



Discourse Analysis on the Cohesive Devices in the Graduate Student Thesis

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Abstract

One of the significant elements of writing skills is cohesion. Cohesion is a concept that refers to the connection and smooth relationship between elements in a text or discourse. In the context of writing, cohesion is the ability to connect ideas, sentences, or paragraphs so that they form a coherent and easy-to-understand whole. Cohesion plays an important role in ensuring that a text has a logical flow and can be understood well by readers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate cohesive devices found in graduate students' theses. It is the case that the language that is utilized the most frequently in print, electronic, and internet media is English. Writing in English is becoming an increasingly crucial ability, particularly in the academic sphere, as English continues to prevail as the universal language of choice for scientific research and publications. To comprehensively analyze how cohesive devices are utilized in the thesis text, the present study employs a qualitative descriptive method. Coding was used to analyze the data from the theses written by one graduate students. The categories of text and texture, cohesion, grammatical cohesion, and lexical cohesion were considered during the analysis. Based on the findings of this study, grammatical coherence was examined in eight sentences, while lexical cohesion was examined in four sentences.

Keywords: Discourse analysis; Cohesive devices; Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

English is the language that is most frequently used in the press, electronic media, and online. Rao (2019) stated that only one language, English, is used for the publication of 85% of scientific journals, while based on other research, 98% of scientific articles are now written in English (Ramírez-Castañeda, 2020). In light of the importance of English as the universal language of scientific research and publication, English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) was created to support the researchers in publishing the research (Flowerdew & Habibie, 2022). Therefore, English's widespread appeal as a national native language in major English-speaking nations, as well as the fact that it leads so many fields of effort and is commonly accepted as the norm in multicultural circumstances, are the main reasons it is the dominant world language.

Dealing with this, the capability in English writing skills become more crucial, especially in academia, where scientific research is a major significant. The writing process assists people to develop critical thinking when arranging sentences and paragraphs.

Egamnazarova (2023) emphasizes the crucial role of writing in language and underscores its significance in the context of learning. Thus, proficiency in writing is a high urgency within the realm of higher education. Improvement in skills related to informative and analytical writing is also considered a reliable gauge of the enhanced value provided by higher education.

Writing can aid in the development and shaping of conceptual understanding, but doing so is a complex task that calls for knowledge organization, clarification, and articulation. Numerous supporting elements are required of the writer, including appropriate vocabulary selection, grammar, flawless spelling, well-written material, organization, and writing goal (Batubara et al., 2021). Atabek (2020) and Hayes & Flower, (1980) stated that writers skillfully need to manage the coordination of idea planning, text generation, and the review process, imposing significant demands on executive attention. This is because suitability and cohesion in the text are substantial, so that readers can follow the flow of thought without confusion. Based on Nückles et al., (2020), Hayes and Flower's perspective emphasizes the necessity of possessing the ability to handle multiple representations and regulate the interactions among planning, generation, and reviewing to achieve effective writing. To conclude, idea arrangement is necessary to ensure that the relationships between these elements are clear so that the author can manage them smoothly.

One of the significant elements of writing skills is cohesion. Cohesion is a concept that refers to the connection and smooth relationship between elements in a text or discourse (Latifah & Triyono, 2020). In the context of writing, cohesion is the ability to connect ideas, sentences, or paragraphs so that they form a coherent and easy-to-understand whole. Cohesion plays an important role in ensuring that a text has a logical flow and can be understood well by readers. In academic writing, the concept of cohesion, as discussed by Bowen and Thomas (2020), involves intricate decisions that influence the development of coherence and the flow of knowledge. Precision and congruency are key factors in constructing texture, and the utilization of context-dependency and complexity further contributes to this process.

Thus, cohesive devices facilitate the seamless expression of opinions as writers transition from one to the next sentence, move between ideas, and progress from one paragraph to another through the use of words or phrases. These devices serve to connect sentences and paragraphs, playing a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding of the writing process and genre knowledge (Kazemian et al., 2021). Therefore, the cohesive relationships established within and between sentences, contributing to the creation of texture, emerge as the primary determining factor in deciding whether a set of sentences effectively represents a cohesive text.

The significance of cohesion can be seen in academic writing, such as a thesis. A thesis is a scientific written work that contains the author's arguments or views on a particular topic. A thesis is usually written as part of the requirements for an academic degree, such as a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree. In writing a thesis, cohesion has a crucial role in forming the basis for the communicative and analytical success of scientific work. Through the use of cohesive devices such as conjunctions, synonyms, and references, the author builds close connections between ideas and ideas in each part of the thesis. Thus, cohesion not only forms a structured logical flow, but also improves the overall readability of the text (Shahzadi et al., 2022). Ambiguity can be avoided, and unity in message delivery is more assured. The quality of writing is reflected in the writer's ability to manage cohesion, showing dedication to conveying clear and coherent ideas. More than just an aesthetic principle, cohesion helps facilitate the editing and revision process, ensuring that each element of the thesis makes a consistent contribution to the overall work. Thus, cohesion is not only a technical element in writing but also an integral

foundation in achieving the goal of conveying information effectively in the context of academic research.

Based on the linguistic views, the study of discourse analysis seems relevant to be conducted in the present research. The consideration of carrying out the research is based on several rationales. Firstly, cohesion is an extremely crucial thing to be focused on in academic writing. As stated by Braun et al. (2020), cohesiveness is defined as "the shared attraction or commitment of team members to their task/goal and each other". Likewise, academic writing is all about thinking and expressing an idea while describing your prior knowledge. Students are expected to learn how to investigate the stronger case in order to provide examples in their scripts (Leli, 2020).

The existing studies confirm strong evidence that the issue of cohesive devices. Some researchers have established the importance of cohesive devices in academic writing. For example, research by Wilfitri & Fatimah (2020), showed that the students' mistakes include not using transition signals as their functions, using them twice or more than once, not using them as a formula, repeating keywords or nouns inconsistently, replacing keywords or nouns with the incorrect pronoun, and using inconsistent pronouns from plural to singular or from singular to plural. Another previous study was conducted by Kirana and Jayanti (2020) about students' thesis abstracts, whose research resulting (1) A total of 458 instances of the six lexical cohesiveness types were identified in 30 thesis abstracts, with repetition accounting for the majority (58.7%). (2) A total of 783 instances of the four grammatical cohesion kinds were identified in 30 thesis abstracts, with Reference accounting for the majority (70.2%). (3) The use of cohesiveness was flawed in three ways: the conjunction was chosen and the conjunction was left out. Cohesive devices are that useful, but there are still things in academic writing that are wrong or inappropriate cohesive devices, the reason is.

With English being the primary language used for scientific publishing and international communication, this study emphasizes the value of English language proficiency, particularly in the context of academic writing. The majority of scientific publications and research papers are written in English, which has emerged as the dominant language across a variety of media, including the press, electronic media, and internet platforms. Programs like English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) emphasize the necessity of assisting researchers in comprehending and successfully utilizing English to communicate the findings of their studies. Proficiency in written English in an academic setting is not limited to the clear communication of research findings; it also involves the development of critical thinking and global knowledge contribution. From the presented explanation, the author intends to conduct a study of discourse analysis to overcome the gaps by promoting cohesive devices in students' academic writing. Specifically, this research aims to analyze cohesive devices that include text and texture, cohesion, grammatical cohesion (reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction), and lexical cohesion (reiteration and collocation). The written work examined in this research received an A predicate with detailed scores from 4 lecturers, 76, 82, 84, and 85, so that if accumulated it becomes an average rating of 82 with an A predicate that means the written work is of excellent value.

Recent research in the field of Discourse Analysis of Cohesive Devices in Graduate Student Theses represents an important contribution to our understanding of the structure and function of language in academic contexts. Through a rigorous methodological approach, this research explores cohesion strategies used in graduate theses, a genre that requires a high degree of clarity and cohesion. The research findings highlight the diversity of cohesion devices used, from word repetition to the use of complex conjunctions, and offer deep insight into how language use can strengthen the relationships between parts in an academic piece of writing. This research not only provides a deeper understanding of

the mechanisms of cohesion in academic contexts but also inspires the development of more advanced discourse analysis methods, which have the potential to enrich the practice of teaching and learning academic writing.

METHOD

This research aims to conduct a discourse analysis of cohesive devices in postgraduate students' theses. The study employs a qualitative descriptive method, designed to provide an in-depth examination of how cohesive devices are utilized within thesis texts. Specifically, the research focuses on a detailed analysis of the use of various cohesive devices to understand how these elements contribute to the overall coherence and structure of academic writing at the postgraduate level. The data for this research were collected from the thesis of one postgraduate student. The analysis was conducted using a coding method that systematically categorized and examined different aspects of cohesion within the text. This included an exploration of text and texture, which refers to the overall flow and readability of the thesis. The study also delved into specific types of cohesion, such as grammatical cohesion, which involves the use of conjunctions, references, substitutions, and ellipses to link sentences and clauses, and lexical cohesion, which pertains to the use of vocabulary and word choice to create a unified and coherent text. By applying this rigorous analytical framework, the research aims to uncover patterns and insights into the effective use of cohesive devices in academic writing. The findings are expected to contribute to a better understanding of how these devices enhance the clarity and readability of theses, thereby providing valuable guidance for postgraduate students in improving their academic writing skills.

In addition to encouraging students to use cohesive techniques in their academic writing, the author proposes research on discourse analysis. In particular, cohesive techniques like text and texture, cohesion, lexical cohesion (repetition and collocation), grammatical cohesion (reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction), and other cohesion are all specifically examined in this work. Researchers can first determine how graduate students construct ideas or topics in their works by using text and texture analysis. This entails being aware of the paragraph relationships, the flow of ideas, and the organization of the information. For example, researchers can observe how the thesis opening introduces the topic, how the argument is developed, and how the conclusion is generated. In addition, in analyzing cohesion, researchers can pay attention to how the relationship between parts of the text is maintained so that it feels cohesive. The use of cohesive devices such as references, substitutions, ellipses, and conjunctions can be identified and analyzed to understand how the writer maintains the smoothness and connection between paragraphs or between ideas. In this way, it is hoped that this research provides deeper insight into the use of cohesive devices in academic writing, which in turn can enrich students' writing and learning practices.

In addition to the overall analysis of cohesive devices, a detailed examination of grammatical cohesion is a key component of this research. Grammatical cohesion involves investigating how various elements such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction are employed within the text to create a coherent and fluent narrative. By analyzing the use of pronouns, researchers can identify how writers maintain consistency and clarity in their references to different entities throughout the thesis. Similarly, examining substitution and ellipsis helps to understand how writers use these techniques to avoid redundancy and streamline their sentences. The use of conjunctions is analyzed to see how writers link clauses and sentences, creating logical connections and enhancing the overall flow of the text. Furthermore, the analysis extends to lexical cohesion, which focuses on the use of reiteration and collocation. In this part of the research, the examination involves identifying how the author repeats certain words or phrases to

reinforce key themes or concepts within the thesis. This repetition not only emphasizes important points but also contributes to the text's cohesiveness. Collocation analysis involves studying how certain words tend to appear together, reflecting common patterns or associations in the language that enhance the text's readability and coherence.

The data analysis technique employed in this research utilizes the coding method to systematically categorize and interpret the cohesive devices found in the thesis text. The coding process begins with the identification of specific instances of cohesive devices, which are then grouped into categories such as grammatical cohesion (including reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction) and lexical cohesion (including reiteration and collocation). Each category is examined in detail to understand its function and contribution to the overall coherence of the thesis. The coding technique involves several steps to ensure a thorough and accurate analysis. First, the data are segmented into manageable units, such as sentences or paragraphs, where instances of cohesive devices can be identified. Next, these instances are coded according to predefined categories based on the type of cohesion they represent. This process allows for the systematic organization of data, making it easier to identify patterns and draw conclusions about the use of cohesive devices in the thesis. Finally, a qualitative interpretation of the coded data is conducted to understand the functional role of cohesive devices in creating a coherent and fluent thesis. This comprehensive approach ensures that the research provides an in-depth understanding of how cohesive devices are used to enhance academic writing at the postgraduate level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the investigation of the cohesive devices in one of the graduate student's thesis introductions, the result indicates:

Table 1. Type of Cohesive Devices

No	Types of Cohesive Devices	Total
1	Grammatical Cohesion	8
	a. References	2
	b. Substitution	2
	c. Ellipsis	2
	d. Conjunction	2
2	Lexical Cohesion	4
	a. Reiteration	2
	b. Collocation	2

The text in the thesis introduction begins by establishing the theme of "Speaking ability" as a fundamental language skill for communication purposes. It then progressively develops the theme by discussing components like articulation, conversational flow, and grammatical competence. Themes expand to encompass the influence of different settings, the development of speaking ability, and its significance in academic and professional contexts. The text exhibits a logical flow of information, moving from defining speaking ability to its assessment (oral competency) and the components contributing to effective spoken communication. It then addresses the development of speaking ability, its implications for English proficiency, and its importance in academic and professional settings.

The texture of the text is predominantly informative and expository. It presents information, supports it with references, and discusses implications and applications. The inclusion of findings from various scholars (Brown, Hamad, Richards, Nunan, Harmer, etc.) adds texture by incorporating diverse perspectives and research evidence. The

inclusion of diverse settings (academic forums, political discussions, business meetings) and purposes (entertaining, describing, proposing opinions) adds texture and depth to the discourse. Texture is enhanced through the mention of specific examples like conferences, debates, and English speech contests, providing real-world applications.

Table 2. Excerpt

Grammatical Cohesion	Reference	Text: "Speaking ability includes one of the fundamental language abilities..." Reference: "Speaking ability" is referred to throughout the text. Text: "It covers transferring the thought directly and accepting the message comprehensively." Reference: "It" refers back to "Speaking ability."
	Substitution	Text: "Hence, both speaker and interlocutor should deal with several proponent points..." Substitution: "Hence" substitutes for the idea of drawing a conclusion or consequence. Text: "It is reported that the participants are confused, startled, and unaccustomed to speaking up in the English language." Substitution: "It" is used to avoid repetition of "Speaking ability."
	Ellipsis	Text: "A survey conducted by Hamad (2018) showed that the exchanging process of ideas into locutions also involves utterances, tones, gestures, and eye contact." Ellipsis: The ellipsis here assumes that the reader understands the continuation of the exchanging process. Text: "Therefore, each person requires adjusting the speech sounds and selecting the responses based on the proper context in the speaking activities." Ellipsis: The ellipsis assumes that the reader understands the implied details of adjusting speech sounds and selecting responses.
	Conjunction	Text: "Also, it concerns with how they state the utterances comprehensively by considering grammatical rules, vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and fluency." Conjunction: "Also" serves to connect this sentence with the previous one, indicating an additional point. Text: "For instance, responding to the discussion, adding more explanations, interrupting the speakers' point of view, and others." Conjunction: "For instance" introduces examples, and the use of "and" connects these examples.
	Reiteration	Text: "Speaking ability needs to develop for several rationales." Reiteration: The term "Speaking ability" is repeated to reinforce the main topic. Text: "The scholars are obligated to have a standard speaking score regarding university regulations proven by the IELTS certificate." Reiteration: The term "Speaking score" reiterates the focus on speaking ability.
	Colocation	Text: "Verbal expressions incorporate refining inputs into outputs..."
Lexical Cohesion		

Collocation: "Verbal expressions" and "refining inputs into outputs" collocate to convey the idea of processing information.

Text: "They are too worried about the uttered responses, which underline grammatical rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation."

Collocation: "Uttered responses" collocates with "grammatical rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation" to emphasize the aspects causing worry.

The primary findings of the research, which are presented in Table 2, concern lexical and grammatical cohesiveness in relation to speaking ability. First, there are instances of references, substitutions, ellipses, and conjunctions used in grammatical cohesion to improve the text's internal cohesiveness. Readers can better follow the line of reasoning when references are used, as in the sentence "Speaking ability includes one of the fundamental language abilities...", which makes reference to "Speaking ability" throughout the text. Fluency in reading is enhanced by substitutions, such as using the term "Hence" in place of the notion of reaching a conclusion. These changes offer variation in wording. Additionally, the use of ellipsis, as in the sentence "A survey conducted by Hamad (2018) showed that the exchanging process of ideas into locutions also involves utterances, tones, gestures, and eye contact," permits the writer to omit information that is implicit or already implied while retaining the fluency of the text. Conjunctions like "Also" and "For instance" are used to link sentences and provide instances, which makes the story more coherent and well-organized.

The use of repetition and collocation to improve comprehension of the subject and add lexical variety to the text is the second aspect of lexical coherence. Reiteration enhances reader comprehension and helps readers stay focused on the main topic. Examples of this type of repetition in text include the words "Speaking ability" and "Speaking score." On the other hand, collocations establish strong semantic linkages between words, enhancing language and improving the clarity of the message delivered. Examples of these collocations are "Verbal expressions" and "refining inputs into outputs."

Thus, the significance of different language methods to guarantee connection and clarity in information delivery is shown by the analysis of grammatical and lexical coherence in the context of speaking ability. These results offer practitioners and researchers important new perspectives on how to evaluate and enhance the quality of academic texts, particularly about speaking proficiency.

DISCUSSION

According to the study's findings, coherence devices, both grammatical and lexical, are present in the students' thesis introduction. The grammatical cohesion consists of references, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, while the lexical cohesion includes the reiteration and collocation. They have the same total, each of them is 2. This study is similar to the research conducted by Faizah et al., (2020), stating the study's findings demonstrated that UNNES graduate students employed six different forms of cohesive devices: collocation, conjunction, ellipsis, repetition, and reiteration. Compared to the other coherent devices, references appeared more frequently. However, substitution and ellipsis were rarely utilized by UNNES undergraduate students to improve their writing. In addition, the findings are also supported by other research findings by Marto (2019), demonstrating that, in contrast to other lexical coherent strategies, students mostly employed repetition in their writing. Every student's writing included repetition. Additionally, the study conducted by Arifin & Farida (2017), discovered that the quality

of the abstracts was influenced by two criteria. These included the use of cohesive devices to enhance abstract cohesiveness and the application of themes, rheme, and thematic progression to enhance abstract coherence.

Additionally, it can be seen that the use of cohesion and coherence devices in student writing is the main focus. Amperawaty and Warsono, (2018) and Liyana, (2014) both highlight the use of grammatical cohesion such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction, along with lexical cohesion such as reiteration and collocation. This finding is in line with other research showing that students tend to rely on these types of cohesion and coherence devices in their efforts to increase the coherence and cohesion of writing. However, as stated by Afrianto (2017) and Gailea et al. (2018), there is a tendency that students often use cohesive devices inappropriately. Lack of understanding of the use of grammatical cohesion, such as substitution and ellipsis, can lead to ineffective use and disrupt the continuity of the text. These findings provide a further understanding of the challenges students face in applying the principles of cohesion and coherence in their writing.

In addition, the findings of Sidabutar and Tampubolon (2024) show that the use of cohesive devices can vary depending on the writing context. The use of lexical cohesion may be more dominant in one context, while the use of references is more dominant in another context. This highlights the importance of considering the context of writing in analyzing and teaching the use of cohesion and coherence devices to students. Cabrejas (2022) research highlights a focus on the use of grammatical and lexical cohesion to improve comprehension and clarity of text, which is overall in line with other research objectives. In addition, the findings of Akbar et al. (2022) indicated that students tend to use some types of grammatical cohesive devices predominantly, while other types are underutilized. This highlights that some types of cohesive devices may not be used frequently in students' writing, indicating challenges that need to be overcome to improve the overall quality of their academic writing. This finding is also strengthened by other studies that consistently highlight the use and challenges of using cohesive devices in student writing.

Based on the correlation between the research results that have been explained, it can be concluded that the use of cohesive devices in student writing has an important role in increasing text coherence and cohesion. Findings from various studies highlight the use of grammatical cohesion (such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction) and lexical cohesion (such as reiteration and collocation) as the main components in creating structured and easy-to-understand text. However, there are challenges in using cohesive devices, such as inappropriate use or lack of understanding of some types of cohesion. These findings indicate the need for a more structured approach and better guidance for students in developing the ability to use cohesive devices effectively. Additionally, the finding that the use of cohesive devices can vary depending on the writing context emphasizes the importance of considering that context in analysis and teaching. This shows that a more contextual and responsive approach to student needs can increase the effectiveness of using cohesive devices in their academic writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, this indicates that cohesive devices are very useful in the realm of writing, especially in academic writing. However, some students in academic writing such as thesis often still experience difficulties and several errors need to be paid attention to in their academic writing. Concrete measures must be taken to address pupils' challenges with cohesive gadgets. Academic writing workshops that emphasize the use of cohesive tools in thesis writing can be arranged by educational institutions. This class can help students' comprehension and writing abilities by offering specific examples, useful

exercises, and honest comments. Academic tutoring services can also be enhanced so that students can receive one-on-one assistance from instructors or tutors to correct mistakes and advance their academic writing abilities. Therefore, by assisting students in overcoming barriers to the use of coherent devices, this technique can enhance the caliber of academic writing, particularly when it comes to thesis writing.

In conclusion, the investigation of cohesive devices in the graduate student's thesis introduction reveals a well-structured and coherent piece of academic writing. The analysis of cohesive devices, as presented in Table 1.1, indicates a balanced use of grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion is manifested through references, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, each with a total count of 2. Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, includes reiteration and collocation, also with a total count of 2. The findings align with similar research by Faizah et al. (2020), indicating the prevalence of cohesive devices in student writing. Notably, the study echoes the importance of references in academic writing, consistent with the findings of Marto (2019). However, the limited use of substitution and ellipsis by undergraduate students, as observed in this study, contrasts with Faizah et al.'s findings.

The broader implications of the research suggest that cohesive devices play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of academic writing, particularly in thesis compositions. Despite the generally effective use of cohesive devices, the study highlights some challenges and errors students may encounter in their academic writing. To address these issues, academic institutions are encouraged to organize writing workshops that focus on cohesive tools in thesis writing. These workshops can provide practical examples, exercises, and constructive feedback to improve students' comprehension and writing skills.

Furthermore, one-on-one academic tutoring services should be strengthened to offer personalized assistance to students, helping them correct mistakes and refine their academic writing abilities. By addressing challenges related to the use of cohesive devices, these measures aim to elevate the overall caliber of academic writing, particularly in the context of thesis writing. Ultimately, the study underscores the significance of cohesive devices and advocates for targeted interventions to support students in mastering these crucial elements of effective academic communication.

RECOMMENDATION

In light of the investigation into cohesive devices in the graduate student's thesis introduction, several recommendations emerge to enhance the overall quality of academic writing, particularly in the realm of thesis composition. Firstly, educational institutions are urged to integrate coherence awareness into writing workshops, providing students with practical examples and exercises that focus on the effective use of cohesive devices. To ensure a comprehensive understanding, instructors should incorporate diverse cohesive devices such as references, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, reiteration, and collocation into writing instruction. Special emphasis should be placed on the often overlooked substitution and ellipsis, with targeted exercises and examples aimed at strengthening students' command of these devices. Additionally, the inclusion of real-world application scenarios in writing instruction will underscore the practical relevance of cohesive tools across academic and professional contexts.

To address individual challenges, academic institutions should enhance one-on-one tutoring services, offering personalized assistance to correct errors and refine students' cohesive writing abilities. Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be implemented, providing constructive guidance on the use of cohesive devices in written assignments. Encouraging collaborative learning experiences, including peer review sessions, can create a supportive environment for students to discuss and improve their

use of cohesive devices. Lastly, continuous professional development for instructors is essential to keep abreast of best practices in teaching cohesive devices and effective writing instruction. By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can contribute to continually improving students' cohesive writing skills, ultimately elevating the caliber of academic writing, particularly in the context of thesis compositions.

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