# Students' Performance in Cultural Text Writing Based on Situational Context and Cohesive Devices: A case study of Discourse Analysis

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#### Abstract

This research is described to classify cohesive devices and contextualize the cohesive devices on the English Students Writing at HKBP Nommensen University Medan. There is a role that creates importance and urgency regarding the development of writing skills which can be considered a mode related to problems that often arise in writing. Classification and contextualization are polarities for determining the type of text as student writing. Research that applies qualitative methods is considered scientifically to obtain more valid results. The subjects of this study were 50 students on the sixth semester of English Education with research locations at HKBP Nommensen University, Medan. Specifically, for situational context and cohesive devices, the data were comprised to context A, context B and context C. Based on the research results, the classification of cohesive devices is found in varying amounts of student writing, but the totality of the use of Lexical Cohesion tends to be more dominant in student writing, especially in context A with 33 percent. Meanwhile, in context B the use of references accounts for 28 percent of student writing. Context becomes the prompt performance in the teaching process including cohesive devices and context formed by teacher-student interactions in the classroom

Keywords: Cohesive Devices, Context, Discourse Analysis, Performances, Writing

#### Introduction

In concerned to the development of the people's lives to get interesting attention and follow what the informant wants to convey. The existence of print and online media in the social, economic, and cultural fields has recently become the centre of attention of the public for the success of the information contained in both print and electronic media. Digital which is considered as a tool for communicating what is contained in ideas and thoughts can certainly be conveyed in the form of text and visuals or visuals that contain verbal. The existence of online media or referred to as digital is considered capable of publishing a thousand meanings through the process of making discourse.

Writing ability is a problem that has not been resolved until now, especially in the educational phenomenon(Field, 2009; Zemach & Rumisek, 2006). Not only to write texts as information material, but also to understand texts written by different authors and have different levels of ability, different disciplines or written communities. With this problem, of course, grouping words, word forms, expressions, and sentences based on word classes and the meanings of words that have the potential to have a continuous chain in the reading text, identify words (including new tenses), phrases, sentences whose truth is questioned.

The context and lexical discourse contained in the discourse is considered a linguistic study that can communicate to readers and viewers about the graphics, images and techniques for using the words conveyed (Sidabutar et al., 2021; Thuy, 2017; Tian et al., 2021). In this case, lexical grammatical and lexical cohesion or referred to as cohesive devices can denote the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning which is represented in a continuous word structure and lexical arrangement. Context and lexical adjustments in discourse include communication between traditional media and digital media as well as elaborating linguistically sustainable meanings in both visual and verbal modes (In & Health, 2014).

Situation context and cohesive devices which are considered as social interaction techniques that can be used to organize the mode used by everyone when speaking can be conveyed in gestures, postures, changes in point of view, head position, voice and matters related to the utterance. (Hafifah & Sinar, 2021). The use of language through cohesive devices and situational contexts has a systemic functional linguistic concept that will contain characters related to the structure of language when conveyed in promotions, invitations, notifications or purposes that are considered to give reactions from readers or viewers(Chanyoo, 2018; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013; Hung et al., 2021). Furthermore, the situational context is also considered as a mode that can string together responses from viewers and readers psychologically which includes understanding cognition, emotion, attention and receiving information based on the quality of the five senses possessed (Giannakos et al., 2019)

The human societal development carrying values or meanings is made possible through social processes, in which human discourses manifest themselves in various forms and modes of human interaction and activity(Feng, 2019; Puspitasari et al., 2021). In this, through human discourse that human society develops in the way it does. The social processes in which human discourse takes place may or may not be interactive in nature.

Language is closely related to discourse analysis, the study of the relationship between the language and contexts in which it is used. (Ludji et al., 2022; Xiao, 2011) Discourse Analysis is a language discipline which describes about sentences from their context. It also includes the study of language in use; written text of all kinds and spoken data, from conversation to highly institutionalized from of talk. To understand discourse well, we need knowledge and mastery of cohesion. It does not depend only on our knowledge about rules of languages, but also depends on our knowledge about reality, thinking process as syntactical process of drawing conclusion.

Cohesion refers to the resources within the language that provide continuity in a text, above and over that is provided by clause structures and clause complexes(Ary Indrawan, 2014; Rokhaniyah et al., 2022; Sidabutar, 2021). Therefore, cohesive relations are non-structural relations which help the hang together. These kinds of relations refer to reference, including cohesion and conjunction.

In this study, it contains discourse research due to the results of student writing which has been integrated into a very interesting analytical material to be developed, especially in the adjustment of words that are interconnected with one another(Nurhidayat et al., 2021). With the continuity of these words, a language performance will be created that fulfils the cultural elements of the text in question. Cohesion in this study is also expected to explore students' ability to apply semantic meanings which is known as coherence(Saputra & Hakim, 2020). The relationship between the first and next words has the potential to provide a clearer understanding of the information conveyed by the author. Based on the formulation of the problem

formulation of the research problem, the objectives are to find the classification of cohesive devices found on the English Students Writing at Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan and to contextualize the cohesive devices on the English Students Writing at Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan

Cohesion includes elements of reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions. (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). Cohesion in discourse will contain good structure and continuous vocabulary so that the discourse can be said to be semantic language and has the right word classification according to the pattern of language used by the author (Saad Alshehri & Alaboud, 2022). Grammatical cohesion is a word classification which is marked by the use of the correct word structure and according to the intended marker(Awwalia & Suhardi, 2020).

Baker (1992: 175) says that cohesive devices are net words of lexical,grammatical and other relations which provide link between various parts of text. Cohesive can be classified into four main types namely reference, ellipsis and substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion. Thus, cohesion is divided into two parts, namely grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion acts as a marker in the sentence structure contained in the discourse, while lexical cohesion plays a role in conveying the meaning of the sentence marked in the vocabulary used by the author.

#### Method

This research is a systemic approach to find answers to questions. In this study, researchers used descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative is used to investigate problems to gain a clear understanding of certain phenomena (Martin & White, 2005) The research data is situational context and cohesive devices in English which are found in student writings. The use of situational context and cohesive devices is collected from student writings in English. This kind of data source was chosen because the data source of language use is the main problem faced by students, especially in writing discourse. Specifically for situational context and cohesive devices, additional data collection was carried out to observe student progress when observing discourse writing. The procedure for determining situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices used in this study is the Marianne 2002 three model procedure for determining elements of situational context and cohesive devices in discourse.

Analysis method means a research which uses some instruments for collecting the data, for instance; formulas to count the data which means here to count the categories of lexical cohesion that occurs in the text, in order to get cohesive devices that occurs mostly in the text, the following formula from (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002)

The subjects of this study were 50 students on the sixth semester of English Education. In this study, the researcher chose purposive sampling. The purposive sampling procedure is a non-random sampling technique in which the researcher involves subjects with certain characteristics in the study. The purpose of sampling is to obtain information from selected participants.

The *location* of this research will be conducted at HKBP Nommensen University Medan. The researcher chose this location because the goals of developing English language education were very accurate. The focus of this research was to obtain accurate information on the obstacles faced by students when writing English discourse. The *focus* of this research will also apply strategies for teaching English through discourse analysis and cultural text writing approaches.

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# Results

#### Context

The location of this research is the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. The student is registered in the English Language Education Study Program which takes the Cutural Text Writing Course. All participants are given an explanation of the topic they will write about both verbally and visually to help write down what they understand from the topic, such as culture, economics, literature and topics that can be used as conversational knowledge. All participants were asked to write individual assignments. sheet will be described, which includes two similar questions covering three topics as Culture and unique lifestyle (Context A), Education (Context B), and Art and Literature (Context C), which includes a novel or a story involving literary science

Based on the analysis results obtained from document data, namely the writing of students who took the Cultural Text Writing course. Cohesive Devices were created as a special application in appropriate handling according to Discourse Analysis studies, namely, reference, conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, and lexical cohesion. Reference is an expression that has a meaning related to another word in question and can be understood when realized with another meaning. References are divided into three types of categories, namely Demonstrative Reference, namely, categorizing the use of individual functions when speaking in the context of a specified situation or how the individual category is adapted to appropriate language use. demonstrative reference, namely, how appropriate the relationship of language used is when there is continuous use of location or scale for the topic or context of conversation. And Comparative reference, that is, the use of appropriate reference language when the context or topic being discussed occurs in comparison or similarity in the language used.

# Reference

#### **Personal Reference**

Personal reference is where the identity of the item can be retrieved by reference to cultural knowledge, in general, rather than the specific context of the text.

Based on the students' writing according to the introductory topic assigned to the course, the writing contains Personal References as in the example:

[1] First in the Batak Toba tradition, <u>Man</u> became converts to <u>speaker</u> in daily life or when <u>he</u> say something in the party or ceremony

*The analysis above explains that the Toba Batak tradition is a culture that has a relationship with* <u>speaker</u> "....." *and only used by groups* <u>Man</u>. The conclusion is, there are three words that are personal, namely "<u>Man</u>, <u>speaker</u>, "<u>he</u>"

This is different from the final use of 'the' in this sentence. To answer 'whose speaker we know it is the one being discussed in the text. We know, however, from our cultural knowledge 'which' culture and 'tradition is being referred to in the text.

The use of personal references is also a realization that is often found in student writing based on predetermined contexts and topics. It was found that the use of personal references revealed the "it" and "they" when connecting the writing to culture which of course comes into contact with objects. As example

[2] "People of Batak Toba using traditional ceremony when they want to give something like ulos, food, etc for their children and the people do it because it is very important"

Based on the classification of references used in students' writing, it was found that "traditional ceremonies" were the central topic of the sentence, so that students with quick reactions replaced the reference in the sentence to "it". However, the reference use of "ulos, food" is not replaced with "they" or is called incorrect because it does not follow the pluralistic process of the objects contained. Meanwhile, the use of "they" and "their" still tends to be understood by students because of the tendency of these sentences in the pluralistic pronoun of "people". Hence, students' performance in using references can categorized as good and understanding, only because they make mistakes when the noun preceded is connected with a singular pattern.

#### **Demonstrative Reference**

The results of the analysis were also found from student writing which contained demonstrative references. Based on the results found from Students' writings are several correct and incorrect uses of portion were found. The results of this analysis can be seen from the examples below such as;

[3] "Many schools do not allow their <u>students</u> to bring mobile phone to school. <u>Those</u> can make the students less concentrated during the teaching learning process.

From the sentence above, it is found to be an example of a correct demonstrative pronoun that is understood by students. This use is very significant in showing the pluralism of students becoming people. In demonstrative reference looks outside the text to the situation in which the text occurs for the identity of the item being referred to

#### Conjunction

(Martin & White, 2005, 2007; Meduna & Švec, 2005)Martin (1992) discuss conjunctions under the categories of *additive*, *comparative*, *temporal* and *consequential* conjunctions, extending Halliday and Hasan's work in this area. Additive conjunctions include 'and', 'or', 'moreover', 'in addition' and 'alternatively'. That is, they draw on the notion of 'addition' in both a positive and a contrastive sense. Comparative conjunctions include 'whereas', 'but', 'on the other hand', 'likewise' and 'equally', drawing on the notion of comparison in both a positive and negative sense. Temporal conjunctions include items such as 'while', 'when', 'after', 'meanwhile', then', 'finally' and 'at the same time'. Consequential conjunctions include items such as 'so that', 'because', 'since', 'thus', 'if', 'therefore', 'in conclusion' and 'in this way'.

Based on the data analysis, students have applied these conjunctions when having a writing based on the context assigned as these following;

#### **Additive Conjunction**

The following is data on additive conjunction in cultural text writing based on context given. "  $\,$ 

[4] Bob wants to go to the store, <u>and</u> Jane wants to as well". And "Ashley is managing the club Thursday, <u>and</u> Sam is Friday."

"Based on the data, there is one conjunction which is placed correctly and appropriate because the use of the conjunction were applied on the co-text to show an addition or an alternatively line topic of the sentence.

#### **Causal Conjunction**

The following data show the correct in causal conjunction made by the students in their writing. *"Therefore, schools should ban students from bringing their cell phones.* 

[5] "<u>However</u> it should be done fairly"

[6]"Someone called for you yesterday, <u>but</u> I don't know who."

This is simplified as in the sentence construction above. Further, the cognitive and language intuition of students goes with the inner contextual meaning stated in each

argumentative text. Another point, the theoretical concept cannot cover all idiosyncrasies in the analytical text since those texts are composed of different cultural backgrounds and ways of interpreting a theme.

#### Ellipsis

Ellipsis element is omitted from the text and can be recovered by referring to a preceding element in the text. Ellipsis may involve the omission of a noun or noun group, a verb or verbal group or a clauses as;

[7] The father wants to go to the village, and daughter wants too'

[8] Mariany is managing the garden on Thursday, and Lina is Friday.

[9] She told the handsome guy to come outside, and her friends too.

[10] Someone called for the old woman yesterday, but she doesn't know who.

It vividly compared to these examples as In the following extract from a narrative story, there are examples of ellipsis in each of the student's comprehension show the varieties ellipsis usage. In the caller's first response the main clause '*The father wants to go to the village*' and follow the clause as '*and daughter wants too*' is ellipsed. In the second response 'It was over' is ellipsed. In the final response a whole clause is omitted *but she doesn't know who*') and the main clause of the next two dependent clauses ('Someone called for the old woman yesterday') are omitted. Based on the student's writing, it was discovered that the capacity of students performance to students writing in narrative story have accommodate the ellipsis use when the context are applied.

#### **Lexical Cohesion**

Generally, all types of lexical cohesion are found in both high and low-graded essays. Particularly, in high graded essays, repetition, synonymy, and hyponymy are found in all five high graded essays; antonymy is found in four high graded essays, and superordinate is only found in one high graded essay; also meronymy is found in two high graded essays. Whereas in low graded essays, repetition, synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy 66 are found in all five low graded essay; and each superordinate and meronymy is only found in one low graded essay. From the table, the occurrences of each type of lexical cohesion which is found in high graded and low graded argumentative essays can be seen as follow:

# Repetition

The repetition of these words is caused by a move when the writers restate and elaborate their argument in the next sentence. And the repetition of some words shows continuity and relation between the previous sentence and the next sentence.

[11] <u>Women</u> will become a housewife, .....which then becomes a compulsory reason for <u>women</u>,...... but <u>women</u> are generally the most versatile figure, ......where <u>women</u> will actually play more roles than men......<u>Women</u> will become a housewife/ who has a great responsibility for the journey of the household/ (repet/clause -1, cl-4, cl-8, cl-11)

# Synonymy

Synonymy occurs when lexical items are identical and have the same meaning. Synonymy may not be in the same word class such as cheered (verb) – applause (noun) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) In another word, one lexical item can be substituted with another because it has a similar meaning or has a related meaning. Synonymy is found in all high graded and low graded essays. The result of the data analysis was discovered as in the following

[12] <u>Women</u> will become a <u>housewife</u>...... who has a great responsibility for the journey of the <u>household</u> (Syno – woman(Cl 1, cl4, dll)  $\rightarrow$  housewife (Cl1,cl5)

#### Antonymy

A number of words are antonymous in a graduation from the most in one pole to the least in intensity at the other pole as;

[13] Women will become a housewife,........ <u>Men</u> as the head of the household may become the backbone of the family/, but <u>women</u> are generally the most versatile figure/and will handle many other things (woman(Cl 1, cl4, ...)  $\rightarrow$  man (cl6, cl...)

#### Hyponymy

Hyponymy occurs when a lexical item refers to its subclasses such as a chair, table, bed are 'kinds' (hyponyms) of furniture (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013)Hyponymy is found in both high and low-graded essays and the occurrence of hyponymy is pretty less than synonymy. Hyponymy found in both levels of essays is used to elaborate or clarified something general to be more specific by providing various kinds of general things. Hyponymy is common where a passage of text is being developed using elaboration as;

[15] He took a young <u>horse</u> from the stable.....then he jumped on the back of the <u>animal</u>

<b>Cohesive Devices</b>		Context	
	Context A	Context B	Context C
Reference	19 %	28 %	24 %
Substitution	15 %	8 %	10 %
Ellipsis	16 %	14 %	18 %
Conjunction	27 %	27 %	26 %
Lexical Cohesion	33 %	23%	22 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %

# Table 1. The Percentage of Students' Performance in WritingPerformance of Students' Writing

#### Discussion

Based on the results of the analysis obtained from student writing, the use of Lexical Cohesion tends to be more dominant in student writing, especially in context A with 33 percent. Meanwhile, in context B the use of references accounts for 28 percent of student writing. Therefore, (Chanyoo, 2018) study, the results of research conducted on students in Thailand have similarities with this research study. The similarity between these studies concerns the dominance of the use of more significant references contained in the writing to form a cohesive device.

Apart from this research, it also has similarities with the study of (Nurhidayat et al., 2021; Saputra & Hakim, 2020) in that their research aims to investigate the types of cohesive devices that are often used in argumentative essay writing by outstanding

students in Indonesia and to analyze their awareness in student writing using argumentative text type with a predetermined topic. This means that determining the topic is relevant to determining the writing context which can stimulate students' ability to use cohesive devices in writing argumentative essays. The use of references tends to be more dominant in student writing. This means that argumentative writing acts as a program that integrates the use of sophisticated grammar, lexical diversity and cohesive devices should be a curriculum priority.

In contrast to the study conducted by (Awwalia & Suhardi, 2020), in his research on the problems faced by students in writing skills experienced difficulties in cohesive devices which tended towards lexical cohesion. Based on what students experienced in their research, this is different from the results of student writing carried out in this research. The difficulties experienced by the student do not constitute a conclusion to describe that lexical cohesion is experiencing problems in the writing, but he only states that the student is experiencing difficulties.

# Conclusion

It is vividly to contextualizing the category of cohesive devices as the atmosphere developing character of students to writing competence. However, the barriers of teachers through the school to nurtures students seems to be full of attention. Teachers will not elaborate the skill of English, but the value of topic will automatically provide a balanced proportion as well. Context becomes the prompt performance in the teaching process include cohesive devices and context formed by teacher-student interactions in the classroom. Teachers then need to make complex cohesive devices and context to communicate to students what is considered good or bad by the particular subject they are writing. It is advised that the students should master three competences namely Cohesive Devices and Contextual competence both in English and Indonesian when writing a discourse. And also the students know well the context which will be transferred into written forms. It is suggested that lecturers help the students to overcome the writing problems by providing the text which not only concern to the cohesive devices aspects but also concern to Contextual aspects. It is recommended that the next researchers find the writing strategy, writing method and writing technique which can be used to overcome the writing problems.

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