COHESION OF PROFESSIONAL WRITINGS
AS FOUND IN THE JAKARTA POST

Katharina Rustipa
Stikubank University

Abstract

Coherence is a key concept for text comprehension and text clarity. One feature that contributes to coherence is cohesion which is realized in cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers. The current study is about cohesion in professional writings found in *The Jakarta Post*. Its purposes are to find out the cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers and to analyze how the cohesion significantly contributes to the coherence. The study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. The data are 4 professional writings taken from *The Jakarta Post*. The research results show that the average of the textual cohesion used in the professional writings is less than 50 %. It means that the textual cohesion is not sufficiently used. This also means that the cohesion used in the professional writings does not contribute so significantly to the texts' coherence. Based on the conclusion above, it is suggested that the students be reminded the importance of textual cohesion to contribute coherence. The teacher should teach the students what textual and point-to-point cohesion is.

Key words: *cohesive devices, metadiscourse markers, textual cohesion, point-to-point cohesion*

A. Introduction

In this era where technology develops fast, people are demanded to be literate in all aspects of life. This development offers a significant challenge since people involve in the use of English as an international language, particularly the written type. By using the written texts, people can express their ideas through mass media, they can communicate and respond to what they read or hear. Through the written texts, especially from internet, people can get abundant advantages, e.g. information, knowledge. Thus, English written text is inevitably faced by the people and this becomes problem for people who are not good English users like most Indonesians.

The importance of writing is put forward by McNamara (2010) as follows: "Writing well is a significant challenge for students and professionals." Light (2001) states that for professionals, writing skills are essential for their day-to-day work and critical for entry and promotion in their disciplines. Writing provides the ability to articulate ideas, argue opinion, and synthesize multiple perspectives. Geiser and Studly (2001) state that for students, writings are among the best predictors of success in course work during their years of study. However, comprehending and producing written texts is difficult for many people.

Cameron (2007) finds out that writing skill is not only difficult for the students but also for scientists, writers and editors. Some English-as-a -second-language writers are able to write in English with ease, but a great many spend countless hours struggling to express themselves at the level of sophistication of which they are capable in their native languages. Similar with Cameron, Almaden states that writing is a highly

complex process for novice and non novice writers alike since it involves advanced skills that include critical thinking, logical development, and coherence of ideas (2006).

Tangkiengsirisih (2010) finds out that even advanced learners at a high proficiency level of English have problem with academic writing at the level of text organization and cohesion, even though they have started learning English since elementary school level throughout the school years. Tangkiengsirisih further explains that coherent writing is badly needed for professionals and university students since it plays a crucial role in disseminating information.

According to Storrer (2002), authors should design a coherent text that enables the readers to detect the relationships linking individual text constituents. Coherence is a key concept for text comprehension and text clarity. One feature that contributes to coherence is cohesion. Based on this reason, I'm interested in investigating the cohesion of the English texts written by Indonesian professionals. We term those texts as professional writings as stated by Simpson (2000) that texts written by writers who are expert in their fields are called professional writing. It is assumed that the writing is produced by experienced or matured writers. Tran (2007) states that the articles or writings are comparable to college writing, and they are valid choice to represent advanced writings.

The purpose of the study is to find out the cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers. Afterwards, the cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers will be classified into textual and point-to-point. The results of the study may provide teaching experts with beneficial information about the cohesive devices and the metadiscourse markers used in English articles written by Indonesian professionals. This information may be taken into consideration for developing English teaching materials and strategies to teach English to Indonesian learners, especially for teaching advanced writing.

B. Review of related literature
1. Cohesion

According to Halliday and Hasan, whether a set of sentences constitutes a text or not depends on cohesive relationships within and between sentences (1976). Cohesion deals with the bottom up elements that help generate texts, accounting for how pronouns, demonstrative, articles and other markers signal textual co-reference in written and oral discourse. It also accounts for how conventions of substitution and ellipsis allow speakers / writers to indicate co-classifications and to avoid unnecessary repetition. The use of conjunctions (e.g. one, but, however) to make explicit links between propositions in discourse is another important cohesive tie (Halliday and Hasan, 1989 : 15). Cohesion, then, is the surface links between sentences of a text that holds the text together; and the links beween sentences are displayed in terms of cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers. This cohesive relationship in a text is referred to texture.

Concerning the concept of cohesion, some scholars state as follows:
Cohesion is the way words formally hang together in sentences and the like, coherence is content-based connectedness between the words that make them produce sense (Mey, 2001: 133)

> Cohesion has to do with relations between surface linguistic form, whereas coherence refers to relations between communicative acts (Stubb, 1983: 126-7)

> Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 4)

From the definitions above, we can conclude that cohesion establishes local relations between syntactic items.

2. Cohesive devices

Cohesive devices can be divided into four groups: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 13; Brown and Yule, 1983: 191). They will be explained below:

a. Reference

Reference refers to how the writer / speaker introduces participants and then keep track of them once they are in the text. The two important concepts in reference are the referring expressions and referents. Referring expressions are words which are used to refer to other words or things, whether it is in the text or outside the text, while the word referred to is called referent. If the referring expression is used to refer to something outside the text, it is called exophora. On the other hand, if it is used to refer to the words in the text it is called endophora. The concept of endophora is classified into anaphora and cataphora. Anaphora is the referring expression which is used to refer backward, i.e. to words which have been used in the text, while cataphora refers forward to words coming later. The reference can be subdivided into: personal pronouns (pronominals), demonstrative reference, comparative reference.

Personal reference (pronominals) is reference by means of category of person/ noun which is classified into pronouns/ personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, we, they, it, one), possesive determiners (my, your, his, her, our, their, its, one's), possesive pronouns (mine, you, his, hers, ours, theirs, it). Demonstrative reference is the reference by means of location, time, on the scale of proximity consisting of nominative demonstrative (this, that, these, those), circumstantial demonstratives (there, here, now, then), and definite article "the". Comparative reference is indirect reference by means of identity or similarity. The words used to express comparative reference are the same, similar, such, different, equal, likewise, so, better, more, less, otherwise.

b. Substitution

Substitution refers to the replacement of one item by another. A substitute is a sort of counter which is used in place of the repetition of an item. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 88) state that the distinction between substitution and reference is that substitution is a relation in the wording rather than in the meaning. There are three types of substitution; nominal, verbal, and clausal. Examples:
1) Nominal. A: I will buy a red car.
        B: I will buy a blue one.
2) Verbal. A: Does Sandy come?
        B: No, but Sella does.

3) Clausal. A: He is going to pass the test.

        B: I hope so.

c. Ellipsis

     Ellipsis refers to the omission of an item. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 142) point out that substitution and ellipsis are very similar to each other. Ellipsis is simply 'substitution by zero'. The underlying point of view in discussing ellipsis is that it is 'something left unsaid' but it can be understood. Like the types of substitution, ellipsis is also classified into three types, i.e. nominal ellipsis, verbal ellipsis, and clausal ellipsis. Examples:

1) Nominal. A: I can meet five clients.

        B: I can only meet two (clients).

2) Verbal.　 A: Have you visited Andi?

        B: Yes, I have (visited Andi).

3) Clausal. A: What did you write last night?

        B: (I wrote) an article.

d. Conjunction

     The cohesive pattern of conjunction refers to how the writer or speaker creates and expresses logical relationships between the parts of a text. Gerot and Wignel (1995: 180) suggest that conjunction is the semantic system whereby speakers relate clauses in terms of temporal sequence, consequence, comparison and addition. Eggins (1994: 105), following Halliday's statement (1985), states that there are three main types of conjunctive relations, namely: *elaboration, extension* and *enhancement*. Elaboration is a relationship of restatement or clarification, whereby one sentence is (presented as) a re-saying or representation of a previous sentence. Extension is a relationship of either addition or variation. Enhancement refers to ways by which one sentence can extend on the meanings of another, in terms of dimensions such as time, comparison, cause, condition, or concession. Besides being divided into the above types of relation, conjunctions are also divided into additive, adversative, causal, temporal conjunctions.

Additive conjunction is the 'and' relation as it is embodied in the form of coordination. It includes *and, in addition, moreover, or, further, furthermore, besides,* etc. Adversative conjunction is contrary to expectation. It covers *but, however, on the her hand, nevertheless*, *still* etc. Causal conjunction is expressed by *so, therefore, consequently, for this reason, it follows from*, *accordingly*, etc. Temporal conjunction includes *then, after that, an hour later, finally, eventually, next time*, etc.

e. Lexical Cohesion

     The cohesive resource of lexical relations refers to how the writer/speaker uses lexical items and event sequences to relate the text consistently to its area of focus (Eggins, 1994: 101). It is the link between sentences using content words. It is used to refer to the recurrent uses of the same content/ related words in order to maintain a sense of integratedness of a text. Lexical cohesion falls into two types : reiteration and collocation.

     In general reiteration is divided into five types. They are repetition, synonym, hyponym, antonym. Repetition is a word or words, which has been stated, and then it is repeated again (or stated more than one time). Synonyms are words, which have equal or similar meaning. Hyponym is a semantic relation between specific and general meaning, between general class and its sub-classes. The item referring to the general class is called super-ordinate , and those referring to its sub-classes are called hyponym.

Antonyms *are* when two (or more) lexical items encode opposite meanings. Collocation is a relation of words that co-occur naturally.

3. Relevance of cohesion

Blackmore (1987), Moreno (2003) state that cohesion establishes the 3 kinds of relevance (the relationship between propositions), i.e. 1) relevance of content, 2) relevance of wording, 3) relevance of relational function.

Relevance of content is built when the interpretation of the current sentence (text of the moment) is affected by the interpretation of the meaning derived from larger fragments of text, e.g. sentences, clauses. Sinclair (1993) in Moreno (2003) terms this mechanism as deictic acts, which are textual in nature. The cohesive devices included in these phenomena are such as reference items and lexical cohesive items, sometimes used in combination. This type of cohesion plays significant role in establishing relevance or coherence in a text.

Relevance of wording takes place when rather than recovery the semantic content of the whole preceding coherence unit, the reader just needs to find the words used in it in order to establish the content of the current sentence. The cohesion included in this framework is called point-to-point cohesion. It includes lexical cohesion: recurrence of a word or phrase, substitution, ellipsis. This type of cohesion is not regarded as textual in nature and does not significantly contribute to relevance or coherence.

Relevance of relational function occurs when to interpret the proposition of a coherence unit (sentence/ clause) depends on the other coherence unit. The cohesive devices used to signal this relevance or relation are conjunction, nominal, verbal, adverbial and other items. Sinclair (1993) in Moreno (2003) terms this mechanism as logical acts, serving as powerful textual cohesion.

From all of the explanation above, it is clear that types of cohesion that significantly contribute to coherence of a text and that facilitate the readers in comprehending the text are textual cohesion comprising deictic acts and logical acts. Point-to-point cohesion doesn't significantly contribute to coherence.

4. Metadiscourse Markers

Metadiscourse markers are means by which propositional content is made coherent, intelligible, and persuasive to a particular audience. Lee (2002) states that metadiscourse plays more important role to create coherence in some genres such as persuasive writing and extended essays, but it may be less important in other genres such as personal letters. The importance of metadiscourse is also stated by Vanda Kopple (2002). He believes that textual metadiscourse shows how we link and relate individual propositions so that they form a cohesive and coherent text and how individual elements of those propositions make sense in conjunction with other elements of the text.

Unlike propositional and interpersonal meanings, which orient to extra-linguistic phenomena, the textual function of metadisdourse is intrinsic to language and exists to construe both propositional and interpersonal aspects into linear and coherent whole. Hyland and Tse (2004) state that textual metadiscourse function is realized by metadiscourse signals/ markers such as conjunctions, adverbials, metaphorical expressions.

Lee (2002), Hyland and Tse (2004) classifies metadiscourse markers as follows:

Category	Function	Examples
Transitions/ Logical	Express semantic	in addition/ but/thus/and/therefore/however/as

connectives	relation between main clauses	a consequence
Frame markers/Illocution markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences, or text stages	finally/firstly/secondly/to conclude/my purpose here is to/to give an example/to sum up/I state again that/My question is/What I am emphasizing is
Endophoric markers/reminders	Refer to information in other parts of the text	noted above/see Fig./in section 2
Evidentials	Refer to source of information from other texts	according to X/(Y, 2000)/Z states
Code glosses	Help readers grasp functions of ideational material, providing additional information or examples for words or propositions that the writer predicts the reader may find problematic.	namely/e.g./suc as/in other words/by this I mean/X meansY
Booster/certainty markers	Emphasize force or writer's certainty in proposition, express full commitment to the truth-value of the proposition	in fact/definitely/it is clear that/certainly/of course/obviously/I know
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately/I agree/surprisingly/undoubtedly/most importantly/I hope
Engagement markers/commentary	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader, direct address to the reader	consider/note that/you can see that/you may think/you may ask/you may not agree
Hedges	Withold writer's full commitment to proposition, show the lack commitment to the truth-value of the proposition	Can/could/may/might/perhaps/possible/about/I think/I guess/I suppose

Metadiscourse markers. Lee (2002), Hyland and Tse (2004)
Note that there is some overlap bertween cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers because some cohesive devices such as conjunctions are also metadiscourse features.

C. Research method

The study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. It describes the observed phenomena in the form of words rather than numbers. The cohesive devices and the metadiscourse markers of the English articles written by Indonesian professionals are identified and analyzed.

The data of the study are 4 articles taken from The Jakarta Post Newspaper. After the data have been collected, the first step taken is the investigator reads and identifies the cohesive devices and the metadiscourse markers of the texts. The second step, the data are analyzed and classified. The cohesive devices and metadiscourse markers are classified into point-to-point, textual. The level or proportion of textual cohesion is compared with the use of point-to-point cohesion.

The key instrument of the study is the investigator herself. She records the data from the raw materials. The recorded data are then reflected upon for further interpretation.

D. Findings and discussion

Four professional writings analyzed in the current study are as follows:

Text 1:
Title: Is fasting during Ramadhan really a healthy ritual? (adopted from The Jakarta Post, Monday August 1, 2011, written by Tommy Dharmawan. The writer graduated from School of Medicine at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta)

Text 2:
Title: Prosecuting the death penalty (adopted from The Jakarta Post Thursday, February 4, 2010, written by Al Araf. The writer is program director of Imparsial (the Indonesian Human Rights Monitor)

Text 3:
Title: Irony of an excessive women's emancipation (adopted from The Jakarta Post Saturday April 10, 2010, written by Dyna Rochmyaningsih- Jakarta. The author is a science writer)

Text 4:
Title: Don't cry Indonesia (adopted from The Jakarta Post Friday, July 24, 2009, written by Retno L.P. Marsudi. The writer is an Indonesian diplomat)

After analyzing the four texts, it is found out that the textual and poin-to-point cohesions found in the professional writings are as follows:
1. Textual cohesion
a. Deictic acts
1) Reference + lexical
e.g. In Islam, a Muslim refrains from food, drink, sex and tobacco from pre-dawn (*imsak*) until dusk (*maghrib*). This period involves a shift in the pattern of intake from daytime to the hours of darkness (Text 1).

2) Reference

e.g. This humanity argument has become the foundation of the importance of respecting the values of human rights. <u>This</u> is what has pushed many countries to correct their death penalty policy and erase it from <u>their</u> law books (Text 2).

b. Logical acts
1) Temporal
e.g. <u>Until now</u>, the reason for the state to still apply the death penalty is for reasons of effective discouragement (Text 2).

2) Causal
<u>If</u> fasting is conducted like a calorie-restricted diet program, Muslims can acquire several advantages for their own health (Text 1)

3) Continuative
e.g. <u>Well</u>, this information could be seen as good news,...(Text 3)
4) Additive
e.g. Currently, there are a total of 119 people that have been sentenced to death <u>and</u> most of them are now in the process of legal appeals (Text 2).

5) Adversative
e.g. The sperm cell only provides genetic material,
<u>while</u> the egg provides not only genetic materials but also cytoplasm and mitochondria as the energy source for the new being (Text 3).

6) Code glosses
e.g. The country's work to tackle acts of terror since the year 2000 – when three bombs wrought havoc on Jakarta, followed by bombs in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 – <u>mean</u> the Indonesian authorities have ample experience.

7) Evidentials
e.g. <u>Responses showed</u> that one in four people believed a woman's place was in the home (Text 3).

8) Frame markers
e.g. But <u>let us limit this discussion</u> to the issue of the death penalty (Text 2).
9) Endophoric markers
e.g. <u>As mentioned before</u>, women provide egg cells which consist of cytoplasm and materials (Text 3).

2. Point-to-point cohesiont
1) Reference
e.g. <u>Women</u> can now freely express <u>their</u> talents and interests in many areas (Text 3)
2) Lexical
e.g. Two very prominent theories of aging are the free radical <u>theory</u> and the glycation <u>theory</u>,...(Text 1)

3) Reference + lexical

e.g. ...since in another study, when analyzing people older than 65, those who were underweight had a higher dementia risk than <u>normal or overweight people</u>, while <u>the latter group</u> had a <u>l</u>ower risk regarding the other two conditions (Text 1).

The analysis shows that the total usage of the textual and point-to-point cohesion is as follows

Text	Textual cohesion	Point-to-point cohesion
1	35 percent	65 percent
2	55,5 percent	44,5 percent
3	42 percent	58 percent
4	53 percent	47 percent
Total	185,5	214,5
Average	47 percent	53 percent

Thus, the average of the textual cohesion used in the professional writings found in *The Jakarta Pos*t is less than 50 %. It means that the textual cohesion is not sufficiently used. This also means that the cohesion used in the professional writings found in *The Jakarta Post* does not contribute so significantly to the texts coherence.

E. Conclusion and suggestion
Based on the analysis some conclusions can be drawn as follows:
1. The cohesion used in professional writings found in *The Jakarta Post* are:
a. Deictic acts consisting of Reference + lexical, Reference
b. Logical acts consisting of Temporal, Causal, Continuative, Additive, Adversative, Code glosses, Evidentials, Frame markers, Endophoric markers
c. Point-to-point cohesion consisting of Reference, Lexical, Reference + lexical
2. The average of the textual cohesion used in the professional writings found in *The Jakarta Post* is less than 50 %. It means that the textual cohesion is not sufficiently used. This also means that the cohesion used in the professional writings found in *The Jakarta Post* does not contribute so significantly to the texts coherence.

Based on the conclusion above, suggestion can be put forward as follows: The students should be reminded the importance of textual cohesion to contribute coherence. The teacher should teach the students what textual and point-to-point cohesion is.

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