

**COHESIVE DEVICES ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING OF
FOURTH SEMESTER OF ENGLISH EDUCATION PROGRAM OF MATARAM
UNIVERSITY IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017**



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RATIFICATION

This is to certify the thesis entitled *Cohesive Devices Analysis of Students' English Writing of Fourth Semester of English Education Program of Mataram University in Academic Year 2016/2017* by Uswatun Hasanah has been approved by the board of advisors as requirement for achieving *Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd)* degree in English Education Program Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Mataram University

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at finding out the types of cohesive devices, the accuracy use and the problems faced by the students in achieving coherent writing by using model proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). This study utilized qualitative and quantitative research method. As many as 20 students of fourth semester of English Education Program are taken as the sample of the study.

The result of the study shows that the students applied five types of cohesive devices with various frequency. Furthermore, conjunction appears more dominant (46.89%) than other types of cohesive devices followed by reference (35.32%), lexical cohesion (16.79%), substitution (0.87%) and the least is ellipsis (0.12%). Regarding to the accuracy use of cohesive devices, the result shows that students are able to use cohesive devices correctly with 63.44% accuracy use. While the problems found in their writing shows that the students' overuse some types of cohesive devices such as conjunction and repetition, make redundancy in their writing. Students' inappropriate use of some types of cohesive devices are also found in their writing. The last is the students seem unfamiliar with some types of cohesive devices. As a result, they rarely use such types in their writing.

Key words: *Expository Writing, Cohesion and Coherence, Cohesive Devices*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari jenis-jenis *cohesive device*, ketepatan penggunaan, dan masalah yang dihadapi oleh Mahasiswa dalam membuat tulisan yang *coherence* dengan menggunakan model *cohesion* didalam bahasa Inggris yang dikemukakan oleh Halliday dan Hasan (1976). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Sample dari penelitian ini yaitu 20 orang mahasiswa semester empat Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris.

Hasil study memperlihatkan bahwa mahasiswa menggunakan lima jenis *cohesive device* dengan frekuensi yang berbeda-beda. Tipe yang paling banyak muncul adalah *conjunction* yaitu sebanyak 46.89% diikuti oleh *reference* sebanyak 35.32%, *lexical cohesion* sebanyak 16.79%, *substitution* sebanyak 0.87% dan yang paling sedikit adalah *ellipsis* yaitu muncul hanya 0.12%. Kemudian, keakuratan penggunaan dari *cohesive device* oleh mahasiswa menunjukkan bahwa mereka dapat menggunakan *cohesive device* secara akurat dengan presentase 63.44%. Sedangkan masalah yang ditemukan didalam tulisan mereka memperlihatkan bahwa mahasiswa berlebihan menggunakan beberapa jenis *cohesive device* seperti *conjunction* dan *repetition* sehingga menyebabkan redundansi pada tulisan mereka. Lalu, ketidak tepatan penggunaan beberapa jenis *cohesive device* juga ditemukan didalam tulisan mereka. Masalah terakhir adalah mahasiswa seperti tidak familiar dengan beberapa jenis *cohesive device* dan itu terlihat dari frekuensi penggunaan beberapa tipe yang lebih banyak dari tipe lainnya.

Kata Kunci: *Expository Writing, Cohesion and Coherence, Cohesive Devices*

INTRODUCTION

It is obviously known that becoming a proficient writer is one of the major objectives of many students due to the fact that they have to write assignment, research report, education paper, essay and even thesis that require proficient knowledge of academic discourse. However, Abdul and Karim (2014 in Suwandi, 2016) stated that most EFL students find difficulties in writing a piece of composition in English because they are not familiarized with this type of work. As a result, they still find difficulties during the writing process such as stuck in developing their ideas, they are not confident with the grammatical mistakes or confused in composing paragraph coherently. Besides, the students have to pay attention to the other elements of writing such as punctuation, spelling, word choice and so forth.

The fact that EFL students find difficulties in making a good writing is revealed by Taufiqullah (2010) who conducted a study in Pancasakty University. He conveyed that students' writing competence was very poor in which their writing are not well organized, less mechanical aspect used, less content materials about the topic and improper use of grammatical aspect as well as understandable sentence in their essay writings.

In fact the main focus of teaching writing is to develop ability in creating a good writing. The requirements that should be fulfilled are unity, coherent, and adequate development with coherence as the most important factor (Corbet 1997 in Mawardi, 2014). As asserted by Tanskanen (2006 in Rahman, 2013) cohesion text can only be established via the use of cohesive devices. In other words, coherent text is achieved through the use of cohesive devices. Cohesion refers to the linguistic tie features which help to make a sequence of a sentence in a text. Linguistic tie features refers to the term cohesive devices as proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

What is meant by coherence here is that the sentence or paragraph in the text really connect one another and not just like a bundle of unconnected sentences which do not convey

any ideas. In other words, all sentences in the text must be linked with the right use of cohesive ties such as conjunction words, substitution, reference and ellipsis in order to build coherence.

Considering the fact revealed previously and the importance of cohesive devices in making coherent writing, it triggers the curiosity to examine students' ability in building a unity and coherent writing by analyzing the elements that contribute unity and coherence. In this study, therefore, the types of cohesive devices used by the students are analyzed and how accurately the students utilize such devices. Through those results of analysis, the problems faced by the students also will be discovered.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the background of study above, there are three research questions as reference in conducting this study, namely:

1. What types of cohesive devices are used by students of fourth semester in their academic writing?
2. Do the students use cohesive devices accurately?
3. What problems these students perceive in using cohesive devices to achieve cohesion?

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used mixed method research in which both qualitative and quantitative method is combined. The data was collected by means of document, test and interview. Two kinds of students writing were collected and the test administered was 16 multiple choice questions. Additionally, semi-structured interview was used to collect data which supported the result of document and test. The sample of the study was 20 students of fourth semester who is taking academic writing class.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Types of Cohesive Devices Used by Students

In order to answer the first research question, two kinds of academic writings written by the students were analyzed. Those data were obtained from midterm and final test of academic writing course in IV/A morning class.

To illustrate the types of cohesive devices applied by the students in their writing, Table 1 is presented. Table 1 presented below is the mean data of the result of cohesive devices identification of both writing. It clearly shows that students apply five types of cohesive devices, namely, reference (personal, demonstrative, and comparative), substitution (nominal), ellipsis (verbal), conjunction (additive, adversative, clausal, and temporal), and lexical Cohesion (repetition and synonym). (See appendix 1)

Table 1. Types of Cohesive Devices Used by Students

Student s	Reference		Substitution		Ellipsis		Conjunction		Lexical Cohesion		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Total	142	35.32	3.5	0.87	0.5	0.12	188.5	46.89	67.5	16.79	402
Mean	7.1	35.32	0.18	0.87	0.03	0.12	9.43	46.89	3.38	16.79	20.1

These types of cohesive devices were applied with different frequency. As shown in table 1, the total appearance of cohesive devices in students' writing is 402 times in which conjunction emerges more often (46.89%) than the other types of cohesive devices followed by reference (35.32%), lexical cohesion (16.79%), substitution (0.87%) and the least is ellipsis (0.12%) respectively. (See appendix 2)

2. Use of Cohesive Devices in Term of Accuracy

To answer the second research question, direct test of 16 multiple choice questions was administrated to the students in order to know whether or not they accurately use cohesive devices. Table 2 below is presented to display the result of the test. The maximum score of the test is 16 with 100% accuracy use of cohesive devices. However, the result of the test shows that as many as two students achieve the highest score, that is 12 with 75% accuracy use while one students get the lowest score, that is eight with 50% accuracy use. The means score that the students achieved is 10.15 with percentage 63.44% accuracy use.

Tabel 2. *The result of students multiple choice test*

No	Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	8	1	50
2	9	5	56.25
3	10	5	62.5
4	11	5	68.75
5	12	2	75
Average	10.15		63.44
Minimal Score	8		50
Maximal Score	12		75

(See Appendix 6)

3. The Problem in Using Cohesive Devices

The last research question attempts to provide the problem faced by the students to achieve cohesion in term of cohesive devices use. According to data analysis displayed in the tables, it clearly shows that the fourth semester students at English Education Program of Mataram university face many problems in using cohesive devices in their writing. Those problems are summarized as follows:

- a. The students overuse certain types of cohesive devices such as repetition, reference and conjunction. This overuse of particular cohesive devices makes tediousness and redudancy in their written work.

- b. The students inappropriately use some cohesive devices such as temporal and conjunction. This means that, in some cases, some parts of the text need cohesive devices but the students do not use them or they add incorrect cohesive devices to link one sentence to another.
- c. It seems that the students are not familiar with all types of cohesive devices to the same degree as reflect from the percentage of cohesive devices, so they only utilize those that they are familiar with because they find them easy to be implemented in their writing.

Furthermore, to support those problems, seven students from sample were interviewed to gain deeper information related to problems faced by the students in term of the use of cohesive devices to achieve cohesion. As many as 5 open-ended questions were asked to the students in order to know the problems.

For the first question, the students were questioned whether or not they are familiar with the term cohesive devices. Most of the students said that they were not familiar with the terms and the rest just answered that they ever heard about the terminology but they were not sure what it was.

Then, the second question asked them to mention some examples of cohesive devices. Since most of the respondents were not familiar with the terminology, only some of the students were able to provide an example. However, when linking words were mentioned, all of the respondents were able to give an example such as *moreover* and *in addition*.

The third question asked the students to mention types of cohesive devices they know. Yet, none of them were able to mention the types of cohesive devices because they had never learned about that or they might have forgotten about the material discussed about that.

The fourth research question tried to ensure whether or not the students were unfamiliar with substitution and ellipsis because those types hardly appear in the students writing. The result is all of the students were not familiar with those terms and when they were asked to answer the question related to ellipsis, only one student who answered correctly.

The last question then asked about what made them feel difficult to use cohesive devices in their writing. Most of the students found difficulties because they did not understand the difference among the types such as additive. As a result they preferred to use cohesive devices that they commonly use and tend to repeat the types in other sentences instead of finding other types.

DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, findings show analysis of students' writing. It reveals that the occurrence of grammatical cohesion outnumbers the appearance of lexical cohesion. Conjunction appears 46.89% and become the most dominant types of grammatical cohesion in students' writing. The students use four types of conjunction namely additive, adversative, clausal and temporal. (See Appendix 1)

In their writing, students were asked to write expository writing about home phone and mobile phone. Expository writing is a genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner. This can be accomplished through comparison and contrast, definition, example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc (Baker, 2013). Expository writing requires the writer to contrast one thing to another or to connect one idea with next idea by using linking words such as moreover, furthermore, in contrast, on the other hand, and so forth to build cohesion. As a result, it affected the frequency use of conjunction types in students' writing.

Then, reference appears in the second percentage. Reference appears 35.32%.

Possible factors thought to have contributed to the high occurrence of reference include the nature of reference. Halliday and Hasan (1976 in Ahmed, 2008) which stressed that:

“what characterises reference is the specific nature of the information that is signalled for retrieval”, that is, “the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that is being referred to”.

Moreover, Morley (1985 in Ahmed, 2008) sees reference as the meaning relationship which links full lexical expression of an entity or circumstance with the pro-form/substitute to which it refers. In addition, Beaugrand and Dressler (1981 in Ahmed, 2008) emphasize that using cohesive devices shortens and simplifies the surface text, as one obvious device pro-forms are economical, short words empty of their own particular content, which can stand in the surface text in the place of more determinate, context-activating expressions. In other words, the use of reference can avoid repetition or redundancy of some lexical. Here are some examples of the use of reference in students’ writing.

[4.1] Homephone is a type of phones which need a cable to operate *it*. Without cable, *it* cannot be used. While mobile phone can be used and operate without cable, so *it* easier to take anywhere.

From the sentence above, personal pronoun *it* in the first and second sentence is used to refer *homephone* respectively. While *it* that appears in the last sentence is used to refer to mobile phone.

Most of the students seem to have the ability of using reference to avoid repetition. It reflects from the percentage of incorrect use of reference in their writing. In line with that, the result of students multiple choice test shows that 63.44% of average students are able to answer reference questions. In addition, according to the interview the cause of they wrongly answer some questions is because they hardly used types of reference such as possessive pronoun or possessive determiner in their writing.

The second finding related to the accuracy use of cohesive devices shows that the average students accurately use cohesive devices with percentage 63.44%. They even could answer the questions of substitution and ellipsis in the interview though they rarely used them in their writing. According to the interview, the reason why they use neither substitution nor ellipsis because they were unfamiliar with these types. Moreover, they conceive that instead of thinking how to use ellipsis or substitution, it is better if they think how to generate or elaborate their idea to make a good writing.

In fact, some questions that were wrongly answered by the students are the one that were hardly and even seldom used by the students. For example, question number 4 related to conjunction. As many as 13 students or 65% students who is wrongly answer that question. It is because linking word such as *until then* is rarely used and heard by the students.

In line with that, according to the interview, the students emphasized that they preferred to use some types of cohesive devices that were familiar and often applied by them in their writing. They seemed to avoid incorrect use of cohesive devices in their writing by applying the ones that they were sure about the functions. As a result, inappropriate use of cohesive devices was not found many in students writing and it was also reflected by the percentage of their test result.

Referring to the problem found in students writing, there are some problems encountered by the students in using cohesive devices to achieve cohesion. The first problem was the overuse of cohesive devices such as repetition, reference and conjunction. It can be seen from the percentage occurrence of those types (See Appendix 1 and 2). Here are the example of the overuse of repetition in students' writing.

[4.2] Phone is an electronic *thing* used to communication between two people in different place. When it was found, phone become an expensive *thing* and only rich people who could have this *thing*. In this era, phone become very crucial *thing* and all people need this *thing* to communication.

In these paragraph the student has repeated the word *thing* for four times without replacing it with another word such as device or tool.

According to the interview, the students often repeated the same lexical in their writing because they did not know much about the synonym of particular lexical to replace it with the word that they have used. In line with that, a study conducted by Mawardi (2014) showed the similar result. The students tended to use repetition rather than synonym or other types of lexical cohesion. He said that one possible interpretation is that the students want to emphasize a particular idea or term. So, they kept repeating the same word. It can be said that most students did not make an effort in picking up words. Besides, it is possible that the students had already progressed in their vocabulary but the problem lies on how they activated these words in language use. In fact, it is likely that vocabulary have been taken as word studying separated from actual use or only associated with respective skills. As a result, the students did not really understand and accustomed to use those words. McCarthy (1991 in Mawardi) noted that awareness of the benefit of learning synonym or hyponyms for text may not always be phycologically presented among learners. In addition, both teacher and student involved in composition have only focussed on content and organisation rather than grammatical correctness or lexical appropriateness (Suwandi, 2014:85).

The second problem wasreferred to the the incorrectness or inappropriate use some cohesive devices by the students. The case is presented below:

[4.3] That is why, when we want to buy either homephone or mobile phone there are some aspects we need to consider: the usage, the price, features, and efficiency. (*the first*) The usage of homephone and moble phone is for communication. *However*, the usage of home phone and mobile phone is varied due to the system of both telecommunication tools.

The text presented above is one of the problems found in students writing. Some parts of the text need cohesive devices but the students do not add them. It can be seen in the first sentence in the second paragraph. In fact, the student wants to explain three aspects that we

need to consider before buying either mobile phone or home phone. However, the student did not use devices that shows relation between the first paragraph and the second one. In addition, Ahmed (2009) stated that the use of conjunction is to make the relationship among the sentence that are extremely understood by the readers.

The last problem was the students are not familiar with all types of cohesive devices to the same degree, so they only utilized those that they were familiar with because they found them easy to be implemented in their writing. As finding showed, students applied five types of cohesive device with different frequency use. Reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion become the dominant types used. However, Substitution and Ellipsis are not found many and even rarely applied by the students. It can be concluded that the students may unfamiliar with these types, so it affects the occurrence in their writing. In line with that, in the interview students said that they know the term reference and conjunction and are able to mention the example but they had no idea when it come to the question about either reference nor ellipsis.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the students are able to use all types of cohesive devices with different frequency use. Conjunction becomes the most types used by the students followed by refence, lexical cohesion, substitution and ellipsis. The possible reason why conjunction mostly appears in student's writing is that because the nature of expository writing itself requires the students to compare and contrast two ideas. As a result, the types of conjunction such as adversative, additive, temporal and clausal are applied dominantly.

Furthermore, the study also found that the percentage of accuracy use in thier test shows 63.44% students could correctly use types of cohesive devices. In line with that

inappropriately use of cohesive devices is not found many in students writing. It is because they only apply such types that familiar with them to avoid mistakes.

Finally, there are three problems found in their writing. The first is the the students overuse some types of cohesive devices and ignore the others. It makes redundancy in their writing. The second one is the inappropriate use of some cohesive devices. In some cases, students do not use cohesive devices in the part that actually need devices and vice versa. The last one is the students are not familiar with all types of cohesive devices to the same degree. In other words, the students only know some types such as conjunction and reference, so it affects the appearance of those types in their writing.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The material about cohesive devices should be given to the students properly. It means that the lecturer should not only introduce the student with devices that commonly applied in the writing. Students need to vary their knowledge about such devices in order to avoid repetition and only use the same devices to refer or link one idea to others.
2. It is suggested before conducting a study with the same field with this study that the researcher should really understand with all types of cohesive devices and how they are used in writing, so its result will be more comprehensive.

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