COHERENCE STRATEGIES AND DEVICES IN EFL ACADEMIC WRITING INTRODUCTIONS

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Abstract

The study was intended to describe the coherence strategies and devices used by the graduate students of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya in writing Introduction section to achieve coherence. This discourse analysis study described the internal relationship of form and meaning by applying textual analysis with a multimodal analysis. The researcher found non-deductive and neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy in this study. The non-deductive strategy consisted of three elements: context establishment, further focus, and thesis statement. The neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy did not have any complete elements, so those writings were categorized as incoherent introductions. Beside those strategies, there were 6 coherence devices identified; they were repetition of key nouns, the definite article 'the', parallelism, purpose signals, substitution, and transitional signals.

Key words: academic writing, introduction, coherence, coherence strategies, coherence devices

Introduction

Any piece of academic writing must have an introduction section. "The introductory paragraph should indeed be written in such a fashion that would encourage the reader to read the paper" (Peay, 2012: 3). The

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introductory paragraphs are supposed to serve an overview of what the paper is about. As mentioned by a Greek philosopher, Plato, in Swales & Feak (2004: 242), "The beginning is half of the whole." Producing a good introduction is one of the hard parts in writing. In the introduction, the writer tells the background, purpose, importance of the writing, and position of the writer. Introduction is made of a few general statements to attract the readers' attention and a thesis statement to state the main idea of the essay (Oshima & Hogue, 2006: 57). An introduction serves as an opportunity to shape the reader's opinion about the writer's main idea before the reader gets to the thesis statement.

A good introductory paragraph must be coherent and unified. Arnaudet & Barrett (1984: 21-22) argue that a longer text can be developed using deductive and non-deductive introduction. Deductive introduction lets the writer introduces the material in a straightforward manner (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984: 22). This kind of introduction makes the readers aware of the writer's approach, how it relates to previous materials, and how the chapter/section will be organized.

In order to achieve coherence, writers need to use appropriate devices. Some writers (Reid, 1993; Harmer, 2007, 2012) define devices to achieve coherence as cohesive devices, while the others (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984) defines them as coherence devices, and the rests (Oshima & Hogue, 1996, 2006; Langan, 2008) do not give any special name for the devices.

Writing an academic paper is obligatory work which must be done by graduate students of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya (WMCUS). In this research, the writer conducted a research about coherence level in introductory paragraphs written by graduate students of WMCUS, Indonesia. Looking at those papers, this study investigated the strategies and devices used to achieve the coherence values in EFL academic writing introductions.

Research Methods

This discourse analysis research applied textual analysis with multimodal analysis. In this research, the writer investigated the coherence of the academic writing texts and focused on the strategies and the coherence devices used in the academic essays. Figure 1 shows the research design of this study.

Figure 1: Research design
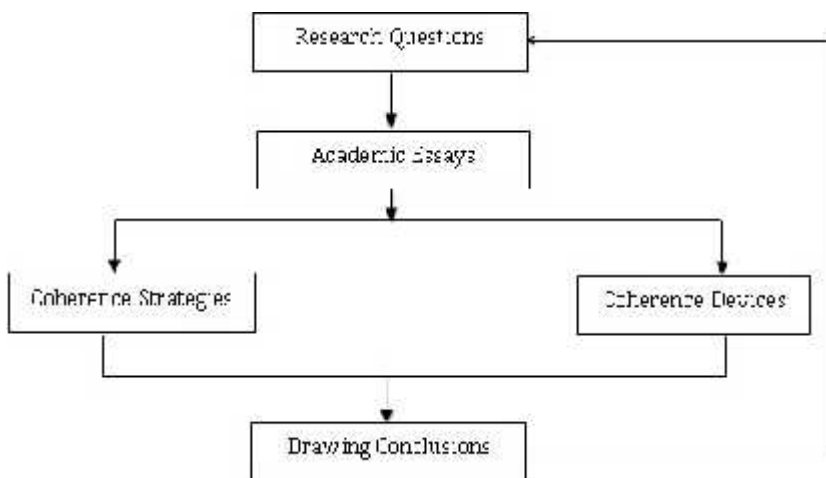
The subjects of the study were 22 graduate students of WMCUS majoring in English education. They were from various departments of different universities. Since they were from various departments, their English competences were also different from one to another.

The research examined the students' academic essays about "The quality of formal education in Indonesia" or "The difficulty in writing academic English essay" written for Academic Writing course midterm test.

The data of coherence strategies were ideas or propositions. On the other hand, the data of the coherence devices were the linguistic forms or formal links. The source of the idea was the introduction section of the academic writing essays. The body and conclusion of the essays were

excluded from the data. All of the data were authentic since students did the test within 24 hours, so they could not do any plagiarism. The units of analysis for the coherence strategies were sentences which showed the pattern of the strategy used. While the units of analysis for coherence devices were clauses, phrases, and words.

The major instrument of this study was the researcher, especially with the knowledge of academic writing, especially coherence in writing (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Oshima & Hogue, 2006). Since the researcher was the only instrument, she developed research tools to analyze the data. The first research tool was the coherence strategies model which contained the outline of introduction in deductive, non-deductive, and neither deductive nor non deductive. It was used to classify the strategies used by students. The second one was a checklist form for the cohesive devices to check the devices used by the students.

Further, triangulation was done to examine the validity of the findings of the study. The selected triangulation was investigator triangulation since it involved multiple researchers in an investigation (Herbert & Shepherd, 2001). The researcher used an inter rater approach to complete the triangulation. After all of the analysis from the inter rater was completed, the researcher drew the conclusions.

Findings

Coherence Strategies

Similar to the study conducted by Arnaudet & Barrett (1984), two patterns of coherence strategies were found in this research: non-deductive and neither deductive nor non-deductive. Non-deductive strategy consisted of context establishment, further focus development, and thesis statement(s). Neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy varied in its introduction's components. Those writings presented their works in various ways. Two students made an introduction without any context establishment. Therefore, they started their writings by presenting the focus

then concluded it with thesis statement(s). Meanwhile, a student developed his writing using context establishment and focus development, but did not mention any thesis statement(s). The other student developed complete introduction's components which consisted of context establishment, further focus, and thesis statement(s), but it did not have any coherence in every part of it. The last student also had the complete components of an introduction, but the context establishment was not related to the further focus. Therefore, this writing was categorized as an incoherent introduction.

Table 1

Coherence strategies

Types	Content	Pattern	Number
Non-Deductive	Establishing Context Further focus Thesis statement	EC FF TS	17
Neither deductive nor non-deductive	Further focus Thesis statement	? FF TS	2
	Establishing Context Further focus	EC FF ?	1
	Establishing Context Further focus Thesis statement	EC FF TS	1
	Establishing Context Further focus Thesis statement	EC FF TS	1

Notes:

EC   = Establishing the context

FF   = Providing further focus

TS   = Thesis statement

Table 1 shows the two types of coherence strategies applied. Seventeen students used non-deductive strategy to achieve the coherence of the abstract. The idea development applied includes establishing the context, providing further focus, and providing final clarification (thesis statement). Context establishment was selected to share knowledge, provide a rhetorical question, background knowledge, or a quotation. These four techniques could be used either individually or in combination. Meanwhile, the other five students used neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy in creating the introduction paragraphs as shown in Table 1.

Based on Table 1, in terms of context establishment, 13 students preferred to share their knowledge at the beginning of their introduction to attract the readers' attention. Two students combined the shared knowledge with background information taken from other researchers and articles about argumentative writing and illiterate people to develop their writings. Four students provided only background information, and one student used a quotation to establish context. Quotation from an expert was taken to arise the readers' interest. Besides those students, there were two students who did not provide any context establishment in their introduction. The two students jumped into the focus of the writing topic.

The table also shows that 15 students already defined the writing topic. The descriptions of the formal education and students in Indonesia were also written. Besides, the keywords of the topic were defined. Five students combined the definitions with their limitation on the topic discussed. One student only limited his topic and another one student combined the relevance of quotation and limitation to narrow the topic.

The result later shows that thesis statement(s) was usually written at the end of the introductory paragraphs. One student did not mention the thesis statement(s) in her writing. 17 final clarifications were in statements and four were in questions. When providing the final clarification on both the statements and questions, the students wrote points to be discussed in the body paragraphs. The difference between the two types of final clarification was in its form, one in positive sentences and the other in imperative sentences.

Non-deductive strategy

Extract 1 shows an implementation of non-deductive strategy. In this paragraph, a context establishment, further focus, and thesis statement(s) to the topic were written.

Extract 1

Of the four typical language skills to be acquired when one is learning a new language, or even in one's own native language, many would agree that writing skill is perhaps the hardest. All of us might — CE

have the experience of filling up some job application forms or aptitude tests in which we have to sorely admit that our English writing skill is simply 'good' instead of 'excellent'. As students, many would have dreaded that part of the English exams where the instruction read "Write a short (and how the teacher dared to call it short!) essay about the advantages and disadvantages of learning English." Neither it is of comfort to know that writing skill is also found wanting even among English native speakers themselves. In a booklet entitled 'How to Improve Your Academic Writing' published by the University of — FF

Essex, England, the introductory lines speak of a recent survey in which academic staff at the University identified writing as the skill that most students lack. If such is the case, what would be the fate of the EFL or ESL (English as Second Language) students? Will academic writing be really the two-headed monster to be feared and — TS

resigned to? What are some of the problem areas in English academic writing and what can the EFL/ESL students do to overcome them?

The topic of this introduction is about difficulties of writing academic English. The student argues that "Writing skill is perhaps the hardest skill." She mentions that "Researchers also identified writing as the skill that most students lack." At the end, the problems of academic writing are questioned. The writer is from Chemical Engineering Department, therefore her writing is slightly linier than the others. Besides, having reading as a hobby is also one of the reasons why her choice of word is quite accurate. The non-deductive coherence strategy could be described as follows:

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        ┌──── Establishing the context
        │
        ├──── Providing further focus
        │
    TS ─┘
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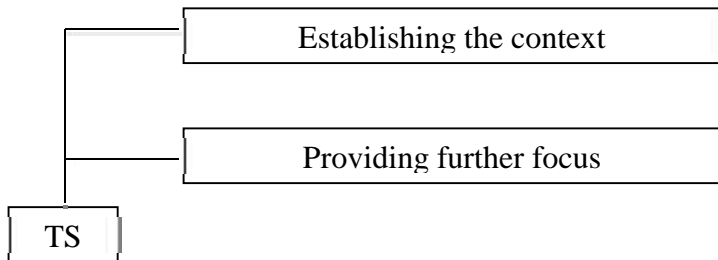
Neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy

Four different patterns of neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy were identified in this study. First, two students directly wrote further focus then moved to the thesis statement, but they chose different topics.
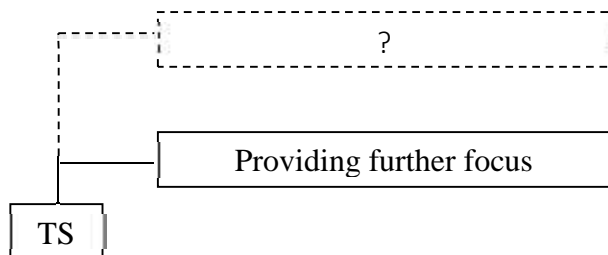
Extract 2

People who are called as functionally illiterate have the minimum ability in reading, writing, and reasoning even though they have graduated from formal school. This happens because of some factors. The factors which cause the functionally illiterate are culture, poverty and crime, and government policy.

FF

TS

Extract 2 discusses the quality of education in Indonesia. It shows that context establishment is not included and suddenly jumps into a further focus. A definition of functionally illiterate is briefly described. At the end of the introduction, factors causing a functionally illiterate are listed. This student is from Faculty of Letters. However, she does not have any reading habit. The strategy could be described below:

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+---------------------------------------------------+
|                        ?                          |
+---------------------------------------------------+
|
|        +---------------------------------+
+--------|     Providing further focus     |
|        +---------------------------------+
+------+
|  TS  |
+------+
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Secondly, context establishment and further focus were found in the writing introduction, but the thesis statement was not found. Extract 3 explains the strategy.

Extract 3

Suryadarma, Daniel during a Seminar in Jakarta on May, 28, 2011; weighed and measured the Quality of Education in Indonesia, and found it wanting. Mr. Suryadarma started by showing the Assessments of some Indonesian students' performances at International researches on reading, mathematics and science. Secondly, he mentioned the Challenges that he encountered, among others: the Curriculum, the Teachers' qualifications, distribution and absenteeism. He closed the seminar by mentioning the Efforts on Improving the Indonesian education quality.

`EC`

`FF`

Extract 3 shows that the writer re-tells the readers about the seminar that she previously attended. However, the thesis statement is not mentioned since it is not her opinion. The background information related to the seminar is presented and everything that happened in the seminar is described. The writer is from a Physics Department and her reading habit

is quite high. However, because of the misinterpretation of the instruction of the text, she cannot finish the test well. The strategy can be described below:

Establishing the context

Providing further focus

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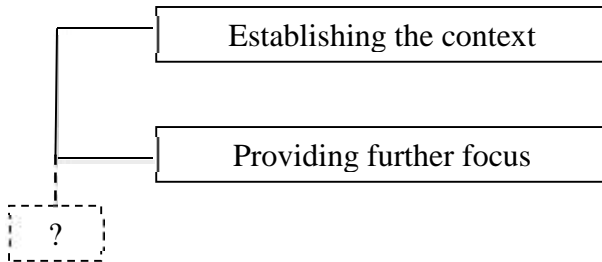
Thirdly, the three components of an introduction were found in this introduction, but there was no relation between the context establishment and the focus. The following extract (Extract 4) shows the irrelevant components of the introduction.
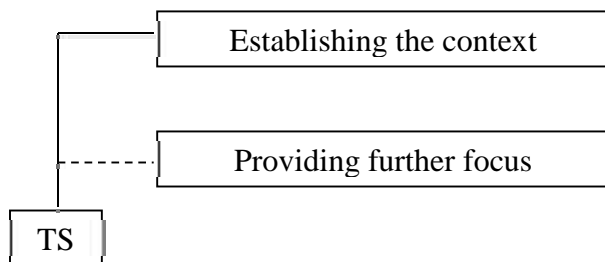
Extract 4

Every writer knows the frustration of sitting down with a paper and pen or at the computer and feeling incapable of producing any words at all. It is typically most difficult to write at the beginning of a paper, when you are struggling to understand your ideas and still trying to figure out what it is you want to say. As a first year writer, I often experience this situation. Then, when it comes to academic writing in English, the challenge may be doubled. "What are usually called 'writing assignments' in college", says Lee Ann Caroll, a professor at Pepperdine University, "might be more accurately be called 'literacy tasks' because they require much more than the ability to construct correct sentences or compose neatly organized paragraphs with topic sentences …" (Irvin 2010). Writing academic English is different from the non-academic one. In writing academic English, I will be required to write an essay based on the analysis of some readings, present an argument, and make a claim. Then, the argument should be supported with concrete supports. As an EFL student who

EC

FF

learns English as a foreign language, I mostly have problems in the vocabulary. I might do not have enough vocabularies to write an essay fluently. Having understood the vocabularies, I am still confused with the word choice. Further, lacking of sufficient supporting details and the ability to express clear main ideas have also become problems in writing a good essay. Typically, ESL and EFL students will experience the same difficulties. Some difficulties arise because for ESL or EFL students, English is learned as a foreign language. The difficulties may be due to language, ideas development, paragraph organization and content. } TS

In extract 4, the context establishment, the focus, and the thesis statement(s) are found. At first, the difficulties of academic writing are discussed. Then, a quotation is written; however, further explanation to the sentence before the quotation is still needed. In the second part, the literacy tasks, analysis, vocabulary, and supporting details are discussed. After that, she jumps to describing about herself, then she goes back talking about the ESL/EFL in general. At the end, the thesis statement which is related to the context establishment is stated. Even though the writer loves reading, this writing is the first academic writing that she makes, she is unable to make it perfectly since she comes from a Faculty of Letters. The strategy could be described as follows:

The last pattern is the writing which has context establishment, further focus, and thesis statement; but, there is no relation between each part.
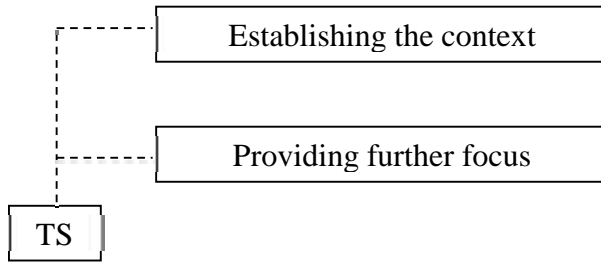
Extract 5

Students of English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language may generally experience how to write in their academic life. Some say that it is easy but some are not. We spend a ⎤ EC

lot of time to perceive and practice what and how to write. We evolve into various qualities of writing. We develop and enhance our language comprehension skill, time management, critical thinking and acknowledge a specific or several subjects that we took as our writing project's theme. Thus, we could say that writing is experiencing English acquisition because through writing, we explore many things in our academic life. Through writing, we learn to do the research. We also grow to manage our time and progress our critical thinking in order to do the assignments and performance test in academic life. We could become a creative academic writer for media due to opinion or theory analysis sharing. ⎤ FF

Therefore, ESL or EFL students and graduate students may improve their learning and personality in several domains. ⎤ TS

Extract 5 shows that the paragraph has the context establishment, focus, and thesis statement related to the topic chosen. However, there is no connection among parts. Experiencing writing in academic life is discussed in the context establishment. Further, the practice of writing is also discussed, then the development of comprehension skill, time management, and critical thinking are talked about. After that, she discussed the research, time management, and test performance. At last, the thesis statement(s) is mentioned about the improvement of learning and personality in several domains, however she does not mention what those domains are. Reading is the writer's hobby, however, since this is the first time of writing English academically, she gets lost in her topic and cannot not write accordingly. The strategy would be described below.

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  ┌ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┌────────────────────────────────┐
  │         │    Establishing the context    │
  │         └────────────────────────────────┘
  │
  │         ┌────────────────────────────────┐
  ├ ─ ─ ─ ─ │    Providing further focus     │
  │         └────────────────────────────────┘
  │
┌─┴──┐
│ TS │
└────┘
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Coherence Devices

Coherence devices used in this study are repetition of key nouns, the definite article *the*, parallelism, purpose signals, substitution, and transition signals to link ideas. Substitution is mostly used in the students' academic writing introduction. Besides substitution, transitional signals to link ideas are often used.

Table 2

Coherence devices

Types of Devices	Words	Phrases	Clauses	Sentences
Repetition of key nouns	13	3	0	0
The definite article *the*	17	0	0	0
Parallelism	20	0	0	0
Purpose signals	1	0	0	2
Substitution				
Noun substitution				
Personal pronoun	98	0	0	0
Relative pronoun	26	11	11	11
Reflexive pronoun	2	0	0	0
Verb substitution	1	0	0	0
Adverb substitution				
Time	1	11	11	11
Place	3	0	0	0
Manner	3	6	0	0
Adjective substitution				
Possessive relative	1	0	0	0
Demonstrative	25	0	0	0
such	2	0	0	0
Phrase and clause substitution	0	0	0	0
Possessive	0	0	0	0
Quantifiers such as	0	1	0	0
Transition signals to link ideas	39	2	0	0
Logical order of ideas	11			

Table 2 shows that all the essays already used substitution. In all the students' academic writing introduction section, there are 126 noun substitution words, 28 adjective substitution words, 7 adverb substitution words and 6 adverb substitution phrases, 1 verb substitution word, and 1 phrase substitution. It is also found that there are 39 transitional words and 2 transitional phrases to link ideas. 20 parallelism words are found in most of the academic writing introduction. 17 definite articles '*the*' are found in 9 students' academic writing introduction sections. Not all of the students' introduction uses repetition of key nouns since it is found that there are only 13 words and 3 phrases. Lastly, 1 purpose signal word and 2 purpose signal sentences are found in the students' academic writing introduction.

Noun substitutions like personal, relative, and reflexive pronouns are mostly used in developing the students' introduction. Extract 6 shows the example of noun substitution in the introduction.

Extract 6

English is widely spoken and used by different people from different countries, includes in Indonesia. But because of English in Indonesia is as ESL/ EFL, L2 learners may face some difficulties in learning it. They have to deal with speaking, listening, writing and grammar/structure which have different rules with L1. Moreover, learners are expected to be able to apply it in suitable context and situation. Many books, journals and articles as their references are also written in English. L2 learners usually try to understand and apply it to their previous understanding (here in Indonesian context because it is as mother tongue for Indonesian people) when they read many those readings. Sometimes they agree or disagree with the content of the readings. And this may encourage them to write or to give comment. ...

Noun substitution *it, they,* and *them* are often used in this introduction to substitute important words in the passage like 'English' and

'L2 learners'. In this extract, the student uses *which* to tell the readers more details about the difference between 4 skills in English and Indonesian.

There are also transitional words and phrases to link ideas found in this study, like *however, so, therefore, beside, moreover, consequently, unfortunately, for example, but, furthermore, although, then, further, given, yet, thus, and, here, though, finally,* and *but yet.* Extract 19 shows several transitional signals like *yet, but,* and *but yet* to link ideas.

Extract 7

The ability of the students is supposed to be the reflection of the education process quality of a school. Yet in the reality in Indonesia even though there are many students graduated with high score, especially in English subject, but sadly they cannot even perform English fluently. Despite the fact that they should have had a quite high English ability in speaking, reading, writing and reasoning due to their high score, but yet it is ironic that their high score in English is not actually the reflection of their real English ability. Then whose mistake was it that these students got English score that does not even reflect their English ability? …

Transitional signals in extract 7 help the readers to relate ideas from each presented sentence. The word *yet*, *but*, and *but yet* are used to mention the contrastive situation between the score and the ability in using English fluently. *Then* is useful in changing the focus from the abilities had to the reason of low abilities.

It is found that 11 students use parallelism in their academic writing introduction. The following extract uses several parallelisms.

Extract 8

Not only do students who study English as Foreign Language or English as Second Language have difficulties in writing in English, but as an English teacher, I do also have problems with it even though we, my students and I, may

perceive academic writing in English differently. As we know that writing and speaking are active skills. It means that we are active in doing something such as when we write, we use our hand to write and when we speak, we use our mouth to talk to other people. In contrast, reading and listening do not need physical movement like writing and speaking. Here, we just sit and either read or listen. ...

The phrase *not only ... but also* is an example of parallelism which emphasizes that writing is really difficult for everyone. Besides that, the phrase *such as* is used to relate the ideas with the example. And the phrase *either or* is useful to convey comparisons reading and listening.

Not all students' academic writing introduction sections use the definite article *the*. Only 10 students use this article in their writing. Extract 9 shows the usage of the definite article *the*.

Extract 9

... Then, when it comes to academic writing in English, the challenge may be doubled. ... In writing academic English, I will be required to write an essay based on the analysis of some readings, present an argument, and make a claim. Then, the argument should be supported with concrete supports. As an EFL student who learns English as a foreign language, I mostly have problems in the vocabulary. I might do not have enough vocabularies to write an essay fluently. Having understood the vocabularies, I am still confused with the word choice. ...

The shows that the word 'challenge' is definite. *The* in the sentence "Then, the argument should be ..." relates the phrase 'the argument' to the earlier sentence which talks about the requirement in writing academic English essay.

There are 15 repetitions of key nouns identified in this study: 13 words and 3 phrases. The following extract shows an example of repetition of key nouns.

<p style="text-align:center">Extract 10</p>

Academic writing is one of the bugbears for the EFL Students. Before the writer move to academic writing, she wants to clarify the term writing. Writing is a skill that requires many aspect of life. Knowledge of the world, the language used, and courage to write something is some aspect that is needed in writing. Then, writing seems to be the most difficult, yet important, for adult EFL learners. And just only few adults' learners have much experience in writing especially in academic writing. Academic writing is different from the personal writing. Academic writing has some structure that must be followed. According to Swales and Feak (2009), academic writing is a product of many considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation. The simples' structure of academic writing can be found in an essay format, because essay has some rules that must be concerned. In writing essay, the writer must pay attention to the purpose why the essay is written and who is the audience who read the essay. …

Three key nouns like 'academic writing', 'writing', and 'essay' are repeatedly used in the whole introduction to make the readers got the idea about the difficulty of academic writing. Since the topic is about the difficulties of English academic writing, therefore those key nouns are repeatedly used from the beginning until the end of the introduction paragraph.

It was found that there is a student who uses a purpose signal in word and two students use purpose signals in their sentences. Extract 11 shows the usage of a purpose signal word.

<p style="text-align:center">Extract 11</p>

… They outline the formality of academic writing suggesting it comes from its readers who must be academics. Its contents must be a serious thought. There will be problems arise

in writing this kind of essay. Therefore, by having many questions in my head about writing an academic essay such as what kinds of difficulties in writing an academic essay, what experience I have had regarding to writing an academic essay, how I perceive academic writing in English, how I overcome problems in academic essay, and what factors that affect me in writing an academic essay in English, I am hoping I could help the readers write a good academic writing.

The word 'therefore', in extract 11, shows the readers that the student directs the readers to some factors of the quality of a good writing. By using the word 'therefore', the student signalizes the ending of the introduction paragraph.

DISCUSSION

Most students' introduction sections are coherent. It is shown by the organization of the writing which uses a non-deductive strategy. The students write in a structured format starting from context establishment then to details in further focus, and ends with thesis statement (Swales & Feak, 2009 and Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984). Almost all students' introduction sections provide background information in the context establishment to introduce the content or function as body paragraphs of the writing (Langan 2008: 90). Further, the writers' stands were shown by stating the thesis statement which eases the readers analyzing the plan of development (Oshima & Hogue, 1996, 2006 and Langan 2008). Probably, the high number of the usage of non-deductive strategy is because the students get this theory in the classroom during teaching and learning activities. The students use the book by Oshima and Hogue (2006) to learn how to write a good academic writing. Since the book and the teacher propose to use non-deductive when writing academic writing, students would also follow them.

In this study, only 5 writings used neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy. The first and second writing which were categorized in this strategy was because those writings did not use any context establishment at all. In those writings, they did not give any reasons related to the topics discussed, but went directly to the focus. If they gave the background, the readers might understand the reason why these topics were discussed. The third writing discussed a seminar that the writer attended. That kind of writing could not be included as an academic writing since academic is related to facts, statistics, and some information to support the facts. As mentioned by Bowker (2007), "Academic writing deals with the underlying theories and causes governing processes and practices in everyday life." The fourth and the fifth writing did not have any coherence in their writings since there was no connection between each part of the writing. Therefore, these writing products were categorized in neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy.

The 5 writing discussed above were found because of the misunderstanding related to the theory of academic writing given in the classroom. Perhaps, these students have not had enough writing experience, so they did not know how to connect each part in their writing. Besides, they might lack of information about academic writing, either the information from the teacher or book.

On the other hand, deductive strategy was not found in this study. Presumably, it was because all of the students were Indonesian and the way of thinking is typically circular. They tend not to talk straight to the point because that is considered impolite for some Indonesians. That is why they always start a new topic with a small talk then go bit by bit to the main topic. If the students use deductive, they have to go straight to the thesis statement then go through the context establishment and further focus which is not quite Indonesian style. Besides that, it is mentioned in the previous paragraph that the book and also the teacher suggests using the non-deductive strategy instead of using the other strategy.

In order to achieve coherence, some coherence devices might help. Most of the students used this strategy with substitutions like noun substitution, verb substitution, adverb substitution, adjective substitution, and phrase and clause substitution (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984 and Oshima & Hogue, 2006). These devices helped students in explaining the ideas without using too many repetitions of the same words which were not the key nouns of the introduction. Commonly, students use noun substitutions to explain certain subjects or objects in their introduction sections. Probably, students chose to use this device more than the other devices because this is the simplest coherence device to be applied in the academic writing introduction. Besides the simplicity, the readers might catch the message easier when the writer uses a simple device to deliver the message. However, the excessive use of substitution devices might confuse the readers. For example, sometimes the overuse of *it* can be very confusing when there are two or more nouns or noun phrases found in the previous sentences.

On the other hand, purpose signals were rarely used like *therefore*. Students rarely used purpose signals because they might think that by writing some points to be discussed at the end of the introduction, the readers already understood that it was the thesis statement of the essay. However, in some students' writing which used purpose signals, readers could easily catch the thesis statement than those which did not use any purpose signals.

The topic given might affect the coherence of the introduction. Some students might be unfamiliar with the topic on the quality of formal education in Indonesia or the difficulty in writing academic English essay especially those who were from the Physics Department and Faculty of Letters. Jones (2007) found that lack of background knowledge and vocabulary might be the reasons of the incoherence level of introduction paragraphs.

The students' educational background might affected how they wrote an introduction. Some students graduating from an English department described the topic of the essay in details and created an understandable writing. Most of them wrote the introductions using non-deductive strategy. Students graduating from Engineering and Architecture Departments could write in a more linear way than those who are from Literature or English department. They analyzed and ordered the ideas linearly. Indeed, their English or reading habit enabled them to choose proper words.

Minimum information about theories of academic writing might be another reason for incoherent introduction. Some introduction sections using neither deductive nor non-deductive strategy were incomplete missing out some important points. One student wrote without giving any context establishment. Probably, this student did not understand the organization of an academic writing. two other students wrote context establishment and further focus, but there was no coherence between those two parts. It might happen because of the lack of information related to the theory of academic writing or background knowledge related to the topic.

The tendency of using non-deductive strategy and substitution devices was very high. Probably, the students used non-deductive because they learned it in the classroom. In line with it, substitution devices were often used because students might think that these were the simplest devices to be applied and to minimize the repetition of the same words. Besides those reasons, background knowledge related to the topic, educational background, and theories of academic writing were probably the other reasons of choosing the strategy and devices. Those points mentioned above are the keys in writing a coherent academic writing introduction.

CONCLUSION

Introduction is the key which determines the success of an

academic writing since this part should be the overview of the whole writing. The introduction should encourage the reader to read the writing until the last. Moreover, an introduction serves as an opportunity to shape the reader's opinion about the writer's main idea before the reader gets into the thesis statement. A good introduction paragraph must be coherent. The coherence can be achieved using some strategies and devices.

The study was held to investigate the strategies and devices used to achieve the values of coherence in EFL academic writing introductions. The data was the introductory paragraph of the academic writing essays. The findings showed that most students used non-deductive strategy and the rest used neither deductive nor non-deductive. Indeed, the students used devices like substitutions, transition signals to link ideas, parallelism, the definite article *the,* repetition of key nouns, and purpose signals to achieve the coherence. Some students might use more devices, but some less. Substitutions were mostly used while purpose signals were rarely used. Students used more substitutions to simplify their writing and they did not use any purpose signals since most readers understood that the last part of the introduction was usually the thesis statement. Besides strategies and devices, educational background, background knowledge related to the topic, and theories of academic writing are other factors which help to have a coherent introduction. These factors are just the supportive factors to achieve a coherent introduction, but cannot change the usage of coherence strategies and devices.

Trustworthiness in a qualitative research is important. Therefore, inter rater was used as the triangulation of this research. Nevertheless, a research in coherence is closely related with propositions related to the writers' thought pattern. In order to know about the writers' thought pattern, the researcher needs to add more instruments to get the information about the writers' thought pattern in the further research. Therefore, the researcher suggests holding up a study with a similar topic, but by completing the triangulation with interviews and questionnaires since the

characteristics of the subjects of this study had not been deeply explored in this study. Later, the researcher could get deeper information about the subjects' habit, reading habit, life background, and other information to improve and complete the finding descriptions. Besides, the participants are expected to tell deeper about their writing, like the reason of using certain strategy, their understanding related to the topic, their knowledge of devices, and the reason of using those devices.

The results of the study are expected to be beneficial for both teachers and the students. For teachers, the result would give input about how the students absorb the knowledge about academic writing which had been explained in the classroom. By looking at the findings, teachers could reflect on their way of teaching in making the students understand the material. Besides that, teachers could make more activities which help the students in understanding the material, then give beneficial feedback to improve their academic writing. For students, the result would help them reflecting how their introductions were and how to improve them. This information could give some inputs about how good their writings were. By knowing it, they could have appropriate improvements to their writing in the future.

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