# Grammatical Cohesive Devices Analysis In Descriptive Writing By English Department Students In Putera Batam University

Robby Satria*, Nurma Dhona Handayani

Universitas Putera Batam, Batam

*robmandala@gmail.com

*Abstract*

*This research has purpose to discuss about linguistics that related to discourse analysis. In this aspect discusses the analysis of language use in texts. The phenomena of discourse analysis can be seen in the usage of cohesion. The concept of cohesion relatively uncommon to many people. Sometimes people fail in making a cohesive writing. It also happens to the students, especially English Department students. They often find a mistake in determining the concept refers to relations of meaning and context that exist within the text. Cohesion is considered as one of the most important aspect in the analysis of text discourse that needed to be understood by English learners especially English Department students. The ability of using grammatical cohesive devices determines student's capability in writing. In this research, it is found that students have ability in using grammatical cohesive devices such as: Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis and Conjunction. The percentage of each device indicates their knowledge toward grammatical cohesive device in writing descriptive text. In addition, the result of this research also classified the types of cohesion found in descriptive writing by English Department students in Putera Batam University. Result of this research, students are not taught grammatical cohesive devices, they are asked to write a text where it is supposed to be cohesive in the use of the different types of grammatical cohesive devices. The conclusion we got from the analysis of the students' test was that students use quite enough grammatical cohesive devices in their writing. But, most of them are confuse and it seems that the inappropriate use of grammatical cohesive devices is concerned with some of them as conjunctions which are most commonly used.*

*Keywords: Discourse Analysis; Grammatical Cohesive Device; Linguistics.*

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membahas tentang linguistik yang berkaitan dengan analisis wacana. Dalam aspek ini membahas analisis penggunaan bahasa didalam teks. Fenomena analisis wacana dapat dilihat dalam penggunaan kohesi. Konsep kohesi secara relatif tidak umum bagi banyak orang. Terkadang orang gagal dalam membuat tulisan yang kohesif. Hal tersebut juga terjadi pada para mahasiswa, terutama mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Mereka sering menemukan kesalahan dalam menentukan konsep yang mengacu pada hubungan makna dan konteks. Kohesi dianggap sebagai salah satu aspek yang paling penting dalam pelajaran Bahasa Inggris khususnya mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Kemampuan menggunakan kohesif gramatikal menentukan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam menulis. Dalam penelitian ini, ditemukan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki kemampuan dalam menggunakan kohesif gramatikal seperti: Referensi, Substitusi, Ellipsis dan Konjungsi. Persentase setiap penggunaan kohesif gramatikal menunjukkan pemahaman mereka terhadap kohesif gramatikal dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Selain itu, hasil penelitian ini mengklasifikasikan tipe-tipe dari kohesi yang ditemukan dalam karangan mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Putera Batam. Hasil penelitian ini, mahasiswa tidak diajarkan tentang kohesif gramatikal, mereka diminta untuk menulis teks yang menggunaan berbagai jenis kohesif gramatikal. Kesimpulan yang diperoleh dari analisis melakui tes tertulis mahasiswa, menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menggunakan kohesif gramatikal yang cukup banyak dalam tulisan mereka. Tetapi, kebanyakan dari mereka masih bingung dan penggunaan kohesif gramatikal yang tidak tepat tersebut berkaitan dengan beberapa kohesif gramatikal yang paling umum digunakan sebagai konjungsi.

**Kata Kunci:** Analisis Wacana; Kohesi Gramatikal; Linguistik.

## 1. Introduction

Language is an important aspect in life. By using language, people can interact, express their feeling and get related each other. The study of language is conducted within the field of Linguistic. It is defined as the scientific of the language of particular language. When linguistic study concern on internal aspect of the language, it is call micro linguistics. It is concerned internal view of language itself including the structure of language systems without related to other sciences and without related how to apply it in daily life. One of the branches of micro linguistic is Discourse Analysis. It discusses the analysis of language use in texts. The word Discourse comes from word discursus which means run back and forth or run everywhere. This word is constructed from word dis which means from different direction and currere which means run (Ahmad and Abdullah, 2012:127). Discourse analysis deals with the way people use language in appropriate context. Paltridge distinguishes discourse analysis into spoken and written text (Paltridge, 2006:2).

## 2. Review Of Literature

### 2.1. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis relates knowledge about language beyond the word, clause, phrase and sentence that is needed for successful communication. Discourse devices also help to string language elements that can form text where the structural connection between sentences creates cohesion. It deals with the way people use language in appropriate context in certain way to have certain affects, in order to construct version of their experiences. When it is restricted to linguistic issue, discourse analysis focuses on the record (spoken and written) of the process by which language is used in some context to express intention (Yule, 1978:83). Paltridge also examines discourse analysis into both spoken and written text and it also considers the ways that the use of language presents different view of the world and different understanding (Paltridge, 2006:2)

### 2.2. Text, Texture and Ties

A text refer to any passage whether spoken or written of whatever length that does form a unified whole. A text also has semantic unit which means that it has correlation in meaning formed by grammatical unit to form unity of the text. Text and discourse are used interchangeably focusing on language larger than sentences.

One of concept of cohesion is texture which relates to existence of text. A text has texture and this is what distinguishes it from that is not a text. It means text without texture would be a group of disconnected sequence of sentences. Linguistic features that cause sentences to stick together contributing to its unity and giving texture (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:2). Besides that, the concept of a tie in cohesion makes it possible to analyze a text in term of its cohesive properties and give a systematic account of its pattern texture. There are two types of cohesion: 1) grammatical cohesion and 2) lexical cohesion (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:2)

### 2.3. Cohesion

Basically, the concept of cohesion is semantic one, it refers to the relation of meaning that exist within text as described. This semantic cohesion has a relation with the reader who interprets the element in a given co-text depending on the other element within the same co text. The actualization of cohesion does not merely on the selection of some option from resources but also on the presence of other element which resolve the presupposition that sets up as described by (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:4). These experts also described that the concept of cohesion is set up to relation of discourse rather than others.

### 2.4 Grammatical Cohesion

#### (1) Reference

References is the specific nature of information that is signaled for retrieval, in case reference the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, identify particular thing or class of thing that is being referred Halliday & Hasan (1979:31). Reference as part of cohesive device become three types: (a) personal, (b) demonstrative and (c) comparative (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:37)

#### (a) Personal reference

Halliday and Hasan described the category of personal reference includes three classes such us personal pronoun, possessive adjective and possessive pronoun. There is no general name for this category in traditional grammar, because the members of it belong to different classes with diverse structural roles. This system of reference is known as person, where 'person' is used in the special sense of 'role' as first person, second person and third person (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:43-44).

#### (b) Demonstrative reference

According to Halliday and Hasan Demonstrative reference is essentially a form of verbal pointing. The speaker identifies the referent by locating it on a scale of proximity. The circumstantial (adverbial) demonstrative

here, there, now and then refer to the location of a process in space or time, and they normally do so directly, not via the location of some person or object that it is participating in process: hence they typically function as adjunct in the clause, not the element within the normal group (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:57-59).

*(c) Comparative reference*

General comparison is expressed by a certain class of adjectives and adverbs. The adjectives function in the nominal group either as deictic or as epithet. The adverb function the clause, as adjunct (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:77)

*(2) Substitution*

Substitution takes place when one feature in a text replaces a previous word or expression. It concerns with relations related with wording. It is important to mention that substitution and reference are different in what and where they operate. Substitution is a way to avoid repetition in the text itself (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:88). They divided substitution into three parts there are Nominal Substitution, Verbal Substitution and Clausal substitution.

(a) Nominal Substitution

The substitute "one/ones" always function as head of nominal group and can substitute only for an item which is itself head of a nominal group (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:91)
For example:

*I shoot the hippopotamus with bullets made of platinum, because if I use leaden ones his hide is sure to flatten them.*

The word ones substitute the word bullets.

(b) Verbal Substitution:

Verb or a verbal group can be replaced by another verb which is "do" this function as head of verbal group, and it is usually placed at the end of the group (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:112-113)
Example: …… the words did not come the same as they used to do.
The first "do" substitutes for come.
In many ways the verbal substitute do is parallel to the nominal substitute "one". Verbal group has a logical structure consisting of head and modifier and an experiential structure in which lexical verb express the thing such as person, creature, object, institution or abstraction.

(c) Clausal Substitution

There is one further type of substitution in which what is presupposed is not the element within the clause but an entire clause. Clause can be usually substitute by "so" or "not". In clausal substitution the entire clause is presupposed and the contrasting element is outsider the clause.
For example:

*Is there going to be an earthquake? – it says so.*

The presuppose the whole of the clause "there is going to be an earthquake"? and the contrastive environment is provided by the *says* which is outside it. There three environment in which clausal substitution take place: report, condition and modality. In each of them it is possible to take two forms such as positive or negative. The positive is expressed by "so" and negative by "not" (Halliday and Hasan, 1979:130-131)

(3) Ellipsis

The starting point of the discussion about ellipsis can be familiar as 'something left unsaid'. It is divided into three: Nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis. (Halliday and Hasan, 1979: 142)

(a) Nominal Ellipsis

It means ellipsis within the nominal group, where the omission of nominal group is served a common noun, proper noun or pronoun.

(i) Deictic: divided into deictic proper (possessive, demonstrative and the) and non-specific (each, every, all both, any, either, some, and)
(ii) Numerative: Ordinal (first, second, third, fourth), cardinals (one, two, three) and indefinite quantifier (much, many, more, most, view, several, a little, lots, a bit )
(iii) Epithet: comparative and superlatives

(b) Verbal Ellipsis

It refers to ellipsis within the verbal group where the elliptical verb depends on preceding verbal group.
For example:

*Have you been swimming? Yes, I have*
*What have you been doing? Swimming*

Both can be said to stand for "have been swimming" and there is no possibilities of filing out with any other item.

(c) Clausal Ellipsis

Clausal ellipsis functions as verbal ellipsis, where the omission refers to a clause.

(4) Conjunction

One of grammatical cohesion devices is conjunction. It is used to show the relationship between sentences. There are four type of cojunction there are: additive, adversative, causal and temporal.

Table 1. Conjunction

| Type | External/ Internal | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Additive | Additive simple, complex, emphatic, alternative, similar | and, also, nor, and. not, or, furthermore, in addition, besides, alternatively, by the way, in other word, likewise, similarly |
| Adversative | Adversative proper, contrastive | Yet, though, only, but, however, nevertheless, despite, in fact, actually, in any case |
| Clausal | Causal general, reversed causal, causal specific | So, then, therefore, because of this, for this reason, for, because, for this purpose, then, in that case, in other aspect |
| Temporal | Temporal simple, complex, sequential, simultaneous, correlative, repetitive, specific, durative. | Next, after that, just then, at the same time, previously, before that, finally, at last, first…then, at once, soon, after, next time, meanwhile, then, finally, at this point |

## 3. Research Method

The research design of this study is descriptive method since it provides a systematic, factual, and accurate description. Beside descriptive method, the researchers also apply quantitative method. This method is based on the data which are in the form of number. According to Kothari (2004:3), Quantitative Research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. However, Quantitative study is based on testing theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures.

## 4. Result And Discussion

To get the data analysis, the writers previously give a short writing test to the second semester students in Putera Batam University. They are given 30 minutes to accomplish their descriptive text about the specific topic. Here, the researchers give a topic about the importance of using social media in relationship with the college life. This method is applied to find out the frequency of grammatical cohesive devices used by English Department students of Putera Batam University. By applying this method, it is expected also to find out frequency of grammatical cohesive device usage which grammatical cohesive devices are more or less prominent. The result found from thirty minutes task to do writing test can be seen below.
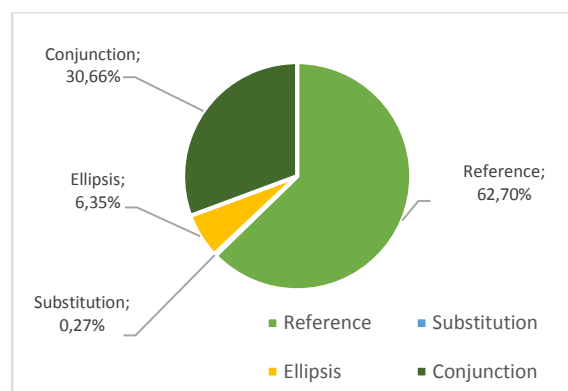


Picture 1. Frequency percentage of Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis

The analysis is started by answering the formulation of frequency and which grammatical cohesive devices are less or more prominent. Based on the chart pie above, most of students use grammatical cohesive devices when writing descriptive text. The result will be show in the following table.

Table 2. Reference usage table

| Total | Reference usage | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | % |
| 724 | 454 | 62,7% |

(1) Reference

The following table shows the number of the type of references used by English Department students of Putera Batam University.

Table 3. Reference type usage table

| Total | Type of references | Number of devices | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 454 | Personal References | 236 | 51,98 |
| 454 | Demonstrative reference | 218 | 48,01 |

The result shown in the (table 3) shows that the frequency of references used by students is 454 in total, and achieve 62.70% from all grammatical cohesive devices usage. References consist of three types, they are: 1) Personal Reference, 2) Demonstrative reference, 3) Comparative reference. The result shows that the frequency of personal references is 118 and it is 51.98 % from the total references usage. Most of students use pronoun "I", "you", "we", "it", "one" and possessive determiner "our", "your", "my", and "their". One of the examples is seen from sample no 2 where the students make a sentence: _You can send direct message to your friends._ The underline word written in sample 2 show that pronoun "you" and possessive pronoun "your" as personal reference which person is used in the special sense of role as second person. Based on collective sample, students describe about _Twitter_ and _Instagram_ about their features, function and reason to use or not to use these social media. According to the result above, it is remarked that students are widely use the personal cohesive devices "the", "this", "that" and "there" as essentially form of verbal pointing of word _Twitter_ and _Instagram._ However, its usage is 216 and it is 48.01% from reference total usage. It seems the using plural demonstrative "these" and "those" less used to form both word _Twitter_ and _Instagram._ The comparative references are not used by student and it cannot be found in any samples.

(2) Substitution

The total of substitution is shown in the following table:

Table 4. Substitution usage table

| Total | Substitution | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | % |
| 724 | 2 | 0,27 |

The following table shows the number of the type of substitution used by English Department students of Putera Batam University.

Table 5. Substitution type usage table

| Total | Type of Substitution | Number of devices | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Substitution | 2 | 0,27 |

The use of substitution in writing descriptive text by students is only 0,27 % because it is only found in two samples.

(3) Ellipsis

The total of ellipsis is shown in the following table:

Table 6. Ellipsis usage table

| Total | Ellipsis usage | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | % |
| 724 | 46 | 6,53 |

The following table shows the number of the type of ellipsis used by English Department students of Putera Batam University.

Table 7. Ellipsis type usage table

| Total | Type of ellipsis | Number of devices | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 46 | Nominal (Numerative) | 18 | 39,13 |
| | Nominal (Deictic) | 2 | 4,36 |
| | Nominal (Epitet) | 26 | 56,52 |

The total amount of ellipsis usage is 6.35% of all grammatical cohesive devices. The result above shows that ellipsis usage is lower than reference usage. One of types of ellipsis is Nominal ellipsis, where the use of it is found in samples. This Nominal Ellipsis divided into three types, the first one is Deictic such as "each", "many", "both", "any", "the", its usage is 4.34% from the ellipsis total usage. One of the examples is in sample no 3, where it is written in _But they can also posting both._ The word "both" shows the omission of nominal group for two, it is used for word _Twitter_ and _Instagram._ Another Nominal Ellipsis found is Numerative Ellipsis. The number of its devices is 18 or 39.13% from total ellipsis usage. The last type of Nominal Ellipsis is Ephitet. It is comparative and superlative degree in sentence, to compare and know the superlative one. The result reveals that students use Deictic Ellipsis is 56.52%, it is the most used rather than others Nominal Ellipsis.

The use of Verbal and Clausal Ellipsis is not found in the result, none of the students use these Ellipsis type.

(4) Conjunction

The total of conjunction is shown in the following table:

Table 8. Conjunction usage table

| Total | Conjunction use | |
|---|---|---|
| | N | % |
| 724 | 222 | 30,66 |

The following table shows the number of the type of conjunction used by English

Department students of Putera Batam University.

Table 9. Conjunction type usage table

| Total | Type of Conjunction | Number of devices | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **222** | Additive | 164 | 73.87 % |
| | Adversative | 44 | 19.81 % |
| | Clausal | 8 | 3.6% |
| | Temporal | 6 | 2.7 % |

The table above reveals the number and type of conjunction used by students concerning the total number of conjunction usage. It is found that the conjunction usage total is 222 and it is 30.66% of all grammatical cohesive devices. Conjunction is divided into four types, they are: 1) Additive, 2) Adversative, 3) Clausal, 4) Temporal. The use of additive conjunction is the highest one, the total is 164 usages from 222, and it is 73.87% from ll conjunction usages. The second highest frequency of conjunction is adversative, its usage is for 19.81%. The clausal and temporal do not show high intensity of usage, the total for each is only 8 and 6. Clausal conjunction found in this result is only 3.6% from all conjunction usages, and the temporal usage for 2.7%.

## 5. Conclusion

Basically, students have ability in using grammatical cohesive devices such as: Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis and Conjunction. The percentage of each device indicates their knowledge toward grammatical cohesive device in writing descriptive text. Students can describe things with sentences in paragraph to form descriptive text. When students produce written discourse, which is a descriptive text, writing experiences can be the source of less and more prominent devices usage. As the conclusion we got from the analysis of the students' test was that students use quite enough grammatical cohesive devices in their writing. It seems that the inappropriate use of grammatical cohesive devices is concerned with some of them as conjunctions which are most commonly used. This can be due to the overuse of some types of conjunctions. However, the overuse of some grammatical cohesive devices embed the use of other devices and make some of them inappropriate. Besides that, students also have tendency in using cohesive device, where it is shown by contrast percentage between reference and substitution usage. Their understanding toward reference is more prominent rather than other devices where substitution is less prominent of all. In addition, grammatical cohesive devices which are familiar with the student will be showed by the highest frequency of the devices in the text where reference is the highest frequency followed by conjunction, ellipsis and substitution.

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