

Transitional signal error on students' paragraph writing

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze error in using transition signal on students' paragraph writing. The subjects of this research were sixth semester students of English Education Department of IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo, in academic year 2018/2019, consisted of 20 students. The method used in this research was qualitative with a descriptive design. Technique of collecting data was carried out through interview. Data analysis was performed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawing. The results showed that types of error in using transition signal that existed in paragraph writing namely; punctuation for transition signal, sentence and clause connectors, types of transition signal, placement of transition signal, and repetitive transition signal. The implication of this research was students did not have good competence in using transition signal according to their function and grammar, also some transition signals were still used inappropriately.

Keywords: punctuation, type of transition signal

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a skill in arranging words into one paragraph sentences, which can be easily understood by the reader. Writing is also a means of communication and alternative in developing ideas or suggestions that can provide information so students can express what they think. Barkaoui explains that the benefits of writing is one of the most challenging skills that second or foreign language learners are expected to acquire as it requires the mastery of a variety of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural competencies. As Brown says that among the language skills, writing is the most complicated and the most difficult one. It is considered

difficult because in writing, a writer is not only dealing directly with the reader. So, if there are structural errors, he will not be able to overcome them by using body language, facial expressions, or tone of speech. Therefore, this error can lead to misunderstanding. However, to become a good writer requires great competence in writing theory. Thus, information can be fully conveyed to the reader. In other words, the difficulty of writing is not just how to generate and organize ideas, but also how to translate these ideas into readable text.

In writing paragraphs, many students do not use transitional signals, and when they use transitional signals, they often use only common type, for instance "and, but", even there are various types of it. Meanwhile Wiener in Dewi defines transition signals as connectors between statements and or ideas in paragraphs. They help readers identify the direction of the writer's thought and announce where he is going and how to follow him. Similarly, Duke asserts that the transition signals indicate the relationships between sentences and help to connect one sentence to the next. So it can be said that the transitional signal becomes a link between ideas, from one sentence to another sentence in a paragraph and also as a link in identifying the writer's thoughts. Besides, it functions as a transition signal to make sentences and paragraphs run easily and coherently so that they can be used to complete the author's message.

Transition signals are used to mark the relationship between ideas in writing. For example, the transition signal 'for example' is used to give an example, while the word 'in contradiction' is used to indicate contrast. Furthermore, there are phrases such as 'in addition' to adding new ideas. Likewise, there are words like 'also' to link similar ideas. Also, transition signals are an important element that supports good writing because they help writers carry readers from one idea to another without ambiguity. Although the transitional signal has a great influence in building good writing, it also will not be useful if the writer cannot choose the right transition signal because it cannot help the writer to manage the writing properly.

METHODS

This research used a descriptive qualitative method to reveal and describe the object of research based on facts that appear or as they are. According to Bodgan and Taylor descriptive qualitative method is a research procedure, which will produce description information in the results of written and oral symbols from people who can be observed. This research used data collection techniques interview to find error in using transitional signals on students' paragraph writing and documentation results in the form of writing and material or lesson plans. There were 20 students of English Education Department of IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo in academic

year 2018/209 participated in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The transitional signal errors are caused by factors such as omission, additions, misinformation, and disordering. This is the findings of the research based on the result of the interview. The followings were the result of data from students' point of view in relation to the causes of the error transitional signal. In using transitional signal in paragraph writing, the students made many errors. The main reason why they made error when using transitional signal was caused by the lack of knowledge about what transitional signal is, the types of transitional signal, and how to use the word of transitional signal in writing text.

Additionally, the data gained from the documentation of the students' paragraph writing task in using transitional signal is showed below.

1. Error analysis in using transitional signal on students' paragraph writing

According to the focus of the study, the researchers should be able to find the errors on using transition signals that the students made in their paragraph writing tasks. After analyzing the data, therefore, the researchers pointed and further elaborated the types of errors in using transition signals occurring on the students' paragraph writing as follows:

a. Punctuation for transition signals

As has been mentioned previously, there are rules on using punctuation for transition signals in paragraph writing. Referring to that rules, the researcher found errors on using punctuation for transition signals on the students' paragraph writing.

b. Sentences and clauses connectors

Transition signals are used both to connect sentences and clauses. Transition signals that can be used to connect sentences are transition phrases such as 'in addition, in contrast, on the other hand, as a result', etc., and conjunctive adverbs such as 'furthermore, however, thus', etc. Besides, transition signals that can be used to connect clauses are coordinating conjunction such as 'and, but, yet, or, so', etc., and subordinating conjunction such as 'although, even though, if, unless, while', etc.

According to the classification above, the researchers found such kinds of error on using transition signal for sentences and clauses connectors on the students' paragraph writing.

Table 1. Students' review about transition signal (student 1)

No	Kind of Transitional Signal	Function	Error of Using Transitional Signal
1.	Besides (sentence connector)	To introduce an additional idea	Besides more resource and material are obtained.

The student's mistake is the wrong transitional signal 'besides' not in sentence, but how the transition signal namely 'besides' in. The student used 'besides' in new paragraph, while according to the theory of using transitional signal the word 'besides' has to explain or support the previous sentence in one paragraph.

Table 2. Students' review about transition signal (student 2)

No	Kind of Transitional Signal	Function	Error of Using Transitional Signal
1.	Therefore (sentence connectors)	To introduce an effect/result	Therefore, school must be a conducive plays for student to learn.

The student's mistake is the wrong transitional signal 'therefore' in sentence. According to the theory of transitional signal, 'therefore' explains the result of the previous topic about, but in student's writing task it did not explain the result or even effect of a topic.

Table 3. Students' review about transition signal (student 3)

No	Kind of Transitional Signal	Function	Error of Using Transitional Signal
1.	Nor (clause connector)	To connect two clauses to form one sentence	Education is the process of facilitating learning of the accusation of knowledge nor habits.

The student's mistake is the wrong transitional signal 'nor' in sentence. According to the theory of transitional signal 'nor' is used to explain or summarize, and to show the spatial relationship, but in student's writing task it was not suitable with the context of sentence. The student used 'nor' literally to explain the affirmative of sentence.

Discussion

Students' error in transition signal is perceived from the following aspects.

1. Pattern of error

Pattern of error allows researchers to determine whether students are making consistent errors. By pinpointing the pattern of individual students' errors, the researchers found that the students made such kinds of grammatical errors. They were 40 items which were included in

13 items of omission, 9 items of addition, 15 items of misinformation, and 3 items of disordering.

2. Causes of error

The contributing factors of the students' error in using transition signals in paragraph writing referring to the analysis of the researcher were three points. They were: a. The inability to identify the rules of using transition signals. There are some rules in using the device transition signals in writing. They are using punctuation for transition signals, differing transition signal for sentences and clauses connectors, differing the types of transition signals based on the function, and the placement of the transition signal (at the beginning; in the middle; or at the end). The result of the analysis showed that students have the inability to apply those rules properly. This inability caused errors on their writing. For example, the students often used transition signals for clauses 'but' and 'so' to connect sentences, and placed it at the beginning of the sentence (Paragraph Writing 3). Student placed a comma after an independent clause followed by a transition signal 'if' that introduce the dependent clause came after while this rule is incorrect (Paragraph Writing 7). Moreover, student used transition signal that indicate opposite idea to introduce result or consequence (Paragraph Writing 10).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, the researchers can conclude that the students made many errors in connecting ideas when using transition signals. This study has the types and causes of error analysis in using transitional signals. The researchers suggest that there are several strategies that students must have, what kind of strategies students should have to overcome the types and causes of students making mistakes in connecting ideas and adding ideas in the form, Students must learn grammar well. Students must learn the mistakes in using transitional signals. Students must use transitional signals more often and must have high motivation to learn.

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