

Analysis of Paragraph Coherence in Students' Proposal Assignments

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze paragraph coherence in students' proposal assignments, focusing on cohesion and coherence. It employed a descriptive qualitative approach within the field of linguistics. The data source consists of student proposal documents, while the data consist of paragraphs from the background and literature review sections. Data were collected through documentation, supported by observation and note-taking. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, classification, analysis, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the level of paragraph coherence in students' writing is relatively low. Four main forms of incoherence were identified: overly long sentences, weak coherence, unclear references, and excessive repetition. Overly long sentences reduce clarity, while weak coherence is characterized by illogical relationships between ideas. Additionally, the use of unclear references leads to ambiguity, and excessive repetition results in ineffective and monotonous paragraphs. Among these four aspects, coherence problems were found to be the most dominant. The study concludes that students need to improve their ability to construct coherent paragraphs, particularly in developing ideas logically, using references appropriately, and varying lexical elements. Therefore, more focused instruction in academic writing is necessary to enhance the quality of paragraph coherence in proposal writing.

Keywords: Paragraph Coherence, Cohesion, Coherence, Student Proposals

1. Introduction

Proposal writing represents a crucial preliminary stage in the research process, requiring the ability to employ language in a scientific, precise, and systematic manner. As an academic genre, a proposal must not only present relevant ideas but also organize them logically so that readers can clearly follow the intended line of reasoning. One essential aspect that supports this clarity is paragraph unity. Well-developed and coherent paragraphs facilitate the effective communication of ideas, whereas poorly structured paragraphs can obscure meaning, weaken arguments, and reduce the overall quality of academic writing.

From a linguistic perspective, paragraph unity is primarily determined by cohesion and coherence. Cohesion refers to the formal and grammatical connections between elements in a text, such as the use of conjunctions, reference, substitution, ellipsis, and lexical ties, which contribute to the surface structure of the discourse. Coherence, on the other hand, concerns the logical and semantic relationships that link ideas into a meaningful whole. A text may appear cohesive on the surface yet still lack coherence if the ideas are not logically connected. Therefore, both cohesion and coherence must function together to achieve effective paragraph construction, particularly in academic writing where clarity and precision are essential.

In the context of higher education, the ability to construct coherent paragraphs is a fundamental component of students' academic literacy. Proposal writing, in particular, demands a high level of discourse competence because it involves presenting background information, reviewing relevant literature, and formulating arguments that justify the significance of a study. However, in practice, many students continue to encounter difficulties in organizing their ideas into unified paragraphs. These difficulties are often reflected in the misuse of cohesive devices, weak logical progression between sentences, unclear referential expressions, and unnecessary repetition. Such problems not only affect readability but also indicate limited mastery of academic writing conventions.

Previous studies have documented that students' writing problems frequently occur in the domains of cohesion and coherence. While these studies provide valuable insights, they tend to focus on general writing performance or isolated linguistic features rather than offering a detailed analysis of paragraph unity within specific sections of academic texts, such as the background and literature review of research proposals. Moreover, earlier research often emphasizes error identification without sufficiently exploring the patterns, dominance, and underlying causes of paragraph incoherence in authentic student writing. As a result, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding how cohesion and coherence interact in shaping paragraph unity in students' proposal writing.

This gap highlights the need for a more focused investigation into paragraph unity in student proposals. A systematic analysis is needed not only to identify the forms of incoherence but also to determine which issues are most dominant and how they affect the overall clarity of academic texts. Such an investigation is can provide more specific and applicable insights for improving academic writing instruction. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the unity of paragraphs in students' proposal assignments by examining both cohesion and coherence. By addressing the identified research gaps, this study contributes to the development of more effective pedagogical strategies in academic writing, particularly in enhancing students' ability to construct logically organized and cohesive paragraphs in research proposals.

2. Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach within the field of Linguistics to examine paragraph unity in students' proposal writing. The data source consists of student proposal documents, specifically the background and literature review sections, as these sections require the development of extended and logically structured arguments. The data comprise paragraphs that are analyzed based on the aspects of cohesion and coherence.

Data were collected through documentation, complemented by observation and note-taking techniques. This process involved a careful and systematic reading of the students' proposal texts, followed by the identification and recording of segments relevant to the focus of the study, particularly those reflecting the use of cohesive devices and the logical organization of ideas.

The data analysis was conducted through several stages: data reduction, classification, analysis, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The collected data were first reduced and organized, then classified according to types of cohesion (grammatical and lexical) as well as aspects of inter-sentential coherence. Subsequently, the data were analyzed to determine the level of paragraph unity and to identify patterns of incoherence present in the texts. The interpretation stage explains how these patterns affect the clarity and effectiveness of the paragraphs.

To ensure the validity of the findings, the study employs theoretical triangulation and prolonged engagement with the data through careful and repeated observation. The results are presented descriptively in the form of analytical explanations supported by representative excerpts from the students' paragraphs, providing concrete illustrations of both cohesive and incoherent constructions.

3. Findings and Discussion

The results of the analysis of paragraph unity in students' proposal assignments, examined from the perspectives of cohesion and coherence, are presented in this section. The analysis aims to identify the extent to which the paragraphs constructed by students fulfill the principles of unity in academic writing. Within Linguistic studies, paragraph unity serves as a crucial indicator in evaluating the quality of written discourse, as it is directly related to the clarity, organization, and logical progression of ideas (van Dijk, 1980). A well-integrated paragraph reflects not only the appropriate use of linguistic forms but also the writer's ability to structure meaning in a coherent and systematic way.

The analysis focuses on the use of cohesive devices, including reference, conjunction, and repetition, as well as the semantic relationships between sentences that contribute to coherence. Cohesion operates at the surface level of the text, linking linguistic elements through explicit markers, while coherence functions at the deeper level of meaning, ensuring that ideas are logically connected and interpretable as a unified whole. As noted by Laba (2017), effective

academic writing requires not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to maintain unity and continuity of ideas across sentences and paragraphs, which are essential for achieving communicative clarity.

Each paragraph in the dataset is analyzed in detail to identify both cohesive patterns and instances of incoherence. This includes examining how students employ referential expressions, how conjunctions are used to signal logical relations, and how repetition contributes either to lexical cohesion or to redundancy. In addition, the analysis evaluates whether the sequence of ideas within paragraphs reflects a logical and consistent flow, or whether disruptions occur due to weak connections, ambiguous references, or fragmented argumentation.

The findings of this analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive description of students' ability to construct effective paragraphs in academic proposals. Furthermore, the results offer empirical insights into common patterns of paragraph (in)coherence, which can serve as a basis for improving academic writing instruction. By identifying both strengths and weaknesses in students' paragraph construction, this study contributes to the development of more targeted pedagogical strategies aimed at enhancing cohesion, coherence, and overall writing quality.

Incoherence Due to Overly Long Sentences

One of the most common causes of paragraph incoherence in students' academic writing is the use of excessively long and structurally complex sentences. In linguistic terms, an effective sentence should convey a single main idea clearly, supported by well-organized subordinate elements. However, in practice, students often combine multiple ideas into a single sentence through the excessive use of conjunctions and embedded clauses. This results in overly complex sentence structures that obscure meaning and reduce readability.

From the perspective of cohesion theory, Halliday and Hasan (1976) emphasize that cohesion is achieved through systematic and explicit relationships between linguistic elements. Overly long sentences tend to weaken these relationships because the abundance of clauses can lead to poorly managed connections between ideas. As a result, the grammatical and lexical ties that should support textual unity become less transparent and harder to interpret. Research has shown that cohesion functions as the "texture" of a text, enabling readers to perceive it as a unified whole rather than as disconnected sentences. When sentence structures become excessively dense, this texture is disrupted, diminishing the effectiveness of the discourse.

In addition to cohesion, coherence is also significantly affected by sentence complexity. According to van Dijk (1980), coherence is grounded in the logical organization of meaning within discourse. Overly complex sentences often fail to maintain clear logical progression, making it difficult for readers to identify relationships between ideas. Empirical studies support this claim. For instance, research on student writing indicates that learners frequently overuse repetition and complex structures while failing to provide sufficient clarity and relevant

information, which ultimately weakens coherence. Similarly, recent studies in the Indonesian EFL context show that although students may employ various cohesive devices, they still struggle to maintain logical flow and clarity in paragraph construction.

Further evidence suggests that excessive sentence length contributes to ambiguity and reduced readability. Studies on student writing consistently highlight that ineffective use of cohesive devices, particularly conjunctions and repetition can lead to redundancy and fragmented idea development. Moreover, research on discourse competence emphasizes that successful writing requires not only the presence of cohesive markers but also their appropriate and proportional use to support coherence and comprehension. In other words, linguistic complexity does not necessarily equate to academic quality; instead, clarity, conciseness, and logical structuring are more reliable indicators of effective writing.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the tendency to produce overly long sentences may stem from students' misconceptions about academic style. Many learners assume that complex and lengthy sentences reflect higher levels of formality and sophistication. However, without adequate control over syntactic structure and discourse organization, such attempts often result in unclear and ineffective communication. This indicates a gap between students' intention to write academically and their actual linguistic competence.

Therefore, analyzing overly long sentences in students' paragraphs is essential for identifying patterns of incoherence in academic writing. By examining how sentence complexity affects cohesion and coherence, this study seeks to uncover recurring structural problems that hinder paragraph unity. Understanding these patterns is expected to provide a foundation for improving students' academic writing skills, particularly in constructing sentences that are clear, concise, and logically organized. An example of this phenomenon can be observed in Data 1 presented below.

Data 1

Beberapa wanita yang mengalami disminore menggunakan obat-obatan analgesik untuk mengatasi nyeri desminore, namun pemakaian yang berlebihan membawa efek samping adiktif, bila over dosis dapat membahayakan pemakaiannya. (Narlianti, 2026:3)

(Some women who experience dysmenorrhea use analgesic medications to relieve menstrual pain. However, excessive use of these medications may lead to adverse effects, including the risk of dependency, and overdosing can be harmful to users (Narlianti, 2026, p. 3).

Based on the analysis, a paragraph was identified that consists of only a single, overly long sentence with a complex structure. From a linguistic perspective, an effective paragraph should comprise several sentences that work together to develop a single main idea. However, in this case, all ideas are condensed into a single sentence containing excessive information, resulting in a highly complex structure that is difficult to comprehend.

From the perspective of cohesion, the use of conjunctions in the sentence is ineffective, as it does not conform to standard grammatical conventions. In terms of coherence, the flow of ideas becomes unclear due to the absence of segmentation into simpler, more manageable sentences. This lack of structural organization makes it difficult for readers to grasp the core message of the paragraph. Therefore, a paragraph consisting of a single long sentence demonstrates a lack of unity, as it fails to present ideas in a logical, clear, and systematic manner.

To improve readability and paragraph unity, the sentence should be divided into shorter, more effective sentences. The revised version is as follows:

“Some women who experience dysmenorrhea use analgesic medications to relieve pain. However, excessive use may lead to addictive side effects and can be dangerous in cases of overdose.”

Incoherence Due to Weak Coherence

In students' proposal writing, paragraphs are often found to lack unity due to weak coherence. Weak coherence is characterized by abrupt shifts in ideas without clear logical relationships between sentences. As a result, the progression of thought within the paragraph becomes disjointed, making it difficult for readers to follow the intended meaning.

From a discourse perspective, coherence refers to the meaningful and logical connections that link sentences into a unified whole (van Dijk, 1980). When these connections are absent or poorly constructed, the paragraph fails to function as a coherent unit of meaning. Even if cohesive devices are present, they do not automatically ensure coherence if the underlying ideas are not logically related. This condition often results in paragraphs that appear structurally complete but lack conceptual clarity.

Such issues are frequently observed in student writing, where sentences are arranged sequentially but do not contribute to a clear and consistent line of argument. The lack of transitional logic, insufficient elaboration, or sudden topic shifts can all contribute to weak coherence. Consequently, readers may struggle to understand how one idea leads to another, reducing both readability and the effectiveness of the text.

This phenomenon can be observed in Data 2 below, where the paragraph demonstrates unclear relationships between sentences and a lack of logical progression, ultimately indicating weak coherence.

Data 2

Luka merupakan kondisi terputusnya kontinuitas jaringan tubuh yang dapat disebabkan oleh trauma maupun tindakan pembedahan. Luka dapat diklasifikasikan berdasarkan struktur anatomi, karakteristiknya, proses penyembuhan, serta lamanya waktu penyembuhan (Ahyana, Aklima, Riski, & Nani, 2023). Kecelakaan dapat terjadi kapan saja, di mana saja, dan dapat dialami oleh siapa saja. Kecelakaan adalah suatu peristiwa yang tidak diinginkan, tidak disengaja, serta tidak direncanakan, yang melibatkan

seseorang, sekelompok orang, atau benda dalam suatu aksi maupun reaksi sehingga berpotensi menimbulkan kerugian (Maria, 2020).

Penyembuhan luka merupakan proses yang kompleks karena melibatkan aktivitas bioseluler dan biokimia yang berlangsung secara terus-menerus. Proses ini mencakup interaksi antara respons vaskular, aktivitas sel, serta pembentukan senyawa kimia sebagai mediator di area luka yang saling berhubungan. Ketika luka terjadi, tubuh memiliki mekanisme untuk memperbaiki jaringan yang rusak dengan membentuk struktur baru yang dapat berfungsi kembali secara optimal. Pada tahap awal pembentukan luka, terjadi proses inflamasi yang berlangsung hingga sekitar 3 hari setelah luka terbentuk. Beberapa jam setelah luka terjadi, jaringan mulai mengalami proses granulasi yang berlangsung hingga hari ke-10, disertai dengan pembentukan kolagen. Selanjutnya, mulai hari ke-3 hingga hari ke-30 terjadi proses kontraksi luka. Sintesis kolagen akan terus berlanjut sampai luka benar-benar sembuh, yang ditandai dengan hilangnya tanda-tanda inflamasi. (Narlianti, 2026:10)

(A wound is a condition involving the disruption of the continuity of body tissue, which may be caused by trauma or surgical procedures. Wounds can be classified based on anatomical structure, characteristics, healing process, and duration of healing (Ahyana, Aklima, Riski, & Nani, 2023). Accidents may occur at any time, in any place, and can happen to anyone. An accident is defined as an undesirable, unintentional, and unplanned event involving an individual, a group of people, or objects in an action or reaction that has the potential to cause harm or loss (Maria, 2020).

Wound healing is a complex process, as it involves continuous biocellular and biochemical activities. This process includes interactions among vascular responses, cellular activity, and the formation of chemical compounds that act as mediators in the wound area. When a wound occurs, the body initiates mechanisms to repair damaged tissue by forming new structures that can function optimally.

In the initial stage of wound healing process, an inflammatory phase occurs, lasting approximately three days after the injury. Within a few hours of injury, the tissue begins the process of granulation, which continues until around the tenth day and is accompanied by collagen formation. Subsequently, from the third to the thirtieth day, the wound contraction process takes place. Collagen synthesis continues until the wound is completely healed, marked by the disappearance of signs of inflammation (Narlianti, 2026, p. 10).

Analysis of Weak Coherence

The paragraph presented in Data 2 demonstrates a lack of coherence due to weak logical connections between sentences. At the beginning, the paragraph discusses the definition and classification of wounds, which is still relevant as an introduction to the topic. However, the subsequent sentence abruptly shifts to the concept of accidents, introducing a new idea without a

clear transitional link to the previous discussion. Although accidents can indeed cause wounds, this relationship is not explicitly stated, resulting in a noticeable break in the flow of ideas.

From a coherence perspective, this shift reflects a lack of logical progression between sentences. According to van Dijk (1980), coherence depends on the meaningful relationships that connect propositions within a discourse. In this case, the absence of explicit connections between “wounds” and “accidents” weakens the unity of the paragraph. The reader is required to infer the relationship independently, which reduces clarity and increases cognitive load.

Furthermore, the paragraph then returns to discussing the process of wound healing in considerable detail. While this information is relevant to the initial topic, the earlier interruption caused by the unrelated insertion about accidents disrupts the continuity of the discussion. As a result, the paragraph contains multiple ideas—definition of wounds, accidents, and wound healing processes—that are not integrated into a single, unified line of reasoning.

From the perspective of cohesion, although some referential and lexical ties are present (e.g., repeated use of “wound”), they are insufficient to compensate for the lack of coherence. Cohesion alone does not guarantee unity if the ideas themselves are not logically organized (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Therefore, the paragraph illustrates weak coherence, as it fails to maintain a consistent focus and logical development of ideas.

To improve paragraph unity, the ideas should be reorganized and connected through clear transitions. For example, the concept of accidents can be explicitly linked as a cause of wounds, or it may be omitted if it does not directly support the main focus. A more coherent version would maintain a single topic—such as wound definition and healing process—and develop it systematically without unnecessary shifts in focus.

Based on the analysis of Paragraph 1 and Paragraph 2 in Data 2, both paragraphs demonstrate a lack of unity in terms of cohesion and coherence. The flow of ideas in Paragraph 1 is poorly organized, as indicated by abrupt shifts between ideas and unclear cause-and-effect relationships. This condition makes it difficult for readers to follow the overall argument.

In Paragraph 1, the sentences do not exhibit clear connections, particularly in the use of conjunctions and references. Several sentences stand-alone without appropriate linking devices, resulting in weak relationships between ideas.

In Paragraph 2, the lack of unity is evident in the absence of continuity with the preceding paragraph. This paragraph introduces a new idea directly without any transitional sentence or connector that links it to the ideas presented in Paragraph 1. From the perspective of coherence, this disrupts the logical progression of the text and weakens the overall structure of the discourse.

Thus, the lack of unity in both paragraphs is caused by the weak use of cohesive devices and the absence of clear logical relationships between sentences and across paragraphs. These

findings indicate that students still need to improve their ability to construct well-connected and systematic paragraphs in academic proposal writing.

Incoherence Due to Unclear Reference

Another common form of paragraph disunity found in students' writing is the use of unclear references. In Linguistic studies, reference is a component of grammatical cohesion that functions to link a linguistic element to its antecedent within a text. The appropriate use of reference helps readers understand relationships between sentences in a clear and systematic manner, thereby contributing to overall textual unity.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), reference involves the use of elements such as pronouns and demonstratives (deixis), which must have clearly identifiable antecedents within the discourse. When referential expressions such as "this," "that," "these," "those," or "such" are used without a definite or explicit referent, they create ambiguity. As a result, readers may struggle to determine what is being referred to, which disrupts the clarity of meaning and weakens paragraph cohesion.

Furthermore, van Dijk (1980) emphasizes that coherence—understood as the logical and meaningful connection within a text—is strongly influenced by the accurate use of cohesive devices. Unclear references can hinder the establishment of logical relationships between sentences because readers are unable to connect ideas precisely. In such cases, even if the sentence structure appears grammatically correct, the paragraph may still lack unity due to अस्पष्ट or ambiguous referential links.

From a discourse perspective, unclear referencing not only affects sentence-level interpretation but also interrupts the continuity of ideas across the paragraph. Readers are forced to infer meaning without sufficient textual support, which increases cognitive effort and reduces readability. This indicates that mastery of referential cohesion is essential for producing effective academic writing.

Thus, unclear referencing represents a significant source of paragraph incoherence in students' proposal writing. The following data illustrates how ambiguity in referential expressions leads to a lack of unity and clarity within the paragraph.

Data 3

Tenaga kesehatan merupakan salah satu peran yang terlibat dalam penanganan penyakit hipertensi ini. Selain dokter yang melakukan diagnosa dan pemeriksaan pada pasien, peran tenaga kefarmasian juga sangat penting. Tenaga kefarmasian merupakan komponen utama sebagai pemberi pelayanan kesehatan kepada masyarakat dalam rangka tercapainya tujuan kesejahteraan kesehatan masyarakat sekitar. Tenaga kefarmasian mempunyai peran

penting karena terkait langsung dengan pemberian pelayanan khususnya pelayanan kefarmasian. (Narlianti, 2026:1)

(Healthcare professionals represent one of the roles involved in the management of hypertension. In addition to physicians who perform diagnoses and patient examinations, the role of pharmaceutical personnel is also crucial. Pharmaceutical personnel are a primary component in providing healthcare services to the community to achieve the goal of local public health welfare. They play a vital role as they are directly involved in service delivery, particularly pharmaceutical care. (Narlianti, 2026:1)

From a linguistic perspective, the aforementioned paragraph exhibits a lack of unity in terms of grammatical cohesion, specifically regarding the use of reference. The demonstrative "this" (Indonesian: *ini*) within the phrase "this hypertension disease" in the first sentence lacks a clear referent (ambiguity), as there is no prior explanation or specific mention of the hypertensive context. Consequently, the reader is not provided with sufficient information to discern whether "this" refers to a specific case study, a general clinical condition, or particular research findings.

In cohesion theory, Halliday and Hasan (1976) posit that reference serves as a cohesive device that links linguistic elements to their referents within a text. Reference is deemed effective only when it possesses an explicit reference, thereby precluding ambiguity. The use of vague references—such as the word "this" without a definitive antecedent—disrupts textual integrity by obscuring the relationships between linguistic elements. Furthermore, according to Van Dijk (1980), the clarity of semantic relations (coherence) is heavily influenced by the precision of cohesive markers. Unclear references can impede the reader's ability to construct meaningful connections between sentences, rendering the paragraph fragmented.

This observation aligns with recent empirical findings indicating that referential errors are a dominant issue in academic writing. Rahmawati (2022) asserts that the use of pronouns without clear referents leads to low text readability, while Pratama (2023) notes that referential ambiguity significantly contributes to weak cohesion in student-authored paragraphs.

Incoherence Due to Excessive Repetition

Another form of paragraph disunity frequently found in students' writing is the excessive use of repetition. In Linguistic studies, repetition is a component of lexical cohesion that functions to maintain topic continuity and clarify relationships between elements within a text. When used appropriately, repetition can reinforce key ideas and support the development of a paragraph. However, when it is employed excessively without variation, it can instead reduce the overall quality of paragraph unity.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), lexical cohesion through repetition should be accompanied by variation in form, such as the use of synonyms, hyponyms, or substitution, in order to maintain textual effectiveness and avoid monotony. Uncontrolled repetition tends to make sentences verbose and inefficient, while also obscuring the main focus of the idea being

conveyed. As a result, readers may find it difficult to process the information clearly, as the text becomes unnecessarily redundant.

From the perspective of coherence, excessive repetition can also disrupt the logical flow of ideas within a paragraph. According to van Dijk (1980), textual unity depends not only on formal linguistic connections but also on the meaningful organization of ideas. If repeated words or phrases do not contribute new information or advance the development of the argument, this weakens the progression of thought and reduces the clarity of the discourse.

Moreover, excessive repetition often signals limited lexical range and a lack of control over academic writing conventions. Instead of strengthening cohesion, it leads to monotonous and less engaging writing, which diminishes readability and communicative effectiveness. Therefore, repetition must be used strategically—serving to emphasize key concepts while allowing variation to sustain reader interest and clarity.

Thus, excessive repetition constitutes a significant source of paragraph incoherence in students' proposal writing, as it hinders both cohesion and coherence by reducing clarity, efficiency, and logical progression.

Data 4

Bahan kimia sintetis yang sering digunakan sebagai bahan hair tonic adalah minoxidil namun memiliki efek samping seperti alergi pada kulit, lemas, vertigo, edema, serta sakit kepala, sehingga perlu dicari alternatif dari bahan alam yang memiliki aktivitas yang baik serta memiliki efek samping yang lebih sedikit atau bahkan tidak ada. (Narlianti, 2026:20)

(Synthetic chemical substances commonly used as ingredients in hair tonics include minoxidil; however, they may produce side effects such as skin allergies, fatigue, vertigo, edema, and headaches. Therefore, it is necessary to explore alternative natural ingredients that demonstrate effective activity while having fewer or minimal side effects (Narlianti, 2026, p. 20).

Based on a linguistic analysis, the paragraph above demonstrates a lack of unity in terms of lexical cohesion, specifically regarding excessive repetition. The recurrence of the phrases "memiliki" (to have) and "efek samping" (side effects) within a single sentence occurs in close proximity without lexical variation. Furthermore, the phrase "*yang memiliki aktivitas yang baik serta memiliki efek samping yang lebih sedikit*" (which has good activity and has fewer side effects) exhibits an ineffective structural repetition. Rather than reinforcing the meaning, this repetition makes the sentence long-winded, wordy, and ambiguous.

According to M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (1976), lexical cohesion through repetition should be used judiciously to maintain topical continuity. However, excessive repetition without variation—such as synonymy or the omission of redundant elements—can weaken text integrity. In Data 4, such repetition renders the information inefficient and difficult for the reader to process.

Additionally, from the perspective of coherence, the sentence in Data 4 is overly long with uncontrolled repetition, thereby obscuring the focus of the main idea. This aligns with Teun A. van Dijk's (1980) view that textual integrity depends on the orderly relationship of meaning. When lexical elements are repeated without a clear function, the logical flow becomes less sharp and the primary idea becomes difficult to identify.

Data 5

Beberapa faktor menyebabkan diare adalah kontaminasi kuman melalui makanan atau minuman terkontaminasi feses atau kontak langsung dengan penderita, sedangkan faktor lainnya antara lain faktor lingkungan dan kebiasaan hidup yang tidak sehat. (Narlianti, 2026:20)

(Several factors contribute to diarrhea, including microbial contamination through food or beverages contaminated with feces or through direct contact with infected individuals. Other contributing factors include environmental conditions and unhealthy lifestyle habits (Narlianti, 2026, p. 20).

The paragraph in Data 5 also demonstrates a lack of unity in terms of lexical cohesion, particularly due to excessive repetition. The word "factor" is repeated several times within a single sentence ("several factors," "other factors," "environmental factors") without sufficient variation or development. This repetition does not serve to clarify meaning; instead, it makes the sentence sound monotonous and less effective.

Furthermore, from the perspective of coherence, the long sentence structure combined with repeated use of the same word results in poorly organized ideas. This aligns with van Dijk's (1980) view that textual unity is determined not only by formal relationships (cohesion) but also by the logical organization of meaning (coherence). Uncontrolled repetition can obscure the main idea and disrupt the logical flow of the sentence, thereby reducing overall clarity and readability.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, paragraph unity in students' writing still exhibits several weaknesses related to the aspects of cohesion and coherence. Four dominant forms of disunity were identified: overly long sentences, weak coherence, unclear reference, and excessive repetition. These four aspects are interrelated in influencing the clarity, organization, and effectiveness of idea development within a paragraph.

Disunity caused by overly long sentences is characterized by the use of multiple clauses within a single sentence without a clear structure, making the ideas difficult to understand.

Meanwhile, weak coherence is reflected in abrupt shifts between ideas and the absence of logical relationships between sentences. In terms of unclear reference, the use of referential expressions such as “this” without a definite antecedent creates ambiguity of meaning. Excessive repetition, on the other hand, results in paragraphs that are monotonous, inefficient, and underdeveloped due to the lack of lexical variation.

The findings indicate that the main problems in students’ writing lie not only in grammatical or structural errors but also in their ability to organize ideas logically and systematically. Therefore, efforts to improve academic writing skills are necessary, particularly those that emphasize the construction of effective sentences, the logical development of ideas, the appropriate use of reference, and the proportional use of lexical variation. Such improvements are essential to produce paragraphs that are more unified, clear, and comprehensible.

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