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THE REALIZATION OF GRAMMATICAL COHESION DEVICES IN EFL STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed EFL students' argumentative essays concerning cohesive devices based on Halliday and Hasan (1976) in the certain part called grammatical cohesion devices. Thus, the study focuses on analyzing the four main categories of them. Those are (1) reference, (2) substitution, (3) ellipsis, and (4) conjunction. Moreover, this study was aimed at figuring out the realization of grammatical cohesion devices which was centred on determining the type of those devices, the predominant devices realized, and the extent to which the use of those devices helps the texts achieve their cohesion. Moreover, this study employed a descriptive qualitative method. Furthermore, the analysis revealed three main points. Firstly, there were grammatical cohesion devices realized on the EFL students' argumentative essays such as reference, ellipsis, and conjunction. Secondly, the predominant devices were personal reference and additive conjunction. Finally, the use of grammatical cohesion devices could effectively enhance the quality of students' writing; it could create the relation and connectedness between one element and another in the text as well.

Keywords: *grammatical cohesion devices, EFL students' argumentative essay*

INTRODUCTION

This study highlights writing as one of language ability that have to be acquired by the English learner both in performance and quality. The improvement of writing quality could be enhanced by the use of cohesive devices concerning the arrangement, relation, and connectedness between one element and another in the text entirely. The structure organization and the existing meaning within the text concern cohesion and coherence text (NS Hadiyati et.al, 2018). In attaining the good quality of cohesive and coherent text, phrases, sentences and clauses which will form a paragraph must hold together; the movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth

(Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 21). Moreover, the taxonomy of cohesive devices was developed by Halliday and Hasan in 1976 followed by Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton (2001, p. 36; 2015, p.62), Taboada (2004, pp. 160-164), and Tanskanen (2006, pp. 15-16) highlight that cohesive devices are explicated partly through grammar; grammatical cohesion and partly through the vocabulary; lexical cohesion. For instance, those devices concern the relation of connectedness both of its structure and meaning.

Previously, there are some researchers who have conducted their studies related to the present topic. Those previous studies deal with grammatical cohesion devices, yet they are in the different field. The first previous study is from Akindede (2011) who carried out a study about examining the use of cohesive devices in academic papers. The second study is from Kilmova and Hubackova (2013) which was addressed the issue of grammatical cohesion devices in English abstract of British origin. Finally, Ninsiana (2014) carried out a study concerning grammatical cohesion devices on Indonesian translation of English bidding document.

Different from all previous studies, the writer was interested in exploring grammatical cohesion devices that was used by the EFL students in their argumentative essays. Henceforth, considering to complete the previous studies, the writer conducted this study in different certain writing product. Besides, the analysis of this certain topic was counted to the rare analysis because majority of researchers conducted the analysis in the whole aspects of cohesion. Significantly, this study revealed the extent to which the use of grammatical cohesion devices helps the texts achieve their cohesion.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 4) as the founder of cohesion theory, followed by Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton (2001, p. 35; 2015, p. 6) and Tanskanen (2006, p. 15), cohesion is the existing meaning of the text that has relation and coordination between one item and another as the set of resources to make it hold and tie together in the relation of making meaning. In this case, it refers to a unit of language in use. Furthermore, it can be spoken or written, monologue or dialogue because text can be in several things to express mind.

Cohesive devices as the tools to create the relation and connectedness to represent the existing meaning within the text were partly divided into grammatical and lexical cohesion. This study was only focused on grammatical cohesion devices as the tool to create the structure and meaning within the text logically, smoothly, and

cohesively. Moreover, the theory that was developed by Halliday and Hasan in 1976 and followed by Schiffrin et al. (2001, p. 36; 2015, p.61); Taboada (2004, pp.157); and Tanskanen (2006, p. 15), state that grammatical cohesion devices are identified as the set of resources for constructing relations in discourse that transcend grammatical structure that refers to the exist meaning within a text. Cohesive resource and relation are to link and connect the elements of the text to make the relation both of structuring and meaning logically and smoothly. In addition, grammatical cohesion devices are categorized into several types, those are reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction.

The first grammatical cohesion device is refence. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994, p. 170), reference can be defined as a system focuses on introducing and tracking the identity of participant involved in the text. Moreover, Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 37) highlighted that reference is categorized into several types. Those are personal, demonstrative, and comparative references. Based on the types mentioned, the first type is a personal reference; it refers to the function in the speech of situation through the category of person; it includes pronoun and determiner. The second type is demonstrative reference; it is reference by means of location; it includes determiner and adverb. The last type is comparative reference; it is indirect reference by means of identity or similarity. With regard to the classifications of the reference, it can be concluded that reference is the resources of referring item in text to make it semantically interpreted. Furthermore, it is divided into three types. First, personal reference can be in a group of noun, pronoun, and modifier. Second, demonstrative reference can be in a group of adverb and determiner. Third, comparative reference can be in a group of adjective and adverb.

The second grammatical cohesion device is substitution. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 88), Schiffrin et al. (2001, p. 36; 2015, p. 62), Bahaziq (2016, p.113), and Jabeen et al. (2013, p. 125), substitution is the correlation and relation in the wording rather than in the meaning that can be identified as the item of text that was replaced by another one to avoid repetition; to replace a small bit of text with a larger bit of text. Based on Halliday and Hasan's theory, there are three types of substitution, those are nominal which substitute a noun, verbal which substitute verb, and clausal which substitute clause by so or not. Accordingly, those types of substitution were

functioned to make the text shorter in structure but wide in meaning. This device could create the relation and connectedness between the existing elements in the text entirely.

The third category of grammatical cohesion devices is ellipsis. Furthermore, it refers to resources for omitting a clause, or some parts of a clause or group, in contexts where the content can be assumed that an earlier sentence makes the meaning clear (Schiffrin et al., 2001, p. 36; 2015, p. 62, Jabeen et al., 2013, p. 126) and it is a simple substitution by zero, the same fundamental relation between part of a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 142). Normally, it is considered as an anaphoric relation because the omission takes place within a text. When ellipsis occurs, the item that is omitted from the structure of the text can still be understood. Like substitution, ellipsis has three types, those are nominal, verbal, and clausal.

The last category of grammatical cohesion device is conjunction. The last part of grammatical cohesion devices is conjunction; it is the presence of other components in text for reaching out into the preceding or following text and it refers to link a clause or a group of clauses in discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 226; Schiffrin et al., 2001, p. 36; 2015, p. 62). Furthermore, conjunction words are linking devices between sentences or clauses in a text. Unlike the other grammatical devices, conjunctions express the 'logical-semantic' relation between sentences rather than between words and structures (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 226-227). In other words, they structure the text in a certain logical order that is meaningful to the reader or listener. In line with Halliday and Hasan's theory, Gerot and Wignell (1994, p. 180) state "conjunction is the semantic system whereby speakers relate clauses in terms of temporal sequences, consequences, comparison, and addition. In harmony with Gerot and Wignell, based on Halliday and Hasan's theory, conjunctions are divided into four types, namely additive, adversative, causal, and temporal. The first is additive conjunction which functions to connect units that share a semantic similarity. The second is adversative conjunction which was used to express contrasting results or opinions. The third is causal conjunction which introduces results, reasons, or purposes. The last is temporal conjunction which expresses the time order of events.

According to Al-Ahdal, Alfallaj, Al-Awaeid, and Al-Hattami (2014, p. 143) the English as Foreign Language students are the people who has had the experience of another (mother tongue), they try to learn that language consciously. For instance, they

acquire the language skill as the effect of their surrounding and environment that mother tongue (first Language) is not available for them.

In defining argumentative essay, Oshima and Hogue (2006, p. 142) state “argumentative essay is an essay in which you agree and disagree with an issue, using reasons to support the opinion.” It can be understood that an argumentative essay is the point of view of personal perspective by providing the reason for the given point of view. For instance, a scientific argument is a form of debate. It can be identified as the persuasion to gain the same perception to believe. Thus, the argument includes both of logical argument and emotional persuasion (Fahy, 2008, p. 2). In addition, the argumentative essay has three structures; it is well-known as the generic structure or the text organization. Those were introduction or opening, body or content, and closing or conclusion. Those structures were used to differentiate and to assess how the good argumentative essay could be selected. Moreover, another base mark to figure out the good argumentative essay, it should be looked at format or layout, content, and grammar (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 316).

METHOD

The study was designed by employing descriptive qualitative research methodology at which it investigated the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p. 426). Moreover, the design was selected because in interpreting the data, the writer employed the form of argumentative essays in figuring out grammatical cohesion devices used at which it was needed to describe the data by words which are clearer and rich of diction. In the beginning of collecting the data, the texts were collected as the documentation step from the lecturer. Those texts were in the form of argumentative essays which was written by 17 students from junior level in Galuh University in East Priangan, West Java. Furthermore, some procedures were done to ask for permission from the lecturer to collecting, using, and analyzing the EFL students’ argumentative essays.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the classification of the texts, the selected texts were categorized into three levels. Those were low, medium, and high levels. Accordingly, the low category showed the small use of reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, it was counted

55 items from both of texts. Moreover, the medium category revealed that the use of grammatical proportion was lifted up, it was counted 109 of three main aspects, those were reference, ellipsis, conjunction and there was not substitution device used. Finally, the high category showed the use of reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction devices. It was counted 133 items from both of the texts.

Generally, the six selected texts showed that the use of conjunction and reference were the predominant device. Text one, two, and three showed that conjunction was the predominant device. It could be seen by 57.4% value of percentage from of all the texts. Furthermore, additive conjunction was the highest use of device category. Meanwhile, text four, five, and six showed that reference was the predominant device. It could be seen by 56.4% value of percentage from all of the texts. Moreover, the type of reference that highly used was personal reference.

Based on the function of grammatical cohesion devices, the high level was the first position, medium level in the second place, and the low level in the last place. The point of view was taken from the writer's analysis and his reading experience of the text that regarded to the grammatical cohesion devices and its function. Finally, those levels were appropriately placed in the mentioned statements. In brief, the first finding showed that the students use reference, ellipsis, and conjunction in their writing. The second finding revealed that personal reference and additive conjunction were the predominant devices and the last finding figured out that the best cohesive text was the high level which used grammatical devices as the tool to help texts achieve their cohesion

Discussion

The elaborated results aforementioned was as a base for beginning the discussion of this study that emphasized on figuring out grammatical cohesion devices by using reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction as the tool, and its implication towards language learning. Furthermore, it could be seen that EFL students studied English as the foreign language which English was not used in daily communication. Moreover, the study was addressed to figure out three points. Those were (1) the realization of grammatical cohesion devices, regarding the study, the devices such reference, ellipsis, and conjunction were used by the students in their writing. According to Schiffrrin et al., (2001, p.36; 2015, p. 62), the use of reference refers to appoint something in language.

Moreover, the use of ellipsis refers to omitting unnecessary thing in the text and the use of conjunction was functioned to connect element in wide scale of structure; (2) the predominant device realized, the realization of grammatical devices were reference, ellipsis, and conjunction. Thus, personal reference which points something in language by means of identity to person or place (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 37) was the first predominant device. In addition, the additive conjunction which connects and share a semantic similarity (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 226-227) was the second predominant device; and (3) the extent to which the use of grammatical cohesion devices helped the texts achieve their cohesion. It could be proven by using those devices the structure and the existing meaning within the text could be comprehensively and completely comprehended.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study presented deep comprehension about grammatical cohesion devices which covered reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Therefore, the use of those could completely improve the quality of writing especially an argumentative essay. At last, the study provides some suggestions for further research, educational elements, and people who use English as a foreign language; it was recommended that they obtain a deep understanding of grammatical cohesion devices which function to create the cohesive text.

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