lead to the other parts. In other words, narrative text should be coherent in order for the reader to grasp the intended meaning. Short story is the narrative genre that is chosen for the analysis in this thesis. That is because it is a short and condensed prose narrative form that usually presents and focuses on a single and clear problem or story. The two short story writers chosen

for investigation are the Egyptian writer **Yusuf Idris (1927-1991)** and **Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)**. Both are famous for their short stories which attracted a lot of attention to their talents as short story writers.

The following sections of the present chapter, Chapter 1, will throw light on the aim of the thesis along with the adopted approach for the analysis.

1.2 Aim of The Thesis:

The present study is concerned with examining the concept of coherence that is regarded as an essential source of linking and organizing the ideas and the content within written narrative texts. Graesser et al. (draft 2002) maintain that "a text is perceived to be coherent when the ideas hang together in a meaningful and organized manner" (P.3). In doing so, the study will be concerned with the following points:

- 1) The identification and examination of the usage of coherence relations and their role as useful tools to describe the structure and organization of narrative discourse.
- 2) The incorporation and integration of the notion of discourse purpose or intention with the coherence relation approach to account for narrative discourse representation. "Rhetorical relations can be described functionally in terms of the writer purposes and the writer

assumptions about the reader" (Mathkour et al., 2008: 713). This will be achieved through exploring the following:

- a) The aim of the text producer (i.e. the writer) for employing coherence relations.
 - b) The effect of such relations on the audience (in this case, the readers of the narrative text).
- 3) The identification of the set of the commonly used coherence relations which are suitable for the nature of the narrative text.
- 4) The identification of whether the coherence relations are a means of characterizing and distinguishing Arabic narrative text and English narrative text.

1.3 Approach:

For realizing these objectives, the study is conducted within the theoretical framework of Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST). It is selected as the basis of analysis as it is intended to describe texts and offers an explanation of their coherence. It is devised by William Mann, Sandra Thompson, and Christian Matthiessen in (1988) as a tool for both text analysis and text generation. RST is developed as a framework for describing text structure, viewed in terms of the semantic and pragmatic relations that hold between text spans. The main body of the study will depend upon RST as the main reference.