



## **COHESIVE DEVICES IN DISCUSSION TEXT WRITTEN BY THE STUDENTS OF SMAN 12 PADANG**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to analyze the use of cohesive devices in discussion text written by the students of SMAN 12 Padang.. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. This research is conducted on the second grade students of SMAN 12 Padang. There are 20 piece of paper of writing test as the data of this research. Out of 20 these, there are 29 transitional signal used appropriately, and 35 others used inappropriately. Then, there are 35 repetition of key words/nouns used appropriately, and 36 others used inappropriately. The last, there are 44 pronouns used appropriately, and 21 others used inappropriately.

**Key words:** cohesive devices, discussion text, transitional signal, repetition of key words/nouns, pronouns

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Writing is one of language skills that is needed to communicate with others. Through writing, the writer's ideas can be delivered to the readers. It is supported by White (19:10) who said that writing is the learning process to express the ideas, knowledge, experience, or information that is organized in written form. It means that if the students want to tell their ideas to the reader, they should write it. Because writing can help the writer to share ideas to the reader, it needs to be mastered and produced a good writing.

One of the ways to master in writing is by understanding the generic structure of texts, especially in the discussion text. Discussion text is a text which discusses about different issues from two or more point of views. It is supported by Maureen (2009), discussion text is a text which talks about some issues from different viewpoints. Then, the generic structure of discussion texts are introduction, arguments (pro and cons), and recommendation. In writing discussion text, the students should understand how to express idea in written form, in order to make reader understand what the text talks about.

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In producing a good writing, the students need to know the connection of ideas they have and to be able to arrange the ideas in effective, logical and clear order in paragraphs. The students need to know which ideas come first and which ideas follow the others. In addition, there are three ways to make a good writing. They are, transitional signals, repetition of words/nouns, and pronouns. Those ways are called cohesive devices.

Cohesive devices are words or phrases that connect sentences and paragraphs together, creating a smooth flow of ideas. It consists of transitional signals, repetition of key words and pronouns. *First*, transitional signals are used to connect words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs in writing. They establish the relationship between ideas a writer expresses whether they are connected comparatively, contrastively, or in some other ways. *Second*, repetition of the key nouns functions as repeating the words which become the controlling ideas found in the topic sentence of each paragraph. They show that a writer is talking about the same thing throughout the paragraph. *The last*, pronouns are used to replace nouns that come before them. The use of pronouns indicates that there is a relationship between the nouns and the pronouns.

In using cohesive devices, the students have to keep in mind that the devices function as signal between ideas in different paragraphs or sentences to achieve coherence in writing. Then, when the students express their ideas by using the devices, the writing will be smooth and easily understood.

Based on the previous studies about coherence and cohesive devices above, there are some problems appear from some researches about the use of cohesive devices. As Dewi Nopita (2011:3) says that the students were not able to differentiate which kinds of related ideas that should be expresses in descriptive essays. In this case, they were not able to differentiate ideas which give descriptions to other kinds of ideas. In using cohesive devices, the students are still confused about when and how to repeat the key words/nouns and how to use pronouns and transitional signals effectively and correctly. It is supported by Almaden (2006:128) that the students only focus on the lexical and sentence level than on discourse level. Teachers usually find students using transitional links in their writing without really creating a coherent piece, and more often than not, students turn out coherence pieces of underlying coherence in the relationship of ideas.

Moreover, the problem faced by the students of SMAN 12 Padang to use cohesive devices effectively and correctly in discussion text. They have some difficulty in using cohesive devices. *First*, the students did not mention the transitional signal to relate one sentence to the next sentence or one paragraph to the next paragraph in text. *Second*, the students overused of repeated words/nouns. *Last*, the students misused of pronouns in the text. In this research, the researcher wants to know whether SMAN 12 Padang students have the same problem with what the previous researchers have found. These problems have to be explained more in order to make students able to realize cohesive devices that was used in discussion text. If the students understand how to use cohesive devices appropriately and correctly, they can improve their writing in a good writing.

Based on those problems, the researcher did the research about cohesive devices used by students in writing discussion text. In details, the researcher was interested in analyzing a study entitled *cohesive devices in discussion texts written by students of SMAN 12 Padang*.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted by using descriptive research. The researcher analyzed coherence in discussion text written by students at SMAN 12 Padang because it should be mastered by senior high school students as they learned discussion text. According to Key (1997), the descriptive research attempts to present answers of the questions based on accurate fact or to describe the existing phenomena. After the data was analyzed, the result was elaborated descriptively.

The data of this research was taken at SMAN 12 Padang. The data in this research were writing tests which were used by English teacher in teaching discussion text. The research was held at the second grade class (year 11) that was the science program. The researcher chose class XI-A1, and the total number of students in these class was 20 students. Thus, there were twenty pieces of discussion texts written by students as the data of this research.

The instrument used in this research was writing test of discussion text. In the test, the students were asked to write a discussion text based on five topics that had been given. The topics had been discussed with the writing lecture. The topics were consisted of Hacking, National Exam, School Uniform, Books Vs Tablets, and Nuclear Energy. Then, the students had been asked to make a discussion text about 4 or 5 paragraphs about the topics they chose. The test had some instructions to guide their writing become coherent, such instructions to use kinds of cohesive devices. The test was done about 100 minutes. Through this test, the researcher analyzed the appropriate of using transitional signals, repetition of key words/nouns, and pronouns.

To see coherence in discussion text written by students, the researcher referred to indicators of coherence devices that adapt from experts which can be seen in the following tables:

**Table 1**

*The indicators of using cohesive devices*

Indicators	Sub indicators
The Use of Transitional Signals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinative Conjunction</li> <li>• Correlative Conjunctions</li> <li>• Words and Phrase that indicate the specific relationship</li> </ul>
The Use of Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Pronouns</li> <li>• Reflexive Pronouns</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive Pronouns</li> <li>• Reciprocal Pronouns</li> <li>• Demonstrative Pronouns</li> <li>• Relative Pronouns</li> <li>• Interrogative Pronouns</li> <li>• Indefinite Pronouns</li> </ul>
Repetition of Key Words/Nouns	The using of repetition of key words are appropriate and effective applied

a. Validity

Validity is the most fundamental consideration in developing and evaluating tests. Validity is important in all forms of research and all types of test measurement and the best thought of in terms of degree. Besides, in some situations, a test or instrument was used for several different purposes and it must be validated for each. This research need to validate the content of instrument because content validity was needed to measure the test and intended content area. According to Gay (2011:161), content validity requires both item validity and sampling validity.

b. Reliability

According to Brown, and Wickrama (2010), reliability is defined as the consistency of an individual when repeatedly performing the same test. Besides, the reliability of the test must be done in order to judge the test was reliable or not. The purpose of the writing test in this research was not to know the students' score, but to find whether students have coherence or not in writing discussion text. Thus, it could be said that the test was reliable as far as instructions of the test could be understood by the students. It means that if the students understood the instruction, and knew about the goal of giving the test, the test of this research was reliable. This supported by Harris (1969:120), test is reliable as far as the test instrument is understandable by the students and the result of the test is suitable with the test goal. The way to test the reliability discussed with the teacher of SMAN 12 Padang in order to see whether the students understand about the instruction in the test or not.

**C. DISCUSSION**

Based on finding above, it was found that the cohesive devices used in discussion text written by students were inappropriately. Cohesive devices consist of transitional signals, repetition of key words/nouns, and pronouns. *First*, the transitional signals that the students used in discussion text were inappropriately,



because they were not used as the meaning and function of each transitional signal. According to Almaden (2006:128), the students only focus on the lexical and sentence level than on discourse level and the teacher found transitional links in their writing without really creating coherent piece.

Furthermore, there some of transitional signals were not used appropriately. It was because the students did not use as the functions each transitional signal. Then, the texts were not showed the relationships of the ideas in discussion text. Next, the use of transitional signals was stated by Capella University center (2009), the transitional signal were words/phrases showed the movement from one idea to another in the same sentence, from one sentence to another in the same paragraph, or from one paragraph to another in the same paper.

The repetitions of key words/nouns are the easiest way to achieve coherence in writing. Even though there is fixed rule about how often to repeat the key words/nouns, a writer need to do it instead of using pronouns when the meaning is not clear or remind readers the main nouns of the paragraphs. In addition, the repetition done may not dominate the paragraphs because they can make readers feel bored. By repeating the key words/nouns, the ideas expressed will become a coherent statement are tied together (Wyrick, 1987, Oshima and Hogue, 1999, West Florida Writing Lab, 2003, and Macfadyen).

In relation to the findings of the research of the repetition of key words/nouns, it was found in discussion text written by students of SMAN 12 Padang. Most of the paragraphs of the texts written by students talked about more than one noun which affects the paragraphs coherence. This condition, made readers difficult to understand which of parts of the things (the topic of the text) being described. Moreover, most students did not repeat the main nouns/words appropriately. Some of words did not repeat the key words/nouns in the text paragraphs and some others dominate their paragraphs by always repeating the main noun/words. Such ways make the text boring.

Furthermore, concerning the use of pronouns, it was mentioned earlier in chapter II that the using of pronouns, a writer must firstly provide or introduce the actual noun that a pronoun is replacing to avoid readers' confusion (Macfadyen, 2007). From the finding of the research, it was found that the using of pronouns are used appropriately. The students at SMAN 12 Padang were able to choose the correct pronouns to replace the previous nouns but some of them could not use appropriately. In addition, Some of pronouns overused and some of others dominated the text by repeating key nouns. As a result, it was sometimes confusing to recognize which of them the pronouns refer to. It means that the theory proposed by Macfadyen is proved.

Finally, based on the findings of using cohesive devices to achieve coherence in discussion text written by the students, they need to improve their knowledge of how to use the devices effectively and appropriately. This is aimed at improving coherence of students writing, particularly discussion text, as mentioned by Oshima and Hogue (1999) that the transitional signals, the use of pronouns and repetition of key words/nouns writing help achieve coherence.

## D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### 1. Conclusion

From the explanation in chapter I, the purposes of this research were to answer three research questions. *First*, whether the transitional signal used appropriately in discussion text written by the students. *Second*, whether the repetitions of key word/noun used appropriately in discussion text written by students. *Third*, whether the pronouns used appropriately in discussion text written by students. The answer to the three questions were obtained by giving the writing test to the students of SMAN 12 Padang.

Based on the data collected through writing test, there were three kinds of cohesive devices used in discussion text written by the students. The total amount use of cohesive devices was 107 appropriately used and 92 inappropriately used. The transitional signals were mostly not used appropriately, there were 29 words of transitional signals appropriately used and 35 inappropriately used. It was because the students did use the transitional signal words, but the words used did not function as transitional signals. The use of transitional was meaningless because it did not function as connectors of ideas between sentences and paragraphs. In fact, there was no connection of ideas when the words of transitional signal were used.

The repetitions of key words/nouns were not used inappropriately, there were 34 repetition of key words/nouns appropriately used and 36 inappropriately used. They repeated words/nouns in the sentence and paragraph, but the words/nouns used did not function as the repetition of key words should be. In fact, there was no connection of ideas when the words of repetition key words were used.

The pronouns were the mostly used appropriately in discussion text written by the students, there were 44 pronouns appropriately used and 21 inappropriately used. It was because the students chose the correct pronouns to replace the previous nouns. But some of them did not used pronouns appropriately because they did not function as pronouns should be. In fact, there was no connection of ideas when the pronouns were used.

### 2. Suggestions

Based on the result of this research, there are some suggestions this may be useful to be considered. They are described as follow:

- a. By observing the result of this research, the teacher should improve the using of cohesive devices; transitional signals, repetition of key words, and pronouns to make coherence in students writing. It could be done by learning processes to prevent incoherent text of students writing.
- b. The students should study about how to use the function of transitional signals, repetition key words and pronouns in written form.
- c. It is also suggested to the next researcher to do research about coherence in written form and other language skills. It is intended to see and compare the result among them. The result is also useful to

seek the most effective way to overcome those useless of each kind of cohesive devices and each language skill.

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