

Cohesion and Context Creating Devices in Narrative

Reference, Deixis and their Application in the *Legends of Alyria* Role Playing Game

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1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore how expressions of reference and deictic language are used in creating context and cohesion in the introductory chapter of the role playing game rulebook *Legends of Alyria*, written and published in 2005 by Seth ben-Ezra. This paper explores both how exophoric reference and deixis are used to create the context of the text and how endophoric reference is used to tie the text together as a cohesive whole. The current study intends to see how these tools are used in the creation of an immersive fantasy world of a role playing game; a world that is purely a product of someone's imagination to begin with and supposedly has little or no connection to the world of its author and readers – although it must also be argued that a present day reader most probably has experience in the interpretation of fantastic worlds not only from the point of view of our factual world, but from the point of view of other sorts of fantasy narratives as well. What is further interesting is that a role playing world is meant to act as an inspiration to its readers' imagination, as the players set out to tell their own stories within a given world. Thus it is interesting to see whether the inspiration to imagine can be said to be triggered through the choices in the language of the text.

The background for this study includes works from fantasy fiction research, as the text studied depicts a fantasy world that is immersive, a term I borrow from Mendlesohn (2008). Immersive fantasy fiction is – and not only in the current author's opinion – the most engaging form of fiction writing, as it requires constant use of imagination to create and interpret the text. The study concentrated originally solely on the context creation elements of the language. The study of cohesion was added as it affects not only the creation of the textual world but also its maintenance throughout the narrative – it is the argument of this paper that the cohesive ties picked up by the reader enforce and elaborate the context creating elements of the text.

Section two will introduce the studied material, *Legends of Alyria*, as well as introduce the genre of table-top role playing for those not familiar with the concept. Also included are brief overviews of the fantastic writing in general, categories Mendlesohn outlines for different types of fantasy fiction and a more in-depth description of the category already mentioned, the immersive. The choice of data, the introductory chapter titled “In the Beginning” from *Legends of Alyria*, was made on the grounds of it being the first piece of text explaining about the world of a role playing game and thus the most crucial step in regards the world creation process the reader engages in while reading the rulebook – also, as the current study aims to concentrate on the vocabulary of the narrative, it was important to choose a single piece of text that could be analysed also from the point of view of cohesion.

Section three will introduce the method of study used in the current paper, which will then be elaborated on by a more detailed overview of the theoretical framework in section four. It will begin with the linguistic side of things, explaining the concept of reference and grammatical cohesion according to Halliday and Hasan (1980 & 1989) as well as those of deixis, deictic centre and deictic reference, as discussed by Bühler (1990) and Lyons (1973 & 1981). This will then be tied to the field of literary stylistics and world creation within literature, a theme discussed thoroughly by Semino (1997). The actual method of study for the analysis is a qualitative discussion on the instances of cohesive and context creating referring expressions and the deictic language found in the course of the narrative. The aim is to concentrate on the reader’s possible interpretations of these linguistic elements and attempt to link it to the background of immersive fantasy and role playing.

I chose this topic for my research because I love to challenge my imagination by reading and role playing. I first encountered the theories of world creation on a course of literary stylistics during my exchange term in the University of Kent in Canterbury, UK, where we discussed among other things deixis and the use of definiteness in literature. I also took a course in pragmatics there, where deixis was also one of the first

topics we studied. Already then I thought about analysing deixis in fantasy fiction, as the texts we dealt with on the afore-mentioned stylistics course were mostly 20th century modernist fiction.

Thinking about most of the fantastic fiction I read, however, the problem arose of finding a suitably short text for analysis. That is why I decided on the role playing game rulebook *Legends of Alyria*, which has several short texts that aim to introduce the world for the prospective players. What makes role playing games unique is their openness, for in the end, the worlds in them are created for the players to take and shape as their own through storytelling. When I decided to enlarge this topic as my pro gradu thesis, I decided to look also to the other kinds of reference found in the text and to consider them from the point of view of cohesion. This was partly because of the low amount of purely deictic reference found in the text and partly because I found the way in which the non-deictic references also contributed to the creating of the text as a whole interesting and worth of further study.

As a role playing game rulebook, I expect *Legends of Alyria* to be more of a guide to the world the players are about to enter than a set of rigid rules – especially as I am not going to look at the actual rules of the game at all, but only at a small part of the setting material. I expect to conclude in analysing the world creation elements in *Legends of Alyria* that many of the entities, i.e. people, places and objects, are left unexplained. This would enable the players to fill in the missing things from their own imagination and continue the creative process started by the author, which would then be further reinforced by the use of cohesive references. It was difficult to predict what sort of concrete results the analysis would have, as both the concept of cohesion and deixis were familiar to me only in theoretical sense and I had little experience in their application previous to this research.

The analysis of the text will be carried out in section five, which is arranged into two parts. The first deals with the cohesive elements of the text, going through the

categories outlined by Halliday and Hasan (1980 & 1989) with a discussion on their specific influence on a reader's perception of the text. Similarly, the other half of the analysis goes through the different types of context creating devices, divided into the three deictic categories of person, place and time. The results of the analysis will be discussed further in section six, after which I will present the conclusions of this research.

2 Description of data

This section will introduce *Legends of Alyria* by Seth ben-Ezra as well as briefly introduce the concept of role playing games. After that there will be sections devoted to fantasy literature and the categories that Mendlesohn (2008) outlines. Immersive fantasy gets its own section, as it is the category this study focuses on due to the analysis on the immersive world of Alyria.

2.1 *Legends of Alyria*

Legends of Alyria (LoA) is a narrative role playing game written by Seth ben-Ezra and published by his own company, Dark Omen Games. It incorporates science fiction elements and dark themes of power struggle, alienation and survival within a terraformed fantasy world, which has declined into a broken society due to having been nearly destroyed by dragons one thousand years ago. As mentioned, the text has elements from both science fiction and fantastic writing, but for the purposes of the current study it will be referred to as fantasy writing. The part that is focused on in the analysis is the chapter entitled “In the Beginning”, which comprises of 19 paragraphs. This chapter recounts the history of the world of Alyria, starting from the first settling of the planet and moving to the ‘current’ situation of one thousand years after the dragon wars. The aim of the chapter is to brief the prospective player of the history of the world and to set them up for further study on the elements that make up the world of Alyria. The book can be divided into two sections, which will be called the setting material and the rules of play, after Richeson’s 2007 review. The setting material is 88 pages from the total of 167, not including index or appendices, of which the introductory chapter takes five pages. The rest of the setting material gives from three pages or up descriptions of the different factions and important places within Alyria, which are the main points of interest when picking up the book for the purpose of role playing.

The setting described in the book has been summed up in the following fashion by a preview by Edwards, published two years before the rulebook came out:

So there's the basic idea: a storm-wracked plateau in a sea of terrifying mist, with bizarre mixes of cannibalized technology and low-tech societies. There's plenty of Color: mist ships, Aliens-like dragons with glowing green eyes, metal arches framing sprawling cities, and so on. (Edwards 2003)

Richeson wrote his review two years after *LoA* was published; here is how he sums up the contents of the world:

Monks who worship a great god, actually a super computer, carry word of its greatness to new colonies. Soldiers with shining, fluid metal armor covering their skin serve a noble lord as bodyguards and shock troops. Reanimated corpses fill smog spewing factories, unicorns appear to protect the helpless, and evil lurks around every corner. (Richeson 2007)

As a setting, *LoA* seems to have it all – there's history of space travel and advanced technology, the workings of which have been all but forgotten. There are also dragons, unicorns, and divided communities of people: some with nigh-magical powers, others that persecute those that are different, as well as all sorts of undesirables, nobles and those that do the work – people as can be found in any detailed description of a society. While in an ordinary fantasy novel this range of possibilities might be confusing, in a role playing game it is usually better, as even a short game often has many players, all with varying opinions and ideas on how to best enjoy the game.

The main reason this text was chosen for the analysis was that it comprises of short pieces of text that would be easy to analyse on lexical level – another factor was that it falls into the genre of immersive fantasy, which is familiar to the current author, but is also as a text different from most fantasy novels, as its function is not as much to tell a

story, but to provide a basis for storytelling for others. Also, as the analysis aims to make general and credible arguments about the interpretation of the text from the point of view of a reader, it was the opinion of the current author that the text chosen for the analysis should differ from a typical fantasy novel or narration, so as to avoid having too much interference from the current author's previous reading and other background knowledge. In addition, as this paper was originally a study on world creation, the brief text introducing a role playing game world was thought as a better source of data than a chapter from a novel, for instance. The genre of role playing and role playing texts are currently rather little researched by others than role players themselves and it could be added as a goal of this study to expand the awareness of the linguistic research field with the possibilities of a role playing text.

The following three sections give brief outlines of what this paper means when it talks about role playing games, fantasy literature and immersive fantasy as a category of fantasy.

2.2 On role playing games

The aim of this section is to explain table-top role playing games (RPGs) to a non-role playing reader. Here is how the research field defines it:

A role-playing game is what is created in the interaction between players or between player(s) and gamemaster(s) within a specified diegetic framework (Hakkarainen & Stenros 2003: 56).

What this means, is that there are usually several players, who take on a fictional world of some kind to play a game of imagination in. In the case of *LoA*, the diegetic framework is the planet of Alyria, but within the role playing genre there are many more possibilities, both commercial and independent made worlds and game systems to play. In a RPG session, there is usually a game master (GM), who concentrates on

introducing the story and the setting to the players, and who also plays the part of the antagonist(s) and other characters not controlled by the players. The players control their own player characters (PCs) and interact with each other, the world and the non-playable characters (NPCs) controlled by the GM. The purpose is often to complete quests of some sort and collect experience and treasure, with which the players can enhance the skills and abilities of their PCs. The most classic form of RPG is dungeon crawling, in which the adventurer party meets, typically in a tavern, hears rumours of a hidden treasure, enters a cave of some sort to find the riches and have to kill monsters that are guarding it.

Of choosing the different genres of RPGs to play, fantasy seems to hold the first place in the players' preferences, according to Konzack and Dall (2008). The same authors define what the word fantasy encompasses in the genre of RPGs in their article *Fantasy and Medievalism in Role Playing Games* that appears in the Knudepunkt article collection *Playground Worlds* (2008). The following are extracts from that article:

There are at least three different answers to the question what is fantasy within the role-playing community. The first includes all kinds of fiction that are not realistic, from horror and weird fiction to fairy-tales and science fiction. (Konzack & Dall 2008: 271)

--- Another answer is that it is a genre based on literary historical sources such as Robert E. Howard's Conan-stories, J. R. R. Tolkien's world of Arda, and J. K. Rowling's magical school. This kind of fantasy is particularly focused on creating magical world with an alternative history. (ibid.)

--- Finally, a lot of role-players use the term fantasy to describe a role-playing experience in the *Dungeons & Dragons* tradition created by Gary Gygax and David Arneson in 1974. (ibid.)

Konzack and Dall name the type described in the first citation fantastic fiction, the one in the second sub-created fantasy (a term they borrow from Tolkien (1997)) and the last Gygaxian fantasy, after the *D&D* creator Gary Gygax.

The fantasy in *LoA* falls in the first category, as it does not base directly on any other literary sources – although it has undoubtedly been inspired by many works of fantasy and science fiction.

2.3 On fantastic literature

In her introduction to *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, Mendlesohn states the following about the nature of fantasy literature:

I believe that fantastic is an area of literature that is heavily dependent on the dialectic between the author and the reader for the construction of a sense of wonder, that is a fiction of consensual construction of belief. (2008: xiii)

Literature, i.e. the writing and reading of the imagined, engages both the sender and the receiver, i.e. the author and the reader. The author writes words down on a paper, making up a story, while the reader takes those words up and constructs the context of the story, the characters and places, the events that occur in their mind; in short, they create the world for themselves. This is the central argument of the current paper. The analysis will not go into the philosophical or the neuropsychological side of human perception and imagination, however, but will just look at the words and the way in which they enable the world creation. Gilman (2012) begins her article *The Languages of the Fantastic* with the following sentence: “[a]ny fiction – but above all a work of fantasy – is a world made of words, --- “(2012: 134). So, all literary worlds, settings and stories are created through words, but a fantasy world is special in that it consists only of words – there is often little factual reference point for the reader to fall back on, apart from the background knowledge and assumptions they have gained from their own

factual world and previous reading experiences – what is called a schema (Scott 2011). Further, a text of the fantastic has a much wider range of possibilities to work with – and those possibilities are what makes fantasy so dependent on the readers’ interpretation, or “the dialectic between the author and the reader” as Mendlesohn put it in the citation above.

2.3.1 Mendlesohn’s four categories of fantasy literature

This section will describe the four categories of fantasy literature Mendlesohn outlines in her book *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008). In the introduction, Mendlesohn states that she is not aiming to define fantasy as a genre, but rather to equip the reader with tools for critical analysis of fantasy, through discussion of language and rhetoric, as well as themes – “an understanding of the construction of the genre” (2008: xiii) as she puts it. The tools she names are discussed in relation to four different categories she outlines for fantastic literature: portal-quest, intrusion, liminal and immersive fantasy, in addition to a few “irregulars” she discusses only briefly. The following are summaries and examples of Mendlesohn’s four main categories, from the point of view of the characters of the text, as it is very much their ‘perception’ that decides the category in question. (The word ‘perception’ in single quotations marks, as the characters mentioned are, in fact, fictional beings.)

The portal-quest fantasy is your basic *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* –story, in which the character(s) enter the world of fantastic from their factual world, through a portal of some sort, as the children do in C. S. Lewis’ story. The basis of this type is that a character’s world view is subjected to change, through a transition into a different, usually magical, realm. The character will then explore the world with a mind-set that is trying to explain the wondrous things through his or her factual world view – or at least such is the case when the character has formed a more or less rigid world view from the factual world – such as is the case in J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter –series.

Intrusion fantasy is where the portal-quest is subverted – where the fantastic forces itself upon the factual world the characters inhabit. As Mendlesohn puts it:

The trajectory of the intrusion fantasy is straightforward: the world is ruptured by the intrusion, which disrupts normality and has to be negotiated or defeated, sent back whence it came, or controlled. (2008: 115)

Mendlesohn gives several examples of this, and argues also that as the intrusion goes hand in hand with the portal-quest, many texts work as examples of both. For instance, the great evil within a fantastic world is often some sort of an outsider – take Sparrowhawk’s shadow in *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Le Guin, for instance. A great many science fiction novels that include aliens go also under this category. Intrusive fantasy might be difficult to label in that by definition, the fact that an intrusion is possible suggests that the intruding force is already present. The point in intrusive fantasy is that the story revolves around the rupture, as Mendlesohn puts it, and the way in which the characters handle the problems it causes.

Liminal fantasy has its connections to the immersive fantasy, which will be discussed last. In liminal fantasy, the characters live in a factual seeming world, to which the fantastic element, in Mendlesohn’s words, leaks through somehow. (2008: xxiii). This leakage is treated as fantastic, magical or at least unordinary by the characters, but at the same time it is not considered too problematic. Mendlesohn remarks that this type of fantasy is rare and gives the example from Joan Aiken’s Armitage family stories, where the appearance of unicorns on the family’s lawn is greeted with “Yes, but today is Tuesday” (Aiken 1953, quoted in Mendlesohn 2008: xxiv).

This then is similar to the immersive type of fantasy in the way, that the fantastic is not questioned – “it’s presence is represented as unnerving, and it is this sense of the unnerving that is at the heart of the category --- liminal” (2008: xxiii) – but the difference to the last category is that as far as the characters inhabiting an immersive

fantasy world know, their world is the only one that exists. The immersive world is a secondary world, with little or no connection to the factual world the author or the readers live in. The world is purely imaginative, and although it is possible to make comparisons to our world there really is no need to do so. This category then, is the focus of this study, as the world of Alyria introduced in *LoA* is such a world.

The next section will focus more on how the immersive type of fantasy world works and how James (2012) sees it having come to be.

2.3.2 On immersive fantasy

An immersive fantasy world is “a world built so that it functions on all levels as a complete world” and it will assume the reader to be as much a part of that world as the characters they are reading about (Mendlesohn 2008: 59). To a modern reader of fantasy, this is probably the most typical type of fantasy literature they have encountered, if the first place is not taken by the portal-quest fantasy. This was not always the case, however:

Tolkien’s greatest achievement, however, in retrospect, was in normalizing the idea of a secondary world. --- [T]o all intents and purposes Middle-earth is a separate creation, operating totally outside the world of our experience. This has become so standard in modern fantasy... --- After 1955 fantasy writers no longer had to explain away their worlds --- by providing them with any fictional link to our world at all. (James 2012: 65)

What James calls “explaining away” of the world and “operating totally outside the world of our experience” are two factors that in the end separate immersive fantasy from the rest. When our world is completely forgotten, all that is left is the imagined. And then it is up to the reader to create the world, according to the clues the author leaves them, i.e. the dialogue the reader has with the text – which is similar to a role

playing game experience, only with multiple people, not only a reader and a text. Much of this world creation is the result of the reader interpreting linguistic devices, such as the deictic references this paper is interested in. Some part of it is achieved also when the reader ties the new things to their old background knowledge and assumptions, as mentioned earlier in the end of section 2.3.

The world of Alyria is secondary and immersive. It does exactly the kind of assuming Mendlesohn talks about: the introductory chapter begins with the use of definite articles in places definite articles are not supposed to be in (see 4.1.2 for further discussion on the use of definite articles in literature), with mention of places, times and people the reader couldn't possibly know about yet, and just keeps on going without explaining anything. In reading of this kind of text, the reader has no other choice but to keep on reading and interpreting the text, creating the context as they do so.

3 Methodology

This section will describe briefly the research methods and theory chosen for the analysis; the latter will be given a more in-depth overview in chapter 4. The goal of this research paper is to study the way in which different types of reference are used in a chapter from role playing game *Legends of Alyria* that introduces the game world to the readers through a narrative that gives a brief overview of the history, geography and inhabitants of the planet Alyria. The analysis will concentrate on the use of cohesive and non-cohesive references and their interpretation from a reader's perspective – whether it is easy or difficult for a reader to understand the cohesive ties formed by the textual references and what kind of interpretations is it possible to base on the situational and deictic references.

The choice of a fantastic literary text was made primarily on the grounds that it would require more involvement from the reader's part in the context creating, and would not allow the reader to resort overly much to the factual general knowledge they possess for aid in the interpretative process; however, as the genre of fantasy literature is already very familiar as a literary genre and as the text in question, *LoA*, is not overly fantastic, the focus changed on the interpretation of both cohesive and contextual references and took on a more linguistic approach to the textual elements studied – the aim thus became to study the reference interpretation in general. The fantastic text was maintained as the data both due to the ample amount of examples it provided as well as the range of possible interpretations it allowed.

The cohesion creating reference includes simply the kind of reference within a text, for which the interpretation can be found in some other part of the text. These kinds of references are called endophoric (Halliday & Hasan 1980:33). If an endophoric reference refers back to something mentioned previously in the text, it is further categorized as an anaphoric reference (Halliday & Hasan 1980:14), but if it refers to something that will be identified later in the text, it is a cataphoric reference (Halliday &

Hasan 1980:17). Of these two, it is the anaphoric reference that is more commonly used, as it is always cohesive. The cataphoric reference can also be used cohesively but it occurs more rarely, since it often requires its referent to follow it very quickly in a text to avoid misinterpretations. It is also the anaphoric kind of reference that is more likely to form long cohesive chains, that is, a series of cohesive ties that might include only one referent but several referring expressions. The referring expressions that create cohesion may be formed through the use of personal pronouns, demonstratives or comparatives – these will be more thoroughly discussed in section 4.1.2.

The context creating references include the situational reference – i.e. exophoric reference (Halliday & Hasan 1980:33) – that require the reader to interpret them through an imaginary situational context and the deictic reference that identifies personal, spatial and temporal relations within the text (Semino 1997:33). As these kinds of references are non-cohesive and do not form cohesive ties or chains in the text, they do not occur in the text as often as the cohesive references; because of this also other kinds of deictic language that affects context creation will also be looked at. Apart from referential items, deixis can also be realized through the use of prepositions, time and place adverbs and tensed verbs. Deixis and its use in literature will be explained more in-depth in section 4.2.

The analysis will be conducted with a qualitative method by discussing examples of cohesive and context creating reference, as well as other deictic language used in a chapter in the *Legends of Alyria* role playing game. The research method was chosen due to the duality of the analysed material, as it is more practical to study the nature, as well as the differences and similarities between cohesive and non-cohesive language in textual context through discussing examples of their use. The examples of cohesive reference will be grouped under the three categories of reference, namely personal, demonstrative and comparative reference, following Halliday and Hasan's work on cohesion in texts (Halliday and Hasan 1980 & 1989). The context creating devices will be studied under the deictic dimensions of person, place and time, according to theories

presented by Lyons (1973), Bühler (1990) and Semino (1997). As the text studied is relatively simple, the cohesive references will likely be clear and easy for the reader to pick out, while the non-cohesive references might require some more effort in the interpretation of their message.

The earlier research tends to pick either cohesion or context creating as their specification, and especially within the context creation research the topics are commonly even further specified into some particular deictic dimension or to some particular kinds of expressions. Such is the case for instance in Kari K. Pitkänen's academic dissertation published in the University Helsinki in 2003, *The Spatio-Temporal Setting in Written Narrative Fiction: A Study of Interaction between Words, Text and Encyclopedic Knowledge in the Creation of Textual Meaning*, where he analyses the naming and triggering of spatio-temporal frames in 150 text beginnings in English narrative fiction. Studies in cohesion on the other hand tend to study all cohesion creating elements in texts and make comparisons between different texts, or different text users. Such is the case for instance in Anna-Maija Juuso's master's thesis titled *Cohesion in Written Cross-cultural Communication: A Case Study of Press Releases written by Finnish and American language professionals in English*, published in the University of Oulu in 2010, where she utilizes methodology of both grammatical and lexical cohesion to study the differences in the text production of L1 and L2 language professionals. Apart from combining methodology and theories from both cohesion and context creation studies to analyse the use of referential language, the current study differs from the previous research also in choosing to analyse a text offering glimpses of a fictional world for the use of storytelling role playing games.

4 Theoretical framework

The current study examines the way in which referring expressions are used in fantastic literary text from *Legends of Alyria* to create cohesion in the text and aid the reader in their interpretation of the context of the text – i.e. the imaginary world the text describes. In a written narrative most of the referring expressions are assumed to be endophoric, i.e. referring to entities within the context of the text. The referring expressions include personal pronouns, demonstratives, the definite article and comparatives. Further attention will be given to the nature of the reference, namely, whether the references made are anaphoric or deictic and how they respectively affect the reader's interpretation of the text. The following chapter introduces the terminology used in the analysis, from the general linguistic theories of reference, cohesion and deixis to the method of study employed in the analysis.

4.1 Reference

A reference is, according to Lyons, a relation between expressions and entities, properties or situations that is bound in the context of utterance, or according to the interest of the current paper, the context of a text. (1981:168) To put it simply, referring expressions cannot be interpreted semantically on their own but require knowledge of their specific referents in order to be understood correctly (Halliday & Hasan 1980:31). According to Halliday and Hasan (1980) the interpretation of a reference item takes one of two forms:

Either the reference item is interpreted through being IDENTIFIED with the referent in question; or it is interpreted through being COMPARED WITH the referent – explicitly not identified with it, but brought into some form of comparison with it. (1980:309, capitals in original)

When the interpretation relies on the identification of specific entities, the reference element functions as deictic – that is, has the identifying function in the clause

(1980:309). Halliday names personal pronouns, demonstratives (including *the*) and comparatives as the linguistic elements that can be interpreted only by reference (2002:38). These words form cohesive ties and chains with their referents and it is the analysis of these that reveal the properties of cohesion within a text (Halliday & Hasan 1980:4). Pronouns identify roles within the context, usually in relation to the speaker and the addressee, demonstratives convey proximity – as in 'this' being nearer than 'that' – and comparatives express likeness or unlikeness between phenomena. The definite article is special in that it only marks the word it is used with as a definite, identifiable entity within the context of the text, but unlike other words acting as determiners, *the* does not carry any specifying content of its own. (Halliday & Hasan 1980:71) Halliday calls the definite article the unmarked demonstrative. (2002:39).

As this study is concerned at looking at referring expressions and referents within texts, it is the expectation that most of those will be textual, or endophoric references – that is, references within the text to other parts of the text – rather than situational, or exophoric references, which can only be interpreted through the situation of context (1980:32-33). Only textual reference is, according to Halliday and Hasan (1980), cohesive, in that it integrates the textual elements together and aids in the forming of the text – the situational reference on the other hand contributes to the creation of the text, since it requires the reader to bring the interpretation to the text through their own contextual knowledge, or schema. Here is an example from Halliday (2002:39):

He calls her snooky-ookums... Can you believe that?

The pronouns *he* and *she* are exophoric references since they refer to persons outside the utterance situations but the demonstrative *that* is endophoric – it refers back to the dialogue, to the fact that *he calls her snooky-ookums*. In simplest terms, the interpretation for textual reference can be found explicitly somewhere within the text, whereas the interpretations for situational references are more implicit, requiring

knowledge from outside the text and interpretation of the context of their use. (Halliday & Hasan 1989:76)

A further definition of textual references is made based on the order in which the referring elements are used in relation to their referents. When a reference is made to an entity that has been identified earlier in the text that reference is called anaphoric (Halliday 2002:38, Halliday & Hasan 1980:14): take for instance the sentence pair below:

The tree is blossoming. It was planted last year.

Here, the pronoun *it* is an anaphoric reference to the word *tree* of the previous sentence and these two words form a cohesive tie between the two sentences. The opposite of anaphoric reference, where the reference is made to something that is identified later, is called cataphoric reference (Halliday 2002:38, Halliday & Hasan 1980:17). An example of a cataphoric reference can be seen in the following sentence:

As he was cold, David went to get his jacket.

Here, the person's name, David, is identified as the referent of the referring pronoun *he* of the earlier clause. What separates cataphoric reference from exophoric or deictic reference is that its referent usually follows it quite immediately, often in the same sentence. Thus, cataphoric reference is seldom cohesive, or at least the cohesion does not often reach further from sentence level. With anaphoric reference it is more common to see long chains of referring expressions that create cohesion within the text, sometimes between several sentences or even between paragraphs.

The main difference between an exophoric and deictic references is that while an exophoric reference can be a reference of any kind, as long as it refers outside of the context of the text, the deictic reference identifies the referent's relation to the deictic centre of the text in the dimensions of time, place and person. The nature of deixis will be further discussed from section 4.2 onwards.

4.1.1 Reference as a cohesive device

Reference is one of the linguistic devices that according to Halliday and Hasan's theory of textual coherence creates cohesion, that is, linkage and connections between the elements of the text. Halliday sums up the role of textual coherence in the citation below:

Every text is also a context for itself. --- At any point after the beginning, what has gone before provides the environment for what is coming next. This sets up internal expectations; and these are matched up with the expectations --- the listener or reader brings from the external sources, from the context of situation and of culture. (Halliday & Hasan 1989:48)

So, cohesion is a way of piecing a text together in a manner that helps the reader to interpret the different elements the text is constructed of by enforcing the reader's expectations of the text. These expectations stem both from the text itself – things such as the genre of the text will already give away much of what to expect from the reading of it – as well as from the reader's background knowledge. Cohesion makes it possible for the text to stand as a context for itself also, so that the reader can interpret the text internally through the text itself and not only through mirroring it to the factual world. This kind of exercise, although important in any sort of fiction writing, is in the current author's opinion crucial in the interpretation of fantastic literature text, where the elements described can be very much removed from the reader's daily life.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1989), the cohesion can be structural or non-structural – structural cohesion has to do with the organizing of the text and the order the elements presented, for instance, whereas the non-structural cohesion means the wording choice, that is, the use of specific kind of vocabulary or grammar within the text. The non-structural cohesive ties in a text can be created through the use of grammatical cohesion, which includes reference, substitution and ellipsis, as well as

through lexical cohesion, which includes things such as repetition, synonymy and naming. (1989:82) For a cohesive tie to be successful between two words, the words need to be linked together through some semantic, i.e. meaning relation (1989:73). So in the case of reference, for instance, the referring expression and its referent must be understood by the reader to have the same meaning in the situation or context they are used in, or otherwise the cohesive tie cannot be perceived by the reader. As Halliday and Hasan put it:

Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text. (Halliday & Hasan 1980:4, capitals in original)

The term presupposition means the inherent expectations that are created within the text by the cohesive devices. For instance, the use of the pronoun *he* presupposes the existence of a masculine character that is neither the speaker nor the addressee in the situational context the pronoun is used in.

4.1.2 Personal, demonstrative and comparative reference

The referring expressions that convey personal reference include personal pronouns, possessive determiners and possessive pronouns: these are illustrated in the following table from Halliday & Hasan (1980:38)

Table 1 *Personal reference according to Halliday and Hasan (1980)*

Semantic category	Existential	Possessive	
Grammatical function	Head		Modifier
Class	noun (pronoun)	determiner	
Person: speaker (only) addressee(s), with/without other person(s) speaker and other person(s) other person, male other person, female other persons; objects object; passage of text generalized person	I me you we us he him she her they them it one	mine yours ours his hers theirs [its]	my your our his her their its one's

As is clear, the existential pronouns only identify roles within the text. *I, me, we* and *us* are used to identify the speaker(s) and *you* is used to identify the addressee(s). The first and second person pronouns are usually not used cohesively, as they do not normally refer to the text at all, but to their own specific roles, except when they are used to refer to others than the speaker and the addressee. These pronouns are often interpreted exophorically, unlike the third person pronouns that are typically used to refer to some other item in the text. (1980:48).

The next table illustrates the demonstrative reference items (1980:38).

Table 2 *Demonstrative reference according to Halliday and Hasan (1980)*

Semantic category	Selective		Non-selective
Grammatical function	Modifier/Head	Adjunct	Modifier
Class	determiner	adverb	determiner
Proximity: near far neutral	this these that those	here [now] there then	the

The determiners can be used in a text both as a modifier to another word or by themselves as a head and their main function is to identify the proximity to the centre of the narrative – i.e. they are highly deictic words. They also always refer to some definite entity in the text, so they either create cohesion with a previously mentioned item in the text, or they create some new, specific element into the text. The adverbs *here, now, there* and *then* also identify proximity, but they do it in relation to place and time – the reason *now* is found in the brackets is that it rarely appears as a cohesive reference but is rather used deictically to identify the on-going time within the text.

The use of definite article in literary texts is a way to introduce new elements to the reader in a manner that requires them to recognize these elements as something unique, familiar or common within the context of the text, but that does not yield any further information of these elements to the reader. This kind of use of the definite article is called false definiteness – false, as it is grammatically incorrect to introduce new entities with a definite article in normal language use. The deviant language use does not, however, bother the casual reader but rather triggers a set of possible interpretations for the entity in question, which usually serve to connect the entity within the context. Semino discusses the use of the definite article lengthily in her work and remarks that

--- definite noun phrases like *the village, the express-train* and *the room* indicate aspects of the relevant text worlds that are familiar to the *persona* whose voice is presented in the poem, and, possibly, also to some addressee whose existence and identity are not explicitly revealed. (1997:24, italics in original)

So the use of the definite article not only defines the entity it is used with but also conveys some information about the speaker and the possible addressee of the text – and when the readers position themselves in the place of the addressee, they construct the information carried by the definite article as definite also for themselves. Thus it is possible for a reader to open a book and upon encountering a sentence such as “No one

understands the true nature of the dragons” (ben-Ezra 2005:12) to assume that the world they are reading about not only contains dragons but has probably *always* contained them, even if they only became aware of the existence of dragons upon reaching that particular sentence in the text. The use of the definite article can in this way also force the reader to amend their assumptions of the text while reading.

According to Halliday and Hasan, the comparative reference is most typically anaphoric. This is because a comparison or likeness between things is by nature more probable if the entities that are compared with each other are on the same semantic level, i.e. found within the same text. (1980:83-84) A comparison always requires that there exists a standard of reference by which something can be said to be superior, equal or inferior in quality or quantity (1980:81). The following table (1980:40) depicts the different words with which to make comparative references, and whether they are belong to the general or two the particular comparison – the difference between these is that general comparison expresses likeness or difference between things, while particular comparison denotes comparability between things in respect of a particular property (1980:77&80).

Table 3 *Comparative reference according to Halliday & Hasan (1980)*

Grammatical function	Modifier: deictic/epithet	Submodifier/Adjunct
Class	adjective	adverb
General comparison:		
Identity	same identical equal	identically
General similarity	similar additional	similarly likewise
		so such
Difference	other different else	differently otherwise
Particular comparison:	Better, more etc [comparative adjectives and quantifiers]	so more less equally

4.2 Deixis and deictic reference

As mentioned previously, the referring expressions looked at in the analysis will include personal pronouns, demonstratives, the definite article and the comparatives. Apart from the references that create cohesion there also occur some deictic references that create context in the analysed text. The following citation from Lyons illuminates the relation between deixis and reference:

Deixis is like reference, with which it overlaps, in that it relates to their context of occurrence. But deixis is both broader and narrower than reference. Reference can be either **deictic** or non-deictic; and deixis does not necessarily involve reference. (Lyons 1981:170, bold in original)

As mentioned earlier, deictic reference is the kind of situational reference that identifies textual relations in time, place and person, and as Lyons states above, not all deixis is referential in nature. Deixis is the part of language that is used for pointing at or referring to something within the communicative context. The deictic words and expressions are not clearly interpretable from the choice of the words alone, but as Lyons states:

[t]he essential property of deixis --- is that it determines the structure and interpretation of utterances in relation to the time and place of their occurrence, the identity of the speaker and addressee, and objects and events in the actual situation of utterance. --- Deixis is grammaticalized in many languages in the categories of person and tense, --- (1981: 170).

Thus it is the relations of the deictic words to their surroundings that determine their interpretation. Deixis as a word comes from the Greek ‘to point’ or ‘to point with a finger’. (Bühler 1990, Lyons 1981, Semino 1997) Semino adds that deictic expressions may therefore be seen as linguistic ‘pointers’ that guide (in the case of literature) the reader’s attention to the relevant referent from the text’s or the author’s point of view

within the context of the text. (Semino 1997: 32) For example, consider the following phrase:

This man was sitting in that chair that she is occupying now.

The deictic expressions in the sentence are *this man*, *was sitting*, *that chair*, *she*, *is occupying* and *now*. *This man* is referred to with a proximal demonstrative *this*, which suggests that the man in question is somehow close to the speaker, whereas the reference to *that chair* with a distal demonstrative *that* denotes that the chair is not. The tenses mark the time and order in which events took place; the past tense denotes time before the *now* of the text and the present tense something happening currently, from the speaker's point of view. All in all, each of the deictic references here has some sort of identifying function that gives the reader information about the relations of the elements in question to the speaker of the phrase – the interpretation of these kinds of pointers often occurs without the reader consciously realizing it. Thus the text guides the attention of the addressee, as Semino stated. But the person addressed is not only a passive receiver of the message, but an equally active participant in the conversation, as it is their interpretation that will eventually shape the receiving of the text – this was also suggested by Mendlesohn (2008) regarding the reading of the fantastic, as discussed in 2.3. Bühler adds that

--- in the case of demonstration with language --- [the hearer] must also contribute a good portion of his own activity and a certain degree of orientation within the order of what is to be pointed out (1990: 141).

Similarly to reference, deictic expressions are also further categorized into three dimensions according to their function: person, time and place deixis. Of these, the dimension is time differs most from the categories of reference, as it is mostly realized in the tense used in the text. Semino also notes three less common categories of deixis – social, discourse and empathetic deixis – which are more common in spoken language

and will not appear in the current study. The three primary dimensions will be discussed more thoroughly in section 4.2.2 but before that, the next section explains what is meant with the term deictic centre.

4.2.1 Deictic centre

Deictic centre is what all deictic expressions relate to. It is the point of reference, also called the zero point or origo by theorists such as Bühler (1990) and Lyons (1973 & 1981) According to Lyons

[t]he deictic co-ordinates vary somewhat from one language to another; but the zero-point, presumably, will always be the moment and place of utterance (1973: 24-25).

Semino adds that

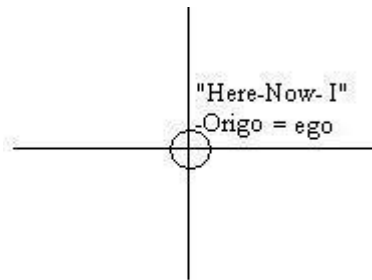
[d]eixis is, in other words, fundamentally egocentric, i.e. it normally takes the speaker's or writer's spatio-temporal location as the basic zero-point or unmarked **deictic centre**, in relation to which all other elements are positioned (1997: 33, referencing Lyons 1977: 638, Levinson 1983: 63-4, Rauh 1983: 12, bold in original).

In literature the deictic centre is usually the point of view of the author, or of the narrator, even though it can also be of a specific character, for it is possible for the addresser to anchor the deictic expressions to a different orientation – this is called deictic projection (Semino 1997: 35).

Bühler (1990) states that there exists a deictic field in language. He adds that within this field, the deictic words 'here' (place), 'now' (time) and 'I' (person) are always situated

in 0 (zero-point), which he also calls the coordinate source – i.e. the deictic centre. (1990: 117) Bühler illustrates the coordinate source further with the following figure:

Figure 1. *Deictic centre according to Bühler (1934:102)*



(<http://replicatedtypo.com>), May 2012) The horizontal line indicates time, the vertical one place and the circle the sphere of perception, or the physical surroundings for the 'I' of the deictic centre.

Within the deictic field, Bühler assigns these three different kinds of demonstration or reference:

I can demonstrate ocularly, or I can use the same deictic words *anaphorically* in speech removed from the situation. Further, there is a third modus, which we shall characterize as *imagination-oriented deixis*. (1990: 94-95, italics in original)

Semino summarizes Bühler's first and third category of reference as follows; deixis can be used both where the addresser and the addressee share the same perceptual space – *demonstration ad oculos*, as when two people are standing in the same room and perceive the same environment – and where neither the addresser or the indicated object are part of the situational context where the addressee is located. The latter case is Bühler's imagination-oriented deixis, or *deixis am phantasma* as Bühler himself calls it, and it is what this paper is mainly interested in, due to analysing a literary text. (Bühler 1982, referenced in Semino 1997: 36-37). In a fantastic literature text, such as

LoA, there is an author, who communicates an imaginary world to a reader, all of which exist in different situational contexts in relation to one another – thus it follows, that all deictic reference within such a text is imagination-oriented. Next section goes through the three dimensions of deixis that are used in the forthcoming analysis.

4.2.2 The three dimensions of deixis

Returning to the categories of deixis, Semino (1997), following among others Bühler's and Lyons' work on references, concurs in the opinion that deixis is organized along three primary dimensions – person, place and time – “with the speaker functioning as the centre of orientation for the positioning of other elements along each dimension” (Semino 1997:33), as demonstrated also in Figure 1 by Bühler.

Person deixis expresses the participant roles for each individual utterance within the communicative event, whereas place deixis identifies the spatial locations with respect to the position of the speaker. Concretely, these two are most often realised with the use of pronouns, demonstratives and place adverbials, with some overlap especially when it comes to distal, i.e. far, and proximal, i.e. close, referring words. Place deixis can further be interpreted in some movement denoting verbs and in prepositions. (Semino 1997: 33-34)

Time deixis denotes the temporal points or periods of time in relation to the time when the utterance is produced – here it is usually important to make a distinction between coding time, the time when the utterance is produced and receiving time, the time when the utterance is received. (Semino 1997:34-35) When thinking of literary texts, however, the coding and receiving times are not so significant. This is because the coding time of a text appears simultaneous its receiving time by the reader, as the reading of a new text is also a new communicative event, regardless of the time when it has actually been written. Only clear references to the time of writing within the text distinguish the coding time from the receiving time to a reader. Time deixis is most

often visible in the choice of tense and the temporal adverbials, and it is often difficult to determine clearly, as time and time periods are not as definable as people and places.

The analysis will follow the three primary dimensions of deixis overviewed here. It is possible that in some cases a particular deictic expression overlaps two or more dimensions, however; in these cases the analysis will also overlap the dimensions in question, and so the division into three categories does not always remain strict.

4.2.3 Reference in context creation

As has been established previously, it is mainly the exophoric and deictic references that create the context of the text, while anaphoric references hold the text together by forming cohesive ties between the elements of the text. This section will discuss how different kinds of reference can be used in context creation of a text; the most typical types of reference to accomplish this are the exophoric and deictic reference and the use of the definite article. Semino states that

[d]efinite articles and deictics share the semantic property of definiteness; they introduce referents that hearers or readers are usually expected to be able to identify uniquely on the basis of the co-textual, contextual or world knowledge that they share with the producer of the message. (Semino 1997:15)

In her book *Language and World Creation in Poems and Other Texts* Semino's goal is to explore the different ways in which poetic text worlds can be classified and described, and most importantly for the current study, how they are constructed in the process of different sorts of texts. Of text worlds Semino states that:

When we read, we actively infer a text world 'behind' the text. By 'text world' I mean the context, scenario or type of reality that is evoked in our minds during reader and that (we conclude) is referred to by the text. (1997: 1)

According to Semino, the process of constructing worlds from texts is often described as central to comprehension. In literary stylistics, the term ‘text world’ has a slightly different meaning from the fantasy world that is the focus of this paper – mainly that a single text, regardless of the genre, has several overlapping and intertwining text worlds that together form its diegesis – that is, the fictional universe created through words (Scott 2011). The world of Alyria discussed in this paper refers to the whole of diegesis of *LoA* and not to the several text worlds that construct it.

Of deixis in poetry – or in other texts – Semino gives the following clarification:

The use of deixis in poetry introduces a dimension of dialogue or ‘address’ within the text, which is presented as the utterance of an individual speaking *persona* in an imaginary communicative context. (1997: 36)

As mentioned earlier, the deictic expressions relate to the deictic centre, which is usually the position of the speaker. In relation to literary text Semino adds to the citation above that “the interpretation of deixis --- requires that readers construct an image of a speaking subject functioning as deictic centre, whether or not this presence is made explicit ---“ (1997: 38). What this means is that the reader constructs the narrator of the story, or the speaker of the poem, whether or not that narrator or speaker is made clearly visible by the author. Often it also occurs that a reader places the author of the text in the position of the ‘speaking persona’, especially in the case of poetry. This narrator-construct then enables the reader to relate the deictic expressions used in the text to some point of reference, for the narrator is located in the deictic centre of the text.

Of deixis and definiteness Semino states that “[a]ll deictic expressions are inherently definite in meaning, but, unlike the definite article, they provide some guidance towards the identification of the relevant referents ---“ (Semino 1997:31, referencing Lyons

1977:647 and Halliday 1985:292). This is in accordance with Halliday and Hasan's view mentioned earlier; the definite article does not give any further content to the expressions it is used with, it only marks it as uniquely identifiable within the textual context. The use of the definite article as context creating device was discussed earlier in 4.1.2 and will not be repeated here – suffice it to summarize, that its function is to mark textual elements as familiar and identifiable, regardless whether they have been introduced to the reader earlier or not.

5 Analysis

The following section will present the study on the cohesion and context creating references and other expressions used in *LoA*. Following Halliday and Hasan (1980), the examples of cohesive reference have been divided into three categories looking at personal, demonstrative and comparative reference, that are presented first in the order mentioned. The sections following these discuss the context creating references and deixis, and have been ordered into the three dimensions of deixis as categorized by Semino (1997): person, place and time.

5.1 Cohesion creating devices

The next four sections are going to look at the different kinds of cohesive references found in the analysed text. The first section discusses the use of pronouns as reference to people and the different kinds of cohesive ties and chains that occur in the text. The second and third sections demonstrate the uses of demonstrative reference, with the definite article *the* given its own section due to great amount of occurrences found in the text. The fourth section includes all the comparative references found in the text and compares their cohesive and context creating functions.

5.1.1 Personal reference

There are not many different people or groups of people being referred to in the analyzed text, so in the case of cohesive reference it is usually not difficult for the reader to determine who or what is the intended referent. Next follow two instances of pronominal reference to people or things, to exemplify the kind of person reference made in the course of the text.

- (1) In the mountains, **the scientists that tended Pheric** saw what was happening. They saw their world being destroyed around them. Yet they

knew that if there was to be any chance of victory, any chance of rebuilding, Pheric must survive. They made their difficult choice. Gathering as many refugees as possible, they retreated to their subterranean strongholds and sealed the entrances with explosives. (ben-Ezra 2005:13)

This paragraph includes a long chain of pronominal reference, where the referent *the scientists* is mentioned only once in the first sentence of the passage. The referent itself is a piece of new information to the reader, as the word *scientist* has not ever before been used in the reference to people in the text – it has only been mentioned earlier that *the Progenitors* created Pheric and that many of them operated it (2005:11) – the definite article operates as a cataphora for the appositive nominal clause *that tended Pheric*, which follows the noun. The referring expressions used in this paragraph are four instances of *they* as a subject of sentence, one instance of *them*, as well as possessive formulations *their world*, *their difficult choice* and *their subterranean strongholds*. The last of these is at the end of a chain constituting of eight pronouns or pronominal expressions referring to the original referent of the first sentence. Despite of the length of the chain it is possible for the reader to understand all of the pronouns as reference to the words *the scientists*, as the passage does not introduce any other subjects – the other actions are the passive *being destroyed* and *was to be*, as well as the non-active formulation to the inanimate computer; *Pheric must survive*. Apart from Pheric, the passage also mentions *refugees* as a group of people separate from the scientists, but they are the object of the clause *gathering as many refugees as possible* so it is not possible to presuppose a further reference to them as in the end of the last sentence all pronouns are in the subject position.

So, as there is only one subject noun in (1) the reference-referent relation is clear. In the next example, there are two different subjects who are being referred to with personal pronouns:

- (2) And then **the Lord of Pain** arrived to take personal charge of the fight. If any could be called the leader of the dragons, it would be him. His mere presence was overwhelming. Men fled screaming as he swooped upon them, tearing them apart. But **one man** did not run. One man did not flee. As the Lord of Pain bore down upon him, he held his ground, waiting. And as the huge dragon bit him in half at the waist, he released the fusion grenade that he held. The explosion shattered the Lord of Pain. (ben-Ezra 2005:14)

The first referent, *the Lord of Pain*, is identified cataphorically in the second sentence with the noun clause *the leader of the dragon*. Both of these two first mentions of the dragon and his title are in the definite form, which underlines the basic assumption that the dragons would have only one leader – however, it is interesting to note that the first noun clause, *the Lord of Pain*, gives no indication as to who or what it is that is *arriving*. It is possible for the reader for a brief while to be confused about the information that is supposed to be interpreted from the first sentence alone, but as the explanation follows quickly in the second sentence, the reader is able to backtrack in their assumptions and connect the otherwise unconnected words *the Lord of Pain* with the idea of the dragons.

Apart from the two definite noun phrases, *the Lord of Pain* is referred to in the next three sentences also with the pronouns *him*, *his presence* and *he*. The reference ties are here again rather simple and easy to understand, as the chain is not broken by other singular subjects at any point – and moreover, in the fourth sentence that also has fleeing men in the subject position, the verb *swooped* aids in the interpretation of the second subject *he* as a flying dragon. It is also interesting to note that the dragon is given the male, other person pronoun *he*, rather than the object pronoun *it*. This is probably to suggest that the dragon possesses intelligence comparable to that of a human being and thus merits the use of the person pronoun.

Next, the referent changes into *one man*, who is mentioned in the fifth and sixth sentences that both have a similar, simple sentence structure. In sentences eight and nine this man is referred to with object form *him* twice and subject form *he* three times – and in the same two sentences the earlier referent, the dragon, is always explicitly referred to either with its apparent name *the Lord of Pain* or in the ninth sentence as *the huge dragon* – its size being mentioned for the first time, incidentally – so that the reference to the man of the fifth sentence remains clear.

The only clear case of person reference that takes place between paragraphs comes right after the example in (2), which is followed in the next paragraph with the following sentence:

- (3) Without their leader, the dragons were disorganised and confused, bereft of will and focus. (ben-Ezra 2005:14)

Here, the expressions *their leader* refers back to *the Lord of Pain* of the previous paragraph, which coheres the two paragraphs together and makes them a more unified whole than the other paragraphs of the text, which use mostly lexical cohesion.

In addition to people, it is also possible to use the pronouns to refer to animals or inanimate beings, mostly places, events or objects. These references appear mostly within a sentence, as in the following example

- (4) Legend claims that the crystal rain of shattered glass in **Kryshana** sounded like weeping as the city mourned her lost children and her own death. (ben-Ezra 2005:13)

Here, the city of Kryshana is referred back to twice with the possessive pronoun *her*. Rather than suggest any human like intelligence as with the dragon reference earlier, this choice of person pronoun seems to be more of a poetic one, in that it appeals to the

reader's empathy by comparing the city to a mother – an interpretation possibly created through the noun phrase *her lost children* where the pronoun is used for the first time.

Interestingly, when the city of Kryshana is, according to the narrative, transformed into the Citadel in the thousand years following the dragons' attack, the pronoun with which it is referred to changes:

- (5) Under the rulership of the Five Noble Houses, **the Citadel** has risen from the ruins of Kryshana. Within its walls, men bow down to Pheric, the god of Iron and Thunder, and pay homage to the Keepers, priests of this fearful god. (2005:14)

This time, the pronoun *its* is used to refer to the city, which is introduced in the first sentence along with a definite article. Apart from creating cohesion between the two sentences the change of the pronoun to *its* with reference to the Citadel from the *her* of Kryshana might imply that the city has lost some of its humanity – although it must be said that this interpretation is again coloured by the current author's opinion. It is further contrasted elsewhere in the text that Kryshana was a city of universities and parks, whereas the Citadel has factories and an ever present criminal element – it could be argued that the difference is emphasized in the choosing of the referring pronoun.

5.1.2 Demonstrative reference

The analysed text has a lot of demonstrative reference in it, mostly realized through the use of the definite article, or the unmarked demonstrative, as Halliday calls it. The participant demonstratives (this – that, these – those) function almost always as a modifier to another word, in addition to which they are usually anaphoric textual references: there is only one clear exception and another, the interpretation of which is somewhat unclear; these two cases will be discussed later in this section. There are also

a couple instances where the adverbial demonstratives *there* and *now* are used cohesively in the text.

The demonstrative references are seldom found in the same sentence with their referents, so it follows that they form cohesive ties across sentence boundaries, as can be seen for instance in the following example:

- (6) The Progenitors delved deep into the earth and constructed **machines of great might** to shape the world to their desires. To control these machines they built **a great computer named Pheric**. Many of the Progenitors operated this computer, maintained it and supervised its terraforming activity. (2005:11)

Here the referents are *machines of great might* in the first sentence and *a great computer named Pheric* in the second sentence that are being referred to anaphorically with *these machines* in the second sentence and *this computer* in the third sentence. Both of the instances are cases of simple demonstrative reference, and they convey no additional information about their referents, apart from the notion of near proximity for both *these* and *this*. The only function of these references is to create cohesion between the three sentences. In the next example, the demonstrative reference also transfers some further information about the referent in the words it modifies:

- (7) And overhead arched **the crystalline dome of Kryshana**. No longer necessary, the dome was retained as an object of beauty and a monument to the past. Many were the poems written of this glittering gem of the Progenitors. (2005:12)

The referring expression *this glittering gem of the Progenitors* in the third sentence refers back to the noun phrase in the first sentence – *the crystalline dome of Kryshana* – which is also repeated as *the dome* in the second sentence. The referring expression

used in the passage refers to the dome construct in rather poetic words, which serves to enforce the general mood of beauty that has been present in the paragraphs concerning the city of Kryshana. In addition, the genitive structure of the expression ties the reference also to *the Progenitors* as the builders of the dome – a detail that is revealed explicitly for the first time, but which is in coherence with the earlier information, namely that the Progenitors originally lived in controlled environments due to the inhospitable atmosphere of the planet.

Another interesting case of demonstrative reference can be found in the beginning of paragraph eight:

- (8) A thousand thousand pages of agony and woe would not suffice to tell the tale of those days. (2005:12)

Apart from being one of the few cases of distal demonstratives, which indicates that the *days* mentioned have already passed when considering the narrative time of the text, it is also somewhat unclear to which direction the reference is made. It appears in the beginning of a paragraph, but it does not really seem to be referring back to the end of the previous paragraph, as the only time related word mentioned there is *the moment* when the dragons and their cultists began the attack. When looking forward, the paragraph continues with a description of what sorts of things happened during the attack and there are no clear mentions of anything linked to the expression *those days*. To put it simply, the reference is not clearly endophoric, but it does not seem to be exophoric either. It follows from the unclarity of the reference that the reader needs to interpret it either as ‘the days that followed the moment the dragons attacked’ or possibly as ‘the days during which the following things occurred’, depending on the direction the reference takes. A further possible interpretation is to integrate the two interpretations mentioned, which would make the reference cohesive to both the preceding and the following text – although it is probably more likely that a reader will

interpret *those days* as an anaphoric reference because it is easiest when reading a text to assign reference to something that has been mentioned previously.

The use of the distal demonstrative *those* further implies certain indefiniteness with its head noun, although the function of the demonstratives is always definite – the interpretation of indefiniteness probably stems from both the distance the demonstrative places the noun and from it being in plural. A singular ‘that day’ has instantly a more definite feel to it than the seemingly unconnected *those days* of the passage. The fact that the reference is made to a period of time is also a factor in the indefinite connotation the expression seems to have. Another example of a distal demonstrative used in the text has similar properties to the one discussed:

- (9) And as it passed through the sky, a rain like blood fell upon the land, and those that saw it wept. (2005:15)

While the expression *those that saw it* is not used cohesively here, it is the only instance of a nominal demonstrative functioning by itself as a head and not as a modifier in a noun phrase. The definition *that saw it* follows immediately, giving a cataphoric definition to the demonstrative as well as creating cohesion to the previous clause with the pronoun *it*. Here, the demonstrative *those* is deictic in that it clearly identifies a group of people – again an indefinite amount of them – that live in the Citadel, which is designated as the point of perspective in the beginning of paragraph 18 from which the sentence above is from. This example will be discussed further when the analysis moves on to discuss the context creating reference in section 5.2.1.

It follows that the use of the proximal nominal demonstratives in the text is always anaphoric, cohesive and clear to interpret, whereas the two cases in which they are distal are more unclear. The distal demonstratives do not have explicit, single word referents, which makes them difficult to categorize. As such they seem to have more of a context creating function – they can be interpreted through analysis of the surrounding

text, but it requires much more effort and deduction than with the anaphoric uses of the proximal demonstratives.

The next citation has the demonstrative adverb *now* as a cohesive reference item:

- (10) The Progenitor culture reached its height with the construction of Kryshana. **Once** this city had been a harsh, sealed environment dome, with functional architecture. Now Kryshana was transformed into a beautiful city. (2005:11-12)

As mentioned in section 4.1.2, the temporal adverb *now* is very rarely used cohesively, as it most often refers to the on-going text time – the cohesion only occurs in such instances in which the meaning of *now* can be interpreted as “this state of affairs having come about” (Halliday & Hasan (1980:75)), in which cases the references are most commonly anaphoric. The temporal reference here is, however, one that is still in the past, but closer to the present than in the referent sentence: this can be deduced from the verb tenses in the sentences, which will be further discussed later in 5.2.3.

The interpretation of the cohesive tie in the previous example is rather clear, as the adverb comes so quickly after its referent. This is not the case when the adverb *there* is used to refer back to *another world* in the very beginning of the text:

- (11) Legends speak of **another world**, far from the shores of Alyria. Perhaps it was another planet. Perhaps it was Heaven itself. There the Progenitors lived in peace and harmony. (2005:11)

Here, the adverb *there* is at the end of a cohesive chain comprised of the referent *another world* and previous pronominal references with the pronoun *it*. The reference is again anaphoric and although the chain is not difficult to interpret as cohesive, the reference the adverb *there* makes must be followed back all the way to the first

sentence, as the two sentences in between are also referring to something previously mentioned with the pronoun *it*. *There* cannot be designated to refer back to *another planet* or *Heaven* of the second and third sentences, although they are clearly identified with the pronouns in these sentences to refer back to the *another world* of the first sentence.

5.1.3 The definite article as demonstrative reference

There are a lot of instances of definite article used in the text, both in the cohesive and the context creating function. The latter function is much more dominant, if one does not count the cases in which all references of the same entity are from the beginning conjoined with a definite article, such as with mentions of *the Progenitors* or *the Outsiders*. This section will look at some examples of the cohesively used definiteness where the first mention is clearly indefinite.

- (12) **Legends** speak of another world, far from the shores of Alyria. Perhaps it was another planet. Perhaps it was Heaven itself. There the Progenitors lived in peace and harmony. But it was not fated to last. For the Outsiders rose up against the Progenitors and cast them from their home in the vault of the sky. Here, the legends conflict --- (2005:11)

The above example from the very beginning of the text is one of the most clear-cut examples of cohesion created by the definite article, with the word pair *legends* – *the legends*. As can be seen, the cohesive tie is maintained over several sentences, as seems to be quite usual with definite reference. The definiteness of the second instance of the word *legends* does not carry any further denominations or connotations apart from the anaphoric reference back to the first occurrence of the word. A very similar example of cohesion can be seen in the following citation with the words *plague* - *the terrible disease* – *the plague*:

- (13) Cultists discovered the biological weaponry of the ancients that had been sealed away and detonated a bomb filled with **ripper plague** in the stress of the city. The trees withered, and the people began to die, ravaged by the terrible disease. Winds spread the plague far and wide. (2005:13)

In this instance the cohesive chain is maintained in all of the three sentences, and although the second uses a different wording and adds the word *terrible* as a premodifier, the reference to the earlier is clear because of the definiteness, which is enforced further with the use of synonymy. The third link in the chain returns to using the word *plague* and again, no further information is conveyed by the definite reference.

The two earlier examples have been quite simple to understand in that referents and the referring expressions have been situated quite close to each other, although the first example had a gap of several sentences between them. The definite article is however unique form of reference also in that it can be used to refer to something mentioned much earlier in the text, and instead of confusing the reader still be interpreted quite easily. The next two citations have the referent in the first sentence and a referring expression in the second, the first being from paragraph eight and the second from paragraph eleven:

- (14) Across the continent, the dragon cultists launched **one coordinated attack**, knocking out communication stations, destroying electrical generators, disabling terraforming processors, disrupting roads and transportation. (2005:12-13)
- (15) The stunning surprise attack destroyed much of their ability to communicate, yet here and there small units of troops resisted. (2005:13)

The referent is the noun phrase *one coordinated attack* and the referring expression is the noun phrase *the stunning surprise attack*. There are altogether 27 sentences between

them, but the cohesion is carried on nevertheless – the text in between describes in more detail the events that took place during the attack, so that the reader cannot strictly speaking forget about it in the middle. However, even if reference from *the stunning surprise attack* could be interpreted as a reference to extended text, the cohesive tie is strongest with the sentence in (14), as it is the very first time the attack is mentioned at all.

A similar example of a definite reference that occurs over a long distance in the text is with the two following references from paragraphs 11 and 15, both of which have their original referent, the false definite *the Outsiders* in the very first paragraph of the text:

(16) The Progenitors still maintained their military force, ever vigilant for an attack from the stars. (2005:13)

(17) The ancient enemy from the stars had discovered them. The Outsiders had returned. (2005:15)

Unlike with the previous example, the text between these references and their referent does not contain any other mentions, implicit or otherwise, of the referent, but despite of this, the reader is able to make the connection between *the Outsiders* that were described in the first paragraph and between the two definite references. This illustrates how a definite reference coheres with its referent despite a lengthy distance between the parts of the cohesive tie – although in the second instance, the reader is aided also by the cataphoric insertion of *the Outsiders* after the definite reference, which makes the reference cohesive in both directions.

5.1.4 Comparative reference

Comparative reference is not used much in the course of the text to cohere it together. Of the two possibilities, general and particular comparison, one can only find instances

of particular comparison. There are three comparative forms and two superlative forms altogether – of these four denote comparisons of quality and two of quantity. All of the examples are, however, somewhat different from one another, especially in the way in which they function to create either cohesion or context within the analysed text.

This first example is from the first paragraph of the text:

- (18) Here, **the legends** conflict – some of the stories claim that the Outsiders descended upon them from the vast emptiness of space, but darker legends claim that the Progenitors delved into forbidden lore and released the dark menace. (2005:11)

The comparison of quality between *some of the stories* and *darker legends* is achieved through the use of the comparative form of the adjective *dark*. Here the reference is clearly anaphoric and creates cohesion between the two clauses – and as both of the expressions also refer back to *the legends* occurring in the first clause, they are doubly referential. The use of comparative structure in a clause is always referential, as comparative requires a relation between two entities to function properly – the same is not true with the use of the superlative, which can define itself (Halliday & Hasan 1980:81). The next two citations give examples of how superlatives are used in the text:

- (19) Many were the poems written of this glittering gem of the Progenitors. **Of all their creations**, surely Kryshana was their greatest. It was a city of light, of beauty, of justice, of goodness, of truth. (2005:12)
- (20) No one understands the true nature of the dragons. Some state that they were the oldest lifeforms native to Alyria and that the coming of the Progenitors disturbed their slumber. Others claim that the dragons are the darkest traits of mankind given physical form. (2005:12)

In (19), the superlative *greatest* is used to refer back to the noun *creations* – hence it is anaphoric and creates cohesion within the sentence, while the possessive pronoun *their* ties back to *the Progenitors* of the previous sentence. The omitted head noun after the superlative underlines the reference to the word *creations*, since no other choice of reference is given; the cohesive tie is further enforced by the repetition of the possessive pronoun in the beginning of both the referent and the referring expression. The two superlative forms in (20), however, are not cohesive or referential – they are simply identifying the qualities of their respective head nouns without actually making any comparisons to anything else found in the text. As such, *the oldest lifeforms* and *the darkest traits* are generalized situational referents with a context creating function.

The last two comparative references are the comparisons of quantity, found from the beginning of the seventh paragraph of the text:

- (21) For no man can be truly good, and even in this time of light and joy, darkness yet gnawed at men's hearts. Some sought more power than their station permitted. Some wished more riches or land and grumbled in discontent. (2005:12)

The first comparative *more power* is cataphoric, as it is followed by a defining *than*-clause. The comparative *more riches or land* does not have a similar definition, but it can be interpreted in a generalized sense as in 'more than they have now'. As comparatives, the first instance is cohesive, albeit only within the sentence it occurs in, whereas the second comparison is context creating, as it lacks a standard of reference. Both of them could of course be understood as referring to the *darkness* of the first sentence as well, but that would be a case of lexical coherence rather than a comparative one and thus outside the scope of this study.

5.2 Context creating references and expressions

This section will move to analyse and discuss the context creating references and expressions found in the analysed text, in the deictic dimensions of person, place and time. The categories of reference that were the basis of categories in the section focusing on the cohesive references are not practical to use here, as most of the deictic and situational references are realized through the use of demonstrative reference only. The main focus of the analysis in this section is on the non-cohesive reference and other deictic expressions that create context for the text, in addition to which the textual deictic centre will also be discussed, as it established the reference point for all of the deictic language found in the text.

5.2.1 Dimension of person

This section will look at the context creating devices that can be categorized into the deictic dimension of person. Here, the examples discussed will include both person and demonstrative references, as person deixis is usually realised through the use of pronouns and demonstratives that refer to people or groups of people, such as the word ‘these’ in “these terrifying beings” (ben-Ezra 2005:11). In the current paper this category encompasses the reference to inanimate entities as well, as the way the reference is made is similar.

The deictic centre of the person dimension, that is, the speaker of the text, is the narrator, who in the case of *LoA* does not use the first person singular pronoun, ‘I’, at all to refer back to themselves. The narrator is an all-powerful one, although they offer some speculations as well – and the amount of the differing speculations that they report naturally enforces the notion of omnipotence. The narration mostly is implicit, as is usual with omnipotent narrators that concentrate on the entities and events taking place in the story. At times, when there are no other dominant subjects taking actions in the course of the text, however, the narrator becomes more visible from behind the text.

This happens, for example, when the tense switches from past to present, or when the narrator uses distal or proximal demonstratives – these help the reader to pinpoint the deictic centre in the dimensions of place and time, which are, as established, the same with that of person. Also, this direct address to the reader, from the last paragraph of text, makes the narrator retroactively more transparent in regards the preceding paragraphs as well – the effect being quite like an afterthought of some kind, of a narrator who was there all the time:

(22) Welcome to the world of Alyria. (ben-Ezra 2005:15)

One of the most usual types of context creating person reference in *Legends of Alyria* is achieved through the use of the definite article. This example is from the very beginning of the text:

(23) There **the Progenitors** lived in peace and harmony. But it was not fated to last. For **the Outsiders** rose up against the Progenitors and cast them from their home in the vault of the sky. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

Progenitors and *Outsiders* are both mentioned for the first time in these sentences, which grammatically speaking would require them to have indefinite articles. However, as stated in sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.3, the use of false definiteness creates a sense of unique identification for both these words, neither of which is ever very clearly defined in the text. The reader is only revealed that *the Outsiders* are the enemy of *the Progenitors*, who have had to flee from their home and settle the world of Alyria. The setting of this relationship between the two words is clearly visible, not only in the actual choice of the words *progenitor* and *outsider* that have a positive and a negative connotation respectively, but also in the other words associated with them in (23). The word *Progenitors* is associated with the positive words *peace* and *harmony*, whereas *the Outsiders* quite negatively *rose up against* them – and against the words *peace* and *harmony* too. A medley of images can be associated with these specific nouns, thanks

not only to their respective related words, but also to the reader's background knowledge and the assumptions they bring with them to the reading of a text. To the commentator of a draft of the current paper, for instance, the image created by the word *Progenitors* was of old men in long, white beards, while to the current author the image is a more science fiction oriented, of a technologically advanced race of people with calm manner, pale and hairless skin and practical white clothing.

There are also cases of definite article use in the text that could be interpreted as generalities, such as in the second paragraph:

(24) **The air** was not breatheable, and **the land** was desolate. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

On the other hand the words *air* and *land* would get definite articles as they are uncountable nouns and can be understood in a general sense as air and land; in the case of *LoA* however, the reader may be reminded that the author is writing about an another planet and thus it is possible to interpret the above mentioned as further cases of false definiteness – as in, that specific air or land on that specific planet, that might or might not be different from the reader's presumptions of the meaning of these words.

In the third paragraph there are two instances of context creating definite references:

(25) **The violent storms** that battered the land were tamed, bringing life and rain instead of destruction. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

(26) Yes, **the raw, unfiltered atmosphere** remained poisonous to them ---
(ben-Ezra 2005:11)

In (25), the non-cohesive noun phrase *the violent storms* is introduced with the definite article and here, the definite article refers to the cataphorically following that –clause, (similar to the example in (1) where *the scientists that tended Pheric* were discussed). In

the second example, there is no that –clause and although it has been mentioned previously in the text that the air on the planet was not breathable, the word *atmosphere* is mentioned for the first time and is non-cohesive. The presupposition that is triggered by the defined type of atmosphere in (26) is that there must also exist filtered, non-poisonous air – this is not ever explicitly confirmed in the text, however.

The next citation exemplifies pronominal deictic reference from the sixth paragraph of the text:

- (27) **Some** state that they were the oldest lifeforms native to Alyria and that the coming of the Progenitors disturbed their slumber. **Others** claim that the dragons are the darkest traits of mankind given physical form. (ben-Ezra 2005:12)

The indefinite pronouns *some* and *others* are cases of person deictic reference, as they refer to the current inhabitants of the planet and not to the Progenitors. This can be deduced from the present tensed verbs. The words also create the context of there being at least two, but possibly more, factions of people that differ in their opinions of the origins of the dragons – it can also be assumed that they are participating in a public discussion on the subject, due to the verbs used being *state* and *claim*. It follows naturally, as the indefinite pronouns create a selection within a group that there may exist also further *others*. These other *others* may or may not concur with the opinions of the *some* and *others* mentioned – the passage even continues with a mention of a third group and its opinion – for the idea of public discussion further brings to mind the group of people that only follow the on-going discussion. So, this way it is possible for an interpretation to create a further interpretation that is based on the first one.

Including the *some* and *others* from (27), there are altogether 12 pronominal deictic person references found in the text, all of which are indefinite pronouns such as *many*, *no one* or *anyone*. The rest of the person references are realized either through definite

noun phrases (e.g. the defenders) or are cases of cohesive anaphoric reference, with either existential pronouns (e.g. *they, him*), noun phrases with demonstratives (e.g. *these terrifying beings*) or possessive pronouns (*their leader*). The small amount of deixis is not too surprising when keeping in mind that there is no actual dialogue going on in the text and most new entities are introduced through the use of definite noun phrases.

An example of a demonstrative person reference not part of a noun phrase can be found in the second to last paragraph: “--- and those that saw it wept” (ben-Ezra 2005:15), from example (9). As established, most of the other demonstratives are part of anaphoric reference noun phrases, such as *this world* and *this computer*, where the main words have already been established either as indefinite or definite noun phrases in the earlier sentences and the demonstrative serves only to instigate the distance to the deictic centre for the referent in question. The image the demonstrative *those* creates here is again of an indefinite group of people seeing the red moon in the sky – the indefiniteness comes from the demonstrative *those* being both plural and distal. The choice of a distal demonstrative conveys the further information that the people referred to are somehow distant to the narrator – most probable cause is difference in time period, as the verbs in the paragraph are all in past tense.

The next citation contains an example of reference through deixis to an inanimate referent, from paragraph six:

(28) So they began to weave **their dark schemes** to bring about the downfall of the Progenitors. (ben-Ezra 2005:12)

Here, the genitive pronoun *their* refers to the dragons that attacked the settlers on Alyria. They are introduced in paragraph six with false definiteness and with interesting switches in the verb tenses – here, however, the narrator brings up *dark schemes* as completely new information. Structurally this noun phrase is similar to the ones with false definiteness, just with a pronoun instead of a definite article and the phrase can be

interpreted in a similar manner to a false definite phrase. The difference between the use of the definite article and the genitive pronoun is that the interpretation that the dragons are the ones scheming is clearer when the genitive pronoun is used – further, it also suggests that the dragons have schemed before, or that scheming is somehow natural to them. If preceded by a definite article instead, the words *dark schemes* would seem weirdly unrelated to the dragons, as if someone else was doing all their evil planning for them. And as can be seen, the word *dark* immediately becomes associated with evil – if not because of the current author’s assumptions, then because paragraph six introduces dragons quite vividly as e.g. “the darkest traits of mankind given physical form” and “demons, released from Hell before their proper time” (ben-Ezra 2005:12).

5.2.2 Dimension of place

The deixis of place and spatial relations are commonly expressed through adverbs such as *here* and *there*, verbs denoting movement and naturally also the prepositions, but also by other means, such as distal (that, those) and proximal (this, these) demonstratives. In the case of demonstratives the deictic expressions of place often overlap with those of the person – as the demonstratives often are a part of a noun phrase – and sometimes overlap occurs also with the temporal deixis, especially with the movement denoting verbs. In the case of cohesive reference that use demonstratives, the deictics of spatial relations are also imbedded and the demonstrative may have a deictic function in the referential expression – however, the next section will attempt to exemplify some of the purely deictic expressions and references to place found in the text, in contrast to the textual references that have been discussed earlier in section 5.1.2.

The place in the deictic centre of the text is the world of Alyria, and to some extent also the city of Kryshana, which later takes the name Citadel. In the last paragraphs of the text the centre seems to switch back to the whole of Alyria again, as many new entities that are a part of the world are introduced – also the last paragraph’s welcome suggests this. Interestingly, although the name Alyria is mentioned right in the first sentence of

the text, it is only in the beginning of paragraph two that it is properly introduced through place deixis, as illustrated in the examples below:

(29) Legends speak of **another world**, far from *the shores of Alyria*. Perhaps it was **another planet**. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

(30) Some of the Progenitors found **this world**: the world of Alyria. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

The first sentence of the text only gives the word Alyria as an anchoring point in relation to the home world of the Progenitors, which is mentioned as being far from Alyria. The indefinite pronoun *another* in (29) creates a contrast between the deictic reference *another world* and the name *Alyria*. The first impression the definite noun phrase *the shores of Alyria* creates is that of a continent, or other sort of landmass – that there is a mention of *another planet* in the following sentence suggests that Alyria is one too, as the contrast between the two entities has already been established. In (30), however, Alyria is set up as the deictic centre, with the proximal demonstrative *this* in the cataphoric reference *this world*, which is immediately followed by its referent *the world of Alyria*. This is because it is more likely that a proximal reference to something as large as a world would only be made if the speaker is in that world, rather than just close by to it. Although the first two sentences already give the reader enough information to deduce that Alyria is a name of a planet, the information is enforced by the cataphoric reference in (29).

As already mentioned in the beginning of this part, the movement and direction denoting verbs necessarily denote places as well – here the connection to deixis is somewhat blurred, as the actual words are not deictic, but as they can be interpreted as deictic references to places, they will be discussed here. Here is an example of such verbs from the first paragraph:

- (31) --- some of the stories claim that the Outsiders **descended upon them** from the vast emptiness of space, but darker legends claim that the Progenitors **delved into forbidden lore** and **released the dark menace**.
(ben-Ezra 2005:11)

The verb phrases *descended upon* and *delved into* both imply a direction and movement of some sort, emphasized naturally by the following prepositions; the same could also be argued with the verb *released* as it immediately raises the question *released from where?* Although *delved into* has more of a symbolic meaning in (31) rather than designating actual, physical movement, it still denotes a sense of direction from the point of view of the deictic centre. Further, the existence of movement means that it begins and ends somewhere – thus a reader will have two spatial points to ponder upon. In the case of (31), the end point for the verb phrase *descended upon* has been established earlier as the home world of *the Progenitors*, who are highlighted here with the pronoun *them*, which functions as the object for *descended upon*. The second spatial relation of interest, i.e. the point of origin of *the Outsiders*, is left open, with two possibilities given, both of them accentuated with indefinite, plural subjects: *some of the stories* and *darker legends*. Further, the definite expression *from the vast emptiness of space* is contrasted with the supposition that the Progenitors themselves somehow let their own nemesis loose, that has *forbidden lore* as indefinite – this makes it seem more like a mere rumour to the observant reader, while the definiteness in the previous clause serves to create imaginary credibility.

In paragraph three there is a fine example of place deixis realised through the use of conjunction:

- (32) **Where** once the newcomers clustered in massive concrete bunkers or arcologies --- (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

The conjunction *where* refers to the actual physical placing of the *concrete bunkers* and *arcologies*, not to the buildings themselves – thus it is very clearly a deictic reference and a good example also in that these places are never described further: the continuing sentence only informs the reader that the people built cities in these same places. The surroundings and the landscape, along with the changing weather conditions – not to mention the arcologies, the bunkers and the cities themselves – are left completely for the reader to visualize. The same structure is used again in paragraph 16: “[w]here trees and gardens once grew ---“ (ben-Ezra 2005:14) where it has the exact same effect as in the earlier example.

From paragraph three comes also an example of prepositional place deictic reference:

- (33) Yes, the raw, unfiltered atmosphere remained poisonous to them, held only at bay by Pheric and its terraforming machines – yet **within the sphere of Pheric’s control**, all was calm and peaceful. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

Prepositions naturally indicate places or directions and the deictic interpretation of them stems from the imagined establishing of here and there, basically. The effect is similar as that discussed with the movement denoting verbs and the movement’s point of origin and end. In this particular case, the preposition *within* denotes areas both actually within, as well as without the mentioned *sphere of Pheric’s control* as the existence of one requires also the contrasting effect of the other – this is emphasized by the notion that the deictic centre does not seem to be included within the area encompassed by the word *within*, as the definite noun phrase that follows the preposition has a more distal undertone about it. For a reader, imagining the scene depicted by this sentence, it is possible to imagine oneself both inside of the mentioned *sphere*, looking out, as well as outside it, looking in.

All in all, the text in question incorporates much more context creating place reference than that of person, although the instances of place deixis are more difficult to count

reliably, as it is often difficult to determine which expressions count as deictic reference. Similarly with person reference, there is a lot of anaphora present, as well as a great amount of definite noun phrases, some of which are conjoined with expressions that possibly are deictic, such as in the phrase “[f]rom their dwelling place deep in the Sea of Mist on the planet’s true surface” (ben-Ezra 2005:12) from paragraph six, where for instance the adjective *deep* would qualify as deictic. The deictic expressions of place are easier to distinguish than person references, however, as spatial relations naturally involve much more pointing. The great amount of definite noun phrases, on the other hand, makes it difficult to find purely deictic references.

5.2.3 Dimension of time

Time and temporal relations are most often visible in the choice of tense, but also in the time denoting adverbs, such as *now*, *soon* and *then*, for instance, a few occurrences of which can be found in the course of the text. There are no referential expressions that have time or time period as their referent found anywhere in the text, so cohesion is established only through the repetition of tense and context creation stems from changes in the expected pattern – it was discussed earlier in section 4.1.1 that cohesion enforces the reader’s expectations of the text, so variations should require the reader to either form new expectations or somehow amend the old ones. The following section will concentrate on the changes occurring in the temporal relations of the text and what sort of effects they have on the reader’s interpretation.

Most of the chapter is written in past tense. This is not surprising since, first of all, it is a tale and tales are often presented in the past tense. Further, this specific tale is also an account of imagined historical events; from deictic point of view the past tense establishes a time ‘before now’ in the text. The past tense is not, however, used constantly in the text. There are a few occasional switches earlier in the text and in the 16th paragraph the past tense is replaced with present and present perfect as dominant tenses. There is, however, again a switch back to the past tense in paragraph 18, which

is immediately again followed by a present tensed paragraph 19. It follows that the reader is thrown off-balance if they expect systematic and linear storytelling, where events follow each other in the order of their occurrence; instead the reader is forced to interpret these changes in the verb tenses, especially when they keep changing to and fro as happens towards the end of the text.

What sort of interpretation can then be gleaned from the changes in tense? As mentioned previously, from paragraph 16 onwards the so far dominant past changes to present tense, with the exception of paragraph 18, where the tense return to past simple only to return back to present tense in the last paragraph, which comprises of only one sentence. The effect that the past simple tense of paragraph 18 in the middle of the present tensed paragraphs 16, 17 and 19 has is that of guiding the reader's attention back to the beginning of the text. The earlier two paragraphs, 16 and 17, have been introducing a lot of new things that have become a part of the world of Alyria after its original settling and terraforming, so the purpose of paragraph 18 is to both to remind the reader of and to re-introduce the original cause to the Progenitors' exile:

(34) And one night as the Dragon Winds **howled** through the Citadel, a new moon **rose** above the horizon. A red moon. A blood moon. And as it **passed** through the sky, a rain like blood **fell** upon the land, and those that **saw it wept**. For the sign **was** clear. The ancient enemy from the stars **had discovered** them. The Outsiders **had returned**. (ben-Ezra 2005:15)

Apart from guiding the reader's attention back to the earlier narrative, the past tense in the paragraph above serves also to distance the event that is being described from the deictic centre of the text. The reader is able to position the story into 'the present' from paragraph 16 onwards, meaning that they jump ahead the thousand years from the events discussed in paragraph 15 – paragraph 16 begins with sentence: “[o]ne thousand years have passed since the Rape” (ben-Ezra 2005:14) – and as they reach the past tense of paragraph 18, they are able to deduce that there exists a time period between the

events of paragraph 18 and the present time of the text. The length of this time period is left opaque and open up possibilities for different ways to take up the world of Alyria as a basis for a role playing game.

It has already been discussed how indefiniteness often creates a feeling of unreliability to some of the sentences that the narrator seems to be only reporting to the reader. The switch of tense goes along with the indefiniteness, for the dominant past tense changes to the present and even the future a few times also during the first fifteen paragraphs. Most of the present tense sentences up to paragraph 15 are also notably speculative, due to the subjects in those sentences being either the definite marked *legends* or indefinite groups of people, as in the following:

- (35) Some **state** that they were the oldest lifeforms native to Alyria and that the coming of the Progenitors disturbed their slumber. Others **claim** that the dragons **are** the darkest traits of mankind given physical form. Still others **mutter** that the dragons **are** demons, released from Hell before the proper time. Perhaps they **are** all correct. (ben-Ezra 2005:12)

This air of speculation that the narration creates is very much linked, not only to the choice of tense and the indefiniteness of the subjects, but also the choice of the actual verbs: *state*, *claim* and *mutter*; not forgetting the adverb *perhaps* in the last sentence. As mentioned earlier in the section discussing person deixis, the narrator appears to be only reporting the opinions of others in these sentences. Moreover, the change in tense denotes that the legends and the *some* and *others* mentioned in the above quotation are situated in the textual present, even if the narration is for the most part focused in the past.

Apart from the choice of tense, temporal reference can also be made through the time adverbs and adverbials; next is an example of their use in *LoA*:

- (36) **Slowly** the land was tamed. The atmosphere became breathable. The violent storms that battered the land were tamed, bringing life and rain instead of destruction. **Soon** forests and grassy plains spread across the land. (ben-Ezra 2005:11)

The adverb *slowly* has an embedded temporality in it, even if it is not strictly speaking a time adverbial, the same way the word *soon* is. It is important to keep in mind that at this point the text time is in the past, or ‘time before now’ This can also be seen in the narration’s preference for the non-continuous forms, although some cases of continuous forms can be found – in the third sentence of the above quote for instance. Returning to the words *slowly* and *soon*, they seem to be in opposition with one another. Noticeably, *slowly* is used in a sentence that denotes physical labour from the imagined inhabitants of the world – the terraforming machines and computer were discussed in the earlier paragraph – whereas *soon* seems to refer to the passive process of nature changing due to the adjustments in the environment. Also, it is possible that the deictics of temporality are mixed in these two sentences: it could be argued that in the first sentence the narration is concentrating on emphasizing the efforts and the mentality of the terraformers in the time span of their on-going work, while the third sentence appears to reflect more the results visible to the narrator, who, as mentioned earlier, is situated in the deictic ‘now’ of the text.

In the next example, there is an instance where the time adverbials are used to reinforce the temporal deixis created by a change of tense in between sentences; the following example was already discussed earlier due to its cohesive demonstrative use, but now the focus is on the temporality these two sentences depict:

- (37) The Progenitor culture reached its height with the construction of Kryshana. **Once** this city had been a harsh, sealed environment dome, with functional architecture. **Now** Kryshana was transformed into a beautiful city. (ben-Ezra 2005:12)

As can be seen, the sentence in the middle, beginning with the time adverbial *once* has also been given the past perfect tense *had been*, while both the surrounding sentences are in simple past tense. It is another instance of a non-linear storytelling, for the second sentence describes a time even further before the text present than the first and third sentences do. Interestingly, the return to the past simple tense is accomplished with the present time adverbial *now* that is used to contrast the past time adverbial *once* in the previous sentence – the sentences are thus in different places on the temporal axis, which is shown in the different tenses and the corresponding time adverbials. That the words *once* and *now* are used to begin the sentences could also be said to prepare the reader for the temporal switches that occur between the three sentences.

6 Discussion

The aim of the analysis was to study the cohesive and context creating references used in the chapter “In the Beginning” from *Legends of Alyria* and see how well their intended message is interpreted by a reader. The analysis looked both at the cohesive ties and chains established by personal pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives that were used as textual referents and the situational referents and deictic language that were used in a context creating function. The method of analysis was to discuss examples from the point of view of a reader and see what kind of interpretations can be based on the different sort of references. The following will attempt to bring the findings of the analysis together and discuss their implications.

6.1 Cohesion

The cohesive personal reference was rather straightforward in that there were no difficulties in assigning the correct referent to the referring expressions, even when there were long cohesive chains where the referent was mentioned only once. This was mostly due to the fact that the paragraphs did not often have more than one entity in the subject position, or if they had, repetition was used more to distinguish different referents from one another. These kinds of references were used cohesively mostly within paragraphs, but in one instance a cohesive tie was established between two paragraphs as well – this is probably because the text is meant as an introduction to the world, so it moves constantly onward, rather than staying in place to expand on the entities it has described.

Similarly to the personal reference, most occurrences of demonstrative reference are used in the text anaphorically and often create cohesion between sentences following one another. This is the case especially with the proximal demonstratives, which always have clear referents somewhere in the preceding text. There are only two instances where the author uses a distal demonstrative, one of which is not cohesive at all, and the

other does not have a simple, one word referent at all, enabling the reader to interpret it as an extended textual reference to either the preceding or the following paragraphs, or even to both. The cohesive demonstratives are always modifiers in noun phrases and sometimes the noun phrases themselves carry some additional information of the referent, although this is rare.

The most common type of reference in the text is accomplished with the definite article, but there are only a few instances in which they are used cohesively to refer back to something indefinite mentioned earlier. The definite articles themselves never bring any additional information to the referred words, excepting the definiteness that signals a reference to something the reader should already recognize. Interestingly, in the case of the analysed text, a definite reference can maintain a cohesive tie over the longest textual distance, for the referent and the referring expression can have several sentences between them and still be interpreted cohesively – the clearest example of this is the reference to the old enemy of the Progenitors, who are introduced in the first paragraph and referred to in paragraphs 11 and 18 with definite reference.

The comparative reference is the least used cohesive reference type in the text – there are only three comparative forms and one superlative form that have a cohesive function, and one of each that are used to transfer contextual information to the reader. Furthermore, the cohesion through comparative reference is created mainly within sentences, so they do not bind the text together as well as the other types of reference discussed. The rarity of comparative reference can most probably be attributed to the shortness of the analysed text. One could also conjecture that as the interpretation of comparatives requires the existence of a standard of reference, the fact that the text uses little comparison in a way inhibits the reader from taking such a standard from the factual world, which might disrupt the immersion into the fantastic world of the text.

It can be concluded that the references used as cohesive devices in the text are all relatively simple to interpret, so it easy to read the text as a consistent whole from

beginning to end. This could be argued to aid in the formulation of an immersive text, as there are no such disruptions that would give the reader a pause in the reading, but instead the text flows onwards smoothly and surely. The references forming cohesive ties are in general close by to their referents in the text, and the chains of several references do not get interrupted within the paragraphs, so in most cases assigning reference and cohesion requires a minimal effort from the reader. The only referential expressions creating cohesion over longer distances in the text are the definite references, and as the text as a whole is rather short and there are only a couple instances of such references, they function well in binding the text together – especially in the case of the second to last paragraph, where the definite reference has its referent in the first paragraph of the text, requiring the reader circle back to the very beginning of the short narrative. This circular form of narration, in the current author’s opinion, affects the immersive reading of the text further, for the text – though of introductory nature – does not only move forward and describe only new entities, but also requires the reader to link back to the previously given information. In a way, this gives the reader a sense of familiarity over a subject matter that before the reading of the text was completely new to them and as such, makes it a part of their new, contextual knowledge.

6.2 Context

The most common context creating references, used both in the dimensions of person and place, are the kind of false definite noun phrases, where the first naming of an entity is accompanied with a definite article. Their effect is that a reader, who is not given a referent to which it is possible to tie the definite reference, creates the definiteness in their own interpretation of the word. In the dimension of person this kind of reference occurs often, especially since the current study has included inanimate objects and animals into the same category as well. The other kind of context creating personal reference is achieved in the usage of indefinite pronouns in a couple of paragraphs,

which in the case of the analysed text have the deictic function of identifying separate groups of people in a previously established population.

The dimension of place has more variation in the kinds of reference and other deictic language it uses in context creation. The examples discussed in the analysis section include pronouns and prepositions as well as movement denoting verbs, a conjunction and an adjective – the definite references were not discussed overly much in the analysis of place references, as they differ very little in nature and interpretation from those discussed already in the dimension of person. An interesting conclusion that can be drawn from the place reference analysis is the duality of the presuppositions that a reader can often base on the place deictic expressions – a movement has both the point of origin and the point where it ends, for instance – a kind of interpretation where the existence of one also means the existence of its opposite pair. While this might not be something a casual reader will immediately realize when reading a text, it is, however, a definite possibility and as such, interesting from a context creating point of view.

The dimension of time had only a couple clearly context creating references, achieved through time and manner denoting adverbials, while the most part of temporal context was constructed through changes in the verb tenses within and between paragraphs. As the text is a narrative of imagined history of the planet Alyria, it is reasonable that the past tense dominates throughout most of the text – however, there were instances where the narration moved briefly to the present tense within paragraphs to describe the speculations of the current populace, for instance. Also, as the narrative comes to the end of the historical events it jumps ahead in time to describe the elements that are presently found on the planet, utilizing the present tense in the account of them and their relations. The closing of the narrative circle, as mentioned in the end of the previous section of cohesion, is reinforced through a return to the past tense in the second to last paragraph. The one sentence paragraph in the end, which is again in the present tense, however, seems to be conveying a sense of moving forward with the narrative of the players, now that the circle of past and present for the world of Alyria has been

completed. This interpretation is further reinforced by the direct form of address to the reader that the last sentence of the text has.

All in all, the context creating reference used in the text is most often of the kind that leaves much room for the reader's own interpretation, allowing them to use their own background knowledge to fill in the voids. Such is the case, in the current author's opinion, especially with the use of the definite article, which, as mentioned also by Halliday & Hasan (1980) conveys no additional information apart from definiteness. As such, a reader is able to flesh out most of the entities described in the narrative through the use of their own imagination – and as most of the entities are never described in detail, a reader may continue this mental exercise throughout the reading. Furthermore, there are some instances in the text where a context creating device triggers not only the element it describes, but also conveys the existence of its opposite pair, as discussed in the examples from the spatial dimension. As Mendlesohn (2008) states, this kind of writing engages the reader – and it is interesting to note that while it requires the reader to fill in some of the information from their background knowledge, this does not disrupt the reading experience, but might actually even complement it. For as the reader is not forced to imagine that what is described in the text, they can concentrate on generating the knowledge for themselves, which is, in essential, what most of the role playing games are all about.

7 Conclusion

This research paper set out to find out how reference can be used both as a context creating device as well as a cohesive tool within a fantastic narrative text. The main interest was on how a reader can interpret different kinds of textual and non-textual references as well as other sort of deictic language, in the case of context creation. The analysed text was the introductory chapter from Seth ben-Ezra's *Legends of Alyria* (2005), which combines elements from fantasy and science fiction writing to create a unique new setting for a story-telling role playing game. The research method utilized was to discuss examples found in the analysed text from the perspective of a reader, taking into account the theoretical background of cohesion and context creation studies, the first based mainly on Halliday & Hasan (1980) and the latter coming chiefly from Semino (1997). The analysis looked at personal, demonstrative and comparative reference both from the point of view of cohesion and context creation and attempted to find out how they affect a reader's understanding of the message the narrative is trying to make. The main conclusions to the analysis were that the cohesive elements aid the reader in immersing themselves with the narrative, as they provide both links to what has been mentioned previously as well as move the text forward, while most of the context creating elements enabled the reader to insert their own images within the narrative, making the different elements in it seem more familiar even in the first reading of the text.

The chapter entitled 'In the Beginning' from *Legends of Alyria* is an example of immersive fantasy text, according to Mendlesohn's categories on fantasy literature outlined in her work *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008). The immersive fantasy is the kind where the fantasy world is a completely secondary world and has no connection within the storyline to the factual world of the readers – a type of literature made popular by Tolkien in his tales of Middle-earth, as mentioned by James (2012). As such, the immersive fantasy is not a new genre to a modern reader and it should not be overly difficult to interpret a literary world written in this style – however, as each immersive

fantasy world is always a new experience, the reading and interpreting always requires some effort from the part of the reader as well. As a role playing game text, the text is typical in that it does not raise any single protagonists or antagonists the reader might be able to identify with, but attempts to describe the world and its elements in a general way, leaving much of the things unexplained or vague. This in part makes the text open-ended and easily adaptable for any sort of gaming experience the players can imagine, as well as makes it interesting to study in detail and see what kind of interpretations can be based on the linguistic elements utilized in it.

This study originated as a shorter research into the world creation elements used in the role playing game text and the main linguistic focus then was on the deictic expressions used to convey the relations in the three dimensions of person, place and time. To expand the study into a master's thesis, the analysis of cohesively used references was added into the research, as the cohesive reference differs from deixis mainly by being somewhat more restricted in form and being based in textual interpretation – thus I was able to combine an analysis of both textual and contextual reference in the interpretation of a narrative text. The qualitative research method was chosen because the aim was to find out how a reader would react to the different kinds of references used in the text and to achieve this, the analysis of the text was completed through discussing examples of the text from a reader's perspective, where the current author took the position of a reader. The study aimed to be objective in the reading and interpreting of the text and while every reader brings with them their own personal background knowledge into the dialogue that is their interpretation of a text, the choosing of *Legends of Alyria* as the source of analysis for this paper was made partially on the grounds that for the current author it was a relatively new text, which could be analysed more objectively than a narrative one is familiar with.

The cohesion theory is based on the works of Halliday and Hasan (1980, 1989 & 2002) following whom the three categories of personal, demonstrative and comparative reference were taken as the division used also in the analysis. The personals included

the personal pronouns, which identify participant roles within the text; the demonstratives convey the notion of distance and definiteness, while the comparatives are used to describe the relations between words in either quality or quantity. The use of deixis as context creating tool comes mainly from Semino (1997) while the linguistic theory on deixis follows also the works of Lyons (1973 & 1981) and Bühler (1990). Deictic references essentially identify the relations between the elements of the text and its deictic centre and they do so in the three dimensions of person, place and time. In these three dimensions the types of reference overlap often, so it is common for instance for a demonstrative reference to denote both a participant relation in the person dimension as well as the spatial distance in the place dimension. The dimension of time is mostly free of pure referential expressions, so the context creation in this dimension was studied by looking at the tensed verbs and some of the temporal adverbials used in the text.

The analysis found that cohesion was mainly created through the use of personal and demonstrative reference and while often the cohesive ties only existed between a couple of sentences, there were also cases, especially with the use of the definite article, where the ties carried over a longer distance in the text. It was also noticed, that the longest cohesive chains were formed with the personal pronouns, for they were the easiest types of reference to interpret cohesively in a longer text. The comparative reference was not used much to create cohesion; the examples found referred only to a previous sentence or clause, or were used in a context creating function. All of the cohesion creating references were in essential simple and clear to understand and required hardly any effort to interpret, which can aid in the immersion into the world of the text, or at least make the narrative proceed uninterrupted. The simplistic narration also makes the context creating elements of the text fairly dependent on the reader's own interaction with the text, as for instance most people or other active entities falling under the person dimension are not given detailed descriptions, leaving the imagining of their physical characteristics wholly on the reader to create. The spatial context creation often allows the reader to assume the existence of opposites, even if they are not explicitly described

in the text, while the changes in verb tenses in and between paragraphs illuminate the positioning of the deictic centre on the temporal axis, giving the player glimpses of the present moment, while narrating events of the past.

It would be interesting to see whether the research method utilized in this study would yield similar results with other sorts of texts – for as mentioned, the genre of fantasy fiction requires a lot of interaction between the reader and the text. Also, another interesting method of study would be to take into account the differences in reader perception by analysing the interpretations of different readers of the referential material presented in the text. The reason why the current study did not use several readers was that the main interest was on the way the cohesion and context creating devices were interpreted by a reader and not the actual interpretations themselves. All in all, this research could benefit from comparison between other, similar studies, as the analysis is based on one person's interpretation of one type of text. However, this fact was recognized from the very beginning of this study and was taken into account in all phases of the research, which lends credibility to the aim of the analysis to remain as objective as possible in the limits of the method of study that was chosen for this paper.

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