Analysis of Lexical Repetition—Taking a News Discourse as an Example[*]

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Abstract—This article puts Hoey's lexical patterns into practice by analyzing a news discourse from *The Times*. The analysis involves a deep and detailed exploration of the links and bonds formed by lexical repetitions, from which marginal and central sentences have been derived. The analysis is believed to have great implications for discourse analysis and foreign language teaching.

Index Terms—lexical, repetition, link, bond

I. INTRODUCTION

Lexis is believed to constitute the foundation of a text. Its contribution to cohesion and coherence has been the focus of attention among many scholars. The pioneers in the study of cohesion and coherence — Halliday & Hasan (1976) made their first attempt in classifying cohesive devices roughly into five categories: conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, reference and lexical cohesion. Among them, the first four fall into grammatical category while only the last is related to lexis. The importance of lexical cohesion is proved by a study conducted by Halliday & Hasan (1976), from which they concluded that lexical cohesion accounts for over forty percent of ties. Hoey (2000) puts forward that, except conjunction, the other cohesive devices have shown different degrees of repetition. Winter. E. O. (1979) holds a similar point of view by saying that "many clauses are repeated, either partially or (almost) entirely… the most obvious kind of repetition being the very common partially repeated structures of the clause. This repetition may however, be disguised by the grammatical form which it takes" (p. 101). *Repetition* is traditionally defined as "doing the same thing many times" (Longman Dictionary, 2003, p.1201). Hoey argues for a broader one which involves many types of repetition.

Using a news report as an example, "Cinema parks face bad projections" which is taken from *The Times* (see the Appendix for the full report), the paper is going to expound in great detail how Hoey's model is applied to analyzing texture in discourse from lexical point of view.

II. HOEY'S ANALYZING MODEL OF LEXICAL REPETITION

Hoey (2000) has made a meticulous and systematic study of repetition. As is stated previously, Hoey adopts a broad definition of repetition. He classifies repetition into simple lexical repetition, complex lexical repetition, simple paraphrase, and complex paraphrase.

"Simple lexical repetition occurs when a lexical item that has already occurred in a text is repeated with no greater alteration than is entirely explicable in terms of a closed grammatical paradigm." (p. 53) For example, *receiver* in Sentence 4 (So far, no details have emerged of the size of the company's borrowings or its debtors, but a spokesman for Ernst & Young, the **receiver**, said that it was confident THI could be turned around.) is the simple repetition of *receivers* in Sentence 3 (THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the **receivers** earlier this month…).

Complex lexical repetition "occurs either when two lexical items share a lexical morpheme, but are not formally identical or when they are formally identical, but have different functions" (p. 55). For example, *collapse* in Sentence 7 (That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Centre on London's South Bank, should **collapse** so suddenly …) forms complex repetition with *collapse* of Sentence 3 (…blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden **collapse**). Although they are identical in form, they function differently in grammar with the former (in Sentence 3) being a noun and the latter (in Sentence 7) a verb.

Paraphrase of which the major function is to explain things in different words, is kind of repetition. Likewise, paraphrase is classified by Hoey (2000) into two types: simple and complex. "Simple paraphrase occurs whenever a lexical item may substitute for another in context without loss or gain in specificity and with no discernible change in meaning." (p. 62) For example, *firm's* in Sentence 6 (Industry sources believe it is likely to be broken up, with buyers picking off individual sites, and some of the firm's incomplete schemes…) and *company's* in Sentence 4 (the full sentence has been presented earlier) are examples of simple paraphrase. To some degree, simple paraphrase is equivalent to Hasan's (1984) synonym.

Hoey interprets complex paraphrase broadly. Complex paraphrase is said to occur "when two lexical items are definable such that one of the items includes the other, although they share no lexical morpheme" (p. 64). For example, *turn around* in Sentence 4 means"to manage an unsuccessful business so well that it becomes successful again"(Longman Dictionary, 2003:1555); in this way, it stands in complex paraphrase with *success* in Sentence 1(The UK's cinema market is bracing itself for a slowdown, despite growing film attendances and the **success** of recent releases). In addition, complex paraphrase includes antonym.

In addition to the four repetition devices discussed above, repetition also include superordinate, hyponymic, and co-reference repetition (p. 69-70). For example, *the country* in Sentence 23 (One agent says: "Virtually every cinema in **the country** would now be valued at …") and *the UK* in Sentence 19 (Research into cinema attendances ……has found that while the number of screens in **the UK** has risen…) are of co-reference. In Sentence 14, Sentence 15 and Sentence 16, there are *Australian cinema operator*, *the US operator*, and *South African-owned operator* respectively, of which *Australian*, *the US*, *South African* are related as hyponym to superordinate with f*oreign* in Sentence 12 (A rush of **foreign** operators began chasing sites in 1998…).

Sometimes, an item in a sentence will form a link with two items in another sentence at the same time. Under such circumstance, only one link is recorded. Hoey (p. 83) puts forward the following list which is made in order of decreasing importance in deciding which link to record.

- simple lexical repetition
- complex lexical repetition
- simple mutual paraphrase
- simple partial paraphrase
- antonymous complex paraphrase
- other complex paraphrase

III. ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL REPETITION IN DISCOURSE

According to Hoey (2000), "the study of the greater part of cohesion is the study of lexis" (p. 10), and relations between lexical items are established on various types of repetition. Repetition links in the selected news discourse are presented below in Table 1(Because all the links have been listed, the table has to spread across several pages).

TABLE I.
LEXICAL REPETITION

	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	cinema-cinema					
3	UK's-UK market-market	leisure-leisure parks-parks buyers-receivers collapse-collapse leading-pioneers				
4	success- be turned around	buyers-receiver	borrowing-borrowings THI-its receivers-receiver			
5		buyers-selling	THI-its receivers-receiver	company's-company receiver-receiver		
6		industry's-industry buyers-buyers	collapse- be broken up	company's-firm's	company-firm's	
7		collapse-collapse leisure-leisure developers-redevelop industry's-industry	collapse-collapse sudden-suddenly leisure-leisure	THI-THI	company-THI	Industry-industry be broken up- collapse tender-bidding individual-whole
8	UK's-UK's growing-expansion	leisure-leisure parks-parks	UK-UK's blaming-blame leisure-leisure park-park		believe-suggesting	
9	UK's-UK cinema-cinema	parks-parks collapse-sprung up cinema-cinema	parks-parks UK-UK collapse-sprung up	emerged-sprung up	including-include	
10	sought-found	leisure-leisure parks-parks industry's-businesses	park-parks leisure-leisure			Industry-business
11	market-market	leisure-leisure parks-park	leisure-leisure parks-park collapse-demise	emerged-demise		be broken up- demise

#						
12		sought-chasing		company's-operators	a number of-a rush of company-operators	
13		industry's-industry sought-looking for		company's-operators so far-now	company-operators a number of -few	Industry-industry sites-sites firm's-operators
14	cinema-cinema UK's-UK	cinema-cinema collapse-came to nothing	UK-UK collapse-came to nothing	company's-company emerged-came to nothing	company-company	schemes-plans firm's-company
15	cinema-cinema UK-UK	cinema-cinema collapse-open	UK-UK collapse-open	company's-operator emerged-withdrawn said-announced	company-operators some-completely	Schemes-plans Incomplete-completely be broken up-open sites-sites
16	cinema-cinema	cinema-cinema		company's-operator	selling-sale	Sites-sites
17		leisure-leisure	leisure-leisure	said-says	assets-property	likely-likely
18				company's-company	company-company	Firm's-company Picking off-picking up
19	cinema-cinema attendance-attendance UK's-UK Growing-risen	cinema-cinema	UK-UK			
20	cinema-cinema growing-growth	cinema-cinema		company's-operators	company-operators	firm's-operators
21	market-market	parks-parks	level-levels park-parks market-market			Schemes-schemes
22	market-market		market-market		market-market	
23	cinema-cinema UK-the country		UK-the country	said-says		
24		collapse-emerged	receiver-receivership THI-THI	emerged-emerged receiver-receivership THI-THI	receiver-receivership	schemes-planning
25		leisure-leisure Developers-redevelop	THI-THI's Leisure-leisure Receivers-receivership	receiver-receivership	receiver-receivership	Schemes-scheme Tender-bid

#						
7	7					
8	leisure-leisure	8				
9		Parks-parks	9			
10	leisure-leisure industry-businesses	leisure-leisure parks-park	include-including Parks-park	10		
11	leisure-leisure collapse-demise	leisure-leisure parks-park	parks-park	leisure-leisure parks-park	11	
12			tenant-tents the US-foreign	businesses-operators	However-But	12
13	industry-industry			businesses-operators	demise-opening	Operators-operators Sites-sites Chasing-looking foreign-Australian a rush of-few
14	collapse-came to nothing	expansion-expansion UK's-UK furious-ambitious	cinema-cinema UK-UK sprang up-came to nothing		demise-open	Operators-operator began-quit
15	collapse-open	expansion-cut	Cinema-cinema US-US Multiscreen-screen			Operators-operator foreign-the US sites-sites
16			Cinema-cinema		leisure-leisure	Operators-operators
17	Leisure-leisure	Leisure-leisure	sprung up-take place	leisure-leisure		
18						Operators-operators
19		expansion-risen UK's-UK Cinema-cinema	multiscreen-screen	found-found		
20		furious-aggressive Cinema-cinema expansion-growth	cinema-cinema		parks-parks market-market	Operators-operators
21		Out-of-town-out-of-town Parks-parks	Parks-parks	Parks-parks	market-market	

22			cinema-cinema			began-dipped their toes
23					demise-emerged	
24	collapse-emerge THI-THI Questions-problems		Cinema-cinema		leisure-leisure	
25	Bidding-bid Redevelop-redevelop Leisure-leisure			Leisure-leisure	create-began	

	13					
14	Operators-operator	14				
15	Operators-operators sites-sites	Operator-operator Plans-plans Opening-open expansion-cut Cinema-cinema	15			
16	Operators-operator sites-sites	Operator-operator Cinema-cinema	Operator-operator Cinemas-cinema sites-sites	16		
17	consolidation-consolidation Few-more	came to nothing-take place	announced-says		17	
18	Operators-operators	Operators-operators	Operators-operators	operators-operators		18
19		Cinema-cinema UK-UK expansion-risen	number-number screens-screens UK-UK Cinemas-cinema	cinema-cinema	consultant-consultant	
20	Few-many Operators-operators	ambitious-aggressive cinema-cinema expansion-growth Operators-operators	Cinemas-cinema Operators-operators	cinema-cinema operator-operators	more-many	operators-operators
21		Plans-planning	Plans-planning			
22	Now-now		withdrawn-retreating			a couple of-several
23	few-less Now-now	Cinema-cinema UK-the country	Cinemas-cinema UK-the country	cinema-cinema	says-says more-less	
24		came to nothing-emerge plans-planning	plans-planning		take place-emerge	
25		plans-scheme	plans-scheme		leisure-leisure	

	19					
20	risen-growth cinema-cinema	20				
21	parks-parks		21			
22			market-market	22		
23	UK-the country	more-less		now-now	23	
24			imposed-forced	investor-investment	a year ago-last year	24
25			schemes-scheme			receivership-receivership planning-scheme THI-THI

To give a clearer picture, the repetition links in Table 1 is re-presented in Table 2 in the form of the number of the links. Out of 300 cells, i.e. sentence pairs, 102 cells (34%) have shown zero links, and 84 cells display only 1 repetition which takes up 62%. This shows that nearly 2/3 links are not closely related and only 1/3 are intimately linked. Hoey points out, "we will only concentrate on those cases of linkage that, within the text, show an above-average degree of connection" (p. 91). So the first step is to pin down of the average number of linkage.

TABLE II.
NUMBER OF REPETITION LINKS

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)
(2)	1	(2)																						
(3)	2	5	(3)																					
(4)	1	1	3	(4)																				
(5)	Ø	1	2	2	(5)																			
(6)	Ø	2	1	1	1	(6)																		
(7)	Ø	4	3	1	1	4	(7)																	
(8)	2	2	4	Ø	1	Ø	1	(8)																
(9)	2	3	3	1	1	Ø	Ø	1	(9)															
(10)	1	3	2	Ø	Ø	1	2	2	2	(10)														
(11)	1	2	3	1	Ø	1	2	2	1	2	(11)													
(12)	Ø	1	Ø	1	2	Ø	Ø	Ø	2	1	Ø	(12)												
(13)	Ø	2	Ø	2	2	3	1	Ø	Ø	1	1	5	(13)											
(14)	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	Ø	1	2	1		(14)										
(15)	2	2	3	2	4	1	1	3	Ø	1	3	2	5		(15)									
(16)	1	1	Ø	1	1	1	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	1	2	2	3	(16)								
(17)	Ø	Ø	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Ø	2	1	1	Ø	(17)						
(18)	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	1	2	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	1	1	1	1	Ø		(18)					
(19)	4	4	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	3	1	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	3	4	1	1	Ø		(19)				
(20)	2	2	Ø	1	1	1	Ø	3	1	Ø	Ø	1	2	4	2	2	1	1	2		(20)			
(21)	1	1	3	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	2	1	1	2	Ø	Ø	1	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø		(21)		
22)	1	1	1	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	1	1	1	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	1		(22)	
(23)	2	2	1	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	2	2	2	1	2	Ø	1	1	Ø	1		(23)
(24)	Ø	Ø	2	3	1	1	3	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	2	1	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	1	1	(24)
(25)	Ø	Ø	3	1	1	2	3	Ø	Ø	1	1	1	Ø	1	1	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	3

There are 114 sentence pairs which have two or more links. If two links are taken as the threshold, as many as 114 sentence pairs will be under discussion, so it seems that two links are not enough to establish the connection between sentences. In order to reach an appropriate number, the threshold has to be adjusted several times. If we make an attempt at four links, we'll focus only on 10 sentence pairs which seem to be disproportionate to the number of the sentences of the whole text. In this way, the middle number 3 is picked up as the cut-off point. Sentences with three or more links form a bond with each other. Thus, Table 3 is derived.

TABLE III.
CO-ORDINATES

1	(-,1)	2	(0,5)	3	(1,7)	4	(1,2)	5	(0,0)	6	(0,3)
7	(3,2)	8	(1,3)	9	(2,2)	10	(1,0)	11	(1,0)	12	(0,2)
13	(2,0)	14	(2,3)	15	(5,2)	16	(1,0)	17	(0,0)	18	(0,0)
19	(5,0)	20	(2,0)	21	(1,0)	22	(0,0)	23	(0,0)	24	(2,1)
25	(3,-)										

The numbers in the bracket are co-ordinates with "the first showing the number of previous sentences to which it is bonded, the second showing the number of subsequent sentences to which it is bonded" (p. 104). For example, the coordinates of Sentence 7 are (3, 2), which means that Sentence 7 stands in bond with 3 sentences before it and 2 sentences after it.

Table 3 suggests that a total of 5 sentences (Sentence 5, Sentence 17, Sentence 18, Sentence 22, Sentence 23) are empty in bonds with any sentence of the text, that is, their co-ordinates are (0, 0). They are regarded as marginal sentences. Marginal sentences are defined by Hoey as those that "contribute less to the development of the themes" (p. 43). Hoey devises a method to test marginality of sentences, that is, to delete them from the text and see whether the abridged version still stands as a whole. We'll make an experiment on erasing Sentence 17 and Sentence 18 to see whether the original text still makes sense.

16 Ster Century Europe, a South African-owned operator, which had one cinema in operation in Norwich and four sites, has also put itself up for sale. ~~17 Colin White, leisure property consultant at Edward Symmons Hotel & Leisure, says that further consolidation is inevitable: "It's highly likely more consolidation will take place. 18 There's a logic from the larger company point of view to pick up a couple of the smaller operators. "~~ 19 Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million. 20 Many cinema operators based their projections on more aggressive growth.

It seems that although the deleted version is not as rich and logical as the original one in meaning, but it is still coherent and makes sense; in other words, texture of the text is little affected. But does that mean marginal sentences are omissible in a text? Before we start a discussion upon that, let's come to the central sentences first.

Central sentences stand in contrast to marginal sentences. Those sentences which have more bonds are considered central, and thus "germane to the development of the themes of a text" (p. 43). But unlike marginal sentences, central sentences cannot be defined in absolute terms. "Just as the minimum number of links criterial for bonding varies from text to text, so the number of bonds criterial for centrality likewise varies." (p. 113-114) Table 4 below presents

distribution of bonds across the text.

TABLE IV.
NUMBER OF BONDS

纽带数	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
句子数	5	5	3	4	2	4	0	1	1

It can be seen that the number of sentences with 3 and 5 bonds are equal. Thus, we'll take the middle number 4 first as the divide and treat sentences with 4 or more bonds are central sentences. According to Table 3, sentences with 4 or more bonds are Sentence 2, Sentence 3, Sentence 7, Sentence 8, Sentence 9, Sentence 14, Sentence15, and Sentence19. Putting them together gives rise to the following abridgement.

② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑧ Observers are already suggesting that the furious expansion of the UK's out-of-town leisure parks is to blame. ⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opeing just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemamark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. ⑲ Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million.

The above abridgement covers major information of the selected news report: 1) the collapse of one of UK's entertainment park developers — THI; 2) causes that lead to this situation; 3) other foreign developers that have similar experiences. And this abridgement is basically coherent, except for the fact that there seems to be an information gap between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14. Sentence 9 talks about domestic developers while sentence 14 suddenly switches to overseas developers. If a transitional sentence is added, will coherence of the abridged version be enhanced? Between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14, there are sentences 10, 11, 12, 13; however, the number of their bonds are quite small, i. e. 10 (1, 0), 11(1, 0), 12 (0, 2), 13(2, 0). As said previously, the first number in the bracket shows the number of preceding sentences that the present sentence has bonds with and the second showing how many sentences after the present sentence are formed in bond with each other. Of the four sentences, only Sentence 12 has bonds with subsequent sentences, and Sentence 14 and Sentence 15 happen to occur after Sentence 12. So we'll try to see whether coherence will be improved by inserting Sentence 12 between Sentence 9 and Sentence 14.

⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑫ A rush of foreign operators began chasing sites in 1998, pushing up tents. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemamark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites.

Obviously, coherence of the abridged version has been greatly improved. The function of Sentence 12 helps throw light on the question posed previously, that is, are marginal sentences omissible in a text? According to the threshold of bonds (4 bonds) that has been decided earlier, Sentence 12 is supposed be a marginal sentence. Although it is not the most marginal one — the sentence not bonded to any sentence or the coordinates are (0, 0), its bonds after all are far fewer compared with those of central sentences. Enhanced coherence of the abridgement achieved by having Sentence 12 added shows that marginal sentences can supply background or subsidiary information which helps readers better understand the themes of the text and thus raises readability of the text.

From the above, we have obtained central sentences by pinning down the number of bonds to 4 and organize them into an abridged version. But this abridgement seems to have contained excessive adjoining sentences (Sentence 2, Sentence 3; Sentence 7, Sentence 8, Sentence 9; Sentence 14, Sentence15), and it is supposed to be shorter.

Next, we are going to raise the threshold to 5 and in this way get Sentences 2, 3, 7, 14, 15, and 19. Put together, they form the following abridgement:

② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opeing just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemamark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically

cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. ⑲ Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million.

With 5 bonds as the threshold, this abridgement is highly condensed and appropriate in length — about 1/5 of the original text. If the background information is provided, that is, the transitional sentence — Sentence 12 is added, both coherence and readability of the above version will get uplifted.

IV. Conclusion

Hoey's lexical pattering involves discussions of repetition links, bonds, marginal sentences, and central sentences. The forgoing analysis has great implications for discourse analysis and foreign language teaching: first, lexical cohesion is multi-faceted; connection between sentences is established not merely through mechanical repetition of the same lexical item; second, as a crucial component of a text, lexis teaching is supposed to focus on those words that have given rise to most bonds. Because Hoey's lexical model contains many meticulous analyses and calculations, it is very hard to carry out the analysis on a quantitative basis. Further corpus research conducted on the computer should thus be encouraged.

Appendix

Cinema parks face bad projections

Jameson, A.
The Times 23 April, 2001

① The UK's cinema market is bracing itself for a slowdown, despite growing film attendances and the success of recent releases. ② This week buyers are being sought for eight major leisure parks, after the collapse of one of the industry's leading cinema developers. ③ THI, one of the pioneers of the UK leisure park, called in the receivers earlier this month, blaming overcapacity in the UK market and a high level of borrowing for its sudden collapse. ④ So far, no details have emerged of the size of the company's borrowings or its debtors, but a spokesman for Ernst&Young, the receiver, said that it was confident THI could be turned around. ⑤ The receiver is working with the group on a number of options to rescue the situation, including selling some of its non-core assets, selling the company as a going concern, or restructuring. ⑥ Industry sources believe it is likely to be broken up, with buyers picking off individual sites, and some of the film's incomplete schemes possibly going back out to tender. ⑦ That THI, which only last year was bidding to redevelop the Shell Center on London's South Bank, should collapse so suddenly raises questions of the viability of the whole leisure development industry. ⑧ Observers are already suggesting that the furious expansion of the UK's out-of-town leisure parks is to blame. ⑨ The parks, copied from the US, have sprung up all over the UK and invariably include a multi-screen cinema as the so-called anchor tenant. ⑩ Other leisure businesses, including themed restaurants, bowling alleys, health and fitness clubs and nightclubs are also to be found on the parks. ⑪However, there have been signs of a demise in the leisure park market for some time. ⑫A rush of foreign operators began chasing sites in 1998, pushing up tents. ⑬But now consolidation in the industry means there are few, if any, operators looking for sites. ⑭ Ambitious expansion plans by Hoyts, the Australian cinema operator, came to nothing, when the company decided to quit the UK after opening just a single cinema at Bluewater in Kent. ⑮ The US operator Cinemamark International, which two years ago announced plans to open 30 cinemas in the UK, has also withdrawn completely, while AMC cinemas, another US operator, has drastically cut the number of screens it will have at its two sites. ⑯Ster Century Europe, a South African-owned operator, which had one cinema in operation in Norwich and four sites, has also put itself up for sale. ⑰ Colin White, leisure property consultant at Edward Symmons Hotel & Leisure, says that further consolidation is inevitable: "It's highly likely more consolidation will take place. ⑱There's a logic from the larger company point of view to pick up a couple of the smaller operators. " ⑲ Research into cinema attendances by Dodna Research, the cinema consultant, has found that while the number of screens in the UK has risen by 26 percent to 2,945 since 1997, admissions have gone up by only 2 percent to 142 million. ⑳Many cinema operators based their projections on more aggressive growth. ㉑Government-imposed planning restrictions on new parks and parking levels at out-of-town schemes have also hampered the market. ㉒ Institutional investors, who dipped their toes in the market several years ago, are now retreating. ㉓ One agent says: "Virtually every cinema in the country would now be valued at a rent less than it was a year ago." ㉔As for THI, its problems first emerged last year when it was forece to place a special-purpose investment vehicle into receivership, after a proposed project at Herne in the Ruhr Valley, Germany, was refused planning permission. ㉕ The receivership also kills THI's shortlisted bid to redevelop Kings Dock in Liverpool to create a leisure scheme on the waterfront.

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