



Grammatical Cohesion of the Narrative Writing the Ninth Grade Students of Junior High School

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the types of grammatical cohesive devices found in the narrative writing of the ninth-grade students of SMP Sint Carolus Bengkulu. This study employed descriptive research. The sample were the fifty narrative text written by the students. The data were analyzed by using observation checklist consisted with reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. The results of this study show that the students used only three types of grammatical cohesive devices to serve the cohesion of their writings of which reference 62.88% with personal reference as the dominant use. Then, it was followed by conjunction 34.63%, substitution 2.49%. However, there was no ellipsis in the writings. There were found 52 inappropriate uses of cohesive devices which are 22 from reference, 6 from substitution, and 24 from conjunction. It is concluded that understanding grammatical cohesion will help the students to create better writings since lacking understanding about grammatical cohesion leads the students to use inappropriate cohesive devices. Finally, it is suggested to the next researcher to conduct similar research in a larger scale.

Keywords: cohesive device, narrative text, writing skill.

Introduction

Writing is one of four skills in English which has been known for being a requirement skill that must be mastered by the language learners (Rahmawati, et al. 2019). Bram (1995) explained that writing is a way of creating or reproducing written text. The authors are required to define the ideas and to organize the sentences to be a meaningful context. Considering the writing is a process, not only is writing a complex skill, it also involves other skills in the process of writing itself. The outcome of writing is incredibly difficult to understand at the same time as many different skills (Brown, 2001). In order to improve the writing skill, many things must be considered by author, such as reading a book because reading is very important (Martina, et al. 2020; Martina, et al. 2020; Handayani, et al. 2020; Anggitasari, et al. 2020; Wibowo, et al. 2020; Dhillon, et al. 2020; Febriani, et al. 2020; Adeani, et al. 2020).

A meaningful text is arranged by sentences which flow though a sequence. It means that every sentence should be connected one to another which is linked together to make the text understandable. For language learners, then, it becomes extremely necessary to make their writings as clear as possible, characterized by well-structured phrases and united text. Paltridge and Stairfield (2007) also mentioned that all the components of the text must have connected each other so the meaning of each sentences is clear and understandable. The connection in the sentence or text can be formed by the use of cohesive devices.

In fact, writing a meaningful text is also complicated for students at the secondary students. Writing is not just writing down words, but making it becomes sentences and organizing it becomes paragraph. In writing it needs clearly stated ideas and well organized. In fact, most students believe that writing task is the most difficult activity to finished (Eggins, 2004). The students should engage themselves in writing processes; setting goal before writing, making up some plans, drafting their writing and also doing revision while all ideas must have connected each other.

Cohesion is a surface indicator or element that forms relations within and between sentences. In line with that, Marianne and Phillips (2002) defines cohesion as a property of text, such as grammatical or lexical features sentences of the text which connects one sentence to other sentences in the text. In other words, the study of cohesion is concerned with the surface linguistic ties in the text (McCarthy, 2001: 98). Without cohesion, a text cannot link together as a whole which aims one certain idea or topic. When cohesive devices are use in the sentence, sentence will be connected each other, then, create a meaning and make a text as a whole text.

Grammatical cohesion is one of the text properties that contribute to discourse organization. Halliday & Hasan (1976) defined cohesion as the process of words and various parts of a text are associated by the use of devices like reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. In other words, grammatical cohesion is a method for establishing unity in the text, such that ideas contained in sentences or even paragraphs are connected together in order to organize cohesion between sentences and paragraphs.

Based on aforementioned explanation above, it is important to investigate these phenomena and wants to know the quality of students' writing in term of using grammatical cohesion to integrate sentences in their narrative text. This study aimed to investigate; (1) how are the grammatical cohesive devices used in the narrative writing the ninth-grade students of SMP Sint Carolus Bengkulu? (2) What are the inappropriate uses of grammatical cohesive devices found in the student writings?

Research Method

This study employed descriptive design. According to Creswell (2012) descriptive method is research that focused on the specific situation or people, it emphasized on word rather than numbers. So, this study would use descriptive design through analyzing grammatical cohesion was made by students in writing narrative text.

The subject of this research was the ninth-grade students of SMP Sint Carolus Bengkulu. The instrument used in this study was observation checklist and field notes. It contained list of types and sub-types of grammatical cohesion which are reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. It aimed

to identify types of grammatical cohesion and the inappropriate uses which were made by students in writing narrative text.

The data were taken from students' writing examination. In this practical exam, the students were required to write narrative text entitled "*Roro Jonggrang*" which traditional folk tales from Central Java. There were some procedures executed in order to get the findings which are; (1) choosing the data, writer took fifty narrative text from the writing examination; (2) classifying the types of grammatical cohesive devices which and divided each of them according to its classification in each table of grammatical cohesive devices; (3) categorizing the grammatical devices in the form of total number; and (4) assessing the appropriateness, writer divided the table into the correct and wrong use of each of them.

Finding and Discussion

Findings

This section showed the grammatical cohesive devices used in the narrative writing the ninth-grade students of SMP Sint Carolus Bengkulu. In this section, there are two sub-points. First, it presents the types of grammatical cohesion used by the students. Second, it discussed the inappropriate uses of grammatical cohesion in the writings. Both are categorized into its own division and is also shown in percentages according to its division as well.

The Types of Grammatical Cohesion

The grammatical cohesive devices found in the students' narrative text can be categorized into four types, those are, reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. This is in line with cohesive terminology which is proposed by Halliday who classified cohesive devices into the types which are used to achieve cohesiveness in the text. However, with regard to the research question in this study, the analysis and data presentation in this section only covers the prominent grammatical cohesive ties used in the students' narrative text. Grammatical cohesive ties used in the students' narrative text can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Types of Grammatical Cohesion

Types of Cohesive devices	Sub-Types	Frequency	Total	Percentage
Reference	Personal	1933	2295	62.88 %
	Demonstrative	362		
	Comparative	0		
Substitution	Nominal	0	91	2.49 %
	Verbal	91		
	Clausal	0		
Ellipsis	Nominal	0	0	0 %

	Verbal	0		
	Clausal	0		
Conjunction	Additive	510	1264	34.63 %
	Adversative	123		
	Temporal	338		
	Causal	293		

Table above shows that reference was found 2295 times which means 62.88% from all grammatical cohesive devices appearing in the students' narrative text. Then, it is followed by conjunction which appear 1264 times which is 34.63% from all grammatical cohesive devices appearing in the students' narrative text. Substitution was only found 91 times which is 2.49% from all grammatical cohesive devices appearing in the students' narrative text. However, there was not any ellipsis found in the students' writing.

Inappropriate Uses of Grammatical Cohesion

This section presents the inappropriate use grammatical cohesive devices. Based on the result, it is found that the students made inappropriate use vary from in term of number and types of cohesive devices. The inappropriate uses in the students' writing are from reference, substitution, and conjunction. The detail description of students' inappropriate use is described in the table below.

Table 2. Inappropriate Use of Grammatical Cohesion

No	Types of Cohesion	Frequency	Inappropriate use
1	Reference	2295	22
2	Substitution	91	6
3	Ellipsis	0	0
4	Conjunction	1264	24

From the table above, it is showed that the most dominant inappropriate cohesive devices in students' writing is conjunction which is 24 times. Then it is followed by reference which is 22 times. In substitution the students only made inappropriate use 6 times. Since there was not any ellipsis found in the students' writing, there was also no inappropriate use in this type. The explanation of each types of cohesive devices can be seen as follows.

Inappropriate uses in personal reference were one of type grammatical cohesion which often appeared in students' writing. Then it was followed by the demonstrative reference. In this case of inappropriate use in personal reference, students made errors because of pronoun shift. It refers to a grammatical error in which the writer of a text used a specific kind of pronoun in a sentence or a paragraph and then suddenly shifts the pronoun to another. This error not only caused the readers to be confused but also mix up the reference use. The following excerpts will further show an example of inappropriate use in personal reference.

Once upon a time, there was a kingdom which was lead by Prabu Boko. The kingdom was called Bandung Bondowoso. Prabu Boko wanted to conquer Prambanan Kingdom because they jealous with this kingdom.

In the excerpt above, it is found that inappropriate use of subject personal reference. The underlined word, pronoun “they” which was used by the students to refer a noun “Prabu Boko” from earlier clause which was inappropriate because the pronoun they refer to plural nouns. On the other hand, the subject in this sentence is “Prabu Boko” which is Singular pronoun. The correct pronoun to replace this word should be “he”. This might be happened because the students think that the word “they” was referred to Bandung Bondowoso Kingdom which is collective noun but still singular.

Substitution

Substitution is change the same word with other in order to avoid repetition. It is a relation in the wording rather than in the meaning. All substitution devices found was verbal substitution. The inappropriate was also about tenses which the students are tended to write verb in present form instead of past while in the narrative text, most sentences should be written in past form. The following excerpt will further show an example of inappropriate use in substitution.

The genies worked very fast. Roro Jonggrang was panic and she asked how to stop them. Then, the main told her to make chicken think it is morning by cleaning, farming, and grinding. When they do, the chicken wake up and the genies are scared.

The following excerpt showed inappropriate use of verbal substitution. The writings were narrative text. It means that the actions were happened in the past, so the indirect sentence should be written in past sentences. However, the students wrote “do” to substitute the action of “cleaning, farming, and grinding” in present form. This is inappropriate since the scene was happened in the past. The correct sentence in this excerpt should be “. When they did, the chicken woke up and the genies were scared”.

Conjunction

Conjunction is achieved to have grammatical cohesion in texts which show the relationship between sentences. There are different from other cohesive, ties that they reach the meaning by using other features in the discourse. By using conjunction, it can help to express a cohesive view and understandable texts. Conjunction is divided into 4 sub-types which are additive, adversative, temporal and causal. There were some examples of inappropriate conjunctions found in the students’ writings described in the excerpts below.

Bandung Bondowoso accepted her challenge. And then he called genies. At a midnight, Roro Jonggrang was nervous because the temples had almost done.

The following excerpt showed the inappropriate use of additive conjunction. It was in the form of inappropriate disposition of additive conjunction “and” which is supposed to connect two clauses as coordinating conjunction. Therefore, functioning “and” as a sentence connector and put it in the beginning of sentence was prohibited. Then to make it appropriate, the writer should combine the two sentences into one. The sentence should be “Bandung Bondowoso accepted her challenge and called genies”.

Discussion

From the result description, the data revealed that reference was the most dominant cohesive device used in the students’ writing of narrative text. It means that the students have good understanding in using reference, or in this case pronouns. The students used reference to link their sentences one to another. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) reference is a semantic relation that creates cohesion by creating links between elements or in other words, reference relates one element of the text to another element of its interpretation in the text.

There was different frequency in using References. The two types of references which are personal and demonstrative was found but there was not any comparative reference. In addition, personal reference was the mostly used the students writing while demonstrative only appeared in small amount. This study agrees with Purba and Sihalo (2017) which found that the students mostly uses personal reference in writing because they are familiar with the type pronouns in English.

Substitution used in the students writing is only verbal substitution and ellipsis did not appear in the students’ writing. The word “do” is the most typical substitution because this word can substitute verb of action. Substitution of particular item using the word “do” can be used to draw on one of the grammatical resources in the text to replace the item (Bloor and Bloor, 1995). Afrianto (2017) claimed that this might be happened since most students are not really familiar with the types of cohesive devices so that the devices used are not various.

Conjunction was the second dominant cohesive device found the students’ writing. All types of conjunction were found and they are distributed evenly. However, the types of conjunction mostly used in students’ writing are additive conjunction. The additive relation is somewhat different from coordination proper. it is proven by some words that strength position of additive conjunction.

The result also showed that there were several inappropriate uses of grammatical cohesion written by the students. The inappropriate uses happened to all types of cohesive device. The most inappropriate use of cohesion was conjunction and then followed by reference and substitution. The

result of this study similar with Trisnaningrum, Alex, and Hidayat (2019) which mentioned that lack of comprehension, knowledge and ability of the use grammatical cohesion devices still become the obstacles in writing English.

To sum up, it can be concluded that the ninth-grade students of SMP Sint Carolus Bengkulu just familiar with some various sub types or kinds of grammatical cohesion devices. The level of familiarity, awareness, and knowledge of the use of grammatical cohesion devices would impact on the quality of writing. The more students are familiar with the types of grammatical cohesion devices and use them, the more grammatical cohesion devices can be well incorporated into their writing.

Conclusion and Suggestion

It can be concluded that that the students used only three types of grammatical cohesive devices to serve the cohesion of their writings of which reference as the dominant use. Then, it was followed by conjunction and substitution. However, there was no ellipsis in the writings. In addition, there were also found some inappropriate uses in the writings from three types of cohesion. Based on the explanation above, there are some suggestions proposed in this study. (1) It is suggested to English teachers to improve their students' knowledge, comprehension and ability of grammatical cohesion devices use, (2) it is suggested to the students to learn more about grammatical cohesive devices and how to use them correctly, and (3) it is suggested to the next researcher to conduct similar research in a larger scale.

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