

## **LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL COHESION IN THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ABSTRACTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to determine the lexical and grammatical cohesion of abstracts of STKIP PGRI Lubuklinggau students. The method used is a qualitative case study. The results showed that students made ungrammatical sentences, wrong prepositions, spelling errors, and improper cohesive devices. In conclusion, lexical and grammatical cohesion is used in the abstract. The repetition of words in lexical cohesion keeps the reader on track, while grammatical cohesion is used to describe available references, conjunctions, substitutions to make a good abstract.

Keywords: Abstract, Grammatical Cohesion, Lexical

### **INTRODUCTION**

The students have to be able to write the text. A text will be important and meaningful if the text can deliver the message to the readers by including cohesion and coherence devices. Text is coherent, which must satisfy two conditions: first is text must be consistent with the context in which it is created, the other is a text must have cohesion; all parts in a text must be connected by cohesive devices. Moreover, Oshima & Hogue (2006) stated that coherence means "hold together." For coherence in writing, the sentence must hold together; the movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth. There must be no sudden jumps. Each sentence should flow smoothly into the next one. Four ways to achieve

coherence: (1) repeat key nouns; (2) use consistent pronouns; (3) use transition signals to link ideas; (4) arrange the ideas in a logical order. There are several ways that texts are made cohesive, and these are cohesive devices (also called linking devices) are traditionally classified at the level of lexis, grammar, and discourse or rhetoric (Thornbury, 2005). The cohesiveness may be made in lexical cohesion through directly repeated words, word families, synonyms, and antonyms; words from the same semantic field, lexical chains, and list; substitution with one/ones. In terms of grammatical cohesion, the cohesiveness may be made from reference (pronouns and articles); substitution of clause elements using so, not, do/does/did; ellipsis of clause elements; conjuncts (also linkers); comparatives, and tense. The last element is rhetorical cohesion that can be made from question-answer form and parallelism.

Students should master the coherence and cohesion items to create a good thesis for those who will graduate from Higher Education (Lismay, 2020). The fact that designing a good text is not easy, students found it challenging to make the text coherent and cohesive. This is in line with Kasriyati et al., (2019) stated that students had enough English vocabulary and did not know the usage of words in sentences. It means that students need more practice in designing good texts. The existence of cohesion and coherence in texts were essential to delivering the message accurately to the readers. This is supported by Anggeraini (2017), who clarified that writing is the key activity in empowering language learners' awareness of the context that affects text writing.

Several studies on the use of coherence and cohesion devices in EFL students' texts have shown that students still face some problems using appropriate elements of coherence and cohesion. First, Suwandi (2016) states that abstracts play a vital role in capturing information from the entire research report, so abstract writing must be concise, and the logical relationship between sentences is clear, coherent, and cohesive. Second, Fitriati & Yonata (2017) concluded that students showed slight weakness in achieving coherent text due to the lack of optimization of cohesive devices, especially conjunctions, to create linkages throughout the sentences in the text. Moreover, Dashela & Mustika (2021) researched analysis of cohesion and coherence in the written text of line today about wedding Kahiyang Ayu and Bobby Nasution. It was used descriptive analysis. In conclusion, the analysis result showed that the text is cohesive but not coherent enough.

Due to the results from previous studies above, students found difficulties in using cohesive devices in writing the text. However, it is the main reason for choosing the students' written abstracts at STKIP PGRI Lubuklinggau to be analyzed by the researchers. The students have to master using cohesive devices to create qualified writing. This idea is based on Dania (2018), which states that cohesive devices are important to create cohesive abstracts. One of the latest studies

that discuss cohesion and coherence in the abstract of the final project written by undergraduate students is the research of Arifin & Farida (2020). The results showed that cohesive devices, themes, and rhemes guided students in writing cohesive and coherent abstracts.

Based on previous research, this study aims to analyze the student abstracts of STKIP-PGRI Lubuklinggau regarding the lexical and grammatical cohesion used by students to make good abstracts. The novelty of this research is to understand the students' ability in writing to make a coherent text. This study provides feedback to lecturers that the discussion on coherence and cohesion should be more intensive to be carried out to improve students' ability to make good and correct abstracts.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of cohesion is semantics; it refers to the relationship between meanings existing in the text and defines it as text. Cohesion occurs when the interpretation of certain elements in the discourse depends on the interpretation of another element. Furthermore, the texts are made cohesive, and these cohesive devices (also called linking devices) are traditionally classified at the level of lexis, grammar, and discourse or rhetoric (Thornbury, 2005).

The first cohesive device is lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion is achieved through the choice of lexical items. It is realized in word repetition and lexical chaining of words that share similar meanings. Lexical cohesion can be divided into direct repetition, words families, synonyms, and antonyms; words from the same semantic field, lexical chains, and list; substitution with one/ones (Thornbury, 2005). Repetition is a repetition of the lingual unit of sound, syllable, word, or sentence part that is considered important to emphasize in an appropriate context (Sumarlam, 2003).

The second is grammatical cohesion. It is divided into reference: pronouns articles; substitution of clause elements using so, not, do/does/did, and so forth; ellipsis of clause elements; conjuncts also called linkers; comparatives and tense. Conjunctions express the logical meaning of elaboration, extension, and enhancement (Eggins, 2004). Items like, however, moreover, firstly, are examples of conjunctions. Furthermore, conjuncts can divide several different categories of logical relation between parts of a text (Thornbury, 2005). The main categories are (1) additive – that is, the relation of addition, exemplification, similarity, emphasis: also, too, as well, moreover, what is more, in addition, for example, likewise, similarity; (2) adversative – that is, relations of contrast or alternative: but, though, however, on the other hand, in fact, alternatively; (3) causal – that is, relations of cause and result: this is why, so, therefore, as a result; (4) temporal – that is, relations of sequence in time: next, then, finally, in the meantime, ever since.

Fitriati & Yonata (2017) classified reference into anaphoric, cataphoric, exophoric, and additional reference called the homophoric reference. The anaphoric reference occurs when the writer refers back to someone or something that has been previously identified to avoid repetition; the cataphoric reference which is the opposite of anaphora: a reference forward as opposed to backward in the discourse; the exophoric reference which is used to describe generics or abstracts found within the text or in the context of the situation. There is an additional reference called the homophoric reference. It is used to refer to something known in the context of culture. The last is rhetorical cohesion. Rhetorical cohesion included question-answer and parallelism.

## RESEARCH METHOD

Researchers used qualitative case studies because the data studied were in the form of phrases or sentences and words. The data were taken randomly from the three abstracts of the students (students X, W, Z in the academic year of 2020) of STKIP-PGRI Lubuklinggau, South Sumatera, Indonesia then it was analyzed to answer how they were used lexical and grammatical cohesion in their writing.

## FINDING

The findings discussed the linguistic evidence related to the cohesion of the texts written by the students. This part showed the cohesive devices used by the students in the form of written abstracts.

### Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the formal and semantic features of a text. The cohesion analysis includes lexical cohesion, grammatical cohesion, and rhetorical cohesion.

### Lexical Cohesion

The lexical cohesion is divided into direct repetition and lexical variations (synonym, antonym, hyponym, and meronym). Table I described some repeated words were found in the students' abstract.

**Table 1.** Direct repetition (1<sup>st</sup> Abstract)

No	Words	Frequency	Line
1	Students	10x	2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11,15
2	Research	5x	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
3	Effective	3x	2, 7, 14
4	Significantly	3x	1, 7, 14
5	Pre-test	3x	5, 8, 9
6	Post-test	3x	5, 8, 10
7	Speaking	3x	2, 7, 14
8	Technique	3x	2, 7, 14

The findings showed that several words are the most repeated in the <sup>first</sup> abstract; the frequent word is *students* (10x).

### Direct repetition (2<sup>nd</sup> Abstract)

The finding showed that some direct repetition was found in the abstract. The data is shown in the following table 2.

**Table 2.** Direct repetition (2<sup>nd</sup> Abstract)

No	Words	Frequency	Line
1	Research	5	1,3,6, 8, 10
2	Reading	5	2, 4, 21
3	Students	4	2, 5, 9, 10
4	Significantly	3	1, 4, 20
5	Pre-test	3	8, 14, 16
6	Post-test	3	8, 14, 16
7	Strategy	3	2, 4, 21

The data shows that the words often used by students are research (5x) and reading (5x).

### Direct repetition (3<sup>rd</sup> Abstract)

The analysis of several repetition words was written in the third abstract will be discussed in the following table.

**Table 3.** Direct repetition (3<sup>rd</sup> Abstract)

No	Repeated Words	Frequency	Line
1	Students	6x	3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 17
2	Comprehension	4x	2, 16
3	This	4x	1, 4, 5, 7
4	Tenth	3x	3, 6, 17
5	Grade	3x	3, 6, 17
6	Study	3x	4, 5, 7

The findings in table 3 show that the word that often appears in the abstract is students (6x). Meanwhile, there were no lexical variations in using a synonym, antonym, hyponym, and meronym in the first, second, and third abstracts. Based on the findings, it may conclude that the writers were not produced lexical variations in writing their abstract.

### Grammatical Cohesion

The second type of analysis is grammatical cohesion. The table below shows the most grammatical cohesion devices found in the abstracts.

**Table 4.** Grammatical Cohesion Devices

No	Types of GC	Example	Frequency	
1	Reference (Pronoun)	1 <sup>st</sup> abstract	It	4x
		2 <sup>nd</sup> abstract	It	3x
		3 <sup>rd</sup> abstract	It	3x
2	Substitution	3 <sup>rd</sup> abstract	So	1x
3	Conjunctions/Linkers	1 <sup>st</sup> abstract	And	5x
			Or	1x
			In Addition	1x
		2 <sup>nd</sup> abstract	And	4x
			Or	1x
			Therefore	2x
		3 <sup>rd</sup> abstract	And	3x
			Or	1x
			First	1x
			Second	1x
		On The Other Hand	1x	
4	Tense	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , third abstracts	Simple Past tense	

The first part of grammatical cohesion is a reference. The number of references found in the first abstract is 4, while the second abstract is 3, and the third abstract is 3. The sentences can be found as follow: *It could be seen from the students' score in pre-test and post-test; It means  $t_{obtained}$  was higher than  $t_{table}$ ; it was significantly effective to teach speaking by using elicitation technique to the eighth-grade students.* The second part analyzes the substitution of clause elements using *so, not, do/does/did*. There was evidence found in the third abstract using *so*, and the sentence can be seen: *So, it meant that it was significantly effective to teach reading comprehension by using Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy to the tenth-grade students.* The next part of grammatical cohesion is conjunctions/linkers. From the first abstract was found seven additive conjunctions (*and, or, in addition*); the second abstract used five additive conjunction (*and, or*), and two causal conjunctions (*therefore*); the third abstract used four additive conjunctions (*and, or*), two temporal conjunctions (*first, second*), and one adversative conjunction (*on the other hand*). The last part of grammatical cohesion is tense used in the written abstracts. All the sentences were used the simple past tense.

The first abstract, ungrammatical sentences and spelling mistakes were found in lines 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 15. For example, in line 2, incorrect preposition use (*it was significantly effective to teaching*), should be (*it was significantly effective to teach*); line 4, passive voice sentence (*the sample of the research was 38 students taken...*), should be (*the sample of the research was 38 students who were taken...*); line 6, (*by used oral test*), should be (*by using oral test*); line 7, the use of possessive (*students*), it should be (*students'*); line 9, (*the average of the student's score*), should be (*the average of the students' score*); line 10, missing the

comma (*Meanwhile the students' average score*), should be (*Meanwhile, the students' average score*; line 11, passive voice sentence (*the students' average score in post-test was 88 achieve by three students*), should be (*the students' average score in post-test was 88 achieved by three students*); line 15, missing the hyphen (*eighth-grade students*), should be (*eighth-grade students*).

Second abstract, in lines 1, 10, 12, 17, 6, 22, some mistakes were identified. For instance, in line 1, spelling mistake (*Is there any significant effect*), should be (*is there any significant effect*); line 10, passive voice (*student was taken by cluster random sampling*), it should be (*students who were taken by cluster random sampling*); line 12, (*the data were analyzed three through three techniques...*), should be (*the data were analyzed through three techniques...*); line 17, missing the comma (*based on the hypothesis testing the researcher got...*), should be (*based on the hypothesis testing, the researcher got...*); line 6, (*In this research the researcher formulated two hypotheses*), should be (*In this research, the researcher formulated two hypotheses*); missing the article can be found in line 22 (*in academic year*), should be (*in the academic year*); missing the hyphen line 22 (*eighth grade students*), should be (*eighth-grade students*).

In the third abstract, the spelling mistakes were found in lines 1, 2, and 16. Line 1, (*iseffective*), should be (*is effective*); (*Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD)*), should be (*Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD)*); line 2, 16 (*teachreading*) should be (*teach reading*). While ungrammatical sentences can be found in line 16 (*it was significantly effective to teach reading comprehension by using comprehension Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy*), it should be (*it was significantly effective to teach reading comprehension by using Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy*). Missing the article can be found in lines 3, 7, 8. Line 3 (*in academic year*) should be (*in the academic year*); line 7, missing the hyphen (*tenth grade students*), should be (*tenth-grade students*); line 8 (*through purposive sampling technique*), should be (*through the purposive sampling technique*).

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the findings found in the three abstracts, starting from the lexical cohesion, the writers of the abstracts conducted the repetition of the words from semantic fields frequently to stay focused on the readers on the track. This confirms the findings, which stated that repetition of the words contributes to keeping track of the participants of the text and makes the reader comprehend the intentions of the writers (Dania, 2018; Kirana et al., 2020). Meanwhile, there were no lexical variations in terms of using a synonym, antonym, hyponym, and meronym in the first, second, and third abstracts.

Discussing the grammatical cohesion, the findings described the reference, linkers, substitution was used in the text. The number of references found in the first abstract is 4, while the second abstract is 3, and the third abstract is 3. Reference creates links between elements at the level of meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Reference is commonly achieved through the use of pronouns (*he, we, it; this and that, these and those and articles*). Reference divides through *anaphoric* reference, *cataphoric* reference, and *exophoric* reference.

The substitution of clause elements *using so* was found in the third abstract. However, related to conjunctions, from the first abstract was found seven additive conjunctions (*and, or, in addition*); the second abstract used five additive conjunction (*and, or*), and two causal conjunctions (*therefore*); the third abstract used four additive conjunctions (*and, or*), two temporal conjunctions (first, second), and one adversative conjunction (on the other hand). The use of conjunctions in the text has functions to relate similar words, coordinate sentences with the same context, support previous sentences, opposite the preceding statement, connect between cause and effect in sentences (Lismayanti & Ningsih, 2019).

The last part of grammatical cohesion is tense. All the sentences are used the simple past tense. The finding showed that ungrammatical sentences, spelling mistakes, incorrect prepositions in writing abstracts were found. This is needed from the teachers to give cohesiveness and improve the students' writing skills (Episiasi, 2018). The result also indicated that the lack of grammatical cohesion devices used in terms of comprehension, knowledge, and ability in writing leads the students to use inappropriate grammatical cohesion devices (Afrianto, 2017; Trisnaningrum et al., 2019). Furthermore, Albana et al., (2020) state that students need to improve the use of cohesive devices, especially in grammatical cohesion, to result in a higher level of cohesion. This is also similar to Raeisi et al., (2019), who states that students need to enhance the quality of writing for presenting them in academic contexts and leading journals.

## **CONCLUSION**

Lexical and grammatical cohesion is used in the abstract. The repetition of words in lexical cohesion keeps the reader on track, while grammatical cohesion is used to describe available references, conjunctions, substitutions to make a good abstract. However, students have difficulty in using cohesive devices. These difficulties are in the form of ungrammatical sentences, wrong prepositions, spelling errors, and improper use of cohesive devices.

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