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An Error Analysis on the Written Speeches of Grade 8 Students

Earl Jones G. Muico[1*], Marian D. Gealon[2]

[1]Department of Arts and Sciences Education, University of Mindanao, Tagum College, Philippines.*
[2]Department of Education, Tagum City Division, Philippines.

Email: [2]mariandurantegealon@gmail.com
Corresponding Email: [1]ejm_131@yahoo.com*

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Abstract: This study examined a corpus extracted from the cohesive errors found in the written speeches of Grade 8 students in one of the schools in Tagum city. This study sought to analyze the errors found in the usage of cohesive devices. Moreover, it aimed to identify the cohesive errors found in the written speeches and classify the errors found. Error occurrences were identified based on Halliday and Hassan's (1976) Grammatical cohesion. Results revealed three error categories of which are the following: Demonstrative, Ellipsis, and Conjunction. Insights were drawn based on the errors found.

Keywords: Error Analysis, Cohesive Devices, Written Speeches.

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing in English classes require proficiency associated with the mastery of the language. Mastery in writing can be demonstrated through the use This ranges from but is not limited to developing, composing to analyzing. Such skills are requisites to produce outputs in writing. Considering the skills demanded in writing, there are evident challenges emerge which range from grammatical errors, content errors, and inconsistency of ideas. The occurrence of these errors will result to difficulties in understanding the message.

Various studies have documented the writing difficulties of students. A study in Japan was able to uncover the deficiencies in written English of students. This was attributed to the lack of focus in learning the fundamental knowledge of writing paragraphs [1]. While a study in Malaysia pointed out that lacking English language proficiency can contribute to writing difficulties in English [2]. Similarly, students in the Philippines struggle in the correct usage discourse markers and their vocabulary [3-5].

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The researchers observed that students in the locale experience writing issues. Although previous studies in the locale were conducted to develop students, these studies were in blended learning, grammatical competence and social media [6-8]. Only a few studies have explored the analysis of written speeches of junior high school students. Thus, the urgency of this study is anchored on addressing the writing problems in basic education. As teachers, the researchers are compelled to address learning issues of students. As such, this study was initiated to identify specific cohesive errors committed by students.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study is corpus based which was based on 15 selected speeches of students. Corpus is assembled depending on the purpose. Moreover, it will serve as the representative of the text type [9].Relative to the selection of corpus, it is stated that there is no scientific measure for a balanced corpus but merely an estimate for the intended use [10-11]. Furthermore, it is not required to have a big corpus. A small corpus is recommended for research in both qualitative and quantitative designs because of its benefits [12]. Thus, the researchers selected 15 written speeches.

The text was analyzed using Halliday and Hassan's grammatical cohesion. The said model composed of 4 areas (Demonstrative, Ellipsis, Substitution and Conjunction). For each Error committed on the 4 areas of grammatical cohesion codes were generated.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

From the results, it is revealed that students committed errors in only 3 areas of grammatical cohesion. Errors found were in Reference, Ellipsis and Conjunction however no error was found in Substitution.

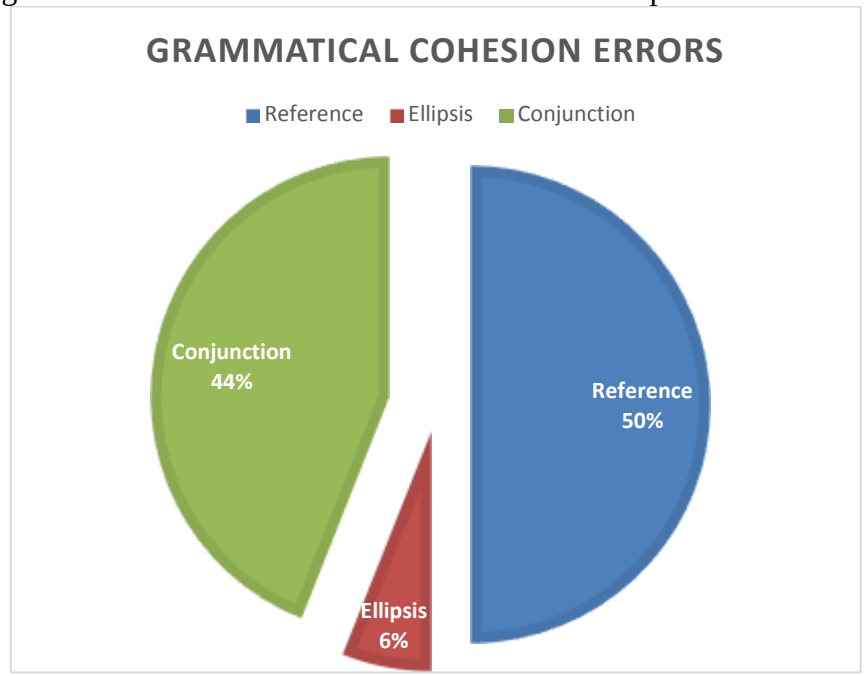
3.1. Grammatical Cohesion Errors in the written speeches of students

Table 1 shows the Grammatical cohesion errors found in the written speeches of students. 18 errors were found which were distributed as follows (18 errors for Reference, 2 error for Ellipsis and 16 errors for Conjunction). Among all areas of Grammatical cohesion, Reference had the highest error occurrence (50%) followed by Conjunction (44%). The least error occurrence was on Ellipsis (6%).

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Figure Grammatical Cohesion Errors in the written speeches of students



3.1.1. Reference errors

Reference errors reached 18 occurrences wherein 2 codes where generated. It is revealed that reference error is the most common error found in the written speeches of students. Particularly errors in demonstrative use and inappropriate noun reference. Some sample errors are reflected in table 1.

Table 1. Sample Reference errors

Error code	Sample reference error
Demonstrative error	These pandemic never hindered the Filipinos to ever give up
	These virus causes many people to suffer from hungriness due to no job or money because of the lockdown
	These pandemic damages us
Noun reference error	The Covid 19 pandemic has been going on for almost 3 years. These are some of the most dangerous challenges this world has faced in our life time.
	Because of the said virus a lot of people lost their jobs and sometimes they can't buy some foods for their family. Despite all of this.
	After 2 years of research and hard work someone finally discovered a vaccine for the virus to harden the immune system, they can still be sick but they will not die and Covid-19 will be like a simple cold.

The first error code generated is Demonstrative error. It can be observed that students commit errors in using demonstratives like this and these. Demonstratives are used depending on the

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noun. **"This"** is intended for singular nouns while **"These"** is intended for plural nouns. This was not the case in sample errors. The second error code generated is Noun reference error. The sample errors show that students commit errors in the noun referent. It is observed that both "**these"** and "**this"** are incorrectly used particularly on the noun referent. The previous sentence mentioned does not have the correct reference to connect with the demonstratives used in the sample sentences.

3.1.2. Ellipsis errors

Ellipsis error only had two error occurrences. Among all errors in grammatical cohesion, ellipsis has the least error commissions in the written speeches of students. As show in table 2, the error occurrence observed is the unnecessary usage of the word **from others**. There is no need to add "from others" in the sample sentence of essay because it can be removed from the sentence. This error stem from the incorrect use of ellipsis. An ellipsis as a component of grammatical cohesion pertains to language use that omit a part of sentence which can be easily to interpreted. As observed in the sample statement, it was not observed and there was a failure in observing the ellipsis.

Table 2. Sample Ellipsis errors

Error code	Sample reference error
Unnecessary usage	Protect yourself and others from infection by staying at least 1 metre apart **from others**, wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently

3.1.3. Conjunction errors

Conjunctions errors had 16 errors commissions in the written speeches of students. Table 3 shows that are three classifications for errors under this category: Starting sentences with coordinating conjunctions, failing to add a comma after conjunction and Incorrect use of conjunction. Table 3 The shows that the conjunction which error occurred most frequently is starting sentences with coordinating conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions are used to compound words that are equal in grammatical rank and syntactic importance. Further, these conjunctions are situated in the middle of the sentence but not in the beginning. This was the common error evident for conjunction errors. Relative to the use of coordinating conjunctions, it is used to connect words and phrases. In connecting these words and phrases, coordinating conjunctions/coordinators should only be in the middle of words or phrases it combines. It should be noted that subordinating conjunctions can be situated in the beginning of a sentence not coordinating conjunctions. This was a similar case in a study that found that Taiwanese second language learners confused coordinating conjunction use with other rules [13]. Another conjunction error observed is failing to add a comma after a conjunction. This error occurs when a comma was not placed with the word **"however".** A comma should be placed after **"however"** because when **"however"** is used to introduce a clause or sentence, there should be a comma after it. Finally, the third error code under conjunction errors is incorrect use of a conjunction. The sample statement shows the use of **"for instance"** does not present an example. When using **"for instance"** as a conjunction, the succeeding clause should provide

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an example or illustration for the preceding clause. This was not the case in the sample statement. The sample statement shows that "**most people infected with the virus will have mild to severe respiratory and recover without the need for particular treatment**" is not an illustration nor is it an example of the preceding statement "**when healthy standards are not followed**".

Table 3. Sample Conjunction errors

Error code	Sample reference error
Starting sentences with coordinating conjunctions	there must be a time to look back fully to understand how such a disease emerged. **But** now is not that time.
	I saw this rumor online that we need to wear a mask because of this certain virus. **And** yes, I call it rumor at that time because I think it's impossible.
	But I know everything happens for a reason.
	and if you were to ask me, and if I we're to ask myself what I learned is that
	But let us not forget the truth of reality that is around us.
Failing to add a comma after conjunction	The government also gave food to people house by house giving out food and etc. **however** there are some people that doesn't listen to the government about not going outside and insisted about going out
Incorrect use of conjunction	When healthy standards are not followed, **for instance**, most people infected with the virus will have mild to severe respiratory illness and recover without the need for particular treatment.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The conduct of the study revealed that students commit writing errors in terms of grammatical cohesion. As shown, only 3 of the 4 areas of grammatical cohesion were found. These errors occurred in Reference, Ellipsis and Conjunction. Majority of the writing errors were found in Reference followed by Conjunction and Ellipsis with the least error. With grammatical cohesion being an important component for successful writing, these errors must be addressed. As such, students should be exposed to grammatical rules concerning the correct use of the three areas of grammatical cohesion that students committed errors. The students will be exposed to grammatical rules but will not be limited to class. The exposure will be expanded in writing activities. These writing activities should be designed to address the three areas: Reference, Ellipsis and Conjunction. The inadequate skills in writing should be the focus of teachers to allow students to develop what they lack in writing.

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