Cohesion and coherence of EFL students' essay writing

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

This study analyzed cohesion and coherence in students' essay writing in terms of (1) the types of cohesion and coherence used by students and (2) students' awareness of creating cohesion and coherence by utilizing the descriptive qualitative method. Research population was fifth semester Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) students at UIN FAS Bengkulu. As a research sample, the technique of purposive sampling was used. As the subject, 29 TBI 5E students were investigated. Data were collected from an old document including essays written by students. The results were qualitatively examined using Halliday and Hasan's theory of cohesiveness, and the absolute scale served as the foundation for Bachman and Palmer's coherence rating scale. In addition, this current study results showed that students used the Halliday and Hasan coding scheme, the types of references used are R11, R12, R13, R14, R21, R22, R23, R31, R32, R33, and R34, and the types of conjunction used are C111, C121, C141, C142, C151, C152, C212, C213, C22, C232, C241, C311, C322, C351, C411, C42, C431, C445, C451, C452, C461, C481, and C5 and the types of reiteration used are L1, L2, L3, and L4. Then, students' ability to build cohesion was referenced 52.1% of the time, while conjunction was used 40.8% of the time. It was then followed by a 7.2% reiteration. Furthermore, students' ability to build coherence was on the Extensive Scale (3) and the Complete Scale (4) on average. It indicates that students have a sufficient understanding of how to construct coherence in their writing. The study's findings indicate cohesion and coherence must be emphasized in writing instruction also English teachers must be adequate in evaluating the cohesion and coherence of students' writing to improve.

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Introduction

According to Fransisko Chaniago (2021, p.16), Writing is significant for a variety of reasons. To begin with, writing is a fantastic way for every student to explore their thoughts (Chaniago, 2021). Writing is more complicated since it is a documented concept that may be changed and revised. Warsono and Anis Amperawati (2019, p.35). Students must be able to master some of the rhetorical structures of the text in order to compose it. Rhetorical structures include mastering the social function, linguistic aspects, and literary schematic frameworks. Students must be able to learn abilities like as grammar, logical idea development, mechanics, organization, punctuation, spelling, style, and expressive quality in the meantime. (Amperawaty, 2019)

Writing or written language is one way for people to communicate. Discourse is an example of written language. A discourse or text should have a complete structure. Furthermore, Zaimar and Harahap in Tri Mahajani (2021, p.8) also explain clearly that cohesion is the relationship of the outward elements of a text. The text will be coherent if each word is related to the other in a coherent sequence. In addition, each word depends on the other but still with its grammatical form and conventions. (Mahajani et al., 2021)

When I observed students in the process of learning English, who were assigned the task of writing an essay, I noticed that they produced unrelated sentences. This happens because of the low knowledge of students about the correct sentence structure, grammar used, and stringing words into complete sentences. The students also struggled to organize their ideas systematically. They tend to have no ideas, so they do not understand what they have to explain and imagine in writing. Worst case scenario, they could not compose a cohesive paragraph. This is because students have difficulty writing texts that require them to write in a foreign language. In a few places, the paragraph stood out. It is possible to conclude that they had difficulty creating cohesive text. Cohesive devices (cohesion and coherence) are very important in writing. It is possible to conclude that they had difficulty creating cohesive text. It was founded in Bamberg (1983) in Arif Suryo Priyatmojo, (2021, p. 361), One of the most difficult challenges was a lack of cohesion in the texts, which contributed significantly to lower test scores.

The researcher in this study is interested in researching written discourse, specifically essay texts. the researcher will analyze the device of cohesion and coherence contain in the essay of the 5th Semester in English Education Students. The researcher is interested in the students' ability to create cohesion and coherence in their essay writing. Furthermore, the researcher's debriefing with an English lecturer at UIN FAS Bengkulu revealed that cohesion and coherence are valued in student evaluations. Considering the importance of essay writing, the researcher sees the need for research on the thesis in that department, because it does not rule out that every essay writer, whether in the Language Department or other majors, must have many errors regarding the use of sentences, especially in terms of cohesion and coherence. Therefore, the researcher will conduct the study under the title "An Analysis of The Cohesion and Coherence of EFL Learners' Essay Writing in UIN FAS Bengkulu".

Method

In this current study, the researcher used a qualitative approach to provide answers to problems that have been laid out. The researcher used a qualitative approach because the data collection techniques in this study were carried out by using documentation. The research conducted at UIN FAS Bengkulu which is located on Raden Fatah Street, Pagar Dewa, Bengkulu City. The reasons for choosing fifth-semester students' of Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) in UIN FAS Bengkulu as the participants in this research are that they have completed basic writing, intermediate writing, and advanced writing subjects. The other reason is that in this fifth semester, they received an academic writing course where the output of this learning is that they produced written works called essays. This study's population includes all students in the fifth semester of the academic year 2021-2022. It has five classes and a total of 119 students. The researcher used purposive or judgmental sampling as a non-probability sampling technique. There were five classes in the fifth semester of Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI), namely (A, B, C, D, and E). But, only class E fulfills the criteria for the research that the researcher did. The instrument in this research was essay texts, written by fifth-semester students of Tadris Bahasa Inggris in UIN FAS Bengkulu. The types of data in this research were all of the sentences in the essay.

Cohesion analyzed coded each cohesive item discovered using the Halliday & Hasan coding scheme table. R. Hasan and M.A.K. Halliday (1976, p.333). The coding scheme can look at appendix 1. (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). The researcher then calculated the percentage of cohesive items that had been coded. Anas Sudijono's formula was used to calculate this percentage. Brigham et al, (2018, p.88)

$$P = f/N \times 100\%$$

With:
p = the proportion of different forms of cohesiveness in students' essay writing.
f = the total number of coherence components in the essay writing of learners
N = the number of instances of each form of cohesiveness in students' essay writing.
(Brigham et al, 2013)
Coherence analyzed the researcher presented an absolute scale that served as the foundation for Bachman and Palmar's rating scale for scoring coherence. Bachman and Palmar (1996, p.214).

0_____1_____2_____3_____4

0 : Zero very little ability
1 : Limited
2 : Moderate
3 : Extensive
4 : Complete

0 (Zero): Too brief to pass judgment. There is no evidence of coherence. Regardless of length, completely incomprehensible.
1 (Limited): A seriously disjointed/isolated collection of ideas. There is a severe lack of conceptual connections.
2 (Moderate): There are some links between different ideas, but no global links between local ideas. There could be some significant gaps in the network.
3 (Extensive): In general, the passage is well-organized. There was no notable pause. Globally, all ideas are inextricably linked. However, there was no evidence of sophistication or elaboration of connections.
4 (Complete): A sophisticated and elaborated idea connection. Thematically, it is completely understandable. The ideas are completely consistent. There was an obvious existence of elements for introductory/opening remarks, coda, and elaborated connections at each significant local point. (Bachman & Palmer, 1996)
Then, the researcher used Anas Sudijono's formula, the researcher calculate the number of every scale of coherence. Brigham, (2018, p.88).

$$P = f/N \times 100\%$$

With:
p = the percentage of learners' essay coherence on the scale of coherence
f = the total number of coherence scales on learners' essay writing
N = the number of coherence scales in learners' essay writing. (Brigham et al, 2013)

Results and Discussions

The writings of 29 students were reviewed. The analysis incorporates Halliday and Hasan's idea of cohesiveness, and the absolute scale served as the foundation for Bachman and Palmer's coherence rating scale.

Table 1 The Recapitulation of Cohesion

Text	Grammatical Cohesion		Lexical Cohesion
	Reference	Conjunction	Reiteration
1	8	14	3
2	11	12	-
3	17	7	3
4	11	9	-
5	12	6	2
6	8	6	2
7	12	13	1
8	17	9	-
9	8	8	-
10	9	7	-
11	12	8	2
12	15	10	-
13	12	8	1
14	12	9	4
15	12	7	2
16	15	10	4
17	10	8	-
18	15	8	2
19	14	6	-
20	12	10	1

Text	Grammatical Cohesion		Lexical Cohesion
	Reference	Conjunction	Reiteration
21	20	16	1
22	14	14	3
23	10	14	3
24	17	8	2
25	14	8	2
26	16	21	4
27	17	12	4
28	17	16	5
29	19	18	2
Subtotal	**386**	**302**	**53**
Total		**741**	

The following chart summarizes the preceding recapitulation:
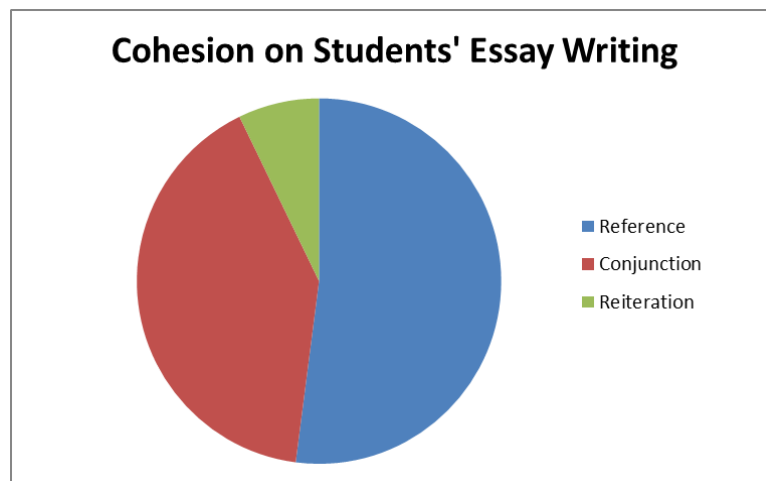
Figure 1 The Percentage of Cohesion

The graph above depicts the percentages of two forms of coherence: grammatical and lexical cohesion. Students can use the table to create grammatical cohesiveness that contains up to 52.1 percent reference and 40.8 percent conjunction. While lexical coherence, including reiteration, amounts for up to 7.2 percent of the total.

Table 2 The Recapitulation of Coherence

Text	Bachman and Palmar Scale				
	Zero (0)	Limited (1)	Moderate (2)	Extensive (3)	Complete (4)
1					✓
2				✓	
3					✓
4				✓	
5				✓	
6					✓
7				✓	
8				✓	
9				✓	
10			✓		

Text	Bachman and Palmar Scale				
	Zero (0)	Limited (1)	Moderate (2)	Extensive (3)	Complete (4)
11				✓	
12				✓	
13				✓	
14					✓
15					✓
16					✓
17			✓		
18				✓	
19			✓		
20				✓	
21					✓
22					✓
23					✓
24					✓
25				✓	
26					✓
27					✓
28					✓
29				✓	
Subtotal	0	0	3	13	13
Total			29		
Total Percentage (%)	0	0	10.3	44.8	44.8

The following chart summarizes the preceding recapitulation:
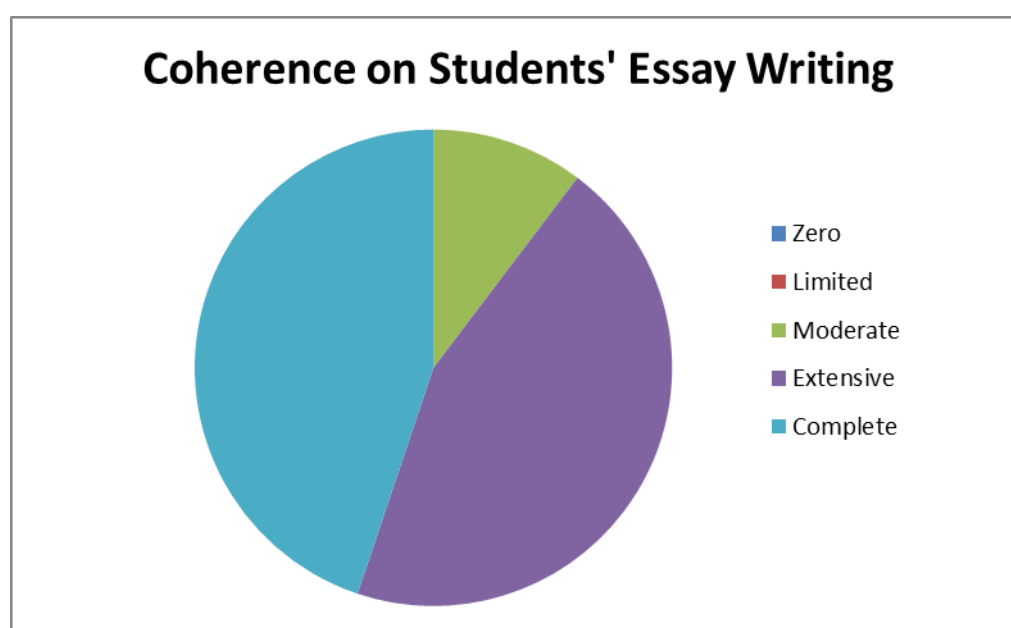

Figure 2 The Percentage of Coherence

The graph above shows the percentage of students who produce coherence. Students build coherence up to 44.8% on the Complete Scale, 44.8% on the Extensive Scale, 10.3% on the Moderate Scale, and 0% on the Limited and Zero Scale.

Cohesion in Students' Essay Writing
According to Table 4.1, the use of reference was higher than the other cohesion devices (52.1%), followed by a conjunction (40.8%), and reiteration (40.8%) (%). According to the data analysis and interpretation of cohesion presented above, students can construct all cohesion devices in their essay writing. But, not every test contains every type of cohesion device. It is critical to recognize that students' ability to create cohesion affects the quality of their writing. When students produce a text cohesively, the elements within the text are linked, making the text easy to read and understand. A cohesive text, according to Halliday and Hasan's theory, is one in which one element in the text is linked to another element in such a way that the text becomes meaningful and readable. (Haliday & Hasan, 1976)

It is consistent with what happens in English Education at UIN FAS Bengkulu. Cohesion thus provides compelling evidence that it contributes to readable writing. At the same time, the text is readable if uses various cohesion devices. It was consistent with previous study findings by Galis Muthia Zahra, Emi Emilia, and Iyen Nurlaelawati that texts were more cohesive because they used a wider range of cohesive devices. (Zahra et al., 2021)

Briefly, the research showed that students of English Education in UIN FAS Bengkulu Writing is classified as high quality when it provides consistent use a cohesive.

Coherence in Students' Essay Writing
According to Table 4.2, the Extensive Scale and Complete Scale pupils have the same capacity to establish coherence with a percentage of 44.8 percent, followed by the Moderate Scale (10.3 percent). The Zero and Limited Scales, on the other hand, have no percentage (0 percent). Almost all students can construct coherence devices on the Extensive Scale and Complete Scale, in other words, is balanced, based on data analysis and interpretation of coherence. It is acceptable to presume that pupils are skilled at building coherence.

Students' ability to construct coherence, like cohesion, influences their writing quality. When pupils write a text coherently, the topic is evident and the phrases link to one another. As a consequence, readers will understand the chapter completely. Finally, coherence is an important feature of writing that should be highlighted. It was consistent with Arif Suryo Priyatmojo's earlier study results that coherence is a crucial part of writing. The study revealed the significance of teaching students' coherence in order for them to write a cohesive composition. Furthermore, the findings highlight English instructors' duty to enhance ways for teaching writing depending on students' inadequacies. (Priyatmojo, 2021)

Based on the discussion above, the researcher concludes that the writing skill of UINFAS Bengkulu fifth-semester English Education students is competent. The verdict clearly shows that practically all pupils have a high level of coherence. To recap, continuity and coherence are essential components of flawless writing. It is also undeniably essential to the relationship between reader and writer in readable writing. Furthermore, continuity and coherence were crucial components that should be incorporated in the writing activity education.

Conclusions

The researcher draws the following conclusions based on the previous chapter's findings and discussion. In cohesion devices, the reference appears as the first rank with 386 instances or 52.1% of the total occurrences, then followed by conjunction as the second rank with 302 instances or 40.8% of occurrences, and the last is reiteration as the third rank with 53 instances or 7.2% occurrences. Using Halliday and Hasan's coding scheme, the types of references used by EFL Learners are R11, R12, R13, R14, R21, R22, R23, R31, R32, R33, and R34. The types of conjunction used by EFL Learners are C111, C121, C141, C142, C151, C152, C212, C213, C22, C232, C241, C311, C322, C351, C411, C42, C431, C445, C451, C452, C461, C481, and C5. The types of reiteration used by EFL Learners are L1, L2, L3, and L4. In coherence devices, analyzed using Bachman and Palmar's scale, the first rank is extensive and complete scale with 13 instances or 44.8% occurrences. Both are equal. Then, moderate as the second rank with 3 instances or 10.3% occurrences. Last, zero and limited scales do not have instances or 0% occurrences.

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