

An Analysis of Grammatical Cohesion of Reading Texts in “Paragraph Writing” Textbook

Fitriani Artarifah¹, Baharuddin², Arafiq³, Lalu Ali Wardana⁴

^{1,2,3,4} English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia

Received : July 23, 2024

Revised : September 21, 2024

Accepted : September 21, 2024

Published: September 30, 2024

Corresponding Author

Fitriani Artarifah

tariartarifah@gmail.com

DOI: [10.29303/jeef.v4i3.691](https://doi.org/10.29303/jeef.v4i3.691)

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Abstract: This study aims to find out the types of grammatical cohesion in the reading texts in “Paragraph Writing” textbook. The data are all of the reading texts taken from a textbook entitled “Paragraph Writing” and analyzed using the theory proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1976). This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative design and documentary technique as the data collection procedures. The findings show that all types of grammatical cohesion are found in the total 22 reading texts. It was found that 569 data are classified as grammatical cohesion items and all types of the grammatical cohesion are found. Those are the reference type that occurs 442 times, ellipsis 17 times, substitution only once, and conjunction 109 times. To sum up, “Paragraph Writing” textbook is a good supplementary teaching material for lecturers in teaching grammatical cohesion, and a suitable additional learning material for students in mastering discourse analysis, especially the grammatical cohesion.

Keywords: grammatical cohesion, reading text, textbook

INTRODUCTION

Language is crucial for human communication and is studied in linguistics. Based on Akmajian et al. (2010), linguistic is concerned with the nature of language and communication. One of the branches of linguistics that is appearing in text is discourse analysis. According to Cook (1989), discourse is a language which has been used to communicate something and is felt to be coherent. Meanwhile, analysis is a detailed study or examination of something in order to understand more about it (Hornby, 2000). In sum, discourse analysis is one of the types of linguistics that cannot be separated from cohesion and coherent.

According to Halliday & Hasan (1976), cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and the other elements that is significant to the interpretation of the text itself. Without cohesion, language or text can be ambiguous or difficult to understand. In that case, Hidayat et al. (2021) analyzed the use of discourse markers on students’ articles and found that students did some errors in using the discourse markers, such as distraction, wrong relation, and semantic incompleteness. However, the errors could be fixed by using the discourse markers properly and paying attention to the cohesion of the text. Baker (1992) defines cohesion as the network of grammatical, lexical, and other relations that link different parts of a text. In other words, cohesion can be defined as the condition of being linked together due to the grammatical or lexical internal language factors.

Furthermore, it is said that grammatical cohesion is one of the factors that help cohesion exists within both written and spoken texts. Suryany et al. (2015) conducted a study to find out the errors in using one of the English tenses and found that the errors made by students are the addition, omission, disordering, and misinformation errors. In line with that study, the students could minimize the errors by learning on how to omit word or phrase, add the word or phrase into sentences, and place the conjunction or transitions correctly that can be learned in grammatical cohesion. Another study that proved grammatical cohesion is essential to learn is by Farhana et al. (2023) that claimed students who pre-edit can produce high-quality pre-edited material by making modifications such as

word choice, punctuation, and subject/object substitution, phrase and sentence removal. In consequence with those two studies, a study on grammatical cohesion types is important to conduct.

In other respects, a textbook serve as a source of information for both teachers or lecturers and students at an institution. According to Cunningsworth (1995), textbooks are best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set in terms of students’ needs. A study by Hultanudin et al. (2016) showed that the English level of students of Communication Study Program at Mataram University is categorized very low and they suggested the students to read textbooks that are written in English related to their field. Similarly, a study by Sari et al. (2022) revealed that students have some difficulties in translating English idioms and therefore, they suggested students to read different type of books or texts. Not only those studies, Yuliatin et al. (2019) also suggested the students to have more exercises in dealing with lower and higher order thinking questions, so that the students can understand the reading texts as well as the reading techniques. Therefore, regarding to the importance of textbook and reading texts, also with the lack of research on textbook where some researchers only analyze one or two type of texts or other data sources, the researcher is interested in analyzing the type of grammatical cohesion of all reading texts provided in a textbook entitled “Paragraph Writing”.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Furthermore, the researcher used document analysis in analyzing the data. Ary et al. (2010) stated that document analysis usually begins with a question that the researcher believes can best be answered by analyzing documents. One of the documents is a textbook which the researcher used as data source.

The data were all the reading texts in “Paragraph Writing” textbook that are written by Zemach & Islam (2005). The number of the reading texts is 22 reading texts and consists

of one paragraph only that has approximately eight to nine sentences. In collecting the data, the researcher used documentary technique by downloading the “Paragraph Writing” textbook on the internet, reading the textbook, copying the reading texts from the textbook into the notes in the form of tables, and numbering the sentences sequentially, started from the first reading text to the next. Payne and Payne (2004) describe the documentary technique is used to categories, investigate, interpret and identify the limitation of physical sources, most commonly written documents.

In collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher used instruments, such as the researcher herself, the use of tables, and the use of notes. By using those instruments, the researcher analyzed the data through some steps: (1) classifying the data using the theory proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1976) about grammatical cohesion, (2) explaining the grammatical cohesion devices, (3) discussing the research findings, and (5) making a conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In this study, the reading texts were copied from the “Paragraph Writing” textbook, then the sentences were numbered sequentially, and the data were analyzed. Based on the theory from Halliday & Hasan (1976), the researcher found all types of grammatical cohesion, namely reference, substitution, ellipsis, and substitution.

Table 1. Types of Grammatical Cohesion

Type	Sub-types	Occurrence	
Reference	Personal	354	442
	Demonstrative	79	
	Comparative	9	
Substitution	Clausal	1	1
Ellipsis	Nominal	6	17
	Clausal	11	
Conjunction	Additive	56	109
	Adversative	33	
	Causal	18	
	Temporal	2	
Total		569	

It was found that there were 569 of grammatical cohesion in 22 reading texts in “Paragraph Writing” textbook, which are 442 of reference, 1 of substitution, 17 of ellipsis, and 109 of conjunction.

Reference

In the total 22 reading texts in “Paragraph Writing” textbook, the researcher found all types of reference, which are personal reference, demonstrative reference, and comparative reference. There are 442 data of 29 reference items found in the reading texts in the textbook.

Personal Reference

There are 354 occurrences of personal reference with total 17 items. The referent *I* occurs 111 times, *my* 56 times, *he* 38 times, *it* 27 times, *me* 19 times, *she* 16 times, *his* and *you* 14 times, and *them* and *us* 3 times. The referent *I* is the most dominant referent that is used by the writer to refer to himself. It is used in 20 of the total 22 reading texts. Some examples of personal reference are:

- 1) The thing **I** remember the most is **his** sensitive personality. (Datum 52 in “Jack Collins”)

- 2) When **they** are in high schools, it’s important for **them** to just be high school students. (Datum 9 in “Part-time Jobs and High School”)
- 3) When **we** met two years ago, **he** told **me** **he** spoke French fluently. (Datum 102 in “Lying”)

Demonstrative Reference

While personal reference is the most dominant sub-type used in the textbook, demonstrative reference is the second dominant sub-type. There are 79 occurrences of demonstrative reference with total 6 items. The referent *the* occurs 58 times, *now* 10 times, *these* 5 times, *this* 3 times, *that* twice and *those* only once. The referent *the* is the most frequently used and *those* is the least. Some examples of demonstrative reference are:

- 1) She said, “You had two weeks to do **the** assignment, so there are no excuses.” (Datum 117 in “It Wasn’t My Fault!”)
- 2) I think of my father every time I see **that** photo. (Datum 27 in “A Birthday Present”)
- 3) **These** people are in teams and have challenges. (Datum 84 in “Trends and Fashions”)
- 4) **Those** friendships can be important for the rest of their lives. (Datum 6 in “Part-time Jobs and High School”)

Comparative Reference

Of all the three types of reference, comparative reference is the least occurrence reference. There are 6 items with total 9 occurrences. The item *more* occurs 4 times, and the rest items which are *the same*, *similar*, *the same as*, *adjective-er*, and *as* occur only once. Some of the examples are:

- 1) Talking to friends and classmates is easy for a lot of teenage boys, but talking to parents is **more** difficult. (Datum 119 in “Talking to Parents”)
- 2) High school students also spend time with friends of **the same** age. (Datum 5 in “Part-time Jobs and High School”)
- 3) Because of her parents’ and the psychologist’s help, my friend is much **healthier** now. (Datum 187 in “Telling a Secret”)
- 4) The next morning, Mark’s mother brought us hot tea **as** usual. (Datum 155 in “Sleeping in a Farmhouse”)

Substitution

In analyzing the data, there is only one type of substitution, namely clausal substitution. Clausal substitution is one type of substitution which what is presupposed is not an element within the clause but an entire clause (Maryati & Suprpti, 2018). The example is in datum 75 entitled “Trends and Fashions”. The sentence is “I don’t think **so**”. The item **so** refers to the previous sentence in datum 74: “Do I have anything that is fashionable?” Here, the item **so** replaces the sentence “I have anything that is fashionable.” If there is no substitution, then the sentence will be “I don’t think I have anything that is fashionable.”

Ellipsis

Based on Halliday & Hasan (1976), ellipsis is divided into three, namely nominal, verbal, and clausal. On the other hand, the researcher finds two types of ellipsis which are nominal and clausal. There are 17 occurrences of ellipsis with 6 nominal ellipses and 11 clausal ellipses. The omission or ellipsis is symbolized by [Ø]. The example of each type is:

- 1) I used the cash register and [Ø] handled credit cards, so I had to be very careful. (Datum 18 in “Learning Responsibility”)
- 2) Many teenage boys would like to talk to their fathers about their feelings, but they don’t know how [Ø]. (Datum 120 in “Talking to Parents”)

Conjunction

The same as reference, all types of conjunction are found in this study. There are 109 occurrences of conjunction with 56 occurrences of additive, 33 adversatives, 18 causals, and 2 temporal.

Additive Conjunction

For additive conjunction, it occurs 56 times with the items *and* occur 48 times, *or*, and *for example* 3 times, *and also* and *in addition* once. The item *and* occurs in 21 reading texts of 22 reading texts in total. Some examples of additive conjunction are:

- 1) Many high school students also play sports, and they practice before and after school. (Datum 4 in “Part-time Jobs and High School”)
- 2) Parents have to talk to their kids about their feelings, **or** their children will feel lonely at home. (Datum 125 in “Talking to Parents”)
- 3) **For example**, I would like my father to say that he is proud of me. (Datum 122 in “Talking to Parents”)
- 4) **In addition**, my uncle won a free dinner for two people by putting his business card in a drawing at a restaurant. (Datum 202 in “Do You Believe in Luck?”)

Adversative Conjunction

There are 33 occurrences with total 3 items; *but* occurs 22 times, *however* 9 times, and *even though* twice. The item *but* is the most frequently used item, and *even though* is the least with only twice occurrences. Some examples of adversative conjunction are:

- 1) He’s 94 years old, **but** his voice is still strong and clear. (Datum 54 in “My Best Friend’s Grandfather”)
- 2) **However**, I’m glad I got a tattoo. (Datum 65 in “Beautiful Forever!”)
- 3) **Even though** his life was not easy, he is positive and optimistic. (Datum 61 in “My Best Friend’s Grandfather”)

Causal Conjunction

By contrast to the adversative conjunction, there are 6 items of causal conjunction but the occurrence is only 18 times. The item *because* occurs 7 times, *so* 5 times, *as a result* and *because of* twice, and *consequently* and *therefore* only once. Some examples of causal conjunction are:

- 1) He also looks a little scary **because** he has some spider tattoos. (Datum 51 in “Jack Collins”)
- 2) He saw a lot of violence in prison, **so** he uses his experience to help high school students. (Datum 49 in “Jack Collins”)
- 3) **Therefore**, I don’t regret going to Australia. (Datum 196 in “Studying Abroad”)
- 4) **As a result**, they made sure my friend ate all her meals. (Datum 185 in “Telling a Secret”)

Temporal Conjunction

Lastly, there are 2 items of temporal conjunction with only once occurrence for each. The items are *first* and *in the*

end. The examples are:

- 1) First, I enjoy swimming and surfing in the ocean. (Datum 32 in “Relaxing at the Beach”)
- 2) In the end, I decided to study in Australia to improve my career. (Datum 193 in “Studying Abroad”)

Discussion

From the result, all types of grammatical cohesion were found based on the theory from Halliday & Hasan (1976), namely reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. There are 442 of reference, 1 of substitution, 17 of ellipsis, and 109 of conjunction. Thus, “Paragraph Writing” is an ideal book that can be a model for teaching and learning process. Moreover, the gap among the number of references, conjunction, ellipsis, and substitution is very huge. It is because most of the reading texts need reference items to reduce unnecessary repetition and make sentences varied by replacing the nouns. Additionally, to make one sentence and another sequential and logical, the use of conjunctions is very much needed and thus, there are conjunctions in each reading text even though not as many as references. Then for the ellipsis and substitution, which do not even reach half of the total data, occur more often in spoken texts or informal written texts with a dialogue form so that there are questions and answers or feedback between the speakers.

Besides, the previous studies, Hizbullah et al. (2022) and Oktavia & Suprayogi (2021) who analyzed speech also found all types of grammatical cohesion even though the type of data is different from this study, which are spoken texts. However, in contrast to this study that found all types of grammatical cohesion, Nurwahidah et al. (2022) who studied a news item text did not find one type of grammatical cohesion that is substitution even though the data are in the same type, namely written texts. Hence, based on the result of this study and the previous studies, whether written or spoken texts, all types of grammatical cohesion could be found depending on the content of the text, on how the texts are presented, and on the amount of the data analyzed.

With reference to the result of this study, there are many examples of grammatical cohesion found in the textbook, such as reference and conjunction that can be used as additional references for students to have better understanding in the topic of grammatical cohesion. These examples are arranged with varied learning styles in each chapter so that students can be interested in continuing to learn grammatical cohesion. Therefore, along with the number of examples and exercises related to grammatical cohesion, the students can make this textbook as a tool for learning language so the students’ needs both in mastering grammatical cohesion and enhancing writing skills can be met. In short, according to the four criteria of evaluating textbook proposed by Cunningsworth (1995), this textbook is an ideal book that can be used as a model or reference for teaching and learning process for the topic of grammatical cohesion because it is provided with examples and exercises that support the topic with interesting language styles so it can fulfill the students’ needs.

CONCLUSION

By using the theory proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1976), the researcher found all types of grammatical cohesion, namely reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Of total 211 sentences, there are 569 data of grammatical cohesion are found and classified into 442 references, 17 ellipses, 1

substitution, and 109 conjunctions. The most dominant item for each type is the item *I* that occurs 111 times, clausal ellipsis 11 times, and the conjunction *and* 48 times. Not all sub-types of substitution and ellipsis were found, and therefore, it is suggested for the future researchers who are interested in studying the same topic to look for other data sources consisting of texts in the form of dialogue. Moreover, analyzing another type of text, namely spoken texts, is also suggested, but it would be better if the data are in the form of conversation, such as daily conversation or informal discussion. In essence, it is expected that this study may provide much information that the lecturers can use as teaching material and give in-depth understanding for the next researchers who are interested in conducting study on a similar topic.

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