

THE ANALYSIS OF COHESIVE DEVICES IN STUDENTS' WRITING DISCUSSION TEXT

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Abstract: This study aims to identify the types of cohesive devices, frequency of various types of cohesive devices, how cohesive devices contribute to their texts, find out the students' problem, and also to know the extent of the cohesion level achieved in the students's writing of discussion text at SMAN 1 Pandeglang. This study employs qualitative research through a content analysis design. SMAN 1 Pandeglang is chosen as the site for this study. Fifteen students of twelfth grade are involved in the study as the respondent. The data are analyzed by using the concept of cohesive devices proposed by Halliday (2014) which covers reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Analyses show that the respondents only use 3 types in the text, i.e. reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion, the most frequent of cohesive devices is about reference that followed by causal conjunction, it is still problematic since they mostly use inappropriate cohesive devices in their writing. As a result, their texts appear to be difficult to understand. Therefore, it is recommended that a students who have to write the text, they should be guided to utilize appropriate cohesive devices in their texts.

Keywords: *writing, cohesive devices, discussion text*

Writing as one of language skills is really difficult to implement. In presenting ideas in writing, students should be encouraged to make sure that their text flow through a sequence of sentences. Enkvist (1990, pp 9-28 ascited in Rahman, 2013) considered the achievement of cohesion in writing as an indefinable, obstruct, and controversial concept which is difficult to teach and

difficult to learn. It can also be said that it is an activity of producing written products or as the writers or learners' effort to transfer their thoughts into words in a written form. Text is something that happens, in the form of talking or writing, listening or reading (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 195). When analyse it, the product of this process; and the term 'text' is usually taken as

referring to the product – especially the product in its written form, since this is most clearly perceptible as an object (though now that have recording devices – tape recorders and now various digital recorders – it has become easier for people to conceive of spoken language also as text). In the last resort, of course, a clause (or any other linguistic unit) is also a happening but since a clause has a tight formal structure do not seriously misrepresent it synoptically as a configuration. The concept of texture displays the feature of being a text. It is obvious that all languages have texts and so do certain linguistic features that create texture (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 593). Therefore, it can be concluded that any texture is made up of two different levels: the sentential and textual. Also, it should be reminded that the fundamental building blocks from which all texts are constructed are four independent components on the two a forementioned levels. Elements to form the sentences and the first stage to the formation of the text through cohesion and coherence constructed on the basis of the textual cohesion through the readers’ efforts to interpret. The relations between the sentences, at this level, play a major role in the achievement of coherence. Cohesion can be established by various means. The textual level, on the other hand, is functional features of cohesion at surface level leading to coherence at deep structure. Scholars (for example, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996) believe that cohesion and coherence are on textual level. This level is the underlying structure of the surface structure achieved through the use of grammatical.

These means include reference,

substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical relationships. Based on the classification of the sub-categories by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 601) reference can be grouped into four categories: pronominal, demonstrative, definite article „the“, and comparative. Substitution has been classified into four sub-categories, too: one/some/ones (as substitutes of noun phrases), do so/it/that (as substitutes of predicate), here/there/then (as substitutes of adverbials), and finally so/not (as substitutes of clauses). Ellipsis has been divided into three sub-categories: noun phrases, the predication, and a clause. The fourth is conjunction, which can be subcategorized into five: additive, adversative, causative, temporal and continuative.

It is in line with what stated by Eggins (2004, p. 24) that, i.e. texture refers to the interaction of two components which are called coherence and cohesion. Hence, to be a text, those minimum units of meaning should be related in a coherent and cohesive way. The coherence of the text is determined by the connection between its social and cultural contexts while cohesion is the way the text’s elements are bound together as a whole.

Cohesion occurs when the semantic interpretation of some linguistic element in the discourse depends on another. It is the foundation upon which the edifice of coherence is built (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 94) and is an essential feature of a text if it is judged to be coherent substitution, ellipsis and conjunction while lexical cohesion includes reiteration and collocation. These two kinds of cohesion help create texture or the property of being a text.

This study attempts to address the following research questions: 1) What types of cohesive devices are identified in the writing of discussion text?; 2) How frequent do they use the cohesive devices in the writing of discussion text?; 3) What problems do students of SMAN 1 Pandeglang face in using cohesive devices in writing discussion text?; 4) How do the cohesive devices contribute to the cohesion of students text? and 5) To what extent is the cohesion level achieved in the students’s writing of discussion text at SMAN 1 Pandeglang?

The reason for choosing discussion text as subject for the study since the students are expected to be able to express ideas in writing with the cohesive and coherent sentence by examining structure of the text and practice to develop various types of text according to the English curriculum (description, hortatory, explanation, discussion, analytical explanation, narration, news items, spoof, Anecdote, report, review), and students develop writing skills

This research is expected to provide the following benefits, it is expected to be useful for theoretical, and practical purposes. Theoretically, the results of the research are expected to offer new information to the analysis of cohesion in students’ writing, in particular the discussion text. Practically, the results of the study are expected to be useful for teachers and students.

METHODOLOGY

The method of this study used qualitative research in the form of content analysis. As stated by Ary et al (2010), content analysis can identify specified characteristics of the

material. It used “to give researchers insights into problems or hypotheses that they can then test by more direct methods” (Fraenkel, 2009, p. 472). In this study the topic was about cohesive devices on student’s writing discussion text.

Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use. As a technique, content analysis involves specialized procedures. It is learnable and divorceable from the personal authority of the researcher. As a research technique, content analysis provides new insights, increases a researcher’s understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions. Content analysis is a scientific tool.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Types of Cohesive Devices

This sub focus presents the types of cohesive devices are identified in the students’ writing of discussion text at SMAN 1 Pandeglang. This teks are analyzed by employing theoretical of framework of cohesive devices proposed by Haliday and Hasan (1976), Eggins (2004) and Halliday and Mathiessen (2014) which cover reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion are found in the students’ discussion text.

Table 1
Types of Cohesive Devices in Students’ Discussion Texts

Cohesive Devices	Total Occurrences	Percentage %
Reference	343	50,44
Substitution	0	0
Ellipsis	0	0
Conjunction	200	29,41

Lexical Cohesion	137	20,14
Total	680	

It turns out in the student's writing only found 3 types of cohesive devices; they are reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The types of cohesive devices in students' discussion texts are showed in Table 1. This table present the total of amount of cohesive devices which are identified in the students' discussion texts.

As shown in Table 1, it can inferred that students mostly apply reference, followed by conjunction and lexical cohesion. However, there is no students apply substitution and ellipsis, to develop text's cohesion.

The Type of Reference in the Students' Discussion Text Personal Reference

According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2004, p. 554), personal reference by mean in the category of person or object in the environment. Personal reference is indicated in the following examples.

[1] **I** mean the moment at senior high school, some students also can receive rewards from **their** school because of their achievement. **It** makes not only **their** friends but also their parents proud of **them**.

The first example is taken from text #1 paragraph #2. In the example above, the identified personal pronoun reference are I, their, it, and them. The word 'I' represent first person singular pronoun. In this content, the participant 'I' refers to

the writer. The second personal reference found in the sample above is their indicate that the student uses possessive determiner, *their* which is third person plural pronoun. It refers back to *some students in senior high school*. The third personal reference is *it* which is third person singular pronoun. The word *it* refers to a thing or object within the text. It refers back to the participant in the preceding clause, i.e. *receive rewards*. The last personal reference is *them*, refers to the students because it has already been mentioned previously as object of participant.

Demonstrative Pronoun

Demonstrative Pronoun is "reference by means of location, on scalenof proximity". The proximity is commonlynfrom the speaker/ the writer's point of view (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). According to analysis of reference, the use of demonstrative reference is indicated in the use of demonstrative items *this*, *there*, and *the*. The use of demonstrative reference is indicated in the following examples,

[5] For [people who agree with full day school certainly has some supportive reasons such as is help students, learn longer and take advantages of **the** potensial that is in him. Futhermore, students can more leisure time with **the** family because in full day school **there** are two days off Saturday and sunday.

The first sample of demonstrative reference is found in the text#6 paragraph #2. It is indicated in the use of determiner '*the*' and '*there*'. In this context, determiner '*the*' refers back to what. '*the*' has a role to emphasize

the plural form of ‘potensial’ and ‘family’ which refers to advantages of full day school. The writer tries to emphasize the reader that ‘potensial’ and ‘family’ are the word which are used to explain the advantage of full day school.

Comparative Pronoun

The next type of reference in this study is comparative pronoun. The present study reveals the occurrences of comparative reference. There are 37 occurrences of comparative reference in this study. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 560), “comparative reference is indirect reference by means of identity and similarity”. It is of comparison. It includes the comparison of quality and quantity. It is commonly shown by the use of some, every, longer, better, easier, other, most, one of, etc. The use of comparative reference is indicated in the following examples which is taken from text #3 paragraph #3,

[7] For student’s cons, using a black shoes is looks like tacky therefore, for some students whose using colourful shoes that make them **more** stylish.

Comparative reference is identified in the use of word “more” which belong to comparative degree. In this context, the word “more” refers to demonstrative reference ‘using colourful shoes’. It is also additional information to explain about the argument against from paragraph two. In other words, the writer emphasize the negative sides of using black shoes, the other students use the colorful shoes.

The Type of Conjunction in the Students’ Discussion Text

In the present study, the writer uses two framework of conjunction based on Halliday and Matthiessen (2004 and Eggin (2004). Halliday divided conjunction into four categories. They are categorized as causal, temporal, additive and adversative.

Causal Conjunction

The causal conjunction indicates the cause-effect relationship. The evidence of causal conjunction is exemplified in example which is taken from text #3 paragraph #2. And text #11 paragraph #4.

[10] For student’s pro wearing black shoes looked neat, **because** it is regulation of the rule school, beside that using a black shoes make some students feel confidence.

The purpose of conjunction “because” in this context is to show the causal relationship (wearing black shoes looked neat) with the previous clause (it is regulation of the rule school).

Additive Conjunction

Additive Conjunction is a type of conjunction which adds or substitutes extra alternative clauses to a text. The position could be positive or even negative relationship. The example of additive conjunction is taken from text #8 paragraph #2

[12] In the other side, making a yearbook are cons, because some students consider that a budget is too expensive for one book **and** needed an idea, property, costume, **and** the other for supported a theme of

memorable album in the yearbook.

According to the example above, additive conjunction is indicated in the use of coordinating conjunction “and”. It gives the information concerning the things of making a yearbook and adds extra alternative clauses to a text. In other words, it can be inferred that according to additive conjunction “and”, the writer intends to give additional information that there are still many other things in contrast of making a yearbook.

Adversative Conjunction

Adversative conjunctions are coordinating conjunctions which are used to express comparison or contrasts. The element introduced by the adversative conjunction usually qualifies or expresses a caveat with regard to the main clause of the sentence. The example of adversative conjunction is explained in text #13 paragraph #1 and text #12 paragraph #3

[14] Sambadha victory give an exiting opportunity for students to distribute their skill. **But**, Sambadha victory can cost extra time and money to plan implement that program.

[15] Not every one agree with this idea, **however** some people feel that it could have terrible effect. When the students feel bored with his lessons maybe quitly use his cellphone to play a game or to access social media to his friends.

Based on example above, adversative conjunction “but” and “however” to tell the reader additional information which is

contrary to the fact. In conclusion, there is a type of extension conjunction found in the students’ texts, namely addition, in particular, there are two subtypes of additional found, namely positive additional and adversative additional. positive additional is indicated in the use of conjunction “and, not only but also”. Then, adversative addition is indicated in the use of conjunction “but” and “however”.

The Type of Lexical Cohesion in the Students’ Discussion Text

Lexical cohesion refers to the way writer/ speaker links the text consistently to its area of focus by the use of lexical items such as nouns, verbs, adjective, adverb, and event sequences (Eggins, 2004). To investigate the lexical cohesion in students’ discussion texts, the present study involves 6 types of lexical cohesion, but the writer found four types of lexical cohesion that used by the students in their texts. there are antonymy, repetition, synonymy and meronymy.

The Frequent of Cohesive Devices

Table 2
The Frequent of Reference

Type of Reference	Total	%
Personal	132	38,48
Demonstrative	174	50,72
Comparative	37	10,78

It is apparent that reference is significantly more frequently used than the other types of cohesive devices. the use of reference cohesive items like personal pronoun and demonstrative is important because they provide the concept of identifiability and may be attributed to the fact that types of reference are used grammatically as part of the

sentence as either subject, modifier or object.

Table 3 shows the frequent of use conjunction as cohesive devices. As seen from the table causal is the most frequent used conjunction with 49% followed by additive conjunction with 37% and adversative conjunction with 13%.

Table 3
The Frequent of Conjunction

Type	Total	%
Causal	98	49
Temporal	2	1
Additive	74	37
Adversative	26	13

The high percentage of use of causal, additive and adversative conjunction as cohesive devices may be attributed to the type of essay the students wrote. In discussion text, the purpose of the writer is to present the reader two points of view about an issue. Table 4 shows the frequent of use lexical cohesion as cohesive devices that in general, all types of lexical cohesion are found in the students' discussion texts.

Table 4
The Frequent of Lexical Cohesion

Type of	Total	%
Antonymy	29	21,16
Repetition	64	46,71
Synonymy	15	10,94
Meronymy	24	17,51
Hyponymy	4	2,91
Collocation	1	0,72

Repetition is the most frequently used lexical cohesion by the students with 46.71% . The dominance of the use of repetition may be due to the students' lack of vocabulary so that they tend to use the some word instead of using its synonyms, antonymy, meronymy, etc. It can conclude that the most frequent of

cohesive devices is about reference.

The Problems of Cohesive Devices in Writing Discussion Text Faced by Students of SMAN 1 Pandeglang

From the result data, it can conclude that the students have the difficulties about conjunction and lexical cohesion. Therefore, the problem faced by student is they did not understand how to use conjunction and lexical cohesion to make the sentence cohesive. Although the students understand about reference especially pronoun, there are some students who often use pronoun but apart of them is seldom to use pronoun in their text. Some students use the repetition word in writing text and the other students are seldom. Because some students understand how to write a coherent sentence so they use synonym in writing English language.

According to the explanation above, it can be concluded that students like learn English language, enjoy writing English, they think that English writing is important and cohesive knowledge is the important aspect in writing essay for them, then they understand how to understand to write discussion texts, but apart of them not only didn't understand about pronoun, conjunction and synonym but also they like to repeat the word.

The Contribution of Cohesive Devices

The present study identified three contribution in using cohesive devices, they are (1) keeping track of the participant, (2) enhancing logical connection between part of texts, and (3) engaging the readers to the core argument of the text, (4) Avoiding repetition and redundancy.

Keeping track of the participant in the text is an important aspect in

text cohesion because it will help readers identify participant in the text. This is assisted by use of reference and lexical cohesion. Conjunction gives contribution to enhance logical connection between part of the text systematically. It is relevant with Eggins' statement (2004, p. 7) that this cohesive pattern refers to how the writer creates and expresses logical relationship between the part of the text.

Engaging the readers to the core argument of the text helps the readers to investigate the core entity in the text. Reference and lexical cohesion, more specifically repetition, are used to engage the readers to the core entity in the text. And avoiding repetition and redundancy help to make the text more efficient as a whole. Comparative reference is tool used to avoid repetition and text redundancy.

The Extent of the Cohesion Level Achieved in the Students's Writing of Discussion Text at SMAN 1 Pandeglang

In general the results of the study found that the students only know three types of cohesive devices which have to be included in the sentence, there are reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The students do not achieve a balance between the use of the various types of cohesive devices, that is, they overuse some types and ignore others. It can conclude that the students understand about how to write discussion text, they could write the text in a coherent sentences. Besides, most of the students utilize many cohesive devices. It is still problematic since they mostly use inappropriate cohesive devices in their writing. As a result, their texts appear to be difficult to understand.

It is certainly caused by lack of competence in their use of cohesive devices. This conclusion is similar to those of previous studies include Liu and Braine (2005) and Ahmed (2010).

Based on the findings of this study, the writer found that the following.

Types of Cohesive Devices are Identified in the Writing of Discussion Text

Inside the circumstance of the use of cohesive devices, the present study shows that the writer only found 3 types of cohesive devices found in the student's writing, they are reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. In general, students mostly apply reference, followed by conjunction and lexical cohesion. But different with substitution and ellipsis, there is no students apply them to develop text's cohesion. The result of the overuse the reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. In the reference which is commonly realized by personal, conjunction commonly realized by causal and lexical cohesion commonly realize by repetition.

It can be concluded that the students are familiar with reference and conjunction in cohesive devices and they seem to be fully aware of applying many repetition in their writing, so that lexical cohesion is mostly used by students to over their lack of vocabulary mastery but substitution and ellipsis didn't use in the students' discussion texts because they are they are commonly used more in speech than in writing.

The Frequent of the Cohesive Devices

Findings of the current study revealed the frequency of cohesive

devices, show that reference had the highest frequency which 50.44% of the total the cohesive devices, conjunction which is 29.41% while the result of lexical cohesion is relatively rare (20.14%). in general, all types of lexical cohesion are found in the students' discussion texts. Repetition is the most frequently used lexical cohesion by the students with 46.71% . The dominance of the use of repetition may be due to the students' lack of vocabulary so that they tend to use the some word instead of using its synonyms, antonymy, meronymy, etc. It can conclude that the most frequent of cohesive devices is about reference that followed by causal conjunction.

The Problems of Cohesive Devices In Writing Discussion Text Faced by Students of SMAN 1 Pandeglang

Finding of the result of the questionnaire and writing test data, the problems that faced by students of SMAN 1 Pandeglang in using cohesive devices in writing discussion text is about the students were not only confuse about how to use reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. But also the students didn't use substitution and ellipsis. It seems obvious that the students are not familiar with all types of cohesive devices to the same degree, so they only utilize those that they are familiar with because they find them easy to implement. Therefore, they use repetition and reference in over abundance.

The Contribution of Cohesive Devices

Related to the contribution of cohesive devices to the cohesion of the discussion texts, there are four contribution found by the writer. The contribution included keeping track of

the participant in the text, enhancing logical connection between part of texts, engaging the readers to the core argument of the text and avoiding repetition and redundancy. In general the contribution of cohesive devices to the cohesion of the discussion texts is important to connect the sentence in the text, to keep the track of the participant, and to avoid repetition and redundancy in the texts.

The Extent of the Cohesion Level Achieved in the Students' Writing of Discussion Text at SMAN 1 Pandeglang

In general the results of the study found that the students only know three types of cohesive devices which have to be included in the sentence, there are reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The students do not achieve a balance between the use of the various types of cohesive devices, that is, they overuse some types and ignore others.

It can be concluded that the students understand about how to write discussion text, they could write the text in a coherent sentences. Beside, most of the students utilize many cohesive devices, it is still problematic since they mostly use inappropriate cohesive devices in their writing. As a result, their texts appear to be difficult to understand. It is certainly caused by lack of competence in their use of cohesive devices.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of research it was found that there were only three types of cohesive devices identified in fifteen students' writing of discussion text i.e. reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion. Moreover, reference is the most frequently used cohesive

devices. It is subsequently followed by conjunction and lexical cohesion.

The problem that appears to be quite obvious to anyone who goes through the students' writing is the inappropriate use of the different types of cohesive devices. This means that, in some cases, the students use a certain cohesive device where it is not required. In other cases, some parts of the text need cohesive devices, but the students do not use them and the students still confuse about how to use conjunction and lexical.

Fourth, it was revealed that most students utilize reference to keep track with the participants, the contribution of cohesive devices to the cohesion of the discussion texts is important to connect the sentence in the text, to keep the track of the participant, and to avoid repetition and redundancy in the texts.

The last, the students understand about how to write discussion text, they could write the text in a coherent sentences. Besides, most of the students utilize many cohesive devices, it is still problematic since they mostly use inappropriate cohesive devices in their writing. As a result, their texts appear to be difficult to understand. It is certainly caused by lack of competence in their use of cohesive devices.

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