

COHERENCE AND COHESION: AN ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPH WRITTEN BY THE ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 2 SINGARAJA

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to analyse and describe the components of coherence and cohesion in argumentative paragraphs written by students of grade XI at SMAN 2. components in argumentative paragraphs written by grade XI students at SMAN 2 Singaraja. In this study, 30 students participated to fulfil purpose of this study, the data were collected using the data collection method, by using the data collection method, by summarizing the students' argumentative paragraph writings which were previously written by the students. Data were analyzed using explanatory sequential mixed methods, which combines descriptive quantitative and descriptive qualitative research methods. quantitative, and qualitative descriptive research methods. The results of this study show that the level of coherent level of students is in the good category, because the average of the final assessment results of students' paragraph writing is 85%. Most of the students' paragraphs have fulfill the components of coherent assessment such as the existence of a topic sentence, supporting sentence and using an argumentative paragraph structure that is complete and precise. The next is the result of cohesion analysis which shows that cohesion devices that appear the most are lexcical cohesion with a percentage of 47.95%, then percentage of 47.95%, then followed by Conjunction with a percentage of 32.88%, references with a percentage of 19.18%, and Substitution and Ellipsis with a percentage of 0%. Ellipsis with a percentage of 0%. Based on these results, it can be concluded that most students in grade XI at SMAN 2 Singaraja have been able to apply coherence and cohesion in their writing, this. This is seen from the use of topic sentenc

Keywords: Argumentative Paragraph, Coherence, Cohesion

INTRODUCTION

Mastering writing is a fundamental language skill, particularly in English, as it facilitates communication within educational contexts (Mourtaga, 2004). Essentially, writing enables the clear and effective conveyance of thoughts, ideas, and factual information. This skill encompasses various ideational components, including goal setting, statement formulation, opinion planning, and structured organization (Özdemir, 2002). Moreover, proficiency in writing involves elements such as coherence, cohesion, accurate punctuation, grammar, spelling, text editing, and appropriate word choice (Kellogg et al., 2007). In today's society, strong writing skills are indispensable across academic and professional spheres. Walsah (2010) emphasizes that effective communication with professors, employers, and peers relies heavily on writing, with tasks like proposals, memos, and emails being commonplace. Furthermore, Ariana (2012) suggests that writing fosters independence, clarity, and creativity, allowing individuals to articulate their perspectives in a structured manner. Despite its importance, writing remains a significant challenge for English Language Learners (ELLs). Goma (2010) attributes this difficulty to first language interference, where learners apply native language structures to English writing, resulting in potential misunderstandings.

Paragraph writing, a crucial form of written expression, requires sentences to be arranged logically to create a unified meaning. Abbs et al. (2018), as cited in Muid et al. (2024), define a paragraph as a systematically organized series of sentences that aids reader comprehension by presenting a main idea supported by explanatory details. Coherence, as defined by Oshima and Hogue (2006), ensures smooth and logical transitions between sentences, avoiding abrupt or irrelevant shifts. Fundamentally, coherence establishes a unified and comprehensible text (Witte and Figley, 1981; Halliday and Hasan, 1976). This is achieved through cohesion, which involves linking textual elements using interrelated words, phrases, or sentences. Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that cohesion builds meaning through semantic relationships driven by lexical and grammatical elements. Castro (2004) posits that cohesion distinguishes text from non-text, enabling readers to establish relevance. Specifically, English cohesion is categorized into grammatical cohesion (reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction) and lexical cohesion (reiteration, collocation) (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Research, such as a study conducted on English Education students at Gorontalo State University, has explored these concepts. This study analyzed the coherence and cohesion in argumentative essays, focusing on elements like pronoun consistency, transition signals, and logical ordering. The findings revealed that while students demonstrated a general understanding of coherence and cohesion, their application of certain specific elements remained limited, despite achieving an average score of 66.95%.

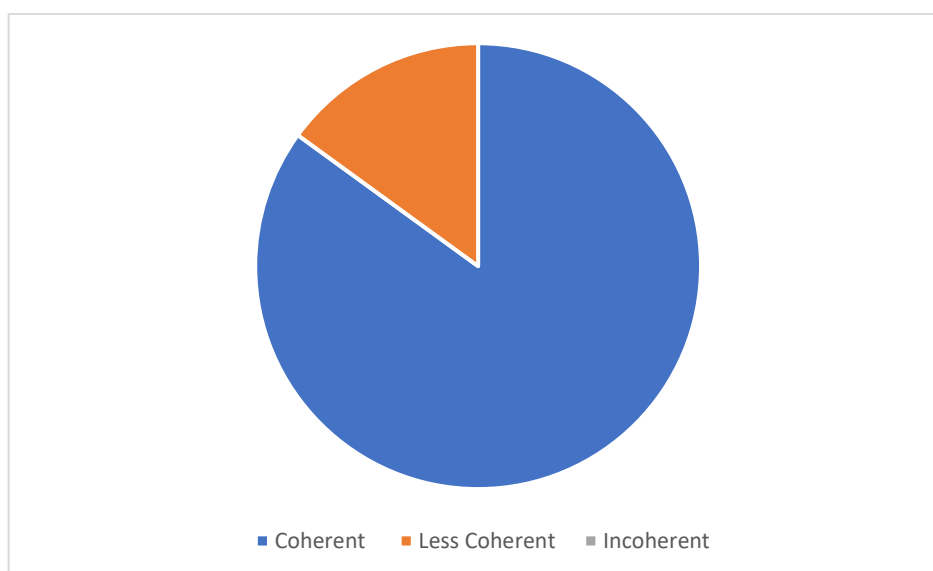
RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, explanatory sequential mixed methods were used to analyze the coherence and cohesion in argumentative paragraph writing. The setting of this study was taken from the students of SMAN 2 Singaraja. 31 students were selected as samples in this study by using cluster random sampling technique. The first instrument used is the students' argumentative paragraph writing which is used as a quantitative descriptive and qualitative descriptive instrument, then the second instrument is the rubric table of coherence assessment and the frequency table of cohesion occurrence in the students' argumentative paragraph, this second instrument is an instrument to analyze the data in quantitative description.

To collect data accurately, researchers applied several procedures before taking students' argumentative paragraphs as data in this study. First, the researcher conducted a primary observation to find out the potential of students in writing a paragraph, the results obtained, students tend to get good grades on their argumentative writing, then the researcher conducted a data collection process through direct collection of student argumentative paragraphs that had been written previously, as one of the fulfillments of assignments by the teacher. Furthermore, these argumentative paragraphs were further analyzed to find the components of coherence and cohesion.

FINDING

The Mean of Coherence Rating of Students' Argumentative Paragraphs

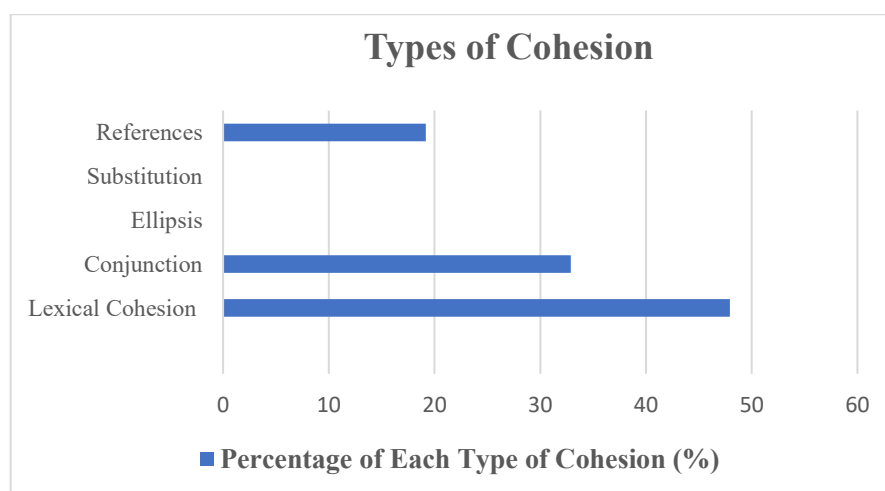


The PAP table, which has been explained, is used to reclassify the coherence level of the students' argumentative paragraphs. The division is based on the

average cohesion score that the students obtained, and the first category is very bad, with a percentage range of 0%-39%; the second bad category, with a percentage range of 40%-54%; the third category, with an average range of 55%-69%; the fourth is good, with a percentage range of 70%-84%; and the final category is very good, with a percentage value of 85%-100%.

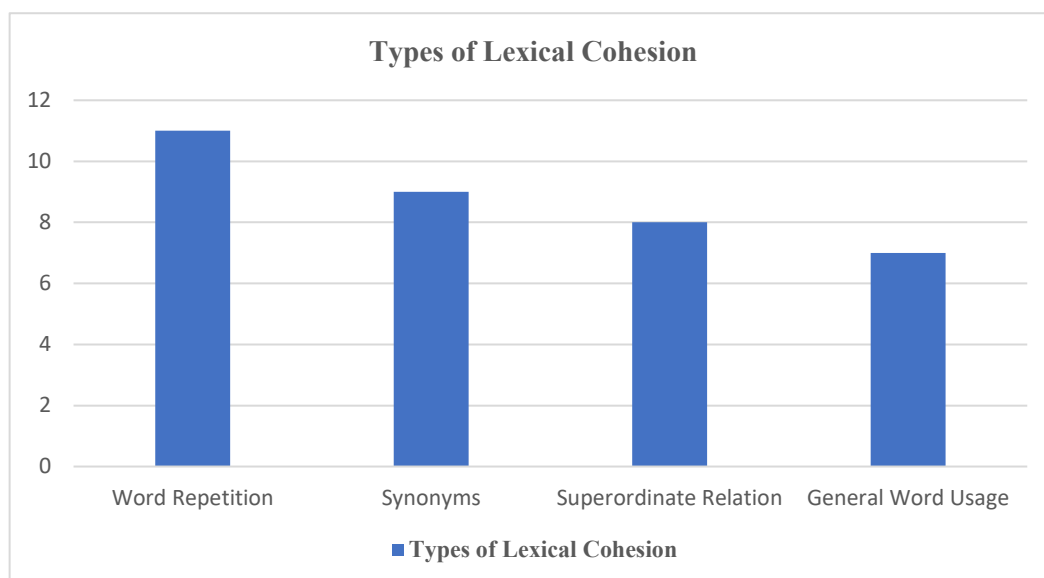
Based on the results of two assessors, the pie chart above displays the percentage of the average value of the argumentative paragraph writing of students in class XI of SMAN 2 Singaraja. The percentage of the average value of the students' argumentative paragraph writing reaches 85%, which falls into the good category, indicating that students are able to write paragraphs in an organized and coherent way. Additionally, the 15% number shows that some students' writing does not fit into the cohesive category, suggesting that some students still struggle to generate topic sentences and turn them into coherent paragraph units. Therefore, it may be said that the typical student already possesses the ability to compose or write a coherent paragraph, as the assessment does not indicate the percentage of students' paragraph scores that are incoherent.

Types of Cohesion Used by Students in Their Argumentative Paragraph



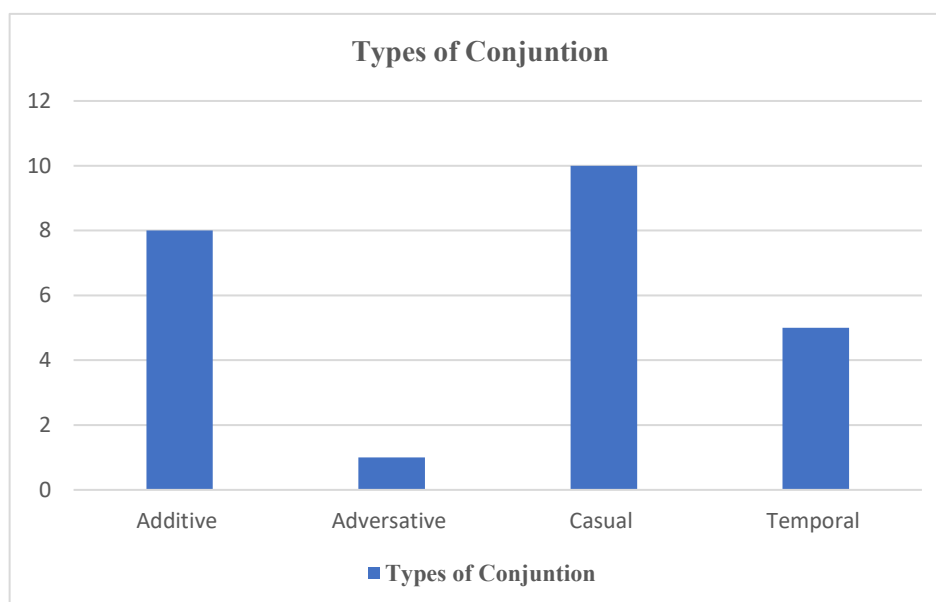
Cohesion can be classified into five types: references, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion, all of which are included in non-structural units. Cohesion acts as a support tool for coherence in a written product, such as a paragraph, by containing grammatical units that can help to convey ideas or ideas in the paragraph more clearly. The diagram above depicts the percentage of cohesion types that appear in the argumentative paragraphs written by students of grade XI of SMAN 2 Singaraja. It can be seen that the type of cohesion most widely used by students is Lexical Cohesion with a percentage of 47.95%, followed by

Conjunction with a percentage of 32.88%, References with a percentage of 19.18%, and no use Substitution and Ellipses with a percentage of 0%.

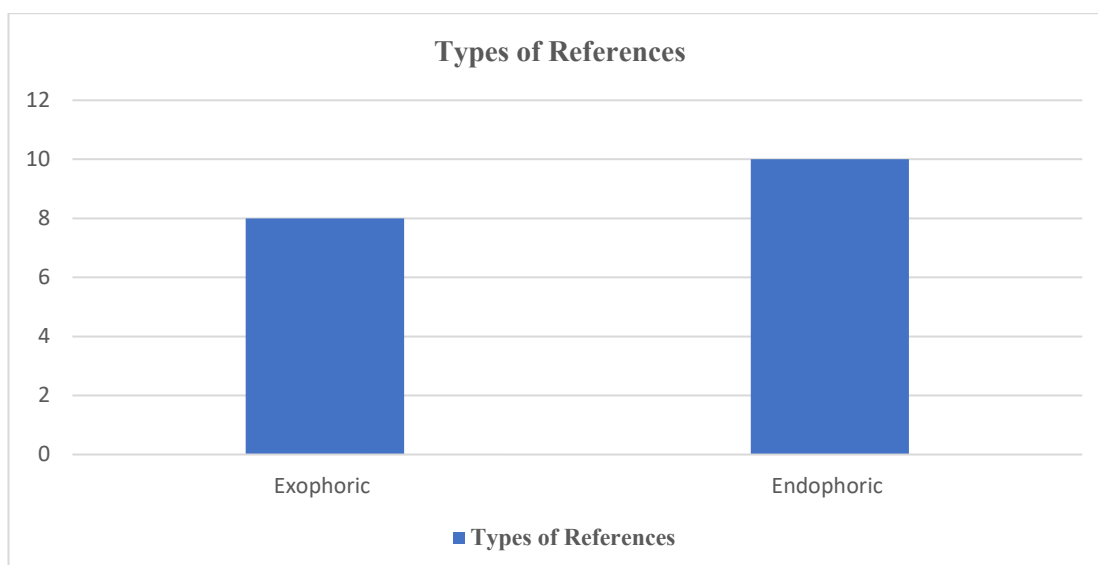


Lexical Cohesion is the most commonly employed type of cohesion in student paragraph writing, accounting for 47.95%. There are four types of lexical cohesion: word repetition, synonyms, superordinate relations, and general word use. Based on the table graph above, it is clear that word repetition is the most commonly used type of lexical cohesion by students, with a frequency of occurrence of 11 times. As a result, students use word repetition more frequently in order to make it easier to connect one idea to another in the paragraph. Furthermore, synonyms with a frequency of occurrence of 9 times indicate that students are still actively using the synonyms aspect to make it easier to repeat or emphasize a word without having to repeat the exact same word, but by repeating a different word with the same meaning as the previous word, so that the writing is more varied and does not appear monotonous. The next type is superordinate relation with a frequency of occurrence of 8 times, where students are able to make efficiency in the use of words to be more concise, because the superordinate relation refers to changing specific words into more general words, so that specific words do not need to be mentioned repeatedly in a writing, so that the resulting writing is more cohesive and easy to understand, and the last type is general word usage with a frequency. However, the frequency results shown do not differ significantly from the previous types of lexical cohesion, indicating that students are capable of using general word types in their writing by selecting general words that are already familiar to many people, making the writing results easier to understand. Based on

a comparison of the types of lexical cohesion that appear to be relatively close together, this suggests that the average student can apply the types of lexical cohesion in their paragraph writing.



The second type of cohesiveness that emerges frequently in students' paragraph writing is Conjunction, which is classified into four types: Additive, Adversative, Casual, and Temporal. The most common type of cohesion conjunction is Casual, which appears 10 times. This indicates that students have been able to connect casual cause and effect in a sentence, resulting in a logical flow of ideas in student writing. Additionally, casual conjunctions can explain why something or phenomenon can occur, providing readers with a deeper understanding. The next type of Conjunction is Additive, which occurs 8 times, indicating that students can connect sentences or words within the same sentence. It has equal weight, so it will broaden the meaning and emphasize the additional information provided. Next is the temporal conjunction with a frequency of occurrence of 5 times; this number indicates that students are quite capable of applying temporal conjunctions in their writing with the aim of being able to show the time relationship between two or more events; by doing so, the reader will not feel ambiguous regarding the sequence of events that occur in the student's paragraph writing. The next advertisement has the lowest frequency of occurrence, which is one time. This indicates that students are not too used to applying this type of conjunction in their writing, this is because this type involves a more complex sentence structure and concerns two conflicting clauses, besides that in writing argumentative paragraphs tends to emphasize the argument given, so if you use conjunction advertise in an inappropriate way, it is feared that it will weaken the main argument that has been given.



The bar chart above illustrates a specific form of cohesion, referred to as References. These references can be categorized into two segments: Exophoric and Endophoric, with the latter further subdivided into Anaphoric and Cataphoric. The analysis reveals that the Anaphoric type within the Endophoric category exhibits the highest frequency of occurrence, recorded at 10 instances. This indicates that students endeavor to establish connections between sentences and paragraphs through the reiteration of previously mentioned information, thereby enhancing clarity in communication. Aside from that, anaphoric references are easily used by students in the text when referring to prior text references, which are typically in the form of pronouns. Furthermore, the Exophoric kind, which occurs 8 times, demonstrates that students rely on context outside of the text to create meaning. This can refer to the shared knowledge between the writer and the reader, or to the situation being discussed, and the last is the Cataphoric type with a frequency of occurrence of 0, which indicates that students are not familiar with this technique, because cataphoric refers to the use of references to be used in information that will

DISCUSSION

• The Mean of Coherence Rating of Students' Argumentative Paragraphs

The Paragraph Assessment Profile (PAP) table, previously described, is used to reclassify the coherence level of students' argumentative paragraphs. This classification is based on the average cohesion scores students obtained, divided into five categories:

1. Very Bad: 0%–39%
2. Bad: 40%–54%
3. Fair: 55%–69%
4. Good: 70%–84%
5. Very Good: 85%–100%

According to two assessors' evaluations, the pie chart above shows that the average coherence score of argumentative paragraphs written by grade XI students at SMAN 2 Singaraja is 85%, placing it in the Very Good category. This indicates that most students are capable of writing coherent and organized paragraphs. However, the remaining 15% suggests that some students still face difficulties in developing topic sentences and integrating them into cohesive paragraph structures. Overall, the findings suggest that the majority of students have acquired the ability to write coherent argumentative paragraphs.

- **Types of Cohesion Used by Students in Their Argumentative Paragraphs**

Cohesion in writing is categorized into five types: Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis, Conjunction, and Lexical Cohesion all of which are non-structural elements that support textual coherence. These cohesive devices help convey meaning more clearly and logically in written discourse. The diagram above indicates that Lexical Cohesion is the most frequently used type, accounting for 47.95%, followed by Conjunction (32.88%) and Reference (19.18%). Substitution and Ellipsis were not used at all (0%).

- **Lexical Cohesion**

Lexical cohesion includes word repetition, synonyms, superordinate terms, and general words. The most common strategy used by students is word repetition (11 instances), which helps link ideas within a paragraph. Synonyms (9 instances) were also frequently used, allowing students to avoid redundancy while maintaining meaning. Superordinate terms (8 instances) reflect the students' ability to generalize specific concepts, enhancing clarity and conciseness. The use of general words, though unspecified in count, appears consistent with other lexical devices, showing students' ability to use familiar terms to support comprehension. The relatively balanced use of these lexical cohesion types suggests that students can apply a variety of cohesive strategies in their writing.

- **Conjunction**

Conjunctions were the second most common type of cohesion used. They are divided into Additive, Adversative, Causal, and Temporal types; (1) Causal conjunctions were the most frequently used (10 instances), indicating students' ability to show cause-and-effect relationships clearly, (2) Additive conjunctions appeared 8 times, showing students could add supporting ideas logically, (3) Temporal conjunctions (5 instances) demonstrate students' capacity to sequence events, (4) Adversative conjunctions, however, appeared only once, suggesting students are less familiar with or hesitant to use this more complex form, likely due to the risk of undermining their arguments in persuasive writing.

- **Reference**

Reference devices are categorized into Exophoric and Endophoric (which includes Anaphoric and Cataphoric); (1) Anaphoric references were used most frequently (10 times), indicating that students often refer back to previously mentioned ideas to maintain clarity and flow, (2) Exophoric references (8 times) suggest some reliance on shared knowledge or external context, (3) Cataphoric references were not used (0%), likely because this technique, which involves referring forward to information yet to be introduced, is more complex and less commonly taught.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings obtained, related to students' ability to create argumentative texts, the results show that students have been able to create argumentative texts that are sequential, have meaning, and are able to be understood by readers, or in other words, students have been able to compose paragraphs by paying attention to coherent elements in their writing. This is evidenced based on the results of the coherent analysis that has been carried out by two assessors, the results show that the average value of student coherence is 85% which represents 26 students, and falls into the good level category, then followed by a value of 15% which represents 3 students with writing skills that are still less than optimal in developing ideas and linkages in a sentence in the paragraph written, so that the paragraph is still less cohesive or coherent. And according of findings obtained, related to the cohesion aspects in argumentative writing students' argumentative writing, it can be described that the cohesion aspect with the highest frequency value is Lexical cohesion with a percentage of 47.95%. appears is Lexical cohesion with a percentage of 47.95%, then the second position is Conjunction with a percentage of 32.88%. in the second position is Conjunction with a percentage of 32.88%, then in the third position are references with a percentage of 19.18%. And

lastly, the same cohesion aspect that does not appear in students' argumentative paragraphs are Ellipsis and Substitution.

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