

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general information of the present study, which includes the background of the study, the research questions, the aims of the study, the significance of the study, the research methods, clarification of some key terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

Cohesion refers to a linguistic feature describing the semantic relation among linguistic elements such as words, phrases, or even sentences. The notion of cohesion is firstly introduced by Halliday and Hasan (1976), in which they define cohesion as “the relations of meaning that exist within the text” (p. 4). In addition, they argue that cohesion in a text can be established when linguistic elements depend on each other. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion can be realized through cohesive devices where they are simply defined as linking words, transitional words, or connectors such as ‘however’, ‘in conclusion’, or ‘moreover’ (Pell, 2015). A cohesive device may be grammatical or lexical. Grammatical cohesion includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, while lexical cohesion consists of reiteration and collocation. The categorization of cohesive devices is based on the principle that cohesion is represented in the lexicogrammatical system where, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), part of cohesion can be expressed through grammar and vocabulary.

Cohesive devices have been said to contribute to text comprehension. A study conducted by Ehrlich (1991), for instance, reveals that a text that lacks cohesive devices renders a highly significant decrease in recall performance. That is to say, a text that comprises few cohesive devices will be difficult to understand. Thus, the present study infers from the aforementioned statement that if a text is perplexing or hard to be understood, the information or message contained in the text tends to be incompletely reconstructed by the reader.

A large number of studies on cohesion have investigated the realization of cohesive devices in multi-disciplinary areas and in different types of text. With regard to research of cohesion in multi-disciplinary areas, some studies focus on the use and role of cohesive devices in translation and psycholinguistics. In translation, these studies emphasize the use of reference as grammatical cohesion in English narratives and its translation into Arabic (Mokrani, 2010), the use of cohesive devices in translation machine (Voigt & Jurafsky, 2012), and cohesion shift in the translation process (Jangi, 2013). In psycholinguistics, the studies emphasize the role of coherence and cohesion in text comprehension (Fersti & Cramon, 2001), and the awareness of lexical cohesive devices in text and reading comprehension (Ebrahimpourtaher & Eissaei, 2013).

Meanwhile, in relation to the studies of cohesive devices in different types of text, the majority of these studies focus on oral and written texts. Regarding oral texts, the studies explore the use of *wa* as a cohesion marker in Japanese oral narratives (Clancy & Dowling, 1987), the relationship between lexical cohesion and oral English quality (Wu, 2010), and the use of conjunction in TV and radio talk shows (Ahangar, Taki, & Rahimi, 2012). Concerning written texts, the studies examine cohesive devices applied in academic and literary texts. Studies on academic texts focus on types of cohesive devices as well as their frequency in essays (van Tonder, 1999), article (Aghdam & Hadidi, 2015), and textbooks (Rostam, Gholami, & Piri, 2016). Meanwhile, studies on literary texts focus on the patterns, types, and mechanisms of cohesive devices in short stories (Anderson, 1978), poems (Bezhanian, 2011), novels (Heslien, 2012), movie scripts (Mualifah, 2012), and dramatic texts (Jabeen, Mehmood, & Iqbal, 2013).

The previous studies above show that the analysis of cohesion in literary works, especially dramatic texts, still obtains less attention. The study conducted by Jabeen et al. (2013) explores the types of grammatical cohesion, focusing on substitution, ellipsis, and reference in a classical act play entitled “The Bear” by Anton Chekhov. It appears that examination of the use of both the grammatical and lexical cohesive devices in a dramatic text needs to be conducted in order to lend support to the development of the study of cohesion. Due to the writer’s passion for literary text, a dramatic text is selected as the object of the study.

Therefore, this present study seeks to examine the realization of grammatical and lexical cohesive devices in a dramatic text and their contributions to how the story proceeds.

1.2 Statement of Problems

With respect to the problem presented in the background, this study explores the realization of cohesive devices in a dramatic text *Oedipus the King*. The problems of the present study are formulated in the following research questions:

- 1) What are the grammatical and lexical cohesive devices used in the dramatic text *Oedipus the King*?
- 2) How does the use of the cohesive devices contribute to how the story proceeds?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the research questions above, this study aims to explore:

- 1) the use of grammatical and lexical cohesive devices in a dramatic text *Oedipus the King*, and
- 2) the contribution of the use of cohesive devices to how the story proceeds.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions to discourse studies. Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to enrich the literature on cohesion in a text, especially a literary work. Practically, this study can be useful for pedagogical purposes. Teachers can use the information that results from this study to help their students understand texts, especially literary works, through the exploration of cohesive devices.

1.5 Clarification of the Key Terms

In order to prevent misunderstanding of the content of the present study, some key concepts need to be clarified. They include discourse analysis, cohesion, grammatical cohesion, and lexical cohesion.

- **Discourse analysis**

Discourse analysis refers to “a linguistic study that focuses on knowledge about language beyond the word, clause, phrase, and sentence that is needed for successful communication” (Paltridge, 2006, p. 2).

- **Cohesion**

Cohesion is defined as “the relationship between items in a text such as words, phrases, and clauses, and other items such as pronouns, nouns, and conjunctions” (Paltridge, 2006, p. 131).

- **Grammatical cohesion**

Grammatical cohesion concerns linguistic tools that are used to identify cohesion at the grammatical level, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

- **Lexical cohesion**

Lexical cohesion is defined as “the relationships in meaning between lexical items in a text and, in particular, content words and the relationship between them” (Paltridge, 2006, p. 133)

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This paper comprises five chapters. The first chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problems, aims of the study, and organization of the paper. The second chapter presents the relevant theoretical frameworks and previous studies. The third chapter presents the research methodology. The fourth chapter presents the findings and discussions. The last chapter presents the conclusion and some relevant suggestions.