

## **The Indonesian Undergraduate Students' Competence in Writing Introduction of Thesis Proposals: A Discourse Analysis**

Setyo Karjono; setyo\_kj@ustjogja.ac.id

Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa

---

### **Abstract**

Writing thesis proposal requires several competences. At the sentence level, it includes the control of word choice or diction and syntactic form. Beyond the sentence, it deals with the organization of the ideas and information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs. In practice, many students encounter difficulties in writing proposals especially the introduction section. The focus of this study was in the discourse analysis type, concerning the thesis writing which covered the organization, the unity, and coherence of paragraphs, and the syntactic form. Subjects of this research were students of a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia who were writing their theses as their final project. All data sources were from the undergraduate students' initial thesis writings especially the Introduction section proposed by the students from the three fields of study: English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature. Findings show that: (a) Mostly the students' proposals addressed well organization though using somewhat developed explanations, exemplifications, or details; (b) They also displayed unity and coherence, though the connection of ideas was occasionally obscured; (c) The student' proposals also demonstrated inconsistent competence in syntactic structure and word choice; (d) Mostly, the student' proposals accomplished the score level 3 for their academic writings because they did not fully meet some points of academic writing criteria. Considering the organization, unity and coherence are the most appropriate variety for the undergraduate students' writings, the study suggests that students should be exposed to a more standard guidance or rubric of thesis writing

**Keywords:** *cohenrence; organization; proposal; synyactic form; unity*

---

### **Background**

Thesis becomes a compulsory and pre-requisite component to attain the degree in a university level. An academic proposal writing assignment is normally considered as the requirement in any academic pursuit to terminate their study which is known as thesis. Before starting to conduct thesis as their research project, students have to determine the topic and then write the proposal based on the topic they are going to study. The proposal for a thesis is essentially a plan of the research. A good research proposal is the key to successful research. The

clearer the proposal is planned, the more successful the completion of the research, and then the more likely it is that it will be approved by the advisor or consultant, with a high probability that the final project will also be accepted. A well-done, acceptable proposal, therefore, is a kind of personal contract between the writer (the student) as the candidate, and the advisor.

Khondker (2009) states that a good research proposal has become a necessity for ensuring the quality of research. A good research proposal must be systematic, coherent and, above all, 'doable'. A research proposal must tell the readers clearly, at least two things: what the writer wants to do and how the writer wants to do it. Any research – whether in the area of Linguistics, Literature, or English Language Teaching – must begin with a clearly focused research proposal. A research proposal must be precise and convincing. The readers have to be convinced that the writers (students) have something there and that the writers (the students) can do it.

However, based on the researchers' experiences in accompanying the students to write their thesis, the majority of students encounter great difficulties in writing. All these problems cause their proposal writings to be lacking in academic quality and in return have caused them to obtain poor result in the evaluations or reviews. The purpose of this study is to evaluate, to interpret, or to analyze the quality of undergraduate students' competence in writing Introduction of thesis proposals. This research focused on the competence of students' writing in Introduction of proposal. Therefore, this research tried to reveal the problems on how the Introductions of the undergraduate students' thesis proposals are organized; how the unity and the coherence of the elements of the Introductions of the undergraduate students' theses were established; how the syntactic forms of the Introductions of the undergraduate students' theses were constructed; and what level the undergraduate students' Introduction theses accomplished.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Text and discourse***

The study of language is essentially a study of texts or discourses. Brown and Yule (2003:6) mention that a text, as a technical term, refers to the verbal record of a communicative act. In a piece of expository text, for example, the writer's indication of development of the argument contributes to the reader's experience of the text. Thus the title, chapter headings, sub-divisions, and sub-headings all indicate to the reader how the author intends his argument to be chunked (Brown and Yule: 2003:7). When we carry the investigation further and ask how we make sense of what we read, how we can recognize well-constructed texts as opposed to those that are jumbled or incoherent, how the readers understand the writers who communicate more than they write, and how the readers successfully take part in that complex activity, we are undertaking what is known as discourse analysis.

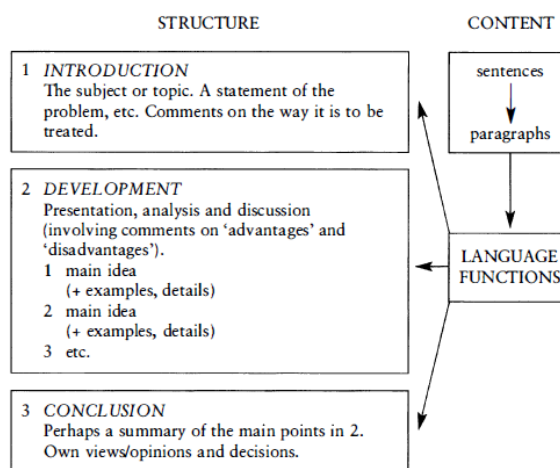
Discourse analysis concerns with how it is that language-users successfully interpret what other language-users intend to convey. As such, according to Brown and Yule (2003:1), it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed. The word "discourse" is usually defined as "language beyond the sentence" and so the analysis of discourse is typically concerned with the study of language in texts and conversation. However, in terms of different paradigms Schiffrrin (1994) differentiates three definitions of "discourse": (1) discourse as language above the sentence or clause, (2)

discourse as language use, and (3) discourse as utterances. Based on the above explanation, this research was done based on the combination of the first and second frameworks. The first framework covered the language beyond the sentence, use in thesis writings.

### ***Academic writing***

Jordan (2003: 9) defines academic writing to be concerned with the general organization of a piece of academic writing, its structure and particularly the way in which the different parts are linked together.

#### **Stage 1 Structure**



*Figure 2. Stage 1 for the structure of academic writing (Jordan: 2003)*

Most pieces of formal writing are organized in a similar way - introduction; development of main ideas or arguments; conclusions. Each part of the writing will consist of language functions: particular uses and structures of the language organized according to the specific purpose that the writer has in mind in wishing to communicate ideas to other people - describing, defining, exemplifying, classifying etc.

Furthermore, Jordan (2003) adds that each language function consists of sentences and/or paragraphs that are joined together or linked by connectives (words or phrases that indicate a logical relationship). These language functions are examined in detail by Jordan (2003: 10) in the following units.

## Stage 2 Connectives

A piece of writing or text will often have the following structure:

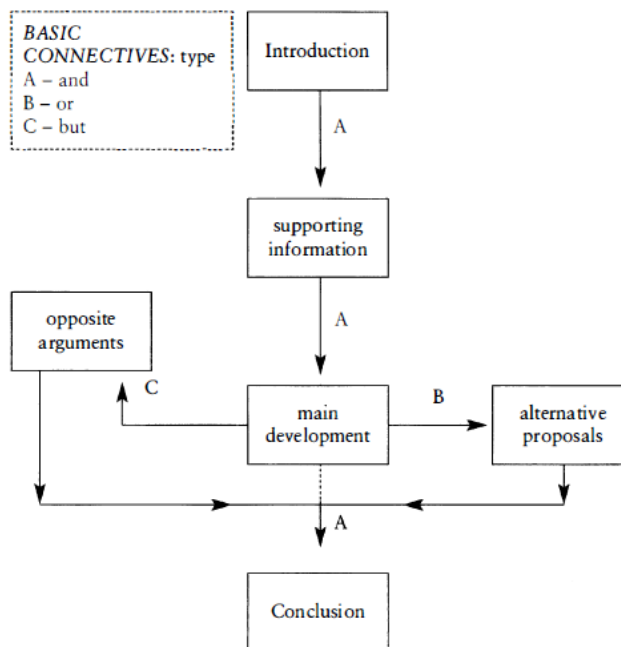


Figure 3. Stage 2 for the connectives of academic writing (Jordan: 2003)

A). The discussion, argument, or comment in the development of the topic may be very straightforward, in which case ideas will be added together one after the other. The basic connective **and** is used here.

(B). Sometimes the comments may be expressed in another way, or an alternative proposal may be made. This is represented by the basic connective **or**. After the alternative has been considered, the main argument will continue.

(C). There are also occasions in arguments etc. when the opposite is considered or referred to. This is represented by the basic connective **but**. After the opposite or opposing view has been considered, the main argument is continued.

### Organization of text

Ideally, referring to the rubric criteria of TOEFL test, academic writing a text should be well organized and well developed. So the topic and task should be addressed effectively, some points may be fully elaborated. The text will be well organized when using appropriate and sufficient explanations, exemplifications, and/or details. The ideas should be developed in response to the topic and task. The paragraphs should be well connected to each other. We should order paragraphs so that each one follows logically on from the previous one. To make this logic more obvious, we can use transition words (or “connectors”), so that the paragraphs flow better and the reader is always kept on track. The easiest way of doing this is by using words like similarly, likewise, by the same token, yet, nevertheless, however, etc.

### *Unity and Coherence*

#### a. Unity

An important element of a good paragraph is **unity**. Unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end. Oshima (1999: 18) states that sometimes it is possible to discuss more than one aspect of the same idea in one paragraph *if they are closely related to each other*. The second part of unity is that every supporting sentence must *directly* explain or prove the main idea.

#### b. Coherence

Oshima (1999: 21) states that coherence is an element of a good paragraph. For coherence in writing, the sentences must hold together; that is, 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. There are four ways, according to Oshima, to achieve coherence:

1. Repeating key nouns.
2. Using consistent pronouns.
3. Using transition signals to link ideas.
4. Arranging the ideas in logical order.

Meanwhile, Lee (2002:33) states that many composition texts and writing handbooks describe coherence in three ways:

- 1) connectedness between sentences,
- 2) use of explicit cohesive devices at the paragraph level, and
- 3) use of connective devices such as pronouns, repetitive structures, and transitional markers.

According to Green (2009), coherence and cohesion mean different things but the two ideas are connected. "Coherence" in an essay means the overall "understandability" of what we write. When writing an essay, coherence involves such features as summarizing the overall argument of an essay in the introductory paragraph; presenting ideas in a logical sequence; putting separate, major points into separate paragraphs; and beginning each paragraph with a 'topic sentence', followed by supporting sentences.

"Cohesion" refers to the degree to which sentences (or even different parts of one sentence) are connected so that the flow of ideas is easy to follow. To achieve good cohesion, we need to know how to use "cohesive devices", which are certain words or phrases that serve the purpose of connecting two statements, usually by referring back to what you have previously written or said. Good cohesion leads to good coherence, which is the ultimate aim.

### *Syntactic form and word choice*

A quick rundown of syntactic form can be described in the types of the grammatical sentence (<http://sentence.yourdictionary.com/grammatical>): Simple, Compound, Complex, Compound-complex sentences.

A writer should also pay attention to the choice of words so that he/she is able to avoid “*awkward*” ( difficult to use, do, or deal with), “*vague*,” (not clearly expressed, known, or described), or “*unclear*” word choice. Difficulties with word choice are not the only cause of awkwardness, vagueness, or other problems with clarity. When writing for papers, students should think simplicity. Using simple words does not indicate simple thoughts. In an academic argument paper, what makes the thesis and arguments sophisticated are the connections presented in simple and clear language.

### ***Criteria for assessing the independent writing***

Since the academic writing should be well organized and constructed, there are some criteria as the parameter for assessing the student’s academic writing. Those criteria are well-stated in the TOEFL test which cover 5 levels of scoring. However, an academic writing largely accomplishes all of the following:

- Effectively addresses the topic and task which is well organized and well developed, using clearly appropriate explanations, exemplification, and/or details
- Displays unity, progression, and coherence
  - Displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety, appropriate word choice, and idiomaticity, though it may have minor lexical or grammatical errors

### **Methodology**

This study belongs to discourse analysis, concerning the thesis writing which covered the organization, the unity, and coherence of paragraphs, and the syntactic form. Subjects of this research were students of a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia who were writing their theses as their final project. All data sources were from the undergraduate students' initial thesis writings especially the Background part of Introduction proposed by the students from the three fields of study: English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature. The initial theses (proposals) were the first drafts made by the students before those theses were reviewed and corrected by the advisors for the first time. The initial thesis writings were needed by assuming that they reflected the students’ original writings.

The samples were taken according to the proportional sampling referring to the research fields the students were interested in: English Language Teaching 50%, Linguistics 30%, Literature 20%. So, the researcher took the sample data: 5 thesis proposals in ELT, 3 thesis proposals in Linguistics, and 2 thesis proposals in Literature.

The collected data were analyzed through the processes of **categorization** or **classification** in accordance with the **rubric criteria** of academic writing as it is stated in TOEFL Test.

Table 1

*Independent Academic Writing Rubric*<[https://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Independent\\_Writing\\_Rubrics\\_2008.pdf](https://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Independent_Writing_Rubrics_2008.pdf)>

SCORE	TASK DESCRIPTION
5	<p>An essay at this level largely accomplishes all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively addresses the topic and task</li> <li>Is well organized and well developed, using clearly appropriate explanations, exemplifications, and/or details</li> <li>Displays unity, progression, and coherence</li> <li>Displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety, appropriate word choice, and idiomaticity, though it may have minor lexical or grammatical errors</li> </ul>
4	<p>An essay at this level largely accomplishes all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses the topic and task well, though some points may not be fully elaborated</li> <li>Is generally well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations, exemplifications, and/or details</li> <li>Displays unity, progression, and coherence, though it may contain occasional redundancy, digression, or unclear connections</li> <li>Displays facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety and range of vocabulary, though it will probably have occasional noticeable minor errors in structure, word form, or use of idiomatic language that do not interfere with meaning</li> </ul>
3	<p>An essay at this level is marked by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses the topic and task using somewhat developed explanations, exemplifications, and/or details</li> <li>Displays unity, progression, and coherence, though connection of ideas may be occasionally obscured</li> <li>May demonstrate inconsistent facility in sentence formation and word choice that may result in lack of clarity and occasionally obscure meaning</li> <li>May display accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary</li> </ul>
2	<p>An essay at this level may reveal one or more of the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited development in response to the topic and task</li> <li>Inadequate organization or connection of ideas</li> <li>Inappropriate or insufficient exemplifications, explanations, or details to support or illustrate generalizations in response to the task</li> <li>A noticeably inappropriate choice of words or word forms</li> <li>An accumulation of errors in sentence structure and/or usage</li> </ul>
1	<p>An essay at this level is seriously flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious disorganization or underdevelopment</li> <li>Little or no detail, or irrelevant specifics, or questionable responsiveness to the task</li> <li>Serious and frequent errors in sentence structure or usage</li> </ul>
0	<p>An essay at this level merely copies words from the topic, rejects the topic, or is otherwise not connected to the topic, is written in a foreign language, consists of keystroke characters, or is blank.</p>

The competence of students' writing should accomplish the following criteria: (1) It effectively addresses the topic and task, well organized and well-developed ideas using clear and appropriate explanations, exemplification, and/or details, (3) It displays unity, progression, and coherence, (4) It displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety, appropriate word choice. Therefore, the levels of students' competence in writing proposals data were determined through the **rubric criteria** of academic writing as it is stated in TOEFL Test.

## Findings and Discussion

The result of analysis shows that 70% of the students' writing did not meet fully the requirements of standard writing competence. Some of the students' writings were lack of topic development meaning that they were not supported by detail or enough explanation. Some of the supported details were not relevant to the topic. Some of the students' writings were lack of unity and coherence or cohesiveness. In terms of syntactic structure, the students' sentences were not constructed by well-form sentences. Meanwhile, in terms of word choice, the researcher found that the students sometimes did not use the appropriate vocabulary.

Table 2.  
*Research Findings*

N o.	Code of Data	Organization	Unity, Coherence	Syntactic Form	Core Level
	LT_01	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is obscured ( <i>difficult to understand</i> )	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	LT_02	1 Well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is obscured	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	LT_03	1 well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence	minor errors in structure, word form	
	LT_04	1 well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence	minor errors in structure, word form	
	LT_05	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is obscured ( <i>difficult to understand</i> )	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	ING_01	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is not clear	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	ING_02	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is obscured ( <i>difficult to understand</i> )	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	ING_03	1 well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence	minor errors in structure, word form	
	IT_01	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas is obscured	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	
	IT_02	1 well organized using somewhat developed explanations	displays unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas, is obscured	accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary	



### *The organization of introduction of students' proposals*

Overall, the students' proposal writings indicate good topic or subject suitability with the title, although some of them are not fully elaborated. As it was indicated in the findings that mostly the students' thesis proposals are well organized and well developed using sufficient explanations, even though some points may not be fully elaborated. The examples can be seen from the following data:

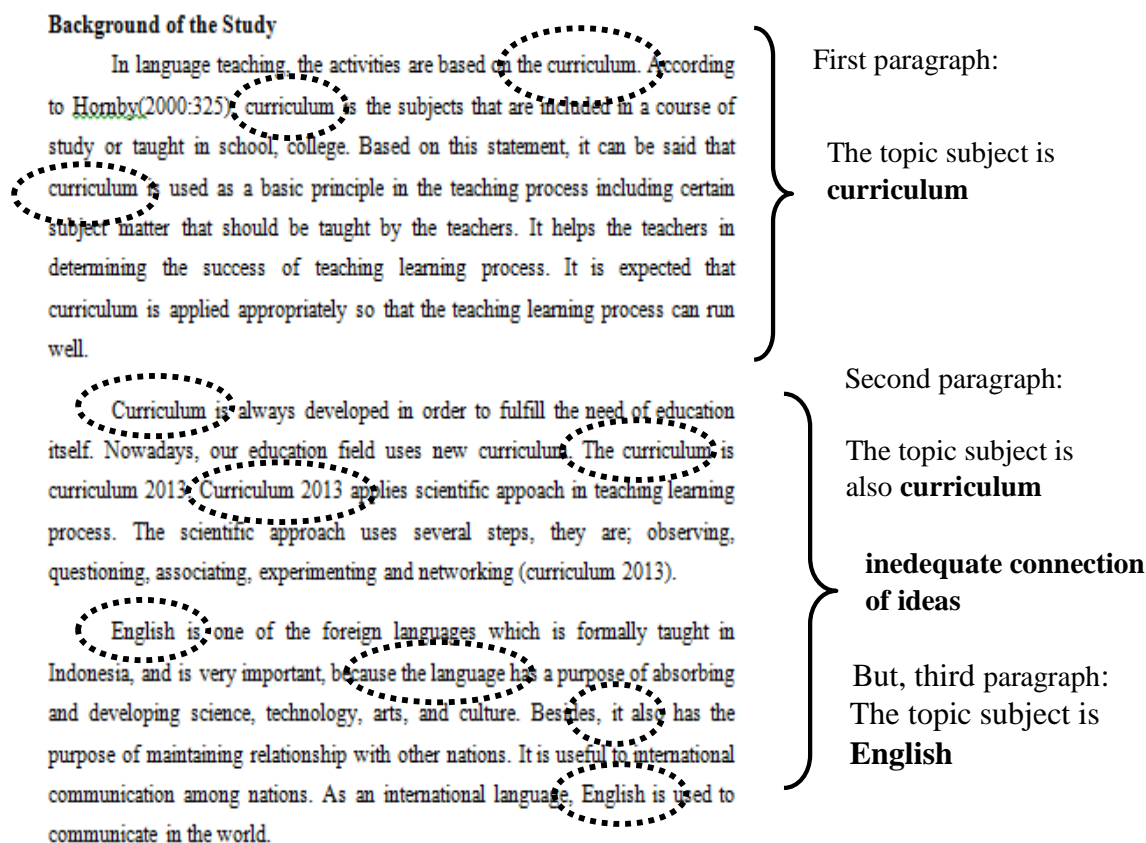


Figure 1. Introduction of a student's proposal

This data show that the paragraphs have fairly good organization. However, the third paragraph has inadequate connection of idea with the previous two paragraphs. Two earlier paragraphs (first and second paragraphs) discuss curriculum, while the later (third paragraph) discusses the importance of English, so there is no connection.

On the other hand, the next paragraphs in the next page of the same data are organized and developed well because they have good explanation or supporting sentences for each paragraph. Look at the following data:

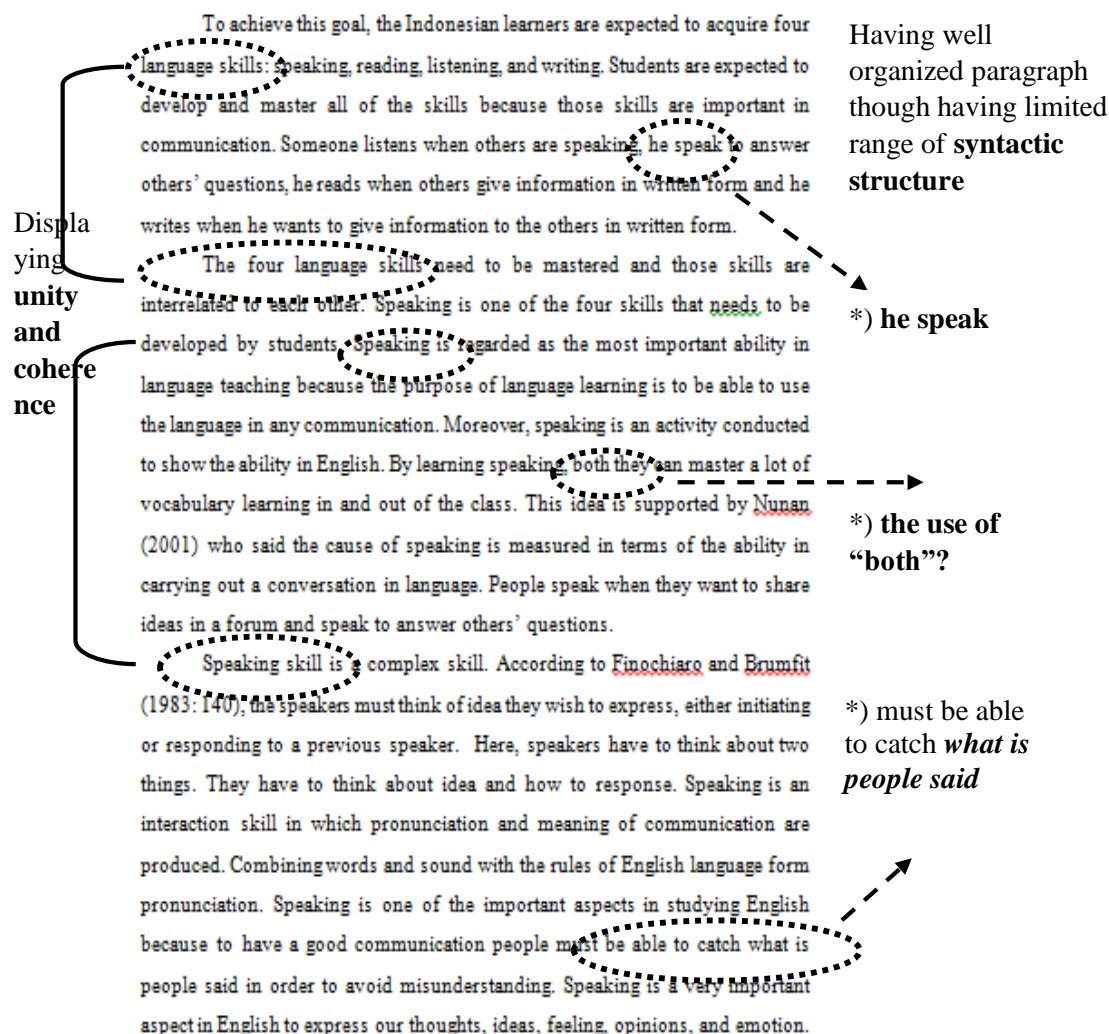


Figure 2. Well organized paragraph data ELT\_01

The data above shows that it has **well-organized** paragraphs because each paragraph consists of a sentence as the main idea which followed by supporting sentences. Besides, the data displays **unity and coherence** by having only one main idea for each paragraph and using **repetition of key nouns** such as: "*the four language skills*", and "*speaking skill*", though having limited range of syntactic structure.

The following data shows the example without effective organization because the main ideas of each paragraph is not elaborated well.

**Background of The Study**

As the international language, English plays an important role in communication between the various parts and groups in the world. It means that English is used by the users widely. English is used in many fields such as politics, economy, art, science, education, multimedia and technology exchange.

( Due to rapid development of science and technology, Junior High School students have to develop their ability in order that they are not to be left behind, so that mastering English is one of many ways of the problem solving.

In Indonesia, English is learned widely. It is one of the subject matters that are learned by students in any educational levels. English covers four language skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Junior High School students have to master them.

There are some reasons why English is important as the foreign language in Indonesia. First, English is an international language. Second, many kinds of books, labels, and literary sources that are written in English. Third, nowadays English is as the main subject at school.

This background of the study has inadequate organization or connection of ideas between the paragraphs

This part should belong to the next paragraph

Two paragraphs display **too short** paragraphs which containing **inadequate explanations or supporting ideas**

Figure 3. Ineffective organization data elt\_02

The data above starts with three paragraphs in which there is no connection each other. The paragraphs have limited development in response to the topic. So, the data above indicates that the paragraphs are not well organized and not effectively developed because the last two paragraphs display too short paragraphs which containing inadequate explanation or supporting ideas.

In the first paragraph, it is stated that English plays an important role in communication in the world; but only one sentence supports this main idea by saying that English is used in many fields. Meanwhile, the first sentence of the second paragraph mentions that *in Indonesia, English is learned widely*; however, the next sentences do not clarify that statement with adequate explanation. It also happens in the third paragraph, where the first sentence as the main idea states that *there are some reasons why English is important as the foreign language in Indonesia*; and the next sentences mention those reasons but they do give further explanation to make them clear.

**Unity and coherence of students' proposal**

The following data contains that the paragraphs with good organization, and with good unity, progression, and coherence

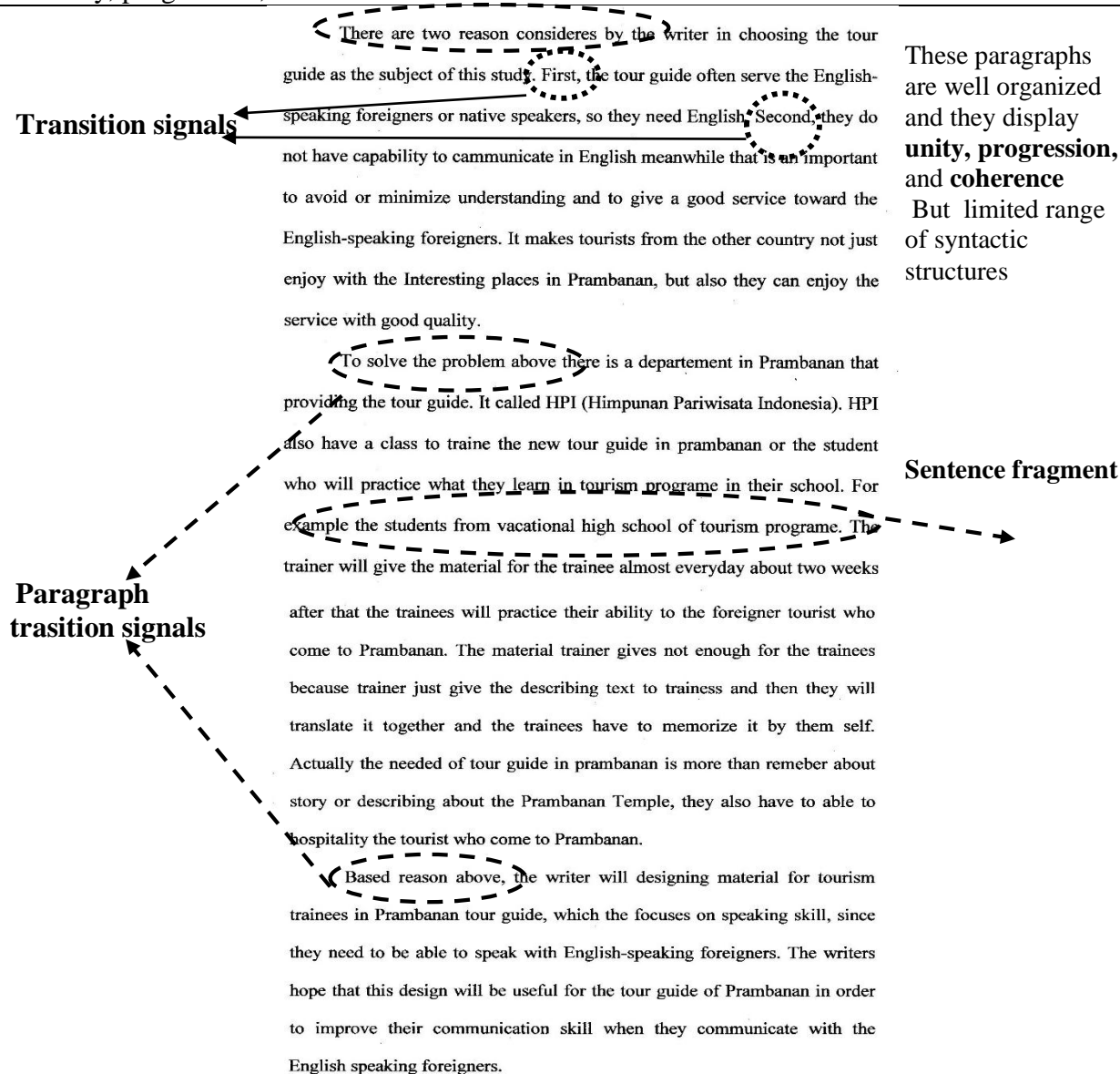


Figure 4. Unity and coherence data elt\_04

The data above shows that the paragraphs are well organized and they display good unity, progression, and coherence by using the words of transition signals such as *first, second*, and the pronouns *they* and *it*. To show the progression and the coherence between one paragraph to next paragraphs, the beginning part of the paragraphs uses the transition signals such as “*To solve the*

problems *above*”, “Based on the reason *above*,....”. However, those paragraphs have problems with a limited range of syntactic structures in each sentence. ( See it in the discussion of *Syntactic Form*).

Meanwhile, the following data shows the example with good unity and coherence because it fulfil the requirements of having unity and coherence.

<p><b>Background of the Study</b></p> <p>Literature is a reflection of reality, so we can learn something about life in general from literature. According to Hornby (687), “literature is writing that are valued as work of art, especially, fiction, drama and poetry (in contrast with technical books and newspaper, magazine, etc)”. Reading literature enables us to enrich our experience and knowledge about human beings in order to understand or to learn about ourselves. Therefore, through literature, the readers can widen and deepen their knowledge of the nature of the world. When we read literary works we can get more information about many things and get many experiences. Besides getting information, reading also can improve our vocabularies. One of the works that we can read is a literary work. By reading the literary work, we can learn some different things. They can be about life, love, heroism, culture and other experiences in life.</p> <p>One of literary works is novel. Novel is one of literary works that is very interesting to be read. It is also a fact that reading novel can help people to gain a better mastery of the language used. People know that the language in the novel is more practical in their daily language than in science. People are interested in the concepts that are shown by the author in the novel. The stories in the novel have many problems in relation to the daily life, activities, and an author’s experiences. The contents of novel can be adopted from a real story either from the writer herself or the other person’s life story.</p> <p><b>DATA LITER_02</b></p>	<p>One of the ways to achieve coherence is by repeating the key nouns :</p> <p><b>literature</b></p> <p>Key noun of this paragraph is <b>literary works</b></p> <p>Key noun of this paragraph is <b>novel</b></p>
--	---

Figure 5. Good unity and coherence data liter\_02

The main topic of the first paragraph is literary works, specifically what we can get from literary works. The transition from the first paragraph to the second paragraph can be displayed smoothly because the use of the repetition of the nouns “*literature*”, the phrase “*literary works*”, and “*novel*” which had been used several times. Therefore, those paragraphs are considered as having coherence and good organization, though they have noticeably minor errors in structure.

### Syntactic form and choice of words

As it was found that the students' proposal writings did not fully meet only the criteria of coherence but also the criteria syntactic form. The syntactic problems in the students' proposal writings varied in forms. The problems can be in the form of agreement, plural, and conjunction. The following paragraph has problem in the sentence structure especially the use of conjunction "not only..... but also....."

#### . Background of the Study

English has been regarded as an International language. As the International language, English ~~is~~ not only needed by students as one of the subjects they learn at school but it is also needed for specific needs. Nowadays, so many workers, especially those who are working in certain field or work also need English to communicate with others.

Syntactic  
Problem:

The use of " not  
only..... but  
also..... "

Figure 6. The use of conjunction data elt\_04

From the data above, we can see that the second sentence is not constructed in well-form sentence.

\*) As the international language, English is *not only* needed *by students* as one of the subjects they learn at school, *but it is also* needed *for specific needs*.

The sentence will be appropriately corrected as follows :

As the international language, *English is needed by students not only for learning needs at school but also for training specific need.*

or

As the international language, *English is needed not only by students for subject learning at school., but also by other people for specific purposes.*

The following data is also considered as having limited range of syntactic structures.

### Background of the Study

Literature is a reflection of reality, so we can learn something about life in general from literature. According to Hornby (687), "literature is writing that are valued as work of art, especially, fiction, drama and poetry (in contrast with technical books and newspaper, magazine, etc)". Reading literature enables us to enrich our experience and knowledge about human beings in order to understand or to learn about ourselves. Therefore, through literature, the readers can widen and deepen their knowledge of the nature of the world. When we read literary works we can get more information about many things and get many experiences. Besides getting information, reading also can improve our vocabularies. One of the works that we can read is a literary work. By reading the literary work, we can learn some different things. They can be about life, love, heroism, culture and other experiences in life.

One of literary works is novel. Novel is one of literary works that is very interesting to be read. It is also a fact that reading novel can help people to gain a better mastery of the language used. People know that the language in the novel is more practical in their daily language than in science. People are interested in the concepts that are shown by the author in the novel. The stories in the novel have many problems in relation to the daily life, activities, and an author's experiences. The contents of novel can be adopted from a real story either from the writer herself or the other person's life story.

Syntactic problems:\*)  
Literature is writing that are valued

\*)  
Reading also can improve\*) an author's experiences

Figure 7. Limited range of syntactic structures data liter\_02

Those paragraphs are considered as having coherence and good organization, though they have noticeably **minor errors in structure**. The part of sentence in the first paragraph has two errors:

a) The use of **to be** for singular subject:

\*) *Literature is writing that are valued as work of art.*

It must be: *Literature is writing that is valued as work of art.*

b) The use of the word "**also**":

\*) *Besides getting information, reading also can improve our vocabularies.*

It must be: *Besides getting information, reading can also improve our vocabularies*

c) Singular/plural Noun problem

\*) The stories in the novel have many problems in relation to the daily life, activities, and an author's experiences.

It must be: *The stories in the novel have many problems in relation to the daily life, activities, and **author's experiences**.*

The following paragraphs have problems with limited range of syntactic structures.

There are two reason considers by the writer in choosing the tour guide as the subject of this study. First, the tour guide often serve the English-speaking foreigners or native speakers, so they need English. Second, they do not have capability to cammunicate in English meanwhile that is an important to avoid or minimize understanding and to give a good service toward the English-speaking foreigners. It makes tourists from the other country not just enjoy with the Interesting places in Prambanan, but also they can enjoy the service with good quality.

\*) *There are two **reason considered** by.*

\*) *not just....**but also** they can enjoy*

\*) *It **called** HPI*

To solve the problem above there is a departement in Prambanan that providing the tour guide. It called HPI (Himpunan Pariwisata Indonesia). HPI also have a class to traine the new tour guide in prambanan or the student who will practice what they learn in tourism programe in their school. For example the students from vacational high school of tourism programe. The trainer will give the material for the trainee almost everyday about two weeks

**Sentence fragment\*)**  
*trainer just give the describing text to train...\*) by them self\*)*

after that the trainees will practice their ability to the foreigner tourist who come to Prambanan. The material trainer gives not enough for the trainees because trainer just give the describing text to trainess and then they will translate it together and the trainees have to memorize it b( them self. Actually the needed of tour guide in prambanan is more than remeber about story or describing about the Prambanan Temple, they also have to able to hospitality the tourist who come to Prambanan.

*Actually **the needed of tour\*)** is more than **remember about** \*) the writer **will designing***

Based reason above, the writer will designing material for tourism trainees in Prambanan tour guide, which the focuses on speaking skill, since they need to be able to speak with English-speaking foreigners. The writers hope that this design will be useful for the tour guide of Prambanan in order to improve their communication skill when they communicate with the English speaking foreigners.

Figure 8. Problems with limited range of syntactic structures data elt\_04



The data of thesis above has several problems of syntactic forms. The followings are the syntactic problems and the correction:

Table 3.

*syntactic problems and the correction*

<b>syntactic problems</b>	<b>correction</b>
*) There are <b>two reason considered</b> by the writer in choosing <b>tour guide</b> as the subject of the study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are <b>two reasons considered</b> by the writer in choosing <b>tour guide</b> as the subject of the study.</li> </ul>
*) Trainer just <b>give</b> the describing text to the trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainer just <b>gives</b> the describing text</li> </ul>
*) Actually the <b>needed</b> of tour guide in Prambanan is <b>more than remember</b> about story or describing about the Prambanan temple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actually, the <b>need</b> for tour guide in Prambanan is <b>more than remembering</b> about story or describing about the Prambanan temple</li> </ul>
*) Based on the reason above, the trainer <b>will designing</b> material for tourism trainees in Prambanan tour guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the reason above, the trainer <b>will design the</b> material for tourism trainees in Prambanan tour guide</li> </ul>

In the case of word choice, the study found that some students have problems with the word forms or word choice such as the which words are considered as noun or verb and the use of inappropriate words. The following example show the students have problems with choice of words. The readers may not understand what the word “main” means.

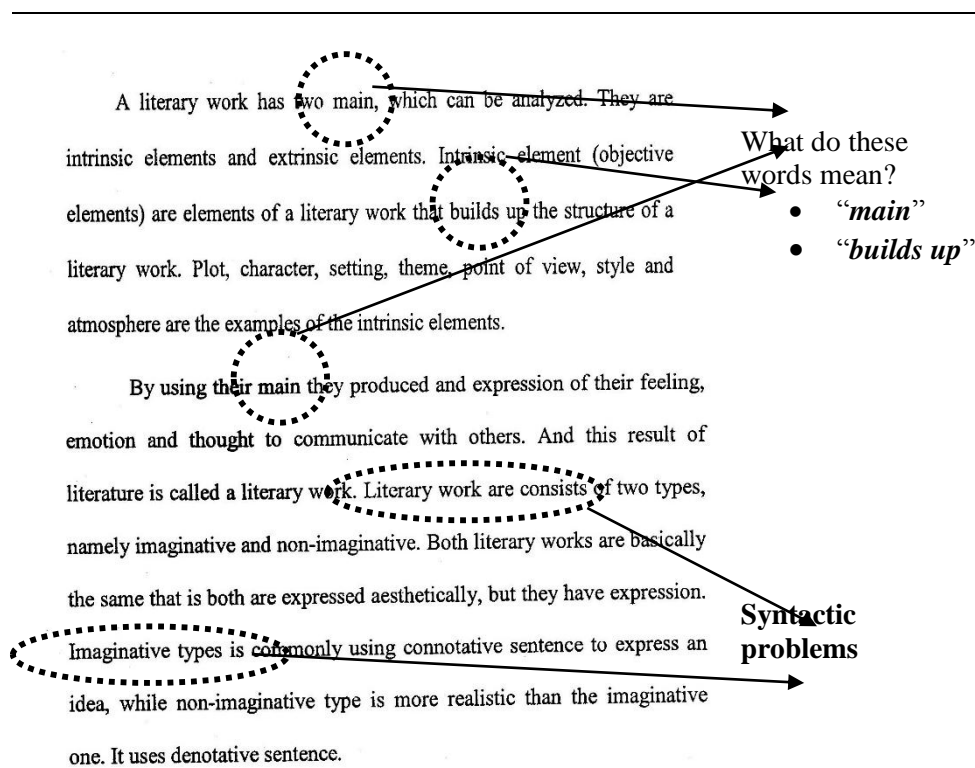
**DATA LIT\_01**

Figure 9. Problems with limited range of syntactic structures data lit\_01

It was also found that the student may not be sure with his /her choice of words. It happened because the student did not choose and write her/his own words, she just put the words from the other sources. It can be proven by showing the student's note writing of the translation of the English words into the Indonesian words. Look at the following examples

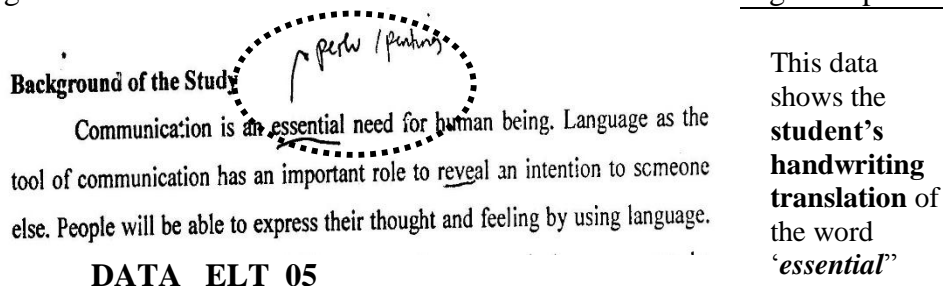
**DATA ELT\_05**

Figure 10. The translation of the English words into the Indonesian words data elt\_05

It can be seen that the student actually did not know the meaning of the word “essential” so she had checked the word in the English–Indonesian dictionary. The same case also happened

in the following examples where the student did not know the meaning of the English words “*determine*”, “*implementing*”, and *lack of*

<p>One of the ways in communication is through speaking. It is very important to master speaking well. To master speaking ability, students must be trained to use English in communication orally. The frequency in using the language will <del>determine</del> <sup>menentukan</sup> the success in speaking ability. Without <del>implementing</del> <sup>menerapkan</sup> the experience of learning the language in the real life, it is difficult for the students to master speaking ability. Hence, speaking competence can be</p> <p>The traditional method influences the teaching of speaking in which there are many problems appear. First, it relates to the condition of students who are <del>lack of vocabulary</del> <sup>kurangnya a</sup> which will make them unable to say words during speaking class. (Second, the students get used to speak their Javanese language. (Third, they</p>	<p><b>student's handwriting translation</b> of the words  <b>“determine”</b>  <b>“implementing”</b>          who are <b>“lack of”</b> vocabulary</p>
--	--

#### DATA ELT\_05

Figure 11. The student did not know the meaning data elt\_05

It seems that the student wrote his/her own words in English, however, he/she himself/herself did not know the meaning of the English words he/she wrote. When the student herself/himself did not know the meaning of the English words, so it indicates that the student might copy and paste the sentences from other sources at his/ her writing.

#### *The level of students' thesis writing*

Overall, the range of students' thesis writings were considered as having the range of score level 3 and 4. However, based on the result of analysis of the samples of data and based on the several points above the researcher can conclude that mostly the undergraduate students' competence on writing the background part of Introduction of thesis proposals was in the third level of academic writing ( Level Score 3 ) because their thesis proposal writings accomplished the following points: (a) Mostly the students' thesis proposals addressed the topic using somewhat developed explanations, exemplifications, and/or details; (b) They also displayed unity, progression, and coherence, through connection of ideas may be occasionally obscured (*difficult to understand*); (c) The students' thesis proposals also demonstrated inconsistent facility in sentence formation and word choice that may result in lack of clarity and occasionally obscure meaning; the student' theses displayed accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary.

#### **Conclusion**

This study concluded that most students were skilled in utilizing or using something effectively in their awareness. Only some students had the skill of employing topic repetition strategies and devices to achieve **coherence** in their paragraphs while others mostly did not have. In the study, the students tend to employ **cohesive devices** by employing repetition of topical

subject, employing sequential progression or unity. However, some students had difficulty in achieving such coherence because the students are foreign language learners and had difficulty in finding the right words and organizing their ideas in the paragraphs.

The students who were second language learners had similar linguistic resources when they wrote, and this reflected the interrelationships of language. Mostly the students' thesis proposals (a) developed the topic and organization using somewhat clear explanations, exemplifications, and/or details, but some of the theses were not supported the topic or ideas using clear explanations or details; (b) displayed unity, progression, and coherence; though, the connections of ideas were still occasionally not clear or obscured; (c) demonstrated inconsistent facility in sentence formation (syntactic form) and word choice that resulted in lack of clarity and occasionally obscure meaning. In other words, it was found that some theses displayed accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary or word choice. This happened because of the interference of first language or Bahasa Indonesia.

Considering the organization, unity and coherence are the most appropriate variety for the undergraduate students' writings, the study suggests that students should get more exposure to the writing practice with standard guidance or rubric of thesis writing.

## References

- Dodds, J. 2000. *Ready reference handbook: Writing, revising, editing*. Boston: Bacon and Allyn.
- Dunkin, M. J., & Biddle, B. J. 1974. *The study of teaching*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Gee, J.P. 2001. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. London: Routledge
- Green, Chris. 2009. *What do "Coherence" and "Cohesion" Mean?* [ielts-yasi.englishlab.net](http://ielts-yasi.englishlab.net)
- Harmer, J. 2004. *How to Teach Writing*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited
- Hartley, James. 2008. *Academic Writing and Publishing: A practical handbook*. New York: Routledge
- Hodges, J. C., and M. E. Whitten. 1982. *Harbrace college handbook* (9th ed.). San Diego, CA: Harcourt.
- Jaworski, A., & Coupland, N. 1999. *The discourse reader*. London: Routledge.
- Jordan, R.R. 2003. *Academic Writing Course: Study skills in English*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited
- Khondker, H.H. 2009. *All You Wanted To Know About Writing Research Proposals But Were Afraid To Ask*. Singapore. Retrieved on 17th April 2014.
- <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/soc/documents/WRITING%20research%20proposal.pdf>

- Krizan, A.C.; Merrier, P.; Logan, J.P.; and Williams, K. 2011. *Business Communication*. 8th ed. South-Western Cengage
- Lauer, J. M., G. Montague, A. Lunsford, and J. Emig. 1985. *Four worlds of writing* (2nd ed.) New York: Harper and Row.
- Lee, Icy. 2002. Helping Students Develop Coherence in Writing. In “English Teaching Forum”. July 2002
- McCrimmon, J. M. 1980. *Writing with a purpose*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company
- Oshima, A. and Hogue, A. 1999. *Writing Academic English*. 3rd edition. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Richards, J. C.(1990). *From meaning into words: Writing in a second or foreign language*. The language teaching Matrix. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- What, M.K.G; Wei, W.T.; and Kee, C. 2013. “Writing Difficulties Faced by Politeknik Kuching Sarawak Commerce Diploma Students in Doing their Assignments”. In *The Asian Journal of English Language & Pedagogy*. Vol 1, (2013)
- Wingersky, J.; Boerner, J.; and Holguin-Balogh, D. 2009. *Writing Paragraphs and Essays: Integrating Reading, Writing, and Grammar Skills*. 6th ed. Wadsworth: Cengage.

### Website References:

- <http://grammar.about.com/od/tz/g/Word-Choice.htm> retrieved on 20 April 2017.
- <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/word-choice/> retrieved on 21 March 2014 © 2010-2013 by The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill.
- [https://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Independent\\_Writing\\_Rubrics\\_2008.pdf](https://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Independent_Writing_Rubrics_2008.pdf) retrieved on 20 April 2017
- [https://www.smcm.edu/writingcenter/internal/pdf/organ\\_pdf/uncohdev.pdf](https://www.smcm.edu/writingcenter/internal/pdf/organ_pdf/uncohdev.pdf)
- <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~matt/proposal.html>
- [http://ielts-yasi.englishlab.net/WRITING\\_BLOG\\_4.htm](http://ielts-yasi.englishlab.net/WRITING_BLOG_4.htm) retrieved on 20 November 2017
- <http://sentence.yourdictionary.com/grammatical> (© 1996-2017 LoveToKnow, Corp.) retrieved on 20 November 2017