

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of Background of the Study, Research Question, Purpose of the Study, Scope of the Study, Significances of the Study, Definition of Terms, and Organization of the Study.

1.1 Background of the Study

All university students, especially the ones from Department of English Education in Indonesia are supposed to be able to compose a good writing for college assignments such as articles, essays, reports, and research papers. Meanwhile, writing in a language which is not the students' first language, for instance, English writing tasks for Indonesian students, may become a difficult assignment to do. (El-Gazzar, 1994; Alwasilah, 2001; Gao, 2012; Kwan & Yunus, 2014; Tanawong 2014). It is aligned with what is stated by Richards and Renandya (2002), that most of English as a second or foreign language students found difficulties in producing and organizing their ideas as well as in putting them into understandable text.

Halliday (1994) elaborates that attaining cohesion and coherence in composing the text is one of the ways to improve the quality of writing and to help the readers understand the text more easily. Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1989) believed that cohesion and coherence have been recognized as essential features of good writing. It is supported by Gerot and Wignell (1994) who stated that the importance of text cohesion is to keep continuity in a text and to help a text hang together (see also Halliday & Hasan, 1976 p. 7). As a matter of fact, many research studies examining the correlation between cohesion and writing quality indicated that cohesion – number of cohesive devices – correlates positively with writing quality (see Angeles, n.d.; Ebrahimpourtaher & Eissaei, 2008; Guiju, 2005; Janjua, 2012; McCulley, 1985; Nakao, n.d.; and Crossley & McNamara, 2010). Hence, it is obvious that research concerning the use of cohesion in text written by English Education students is important and needed to be conducted.

Apparently, cohesion studies have got many attentions from some linguists in the last two decades. Some focus on identifying the cohesive devices used in texts from particular genre of writing (see Angeles, n.d.; Alarcon & Morales, 2011; Kargozari & Ghaemi, 2012; Mawardi, 2014; Meisuo, 2000; Rahman, 2013; Sanczyk, 2010; Swastami, 2014; Tsareva, 2010; Xu, 2000), while others focus on looking for pattern of similarities and differences of the use of cohesive devices by the ESL or EFL students and the native ones (see also Granger & Tyson, 1996; Xu, 2000; Prommas & Sinwongsuwat, 2001; Bikeliene, 2008; Na, 2011; Ong, 2011; Kargozari & Ghaemi, 2012). Meanwhile, there are also the ones that examine the correlation between the number of cohesive devices and writing quality (see Angeles, n.d.; Ebrahimpourtaher & Eissaei, 2008; Guiju, 2005; Janjua, 2012; McCulley, 1985; Nakao, n.d.; and Crossley & McNamara, 2010; Johnson, 1992; Meisuo, 2000). Interestingly, the findings within this focus in some cases have been somewhat contradictory; some found they are positively correlated while some found they are negatively correlated.

Intended to fill the gap between the aforementioned studies, this present study is different in term of the subject in order to discover how Indonesian English Education students use cohesive devices in maintaining the quality of their writings.

1.2 Research Question

The research question formulated on this study is: How do English Education Students use cohesive devices in maintaining the quality of their writings?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question above, the purpose of this study is: To discover the way cohesive devices used by English Education Students in maintaining the quality of their writings.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Research on cohesion can be conducted involving many different aspects and variables, but due to the limitation of time, energy, and knowledge; in this study, the researcher only attempts to analyze cohesive devices in the writings.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is divided into two categories: practical and theoretical significance. Practically, this study is expected to help students to be able to create logical sentences by giving information regarding cohesion and cohesive devices in writing. Moreover, this study is theoretically important as a resource that can be used by academicians, more specifically, by English Education students for being a point of reference for future study.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

With the intention of avoiding misunderstanding and ambiguity, several terms need to be defined. Here are definitions of some terms used in this study.

1. Writing

Writing is one of four basic linguistic skills which later Fowler, Aaron, and Okoomian (2007) state that it is a productive skill. It is a process of composing. Written products are often the result of thinking, drafting, and revising processes which require multiple drafts in creating an effective product.

2. Text

As stated by Halliday and Hasan (1976), text refers to any written or spoken passage in spite of its length in which its elements form a unity. A text can be in form of “written or spoken, prose or verse, dialogue or monologue”. The point is that it is a linguistic unit in use (p. 1). Text, moreover, is not syntactic unit, yet semantic. Hence, text can be considered as a text not caused by its structural or syntactic pattern, yet its relation in meaning (p. 2).

3. Texture

Texture refers to the property of being a text. Moreover, it is what distinguishes a text from a non-text. As stated by Halliday & Hasan (1976), “It derives from the fact that a text can function as a unity with respect to its environment.”

4. Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the continuity that presents between one part of the text and another (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Cohesion can refer to resources within language that provide continuity in a text as well. In other words, cohesion is used to help parts of text hang together (Gerot and Wignell, 1994). Halliday & Hasan (1976), state that cohesion is expressed over grammar and vocabulary. Hence, there are two types of cohesion – lexical and grammatical.

5. Cohesive Tie

Cohesive tie defined by Martin (2001) as the relationship exists between cohesive item and the presupposed item within a text. So it is aligned with what is stated by Halliday and Hasan (1976), that tie is what can be represented from two or more semantically relational items.

6. Coherence

According to Johns (1986), coherence describes as characteristic of the text which involves cohesion and unity to link sentences and unify text. In addition to Johns, Grabe (1985) states that coherence forms the relationship between propositions that leads to writer's general purpose. In addition, according to Enkvist (1990), coherence is comprised of three aspects: cohesion, plausibility or interpretability, and justifiability.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

There are five chapters in this paper as follows:

Chapter I - Introduction

Chapter one contains introduction to this study, this chapter provides the background of the study, scope of the study, research question, the aim of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of paper.

Chapter II – Literature Review

This chapter covers theoretical foundation, which provides the theories related with this study. The main framework of the study is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter III – Research Methodology

Chapter three is dealt with research methodology which describes the research methodology that has been briefly introduced in chapter 1. In this chapter, there would be research design, samples, data collection, data instrument, and data analysis.

Chapter IV – Findings and Discussion

This chapter describes the result of analysis. The research question meets the answers in this chapter. To make it clearer for the readers, the researcher conveys the discussion of the findings.

Chapter V – Conclusion, Limitation and Recommendation

The last chapter is conclusion which describes the result of the study and suggestion for further better study.