CHAPTER I

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1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

When we learn a second language, we learn to communicate with other people. It means we learn to understand them, talk to them, read what they have written and write to them (Raimes, 1976). Broadly speaking, we need to learn to communicate either in spoken or written way.

However, writing is not simply speech down on a paper. Learning to write is not just a "natural" extension of learning to speak a language. We learned to speak our first language at home without systematic instruction, whereas most of us had to be taught in school how to write that same language. So that, even many adult native speakers of a language find writing difficult (Ibid, p. 4).

The two processes, speaking and writing, are not identical. Speech is usually informal and repetitive. We can say things like: "What I mean is..." or "Let me start again." Writing in English, on the other hand, is more formal and compact. The writers need to express their ideas in complex sentences by using connecting words like 'however', 'who', 'in addition', and so on so that the ideas in each paragraph can progress logically with fewer digressions and explanations (Ibid, p. 5).

The logical order of ideas is not the only criteria of a good composition. A composition is said to be good if there is continuity of thought between one idea to the others and between one sentence to other sentences. In other words, each

sentence in a paragraph except the first should have cohesion with the one preceding it. As it is said by Halliday and Hasan (1976:2) that "the primary determinant of whether a set of sentences do not constitute a text depends on cohesive relationships within and between the sentences."

Halliday and Hasan stated further that the cohesive relationships create texture. Here, they make an analogy between a text and a 'texture'. They considered a text as collection of meanings woven together to make a textured 'fabric'. The clauses of the text can be thought of as cross – threads held together by down – thread by the strands of meaning so that the individual clauses are unified into cohesive whole unit of meaning. For example:

Surabaya is known as City of Heroes. It's because the history of November 10. Long time ago, the youth of Surabaya fought with England. Many of them were killed in that war.

The *causal conjunction* 'because' in the second sentence indicates a cause effect relation between the first sentence. In the third sentence, the phrase 'Long time ago' is categorized as *temporal conjunction* which refers to November 10. The student uses *definite article* 'the' in the noun group 'the youth of Surabaya' because she assumes the audience will share knowledge of the youth she refers. The *personal pronoun* 'them' in the fourth sentence refers to the 'youth of Surabaya' in the third sentence. Finally, the *demonstrative reference* 'that' in the phrase 'that war' refers to the fought between the youth of Surabaya and England.

The causal conjunction, temporal conjunction, definite article, personal pronoun, and demonstrative reference used in the example above are some types of Cohesive Relations or Cohesive Devices. Halliday and Hasan (1976) divided

the Cohesive Devices into five main parts; they are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

The presence of the five devices above in five modes of writing, namely: narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive, and argumentative, are very important because these devices connect one sentence to other sentences so that writers' ideas will also flow smoothly.

The five modes of writing are taught in the English Department of Widya Mandala University through a series of writing courses. In the first semester, the undergraduate students take a prerequisite course called the Intensive Course Program. This program is aimed at developing the students' command of English to prepare them to take other courses offered in the department. In this program, language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and language elements (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) are taught in integrated manner. Writing exercises are mainly given at sentence level.

Further writing courses which are given in the next four semesters are divided into four courses: Writing A, Writing B, Writing C, and Writing D; and each of the courses has different purposes. Writing A, which is given to the second semester students, is about Narration. Writing B, which is given to the third semester students, is about Descriptive composition. Writing C is given to the fourth semester students; it deals with Expository. Finally, Writing D that deals with Persuasion and Argumentation is given to the fifth semester students.

A study conducted by Dewi (1998) indicated that undergraduate students used only certain simple types of cohesive devices. In this study, the writer

analyzed the types of cohesive devices frequently used and wrongly used by the fourth semester students of IKIP Malang. Here, she only analyzed two types of Expository composition, namely: Exemplification and Process Essay. Based on the study, she found out that the Personal Reference was the most frequently used in both Exemplification and Process Essays. However, Verbal and Clausal Substitution were rarely used both in the two types of essay.

This study also revealed that although the students were in the fourth semester, they still made mistakes in the usage of Demonstrative Reference and Additive Conjunction. Hence, certain types of cohesive devices are still problematic for students, although they have passed many courses related to writing.

A similar study was also done by Latief (1990) as quoted by Cahyono in "Second Language Writing and Rhetoric" (2001). Latief 's research was aimed at assessing the coherence, syntactic, grammatical, and mechanical quality of the students' Descriptive and Argumentative writing across different years of study, from the second up to the fourth year. He found out that the university year cohorts did not necessarily indicate differences in the proficiency of the students in writing Descriptive essay coherently. However, in writing Argumentative essay, the fourth year students were able to write more coherent essay comparing to the third year students.

Similarly, Cahyono's research (2001) showed that there is a difference of overall proficiency in English composition between the first- and fourth-year students. The fourth-year students were more successful in all of the components

of proficiency in English composition, including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The possible reason for this difference is the role of the instructional program in the department. The first-year students were in their beginning stage of study, while the fourth-year students had taken all writing courses.

Based the study done by Latief, Cahyono, and the writer herself, the writer can say that students' level is not a guarantee of the ability to write coherent compositions. It means although the students have already passed the pre-requisite courses for writing and have an ability to write correct sentences, they might still find difficulty in writing coherent paragraphs. Based on this situation, then the writer is interested to find out the proficiency of the fifth semester students of Widya Mandala University in producing a coherent paragraph by finding out the frequency of cohesive devices that are used and wrongly used.

In this case, the writer decided to analyze the fifth semester students only because she assumes that the students are at the final stage of learning and have already passed all courses related to Writing, hence the students' compositions are more effective to be analyzed. Besides that, the writer focuses only on the cohesiveness between sentences as the primary determinant of a coherent paragraph, excluding content, organization, and mechanics. However, unlike the writer's previous research in which she only described the frequency of cohesive devices that were used and wrongly used by the students, here she tries to find out the reasons of the students in making such mistakes. By finding out the frequency of cohesive devices that are used and wrongly used, she will be able to find out

the possible causes and suggest possible teaching techniques for improving the students' competence in using cohesive devices.

1.2. STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEMS

Having realized the importance of cohesive devices in every type of composition, the writer intend to answer the main problem, that is: to what extent are the fifth semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University who take Writing D able to use cohesive devices in Argumentative compositions? To answer this main problem, then the writer formulates four minor problems. They are as follows:

1. Which types of cohesive devices are frequently used in Argumentative composition written by students of Widya Mandala University?

2. Which types of cohesive devices do the students frequently wrongly use in Argumentative composition?

3. Why do the students put the cohesive devices wrongly?

4. What is the possible teaching technique to eliminate the possibility of the students making mistakes in cohesive devices?

1.3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is intended to assess how far the fifth semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University are able to use cohesive devices in Argumentative compositions. Hence the minor objectives of this study are to find out:

1. The types of cohesive devices that are frequently used in Argumentative composition written by the students of Widya Mandala University.

2. The types of cohesive devices that the students frequently wrongly used in Argumentative composition.

3. The reasons the students put the cohesive devices wrongly.

4. The possible teaching technique to eliminate the possibility of the students making mistakes in cohesive devices.

1.4. THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although there are five modes of writing, namely: Narrative, Descriptive, Expository, Persuasion, and Argumentation, the writer analyzed only the occurrence of cohesive devices that were used and wrongly used in Argumentative composition. In addition, the writer focused her research only on the cohesive devices used by the students, ignoring the organization and mechanics.

1.5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is an attempt to analyze the usage of Halliday and Hasan's cohesive devices in Argumentative composition. Then the result of this analysis will make both writing teachers and their students aware of the importance of cohesive devices in a composition. Hopefully, after reading this study, the teachers will be aware of the types of cohesive devices that are frequently wrongly used by their students, along with the possible causes. Finally, the teaching

7

techniques the writer has suggested may help the writing teachers deal with cohesion problems.

1.6. THE ASSUMPTIONS

In this study, the writer has some assumptions. They are as follows:

1. The teachers have already explained the Argumentative composition theory; therefore, the students have already known how to write Argumentative compositions.

2. The students have already passed writing A as the basic level; therefore, some of them are able to write cohesive paragraphs in their compositions.

1.7. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Writing does not only need the limited topic and skeletal organization, but also the cohesiveness between words, sentences, and paragraph (Irmscher, 1969). The cohesion here refers to the grammatical and/ or lexical relationship between the different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence, for example the word 'there' in: if you are going to London, I can give you the address of a good hotel there; refers forward or anaphorically to the word 'London' (Richards, Platt, and Platt 1985).

There are many studies about cohesive devices in a paragraph. According to Moore (1965), the cohesiveness of sentences within a paragraph is usually secured by the use of one or more of these five devices: connective words,

8

transitional phrases, repetition of key terms, repetition of sentence pattern, and pronoun. Furthermore, Imscher (1969) formulated five kinds of structural connection for binding the sentences and paragraph closely together. They are: mechanical, rhetorical, grammatical, lexical, and semantic link.

Finally, according to Halliday and Hasan's theory (1976), which is the focus of the writer's present study, the relations within a sentence and among sentences are made possible because of the presence of cohesive relation. They divided the cohesive devices into five main parts, namely: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion; and each of these parts will be discussed intensively in chapter 2 (Review of Related Literature).

The presence of cohesive devices is important in all modes of writing; hence, to get a comprehensive study, the writer applied both the theory of Argumentative writing and Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion. The theory of writing was used to see how the Argumentative composition should be written. Furthermore, the cohesive devices theory was used to evaluate cohesion between sentences in the composition.

The result of the writer's evaluation on the students' composition in terms of the cohesive devices usage will be useless without any applications. Thus, the writer continued her evaluation by suggesting some possible exercises for helping the students comprehending the cohesive devices better. Based on this consideration, then in this thesis the writer also explained the techniques of teaching cohesion besides the two theories mentioned above.

1.8. THE DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

There are some important terms used in this study. They are Cohesion, Cohesive devices, and Argumentative composition. The definitions of these key terms as follows:

1. Cohesion is the characteristics of a paragraph in which each sentence follows clearly from the sentence before it and leads clearly to the sentence following it (Carino, 1990: 98).

2. Cohesive devices are components that cause surface element to show progressive occurrences so that their sequential connectivity is maintained (Ibid, p. 98). There are five types of cohesive devices or cohesive ties, namely: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

3. Argumentative composition is a form of discourse the central purpose of which is to persuade an audience to adopt a certain attitude or a belief by giving a logical or rational reasoning (Vivian and Jackson, 1961; Hairston, 1974).

1.9. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I introduces the study in terms of its background, statements of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, assumptions, theoretical framework, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms. Chapter II tries to sharpen the theoretical framework by explaining some relevant basic concepts. Chapter III tries to answer the problems stated in Chapter I by discussing the underlying research methodology that consists of the

research design, subjects, instruments, data collection, analysis and evaluation. The result of the data analysis and evaluation is discussed in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V gives the conclusion of this thesis by discussing the previous chapters, drawing some conclusion, and suggesting what to do for classroom teaching and future research.