

Faculty of Language & Literature and Language Training Center  
Satya Wacana Christian University Salatiga

## **BRINGING LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE INTO EFL CLASSROOMS**

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**ASSESSING THE SCOPE FOR COHESION EXERCISES AT STUDENTS' LEVEL  
IN THE TEST OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE**

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***Abstract***

Nowadays, discourse is very popular among students and teachers/lecturers. It can be seen that it has been one of the subjects in English Department. Discourse analysis examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social, and psychological context, become meaningful and unified for their users. Cohesion has then become an important case to discuss due to the fact that it is part of discourse analysis. It has often been neglected in language teaching, where sentences have been created, manipulated, and assessed in isolation. It has been assumed that student difficulties arise primarily from lack of vocabulary or the complexity of grammatical structure at sentence level, whereas difficulties can as easily arise from problems with cohesion: finding the referent for a pronoun, for example, or recovering a phrase or clause lost through ellipsis. The results of this neglect are familiar to students at all levels, for they affect both production and processing. So far in many cases, teachers/lecturers have still found their students' writing are not in a good form due to its lacking cohesiveness. In fact, cohesiveness is one the properties by which an essay or article or any other kinds of writing is considered to by the good one. Therefore, the study of cohesion is necessary to be intensively done, especially by lecturers. This paper explores the scope of cohesion in the result of students' analysis test in the classroom discourse. Analyzing the use of cohesion in writing is looking closely the utilization of cohesive devices, such as *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis*, *conjunction* and *lexical cohesion* in it.

**Key words: cohesion, classroom discourse**

**Introduction**

Traditionally, language teaching has concentrated on pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and while these remain the basis of foreign language knowledge, discourse analysis can draw attention to the skills needed to put this knowledge into action and to achieve successful communication. Communication can be spoken and written. People do not

always speak or write in complete sentences, yet they still succeed in communication. Discourse is realized in communication. Communication happens in text. The term classroom discourse refers to the language that teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom. Talking, or conversation, is the medium through which most teaching takes place, so the study of classroom discourse is the study of the process of face-to-face classroom teaching. In teaching learning process communication should be done intensively between students and teachers/lecturers.

Language teaching has divided discourse into two major categories, the spoken and the written. The examples of spoken language are lessons, lectures, interviews, trials etc. While poem, memo, letter are considered to classify into written language. There are differences between spoken and written language. The division of language into the spoken and the written is clearly and sensibly based on a difference in production and reception: we use our mouths and ears for one, and our hands and eyes for the other. In spoken language, not everything should be explicitly stated while in written one everything should be presented for clarity. In spoken language the people may use gambits and interruption while in written one they can edit their writing so that the mistakes can be polished. The everyday lexis usually found in spoken language. For example start, lively, fun, guys. Meanwhile the prestige lexis in written one, among others are commence, vivacious, joyful, ladies and gentlemen etc. Another difference is spoken language use non standard grammar, e.g. I wanna go, but written one use standard grammar, e.g. I want to go. One of the other differences is lexical.

According to the curriculum in the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University Discourse Analysis is taught in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester in four credits. Many topics discuss in this subject. They are the nature of discourse, discourse properties, language functions, discourse approaches, discourse structures and many more. I am interested in one of the topics in discourse properties that is cohesion. In this paper, I focus on the discussing of cohesion theories and assessing the scope for cohesion exercises at students' level in the test of discourse.

## **Discourse**

Defining and describing the scope of study Discourse Analysis is not an easy task. Discourse is very closely with the text. Suffice it to say that the terms text and discourse are used in a variety of ways by different linguists and researchers: there is a considerable number of theoretical approaches of Discourse Analysis. Nunan (1993:20) states that text refers to a written or taped record of a piece of communication whereas discourse refers to the piece of communication in context. There are two types of context. The first is the linguistic context – the language that surrounds or accompanies the piece of discourse under analysis. The second is the non-linguistic or experiential context within which the discourse takes place. Non-linguistic contexts include: the type of communicative event (for example: joke, story, lecture, greeting); the topic; the purpose of the event; the setting, including location, time of day, season of year and physical aspects of the situation (for example, size of room, arrangement of furniture); the participants and the relationships between them; and the background knowledge and assumptions underlying the communicative event. Basically, people produce texts to get a message across, to express ideas and beliefs, to explain something, to get other people to do certain things or to think in a certain way, and so on. Moreover, Widdowson (2007:7) says that the term discourse is taken to refer to what a text producer meant by a text and what a text means to the receiver.

### **Cohesion**

Every day we meet words in our surrounding. When these words are put together to communicate a meaning, a piece of text is created. When we speak or write to communicate a message, we are constructing a text. When we read, listen, or view a piece of text, we are interpreting its meaning. But, not all sentences are interesting, relevant, or suitable; one cannot just put any sentences after another and hope that it will mean something. People do not always speak or write in complete sentences, yet they still succeed in communicating. Halliday and Hasan (1976:1-2), text is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole. In addition, something is called a text when it is meaningful. It is a piece of language in use. It is not a grammatical unit, like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size. In this case, the text should be meaningful, unity and appropriate to its context.

According to Eggins (1994: 87) there are two dimension of the text: contextual properties and internal properties. Contextual properties can be called as coherence, while internal properties as coherence. Coherence refers to the way a group of clauses or sentences relate to the context. Moreover Gerot and Wignell state that cohesion refers to the resources within language that provide continuity in a text, over and above that provided by clause structure and clause complexes. Since in the systemic model we recognize two levels to context (context of culture, i.e. genre, and context of situational or registerial coherence, and generic coherence.

The text is thus a unit of discourse, a semantic unit. Although a text is physically made up of grammatical units (clauses, phrases, etc), the text is not just a collection of clauses. Text has the relationship with texture, created through patterns of cohesion. This is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text. In addition Halliday and Hasan (1976: 2), texture is the property of 'being a text'. In talking about texture, the concept that is most important is that of a tie. Basically, the term tie implies a relation. We cannot have a tie without two members, and the members cannot appear in a tie unless there is a relation between them. The concept of a tie makes it possible to analyse a text in terms of its cohesive properties, and give systematic account of its patterns of texture. Dwi Nurcahyo, A (2006: 2), it is important of paying good attention to the cohesiveness aspect to help students produce good writing.

The simplest and most general forms of cohesive relations are 'equal' and 'and': identity of reference, and conjoining. Cohesive devices are the other name of types of cohesion. They are non-structural relations which work to help a text hang together. Halliday and Hasan (1976) classified five different types of cohesion: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. Then, these have been further refined and the five categories have been reduced to four, with substitution being seen as a sub-category of ellipsis. In this paper, I will discuss one by one.

### **1. Reference**

The cohesive resource of reference refers to how the writer/speaker introduces participants and then keeps track of them once they are in the text. Participants are the people, places and things that get talked about in the text. There are two different ways in which reference items can function within a text, namely endophoric reference and exophoric

reference. Endophoric reference is divided by two, anaphoric reference and cataphoric reference. Anaphoric reference points the reader or listener 'backwards' to a previously mentioned entity, process or state of affairs. While cataphoric reference points the reader or listener forward-it draws us further into a text in order to identify the elements to which the reference items refer. On the other hand, exophoric reference is a reference which is interpreted in immediate context of situation (Halliday and Hasan, 1989). It is a form of context-dependence. It makes no contribution to the cohesion of text. Additionally, it does not constitute a cohesive tie (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 34, 53, 57).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify three sub-types of referential cohesion- personal, demonstrative and comparative. These various devices enables the writer or speaker to make multiple references to people and things within a text.

a. Personal reference items are expressed through pronouns and determiners.

For example: Cindy is a beautiful girl. **She** is an Elementary school student.

The word she refers to Cindy. The word *she* is a personal reference and considered as anaphoric reference. This pronoun is preceded by certain person *Cindy*.

b. Demonstrative reference is expressed through determiners and adverbs.

These items can represent a single word or phrase, or much longer chunks of text-ranging across several paragraphs or even several pages.

For example: Recognizing that this country had to change, Gorbachev could have become a cautious modernizer in the Chinese fashion, promoting economic reform and sponsoring new technology while holding firm against political change. **This** did not happen.

The word this is demonstrative reference.

c. Comparative reference is expressed through adjective and adverbs and serves to compare items within a text in terms of identity or similarity.

For example: A: Would you like these toys?

B: No, I'd like **the other toys**.

## 2. Substitution and Ellipsis

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976: 88) substitution and ellipsis can be thought of in simplest terms as process within the text: substitution as the replacement of one item by another, and ellipsis as the omission of an item. These two types of cohesion are essentially

the same. Substitution and ellipsis are divided by three categories, nominal, verbal and clausal.

a. Nominal substitution

There are some new purses on the table. This **one** is mine.

b. Verbal substitution

A: Romy says you eat too much.

B: So **do** you!

c. Clausal substitution

A: Is it going to be cloudy?

B: It says so.

d. Nominal ellipsis

Mr Raymond and Mrs Farra are teacher. Both (0) are smart.

e. Verbal ellipsis

A: Have you been doing your homework?

B: Yes, I have (0).

f. Clausal ellipsis

A: Why did you only buy three bowls? She needed four.

B: She didn't inform me.

### 3. Conjunction

Conjunction is not a device for reminding the reader of previously mentioned entities, action and state of affairs (Nunan: 1993). It signals relationships that can only be fully understood through reference to other parts of the text. Gerot and Wignell (1994: 180) state that conjunction is the semantic system whereby speakers relate clauses in terms of temporal sequence, consequence, comparison and addition. So, there are four different types of conjunction – temporality, causality/consequential, addition and adversity/contrast. Temporal relations connect clauses depending on whether the actions they encode take place at the same time or one after the other. Consequential relations connect clauses as cause and effect. Comparative relations pick out contrast and similarities between clauses. Additive relations simply add or substitute extra alternative clauses to a text.

Example of each type follow.

And in all this time he met no one (additive)

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<u>Yet</u> he was hardly aware of being tired	(adversative)
<u>So</u> by night time the valley was far below him	(causal)
<u>Then</u> , as dusk fell, he sat down to rest	(temporal)

#### 4. Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion occurs when two words in a text are semantically related in some way – in other words, they are related in terms of their meaning. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the two major categories of lexical cohesion are reiteration and collocation. Furthermore, they divide reiteration into four types, namely repetition, synonym, superordinate and general word.

Example of each type follow.

Repetition

Kudus town is located in Central Java. There are many factories there, so it is called industry town.

Synonym

You could try reversing the car up the slope. The incline isn't all that steep.

Superordinate

There are many flowers in my garden, such as rose, jasmine, orchid etc.

General word

A: Did you try the chicken soup?

B: Yes, I like the thing much.

Collocation

Collocation can cause major problems for discourse analysis because it includes all those items in a text that are semantically related. In some cases this makes it difficult to decide for certain whether a cohesive relationship exists or not. For example, the word *neighbor* and *scoundrel* are not related at all. However, in the following text they are synonyms.

*My neighbor has just let one of his trees fall into my garden.*

*And the scoundrel refuses to pay for the damage he has caused*

Nunan (1993: 30)

#### Research Methodology



The research design used in this study is descriptive qualitative. The data of the research are taken from the results of students' analysis test of discourse analysis class. The data are analyzed based on the concept of cohesion proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). I used my discourse class in getting the data. There are fifteen students' analysis tests. In obtaining the data, I gave a text to students in the test of discourse analysis class, after that I asked them to analyze based on cohesive devices.

### **Result and discussion**

In analyzing the data, I use cohesion theory of M.A.K Halliday and Ruqiyah Hasan. According to them, there are five cohesive devices (types of cohesion), those are *reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion*.

This is the text gave to the students to analyze. In this paper, I focus on my discourse analysis class. Basically, I gave the text to the students and I asked them to analyze based on cohesive devices. In this case, I didn't ask the students to produce a text because it's not a writing class.

### **This is the text.**

#### **Dad's New Role**

Dr. Elizabeth Lee is the medical director in charge of communicate diseases in the county where she lives. She enjoys her challenging career and prefers it too staying at home with her two young children. Her husband is Jack Lee. Both realize the importance of parents' active participation in their children's lives. Therefore, they decided that one of them should stay at home to be a full-time parent.

Jack Lee is one of a growing number of stay-at-home dads. According to a 1996 survey by the Los Angeles Times, 39 percent of the men who responded to the survey indicated that they would be willing to quit their jobs to take care of their children, while their wives became the primary breadwinners. Furthermore, the U.S. Census Bureau reported in 1997 that approximately two million men across the United States have primary responsibility for their children.

Other fathers are telecommunicating or have part-time jobs that allow them to spend more time with their kids. For example, telecommuting gives advertising executive Ron Stemple time to take his children to school and pick them up. He can also drive them to their after-school activities. A 1997 study by job placement agency Executive Search, Inc. reported that between 57 and 78 percent of men would be willing to reduce their work hours and their salaries to spend more time with their children.

According to the experts, Dad does just as well as Mom at parenting. As Joan Grant of the New York Department of Social Services stated, "Men are just as capable as women of taking care of children's needs, including preparing nutritious meals; dispensing love, discipline, and Band-Aids; and providing a happy home environment." These ones've done by Dad.

Before I give the students' analysis, I will give a description of cohesive devices in the text. There are 35 types of cohesive analysis in the text.

a. Reference

Paragraph 1

I found 4 types of personal reference; those are *she*, *her husband*, *it* and *they*. The word *she* in sentence (2) refers to Dr. Elizabeth. The word *it* in sentence (2) refers to challenging career. The word *they* refers to Dr. Elizabeth and Jack Lee. It concludes that the word *she it*, and *they* are called anaphoric. While the word *her husband* in the sentence (3) refers to Jack Lee, and it is called cataphoric.

Paragraph 2

The word *they* and *their* presuppose the men who responded, while the word *their* refers to two million men across the United States.

Paragraph 3

The word *them* and *their* refer to other fathers. *His children* and *he* explain Ron Stemple. While the word *them* presupposes Ron's children and the word *their* (work hours, salaries and children) refers to 57 and 78 percent of men.

Paragraph 4

There are no reference found in paragraph 4

b. Substitution and Ellipsis

When we read paragraph 1, we can find the word *both*, it is a kind nominal ellipsis. So, the complete sentence without ellipsis would be:

Both (Dr. Elizabeth and Jack Lee) realize the importance of parents' active participation in their children's lives.

The phenomenon of substitution in the text can be found in the word ones. The word *ones* in the last sentence substitutes *taking care of children's needs, including preparing nutritious meals: dispensing love, discipline, and Band-Aids; and providing a happy home environment*.

c. Conjunction

There are five types conjunctions in the text, i.e. *therefore*, *while*, *furthermore*, *for example* and *and*. In paragraph 1, the conjunctive element *therefore* is regarded as causal conjunction. *While* in paragraph 2 is considered as adversative conjunction. Concerning the word *furthermore* in paragraph 2, it performs additive conjunction. The word *for example* introduces additive conjunction. Finally, the conjunctive element *and* is also a kind of additive conjunction. It is repeated four times.

d. Lexical cohesion

Repetition can be found in paragraph 1 using the word *home*. I also found the word *parent* in paragraph sentence 4 is repeated in the sentence 5. In paragraph 2, the words *men* and *children* are repeated. In addition, the word *dad* in the last paragraph is repeated twice.

The phenomenon of synonymy can be seen from the words *father-dad*, *mother-mom* and *kids-children*.

While antonymy can be seen from the text in words *husband-wives*, *men-women* and *dad-mom*.

There is only one example of super ordinate in the text; *medical director-career*.

After analyzing the text, I measure the students' analysis by using table.

No	The number of											Total
	R	S & E		C				L C				
		S	E	Add	Adv	C	T	R	S	A	S	
1.	12	1	1	4	-	-	0	5	1	1	-	25
2.	8	-	1	5	-	-	0	3	1	-	1	19

3.	10	-	-	4	-	-	0	2	1	3	-	20
4.	10	1	-	6	1	1	0	3	3	-	1	26
5.	9	1	-	5	-	-	0	3	2	2	-	22
6.	12	1	1	5	-	-	0	1	1	3	-	24
7.	10	1	-	5	1	1	0	2	1	2	1	24
8.	12	1	-	5	-	1	0	2	-	-	-	21
9.	7	1	1	5	-	-	0	2	2	2	1	21
10.	10	1	1	7	1	1	0	3	2	3	1	30
11.	10	1	1	5	1	1	0	3	2	2	1	27
12.	11	1	1	4	1	-	0	4	2	1	1	26
13.	7	-	-	4	1	1	0	3	2	-	-	18
14.	12	1	1	5	-	-	0	1	1	3	-	24
15.	8	1	1	5	-	-	0	2	2	2	1	21

Notes:

R : Reference

S : Substitution

E : Ellipsis

C : Conjunction (Add: Additive, Adv: Adversative, C: Causal, T: Temporal)

LC : Lexical Cohesion (R: Repetition, S: Synonymy, A: Antonymy, S: Superordinate)

From the table above, I classified the number of cohesive devices into some categories:

Excellent : 35 – 33

Very good : 32 – 30

Good : 29 – 24

Fair : 23 – 21

Poor : 20 – 0

The data shows that the student number 10 had found 30 types of cohesive devices. It means that he has the highest score in analyzing a text, while the student number 13 had found 18 types of cohesive devices. She considered getting the lowest score. So, in analyzing cohesive devices in a text we have to think deeply so that there will be no elements missing.

## Conclusion

To know the level of cohesiveness of writing, we have to analyze how many cohesive devices used in the text.

Based on the discussion, the conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. The use of reference on the students' analysis is the most occurrences of cohesive devices. It can be seen that all of the students can easily analyze the reference.
2. Substitution and Ellipsis are the element that not all of the students can master well.
3. The third part of cohesive devices is conjunction. In analyzing the types of conjunction, the students do not pay more attention. Some of the students feel difficult to differentiate types of conjunction.
4. The most common occurrences of Lexical Cohesion is Repetition.

### **Pedagogical Implication**

As teachers/lecturers, we should notice that a clear understanding of the cohesive devices between sentences may help to explain one of the ways in which foreign students sometimes write supposedly connected sentences, each of which is well-formed in itself, but which somehow add up to very strange discourse. This paper is one of the references in teaching English since by asking the students to analyze the text, the teachers/lecturers will not get more difficulties in asking the students to produce a good text. In other words, it will be the way to open the students' mind in analyzing cohesive devices before they produce a good text. So, it is the development of writing skills.

For the students, hopefully it will give guidance in producing text since cohesion is a necessary though not a sufficient condition for the creation of text. Producing a text is an important part in writing.

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