

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

As an international language, English plays an important role as a means of communication among people in the world for business, science, economy, and technology. Realizing the importance of English as spoken and written international communication, the Education Ministry of Indonesia includes English as a compulsory subject to learn in Junior High School up to Senior High School, states that “in learning English, there are certain skills that students need to learn, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.”

As a productive skill, writing is not like speaking skills nor other receptive skills. Writing is the most difficult skill for not only it needs a lot of vocabularies in composing paragraph, but also grammatically correct to be comprehensible besides other writing's rules. Therefore, composing paragraphs in writing activity takes a lot of time. As Harmer (2004:31) states that, “Writing is often not time-bound in the way conversation is. When writing, students frequently have more time to think than they do in oral activities. They can go through what they know in their minds, and even consult dictionaries, grammar books or other reference material to help them.”

Besides, good writing requires unity, coherence, and adequate development, with coherence as the most important factor (Almaden in

Ayub and Sunarjaya 2013:2). To make a text coherent, students need to have a clear understanding of cohesion and coherence. This is because cohesion and coherence are related to each other.

The importance of studying cohesion, especially cohesive devices is to create a good and systematic text and to make readers easily understand what information is delivered in it. Cohesive devices link sentences and paragraphs together so that there is no leap or break between ideas. Therefore, cohesive devices also help the reader accurately understand and follow the writer's thoughts.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976:3), there are two cohesive devices namely grammatical and lexical cohesive devices. Grammatical cohesive devices deal with cohesion between or among sentences because of grammatical factors. Lexical cohesion deals with cohesion between or among sentence because of lexical choice. However, this study only focuses on grammatical cohesion because this study will be conducted at the level of senior high school, and the students of senior high school have not been taught about cohesion. Therefore, the writer only focus to analyze one cohesive device. Grammatical cohesion was chosen because it deals with grammatical factors that students of senior high school have learned some materials of grammatical rules. Whereas, lexical cohesion was not chosen because students of senior high school may only have limited vocabularies that affect their lexical choices in writing sentences.

Some researchers who have conducted this study. First, Jabeen (2013:130) did a study about cohesive devices in “The Bear” by Chekov (1938:51). The objective of the study was to highlight substitution, ellipsis, and reference. The play was analyzed stylistically and the three levels of cohesive devices were the basis of the analysis. The result showed that each of the elements had functions contribute to the effective meaning of the story. It can be concluded that these cohesive devices play important roles in making oral and written communication understandable.

Second, Afful and Nartey (2016:202) did a study about cohesion found in abstracts of undergraduate theses at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana. The objective was to analyze grammatical cohesion in the language and literature abstracts. Qualitative analysis was used in this study. The result showed that there were three key findings. First, based on Halliday and Hassan’s (1976), among the four grammatical cohesion (that is conjunction, reference, substitution, and ellipsis), reference and conjunction were mostly used in the abstract. Second, the use of these grammatical devices in the Language and Literature abstracts showed more similarities than differences. Third, although undergraduate students studying English at the University of Cape Coast did use a range of cohesive devices, they still lack understanding in the use of cohesive devices.

Third, Alarcon and Morales (2011:115) did a study about grammatical cohesion in students’ argumentative essays in the Philippines. The purpose was to analyze the cohesive devices used by undergraduate

students in the argumentative essay. The method used in the research was qualitative and quantitative. The result showed that reference had the highest frequency (90.67%) of the total cohesive devices with a mean score of 53.37. Conjunction occurred 326 times in the essays (9.08%) with a mean score of 5.34 while substitution was the least used type of cohesive devices (0.25%). The use of cohesive devices was not significantly correlated with the quality of the students' essays. It was also found that certain cohesive types assisted the students in the argumentation process.

In this research, the writer only focuses on the use of grammatical cohesion and will try to combine the problems above and conducted to the level of senior high school. Therefore, in this research, the writer will investigate grammatical cohesive devices in students' recount text as well as the grammatical cohesiveness of the text based on the use of the grammatical cohesive devices.

B. The Identification of the Problem

As anyone knows, the students have many problems in learning English as a foreign language. One of the general problems faced by the students is when they explore their idea in written form like writing genres. There are many areas encountered by the students when they are ordered writing genres. From the writer's observation, the common problems appear

in writing genres at least five areas, they are problems in content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Text also has an indicator that shows a text's quality is, its cohesion. Cohesion shows how the sentences in the text connect to each other (Taboada, 2004). Cohesion of a text can be developed by using a cohesive device (Gerot & Wignel, 1994; Eggins, 2004) to connect the words between clauses in the text (Meyer, 2009). Cohesive devices include grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion devices are references, conjunction, ellipses, and substitutions.

The first grammatical cohesion device, references, it is words that are used to appoint other words. There are three types of references: pronominal reference, demonstrative, and comparative. The next one is conjunction. Conjunctions are words that are used to connect clauses. They surely have meaning and create a better text. Four conjunctions create different relations: additive (adding similar information or element), adversative (adding dissimilar information), causal (adding reason), and temporal (giving order in the sentence). The next ones are ellipses and substitutions. Ellipses omit some words that existed in the previous clause, and substitutions change words with other words.

Lexical cohesion creates cohesion by using different words, including repetition, synonym, superordinate, general nouns, and collocations. Repetition means that we use the same words repeatedly. Synonym and superordinate mean that we use words with similar or

expanded meaning. General nouns mean that we use more general word than the specific words that have been used in the sentences. Collocations mean that we use words that we use the commonly occurring words (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). By using the cohesive devices, it is expected that the sentences in the text will relate to each other. Therefore, coherence and cohesion should exist together in a text to produce a good text. At the same time, coherence and cohesion also show the students' level, whether they are on high or low level. Witte and Faigley (1981) mention that high level students can use synonyms and collocations, while low level students use repetitions more.

C. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the student, the problem of this study can be formulated in the form of questions as follow:

1. What are the types of grammatical cohesion used by the tenth grade students of SMA Gajah Mada Medan in their recount text writing?
2. How is the cohesiveness of the students' recount text based on the use of cohesive devices?

D. The Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem, then the purposes of this study as follow:

1. To identify the grammatical cohesion types used by the tenth-grade students of SMA Gajah Mada Medan.
2. To investigate the grammatical cohesiveness of the students' recount text writings based on the use of grammatical cohesive devices.

E. The Scope of the Study

The main scope of this study is focused on student's recount text writing and especially the use of grammatical cohesive devices by using the theory of cohesion by Halliday and Hasan (1976), such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction in recount text at the tenth grade students of senior high school in SMA GAJAH MADA in the academic years 2020/2021.

F. The Significances of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be able to give some benefits theoretically and practically as follow:

1. Theoretically

a. For the students

The students of Gajah Mada can improve their ability in writing text, especially in recount text. Furthermore, they can transfer what they know cognitively about the use of grammatical cohesion in recount text.

b. For the teacher

To help the teacher in evaluating students' writing performance, construct remedial teaching, and give understanding that students need continuous and special supervision conducted by teachers during writing activity.

c. For the next study

As a comparison for the better studies.

2. Practically

a. For the teacher

The result of the research not only can be used as the description and information about how far the students catch what the teacher teaches from the process of the study. By knowing the most students' problem in writing genre, it also can be used as a reference when the teacher wants to improve students' writing skill. Because understanding grammatical cohesive devices can motivate English teachers to create various learnings based on context and may result in, a new standard of English learning to create linguistic competence on the part of English students.

b. For the students

After knowing the result of the students' writing, they will know how far their ability in writing recount text. It also can be used as information about what problems do they have in writing genre especially in writing recount text. By knowing their problem, the

students can improve their writing and they can make an effective and good text.

c. For the next study

The result of this research might become a reference for the next study who want to conduct the further research on the similar problem. This research also can help the other researcher in improving the knowledge about the analysis of students' problem with writing genres, especially recount text and getting more useful experience and information to be the best for the future.

