

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Discourse is a complete unit of language that can be in the form of written or oral (speech). Written discourse is in the form of sentences or paragraphs, but it also can be in phrases or words, for example, discourse in the form of advertisement. Written discourse is commonly in books, novels, magazines, essays, etc. When discussing a reasonable discourse, cohesion and coherence will never be missed. Cohesion and coherence are the points of an ideal discourse. A good discourse should contain a text-forming device called a cohesive device to make the text seem to hang together or be cohesive. Halliday and Hasan (1976) divided it into five types of cohesive devices: substitution, ellipsis, reference, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Moreover, a discourse should also be coherent, which means the words or sentences should be logically consistent, and the readers could understand them easily, in short, the words or sentences being used should make sense.

Concerning written discourse, educational writing products in Indonesian High Schools are still considered low. As a result, students have low skills of writing ability, and one of the reasons is the lack of knowledge in using cohesive devices. As a result, they find difficulties in creating cohesive and coherent text. Regarding this matter, studying and applying cohesive devices will lead to students' writing skills improvement.

The previous study by Bahaziq (2016) emphasized the use of cohesive devices by analysing a student's essay on the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) sample examination. The result showed the cohesion of the essay and demonstrated the grammatical and lexical cohesion devices. The most grammatical devices used that showed up in the essay were references and conjunctions, while the lexical cohesion devices had only a little evidence. The researcher concluded that the essay is quite cohesive, but some parts still need improvement.

Johnson (2017) in his study stated that to draw connections between ideas, the writer is responsible for using cohesive devices, either through the use of explicit grammar devices or vocabulary devices. The easiest cohesive device to teach and learn is the conjunction, a type of grammatical cohesion, while the hardest is lexical cohesion.

Another previous study by Trisnaningtum, Alek, and Hidayat (2019) examined grammatical cohesion devices used in college students' academic writing essays. Their study aimed to determine the kinds of grammatical cohesion devices that college students commonly use to write their essays. The researchers used Halliday & Hasan (1976) grammatical cohesion devices framework to analyse the data. Based on the research, the researchers found that the most used grammatical cohesion devices in students' essays are references, with 53.53%. They also concluded that college students are only familiar with various subtypes of grammatical cohesion devices.

With the background stated, the researcher would like to conduct a part of discourse analysis that investigates cohesive devices used in students' writing. I would also like to describe the specifications of the cohesive devices found in students' writing. Along with applying the right methods, conducting a cohesion analysis on students' writing would be a proper way to do this since the results could give both teachers and students insight into what needs to be fixed or added in terms of teaching cohesive devices to develop a better writing production later. Descriptive and analytical studies are used in this paper, with Halliday and Hasan's framework used to identify and analyse cohesive devices found in students' writing. This research would be different since the data will be taken from high school students' writing, and the location will also be different. This research will be done by taking data from one of the high school in Yogyakarta.

## **B. The Identification of the Problem**

To identify the problems, the researcher has observed a high school' teaching and learning process in Yogyakarta and as stated in the background of the study, the research problems can be formulated as follows:

1. Students' difficulty in creating cohesive and coherence writing products

Indonesian students' ability to create writing products is still low. The reason that may underlie the previous statement is that students are not able to create cohesive written texts. English educators in Indonesia could find this problem

almost in every school. Thus, educators should focus on this problem and find ways to shape students' ability to write cohesively.

2. Students' low skills of writing ability because of the lack of knowledge in using cohesive devices

The key to creating a cohesive text is to be able to place its cohesive devices to the right use. One of the reasons that may cause students' low skills of writing ability is the lack of knowledge in using cohesive devices. Students are not familiar with its types and use, so in teaching writing, it is important for teachers to introduce students to cohesive devices.

3. The need to study and analysing cohesive devices of students' writing is the other solution to improve students' writing skills besides applying teaching writing techniques

With some difficulties students find in their writing, educators must be able to overcome the issues with the right solutions. Therefore, besides applying teaching writing techniques, studying and analysing cohesive devices in students' writing may be a good option to improve students' writing skills. Furthermore, studying and analysing cohesive devices in students' writing may make educators and students aware of the use of cohesive devices to develop a better and cohesive written text.

### **C. The Delimitation of the Problem**

Conducting research to analyse all students in a high school would be difficult to hold. Therefore this research only covers cohesive devices analysis on

one class of grade 10 students in the high school. The subjects of this study are also limited, the researcher would only focus on the students' writing products of Analytical Exposition text.

#### **D. Formulation of the Problem**

The formulation of the problems is stated in research questions below:

1. What common cohesive device types frequently use in high school students' academic writing?
2. What kinds of cohesive devices specifications are found in the high school students' academic writing?

#### **E. Objectives of the Study**

In line with the research questions stated, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out what common cohesive devices types that are frequently used in high school students' academic writing.
2. To explore the cohesive specifications found in the high school students' academic writing.

#### **F. Significance of the Study**

This research is expected to give a valuable contribution to both theoretical and practical significance.

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to provide more insight and awareness to using cohesive devices in writing programs.

## 2. Practical Significance

Practical significance refers to how useful the research is, it concerns with the effect of research to the real world.

- a. For the researcher: This research practically gives valuable significance to the researcher herself. This study allows the researcher to gain deeper knowledge on the cohesive devices topic to later analyse students' writing with the proper theory and framework.
- b. For English Teachers: the results of this study could give English Teachers awareness of the importance of teaching cohesive devices to improve students' writing cohesion. With the result of the most frequently used cohesive devices found in students' writing, teachers could consider more on teaching wider cohesive devices types in order to reach students' writing to be cohesive.
- c. For the students: the results of this study give students awareness of the importance use of cohesive devices to reach cohesion in the writing products. By understanding kinds and specifications of the devices other than the most frequently used one, students are expected to be able to produce a cohesive writing.

d. For other researchers: this study is expected to inspire other researchers who are interested in conducting a similar research topic. This study might be a reference and give them insight and ideas to later hold a better study.