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Social

AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSITION SIGNALS IN DISCUSSION TEXTS WRITTEN BY THE SIXTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF THE ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM OF UNDANA IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017

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Abstract

This research is aimed to identify the types of transition signals used in discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of the English Study Program of UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017, to classify the types of transition signals which are mostly used by students and to analyze the appropriateness of the use of those transition signals in students' discussion texts. The researcher used descriptive qualitative method in conducting this research and the instrument used in collecting the data was the writing discussion text test. The subjects are forty eight students of the sixth semester of English Study Program of UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017. The result of the data analysis revealed that first, students are used all types of transition signals proposed by Oshima and Hogue. From all of the types, addition is the type of transition signals mostly used by students. Generally, students have good competence in using transition signal appropriate with its function and grammar, however, some transition signals are still used incorrectly.

Keywords: Analysis; Transition Signals; Discussion Text.

1. Introduction

In the process of teaching and learning English, students are required to master four basic skills; they are speaking, reading, writing, and listening. From those skills, writing is considered the most complicated language one to be learned. As Brown (2004: 218) says that among the language skills, writing is the most complicated and the most difficult one. This is supported by Richards and Renandya (2002: 303) who say that writing is considered as the most difficult skill for second language learners to master.

Writing is difficult because in writing, a writer does not face his/her readers directly. So, if there are mistakes or structural errors, she/he cannot overcome it using his/her body language, face expression, or speaking tone. These mistakes could result in misunderstanding. After all, being a good writer requires great competency in writing theories. Therefore, the information can be completely delivered to the readers. In other words, writing difficulty is not only on how to generate and organize ideas, but also how to translate the ideas into a readable text.

In order to overcome the difficulty of writing, students should pay more attention on writing and on how to express their ideas, thoughts, and opinions in a written form. In this sense Byrne (1979: 1 in Ratnasiah 2016: 12) states that writing involves the encoding of a message of some kind, that is, translating writers' thoughts into a written language.

The writers transfer their thoughts into a written form by following some certain rules such as spelling, grammar and punctuation, coherence and organization of ideas. Those rules should be mastered by writers because writing is a way to communicate one another and they have to be able to construct their paragraphs coherently. A way to make a coherent paragraph is using transitions which should be clearly demonstrated in a text.

It is clearly stated in previous paragraph that to make coherent coherence in writing, it is needed the use of the transition signals. Transition signals are 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 (Wiener 1981 in Dewi, 2015: 15). Similarly, Duke (1983: 65) asserts that the transition signals indicate the relationships between sentences and help to connect one sentence to the next. They help readers follow the movement of a discussion and understand the relationship between ideas (Harris 2010 in Dewi, 2015: 15). The function of transition signals is then, to make the sentences and paragraphs run smoothly and coherently, in order that readers understand the writer's message.

There are some kinds of transition signals; it can be transition signals between paragraphs or within paragraph. In the discussion of transition signals, Oshima and Hogue (1998:44-45) divided transition signals into three groups based on grammatical function. The three groups are sentence connectors, clause connectors, and mixed group called others. Those transition signals can be put in the beginning of sentences, in the middle of sentences and it can also appear in the end of sentence. They also divided transition signals into eight types. Those types are addition, contrast, comparison, example, cause effect, sequence and conclusion. In addition, Wingersky (1992:284) introduced some types of transition signals to add something, to show a contrast, to give an example, to compare or show similarity, to show time sequence, to emphasize, to show space relationship, and to summarize.

Transition signals are the important elements that support a good writing because they help the writer bringing the readers from one idea to another idea without any ambiguities. Although they have big contribution in constructing a good writing, they will be uselessif the writer cannot choose the appropriate transition signals because it cannot help the writer to arrange a good writing.

Discussion text is a writing genre in which the writer discusses a controversial issue from the pros sides to cons sides equally. Tukan and Palupi (2008: 13) claim that discussion text is a writing genre which deals with both sides of a controversial issue - the for and against arguments in the same essay. In constructing this type of text, Anderson and Anderson (1998: 20) state that the writer of a discussion text has to include the following points. Introductory paragraph that has a statement or question about the issue, a series of paragraphs that give evidence, opinions, or reason for and against the issue, and a conclusion that gives a final point of view, either for or against the issue. Both sides should be treated equally.

In order to make the claim and its reasons both for and against run coherently and cohesively, transition signals of discussion texts are highly needed. Transition signals showing movement from either the pro side to the con side or the other way around should be clearly demonstrated in a discussion text.

In English Department of Nusa Cendana University, the students begin to get writing course from first semester. It is divided into four stages. There are Writing I, Writing II, Writing III and Academic Writing.

Each writing stage has different objectives. In writing I, the students are expected to be able to express meaning in a short paragraph using basic pattern of sentence, distinguish between simple, complex, and compound sentences, plan and write a paragraph with correct spelling and punctuation. In Writing II, this stage little bit complex than writing I. Writing II is designed to help students write a paragraph using a topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence. Students are guided through stages of writing a paragraph by giving reasons and using examples to support the reasons and expressing the opinion by using facts. The next is Writing III, which is delivered in the sixth semester. In this course requires the students to express ideas in various types of essay in organized manner using good language. The last is Academic Writing which expect the students to write a variety of writing for variety purpose, audience and context in well organized manner using good language. Students are expected to write essay, an academic paper and so on.

By those statements above, the researcher interested in conducting research on the sixth semester students of the English Department because they should have already learnt and used transition signals since they took Writing I. Consequently, they are supposed to have mastered in using transition signals.

This study is not the first work that has been done, there were several researchers that had done the same work, for example, surfaifel (2002) who has analyzed the type of transition signals that are used in some articles on Reader's Digest, another study also had been done by Amrullah (2004) who analyzed the type of transition signals that are used on a novel written by Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle.

From the explanation above, it has been known that those two studies only analyze the types of transition signals that are used on the novel and articles. To make a difference, this study does not only analyze the types of transition signals in discussion texts written by the sixth semester

students of the English Study Program UNDANA, but also analyze the appropriateness of the use of those transition signals in students' discussion texts.

Based on the background, then the researcher conducted a research entitled: An Analysis of Transition Signals in Discussion Texts Written by the Sixth Semester Students of the English Study Program of Undana in Academic Year 2016/2017with the major problems of this study formulated by the researcher are first problem is about the types of transition signals used in discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of the English Study Program of UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017, the second one is about the type of transition signals which are mostly used in the discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of the English Study Program of UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017, and the last is about the appropriateness of the use of those transition signals in students' discussion texts.

This research is intended to classify the type of transition signals used in discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of the English Study Program of UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017, find the types of transition signals which are mostly used in the discussion texts written by students, and analyze the appropriateness of the use of transition signals in discussion texts written by students.

2. Research Methodology

This research used descriptive qualitative method. The researcher used this method as an appropriate one for this research because it describes the characteristic of phenomena; likewise Haan (2004: 4) stated that this method describes naturally the existing phenomena. The description of phenomena employed narrative description. Narrative description means the researcher explains the phenomena, situation, and the facts completely and comprehensively by using words and sentences in narrative text (Isaac and Michael, discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of English Study Program of UNDANA in Academic Year 2016/2017.

This research used qualitative methodology because of some reasons; the first reason is because this research focused on the process. It concerns with the discussion about what the transition signals applied in students' discussion text. The second reason is because this research did not use any statistical procedures since it was not done to count the number of transition signals that were used on every students' writing. The third reason is because this research was done inductively, it means that this research did not go from a hypothesis but from the theory that has been studying and from the data that have been collected. From those two things, this research, then constructing a concept to answer the questions from the data and combined with the theory of transition signals formulated by Oshima and Hague (1998). In addition this research is also descriptive since it described the appropriateness of the use of transition signals in students' discussion texts.

In this study, the subject was taken from the sixth semester students of English study program of Nusa Cendana University. The sixth semester consists of two classes with the total number of students are 48.

In order to get a valid data analysis of this research, the researcher of course needs an adequate amount of data. First of all, she came to UNDANA, asked for permission from the Dean of Teacher Training and Science Faculty, and the permission of the Head of English Study Program of UNDANA. After getting their permissions, she gave writing test to the sixth semester students (in this case, writing discussion text test). The time allocation for completing the test was 60 minutes. Finally, after students finish the test, the researcher collected their worksheet to be analyzed later on.

There were some steps to analyze the data. Firstly, the researcher identified the transition signals used by the students, and then classified them into eight types of transition signals based on the Oshima and Hogue's theory namely addition, contrast, comparison, emphasis, example, cause effect, sequence and conclusion. After that she listed them all in the form of table. Then, from those results, she made conclusion what types of transition signals occur in students' discussion texts.

Secondly, she counted the frequency of every type of transition signals to find out the type of Transition Signals which was mostly used in the discussion texts written by the sixth semester students of the English Study Program UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017 using the formula (Sudjana, 2001: 129) as below:

$$F = \frac{\text{Total number of the occurrence frequency of each type}}{\text{Total number of the occurrence frequency of all types}} \times 100\%$$

Finally, she analyzed the data found to find out the appropriateness of the use of transition signals in students' discussion texts. The data were drawn from the students with the highest number of the use of transition signals' types on their writings.

3. Findings

This chapter reports the findings of the analysis based on the formulated problem statements in previous chapter.

The analysis of the use of transition signals is based on the type of transition signals and based on the words that include on certain types of transition signals proposed by Oshima and Hogue (1998).

The first research problem is about the types of transition signals used in students' discussion text. To answer the first problem, the researcher identified the transition signals used by the students, and then classified them into eight types of transition signals based on the Oshima and Hogue's theory. After that she listed them generally in the form of table. Then, the classification can be seen below.

Table 1: The Classification of Transition Signals used by students

Student	Addition	Contrast	Comparison	Emphasis	Example	Cause Effect	Sequence	Conclusion
1	And, but also, in addition	But, on the other hand	or, if	On one hand	for example	As a result, so		In conclusion
2	And, moreover, besides	Nevertheless	Or		Such as	Therefore	The last	In short
3	And, in addition, also	Besides	Or, if			Because	Finally	
4	And	In the other side, but	Or	Actually		Because, thus		It can be conclude that
5	And, also	But, although	Or		For example			In conclusion
6	But-too, besides, and, another	On the other hand	Or		Such as	So	The first, seondly, the next	In conclusion
7	Also, and	But	Or			Since		To conclude
8	And, also, too, other point		Or		For example	So, because		In conclusion
9	And, also, and also, furthermore, therefore	However, in contrary			For instance, such as	Because		In conclusion
10	And, another, furthermore	Although, nevertheless	If, or, as well as					Summing up
11	Another, and , also	But	Similarly, or		For example, such as	Because		
12	And, also	But, however	As well as, or					In conclusion
13	Also, and, besides	But					First	In conclusion
14	And, another, also	On the other hand	Or			So that, due to		To sum up
15	And, also	But however	Or		Such as			In conclusion
16	And, also, besides	But	Or	In fact				To conclude
17	And	But, in the other side	Or		Such as	So, due to, thereby		In conclusion
18	And		Or, otherwise			Firstly, secondly		In conclusion
19	And, also, moreover	Although	As			Because		In conclusion
20	And, also, furthermore	In contrast	If, or			Because, thus		In conclusion

21	Also, and	But, although, in contrast	If		Such as	Since	In the end	In conclusion
22	And, besides, also, another, and also	On the other hand	As well as		Such as			In conclusion
23	And, also	However, despite of, but	In the same way, or, as, compared to, similarly		Such as	Thereby		
24	And, another, also	In contrast	Or	Actually	Such as			Finally
25	And, also	Yet, but			Such as	First, second		In conclusion
26	Also, and	Even though, but	Or			Due to		In conclusion
27	Moreover, and, also				Such as	Because, because of that		It can conclude that
28	But also, and also					Because		In conclusion
29	And, besides, also	While, but	If			Because		In conclusion
30	And, but also, also, besides, too	However, but	Or, likely to, because			Because		
31	And, also		Or		Such as			In conclusion
32	And, another, also, in addition	On the other hand, but, however	Or			Because		To sum up
33	And, also, but also	But	Or	In fact			Finally	
34	And, also, in addition	But, however		Indeed	For example	Because, due to, so		
35	And	However	Or	Actually		Because, therefore	Second	In short
36	And, also	However, tho ugh						To sum up
37	And	In contrast	Likewise		For instance	Then, because		In summary
38	And, also	But, in spite of			Such as	Because of, since, so, thus	First, second, third, the last	In conclusion
39	Too, and, besides that, also	But	Or	In fact			Finally	
40	And, besides,	While, but	Or			Because		In

	also							conclusion
41	And, also, moreover	But	Or	In other words		So		In conclusion
42	And, also, not only-but also	But	Or					To sum up
43	And, also	But, however						To sum up
44	Also, and	However		In fact	For example	Because		In conclusion
45	And, too	But	If, likely to			Thus		In short
46	And, also, and also, too	But	In contrary	As small as		Because		In summing up
47	And, also, another	However						In conclusion
48	And, nott only-but also	But	As well			Because	Finally	

After finding the types of transition signals used by students in their discussion texts, the researcher calculated the percentage of each type which has been used in students' texts, in order to find out the type of transition signals mostly used by students. Furthermore, there are 734 transition signals in the 48 of students' discussion texts. All the transition signals' types appear. Transition signals divided the types into 8, there are: addition occurs 417 times or 56, 81 %, contrast occurs 83 times or 11, 30%, comparison occurs 66 times or 8, 99%, emphasis occurs 12 times or 1, 63%, example occurs 33 times or 4, 49%, cause effect occurs 60 times or 8, 17%, sequence occurs 25 times or 3, 40%, and conclusion occurs 38 times or 5, 17%.

The last, after finding the type of transition signals mostly used by students, then the researcher analyzed the data found to find out the appropriateness of the use of transition signals were used by students. The data were drawn from the students with the highest number of the types of transition signals usage on their writings. The highest number of the types used by students are seven types, and there are five students who use seven types of transition signals here. From 102 transition signals used by those five students, there are six transition signals which are used inappropriately. They are the word *and* in first student's first paragraph, the word *and* in first student's third paragraph, the word *and* and *or* in first student's fourth paragraph, andthe word *although* and *but* in fourth student's third paragraph.

4. Discussions

After obtaining the data and analyzing them based on formulated questions of this research, this section is discussing the whole data to answer the problems.

Based on the result of the analysis on the data, the researcher finally finds the answer of the questions. Dealing with the question about types of transition signals that are used in students' discussion texts, the result of the analysis found that all the types of transition signals namely addition, contrast, comparison, emphasis, example, cause effect, sequence and conclusion were used in students' discussion texts. From those eight types of transition signals, there are four

students used three of them, six students used four types, twenty-five students used five types, nine students used six types and the rest five students used seven types.

Dealing with the second question about the type of transition signals mostly used by the sixth semester students of English Study Program UNDANA in academic year 2016/2017, the result of the analysis found that **addition** is the most type used by student among all types of transition signals. It appears 417 times (56,81 %). The second level is using **contrast**. It appears 83 times (11,30%). The third level is using **comparison**. It occurs 66 times (8,99%). The next one is using **cause effect**. It occurs 60 times (8, 17%). And then, **conclusion** is in the fifth level. It occurs 38 times (5,17 %). The sixth level is using **example**. It appears 33 times (4, 49%). While using **sequence** emerges 25 times (3, 40%). The last is **emphasis** which occurs 12 times (11, 30%). In addition, emphasis is the less frequent type of transition signals used by students in their discussion texts.

Dealing with the last research problem about the appropriateness of the use of transition signals which are used by students, in this section, the researcher discusses about the appropriateness of transition signals are used by students. Based on the result of analysis, the researchers conclude that most of the transition signals are used correctly. Those transition signals are used correctly if they are used appropriately with their grammar and functions. For example: "*Internet users can find out about the world and interact with all of the world's population using social media*". Here, the transition signal used is 'and'. It is classified into the type of transition signals for addition. Transition signals for addition have function to introduce additional relationship between ideas, or it works as a signal that the additional information is coming. In this sentence, 'and' is used to introduce additional information about the advantages of internet. After mentioning the first advantage of internet (that through internet, the users can access many things), the student then introduces the additional one (that by internet, the users can communicate with all people in this world) by using this transition signals for addition 'and'.

In the other side, there are also some transition signals in students' discussion text that are used incorrectly. They are incorrect because the use of them is not appropriate with their function. For example: "*It makes work becomes easier and people love it".* Actually, this transition signal works as additional transition signals, but in this sentence, the use of this transition is not appropriate with its function since there is no additional relationship between two ideas that is stated before and after the use of this transition. The first idea states about the good of internet. It means that the next idea must be included an additional information about the good of internet too, but instead the second idea shows the effect relationship. The second idea shows the effect relationship since it states the effect of the good of internet. Internet is good, so that people love it. Then, it can be concluded that the use of transition signals for addition 'and' here is incorrect. It should use the transition signals for cause-effect.

5. Conclusions

Based on the the findings and discussions, the following conclusion can be described dealing with the use of transition signals in the students' discussion texts.

First, in writing discussion text, students need to use transition signals to make it smoother and helps the readers understand it more easily. Dealing with the first research problem about types of transition signals used in students' discussion texts, the result of analysis found that all the types of transition signals namely addition, contrast, comparison, example, cause effect, sequence and conclusion are used by students. This is meant that the students have good competence is using transition signals in their discussion texts, because they applied all the types of transition signals at their writing text.

Second, from 743 transition signals as a total used of eight types of transition signals used by the students, addition occurs 417 times or 56, 81 %, contrast occurs 83 times or 11,30%, comparison occurs 66 times or 8, 99%, cause effect occurs 60 times or 8, 17%, conclusion occurs 38 times or 5, 17%, example occurs 33 times or 4, 49%, sequence occurs 25 times or 3, 40%, and the last emphasis occurs 12 times or 1, 63%. In short, addition is the type of transition signals mostly used by students, while emphasis is the less frequent type of transition signals used by students in their discussion texts.

The last, besides the researcher analyzes types of transition signals used by students and the type of transition signal mostly used by students, she also analyzes the appropriateness of transition signals used by students. Based on the result of analysis, the researcher concludes that most of the transition signals are used appropriately. Those transition signals are used correctly if they are used appropriately with their grammar and functions. In the other side, there are also some transition signals in students' discussion text that are used incorrectly. They are incorrect because the use of them is not appropriate with their grammar and functions.

After concluding this research, the researcher would like to give some suggestions for the students that they are expected to understand more about transition signal and should pay more attention to the appropriate use of transition signals in order to enrich their knowledge to support them in writing text. In other words, students should learn more about the function and grammar in transition signals in order that they can apply the transition signals in correct way. The use of transition signals are important in writing text because they make the text can be understood by the readers. And then, she suggests to the next researchers in orther that they can investigate more than her research has achieved. They can look for the use of transition signals in different object such as in opinion column in a bilingual newspaper or in journals.

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