

Dissecting logical statements in EFL undergraduate thesis abstracts: Gaining insight through cohesive and coherent mechanisms

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ABSTRACT

A well-structured composition must be both coherent and cohesive, enabling arguments to flow logically and ensuring clarity for readers. Yet, this critical aspect of academic writing is often overlooked, particularly in the thesis abstracts of EFL college students. Thus, this study investigates how cohesive and coherent mechanisms are employed to construct logical arguments in student-written thesis abstracts. By applying qualitative content analysis, the research examined patterns of cohesive ties and their contribution to overall textual coherence. The data employed for this research were ten theses abstracts accessed publicly from the universities' official repositories. The findings indicate that cohesive devices play a crucial role in shaping coherence, with greater cohesion typically resulting in stronger logical connections within the text. Transition markers, which establish semantic links between clauses and sentences, emerged as the most influential indicators of coherence. These markers guided readers through the arguments and ensured a more unified presentation of ideas. The results suggest that the effective use of cohesive and coherent strategies not only improves the clarity of thesis abstracts but also enhances their academic quality. This highlights the pedagogical need to integrate explicit instruction on cohesion and coherence into EFL writing courses. By fostering students' awareness and mastery of these devices, educators can support the development of more precise, persuasive, and professional academic writing. Ultimately, improving these skills can raise the standard of student theses and contribute to higher levels of scholarly communication.



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1. Introduction

Over the last three decades, academic writing has become increasingly central to higher education, with research articles, theses, and other scholarly works serving as critical vehicles for knowledge dissemination (Dowd et al., 2018; Iskander et al., 2018; Golparvar et al., 2026). This shift has raised expectations for students, even at the undergraduate level, to demonstrate competence in producing well-structured and publishable academic texts (Agathokleous & Yu, 2022). Thesis writing, particularly the abstract section, demands the ability to synthesize complex research into a concise yet logically organized text, making cohesion and coherence indispensable components of effective academic writing (Karjono,

2020; Bram & Angelina, 2022; Shin & Demmans, 2023). Yet, for EFL learners, academic writing is often challenging (O’Leary & Steinkrauss, 2022), as they often lack sufficient grammatical, lexical, and rhetorical control to meet academic discourse demands (Chen & Zhang, 2019). EFL students frequently underuse or misuse transitions, resulting in awkward phrasing, disconnected arguments, or texts that lack clarity (Banjarnahor & Narius, 2019; Ahmed, 2019; Liu et al., 2025). These shortcomings suggest that students’ ideas are not yet fully developed or effectively connected (Sweet et al., 2025).

Cohesion and coherence are essential for achieving clarity in writing (Shahsavari & Kourepaz, 2020; Gros-Navés et al., 2022; Tabari & Johnson, 2023), as they enable ideas to connect logically across sentences and paragraphs (Walková, 2020; Siekmann et al., 2022; Alarcón, 2025), and facilitate a better understanding intersections between the writing process and product (Tian et al., 2021). Without cohesive and coherent ties, student abstracts risk becoming difficult to follow, repetitive, or poorly structured (Chandran & Shah, 2019; Farida & Rosyidi, 2019). The students frequently underuse or misuse transitions, resulting in awkward phrasing, disconnected arguments, or texts that lack clarity (Banjarnahor & Narius, 2019; Ahmed, 2019). Moreover, prior studies have shown that students frequently encounter difficulties in applying these features, producing abstracts that are fragmented, ambiguous, or overly mechanical (Trisnaningrum et al., 2019; Bram & Angelina, 2022). These problems often stem from limited mastery of transitional markers, which are key indicators of coherence and function as signals of semantic and rhetorical relationships within texts (Wang et al., 2019; Dashela & Mustika, 2021; Khaghaninejad et al., 2021). Therefore, students require explicit instruction in achieving textual coherence through strategies such as repeating key nouns, maintaining consistent pronoun reference, using appropriate transitional markers, and organizing ideas logically, as mastery of these elements enables them to produce clear, logical arguments (Archila et al., 2022).

While cohesion and coherence have been widely examined in EFL academic writing (Arifin & Farida, 2020; Golparvar et al., 2026), research specifically addressing the role of transitional markers in Indonesian undergraduates’ thesis abstracts remains scarce, despite their critical function as evidence of educational outcomes and disciplinary training (Shahsavari & Kourepaz, 2020; Gros-Navés et al., 2022). Existing studies often treat cohesion and coherence broadly, without focusing on how transitional devices shape logical argumentation and readability. This study addresses that gap by investigating: (1) the proportion and features of transitional indicators manifested through cohesive mechanisms, (2) the delineation of transitional indicators that support logical assertions via coherence strategies, and (3) the role of transition markers in strengthening logical statements. These three research problems are directly aligned with the study’s aims of examining how cohesion and coherence operate to construct meaning, clarify argumentation, and enhance textual logic within academic discourse. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of how these linguistic resources affect the quality of student academic writing and provides pedagogical insights for improving thesis writing instruction.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study employed qualitative content analysis, as it focuses on the systematic examination of textual data. This approach is particularly appropriate for analyzing written discourse because it enables both inductive and deductive code development (Puppis, 2019) and allows textual patterns to be condensed into meaningful categories (Carrarsi, 2024). Content analysis also offers a mixed-method advantage: text is qualitatively categorized and then quantitatively examined through frequency counts (Mayring, 2014). In this study, the framework facilitated an in-depth exploration of how EFL undergraduate students used cohesive and coherent devices in thesis abstracts.

2.2. Source and Technique of Collecting Data

The data employed for this research were extracted from the abstracts of theses of undergraduate students enrolled in EFL programs at an esteemed university, accessible through its official repository. These thesis abstracts, which encapsulate a succinct overview of the research undertaken, were generated by undergraduate students with the approval of various university academic and institutional authorities. Considering that the abstracts are conveniently accessible via the university’s repository, the researcher adhered to ethical principles regarding the use of publicly available academic material, ensuring that no personally identifiable information was disclosed. The abstracts were selected through the purposive sampling technique as outlined by Cresswell (2012), which may facilitate the researcher in examining

particular phenomena within a well-defined group; in this instance, the writing practices associated with thesis abstracts of Indonesian EFL undergraduate students.

The decision to analyze ten abstracts was made on the basis of both methodological rigor and practical feasibility. First, the number was determined to ensure depth of analysis while maintaining a manageable corpus that allows for close, detailed examination in line with the content analytical approach. Second, the abstracts were selected purposively according to clear inclusion criteria: (a) they were published within the most recent five years (2018-2023) to reflect contemporary research trends, (b) they were originated from undergraduate theses in English language education to maintain disciplinary consistency, and (c) they explicitly addressed the research theme under investigation, ensuring direct relevance to the study's objectives. Moreover, the utilization of publicly accessible thesis abstracts for this research endeavor aligns with ethical research practices, as it honors the confidentiality and privacy of individual authors. Furthermore, the data were examined in a manner that ensured the anonymity of the authors and prevented the misuse of personal or sensitive information.

2.3. Technique of Analyzing Data

In terms of analyzing the coherence and cohesion of undergraduates' abstract thesis delved through the transitional markers, the researcher endeavored to employ the analytical processes in the following steps: First, the researcher undertook the process of data condensation through the systematic collection, meticulous selection, deliberate focus, and subsequent simplification of the gathered data. The analysis of the abstracts focused on the frequency of cohesive devices, encompassing both grammatical and lexical elements and coherence devices. These devices were later identified and classified, allowing for the determination of the percentage distribution within each categorization. Then, in analyzing coherence and cohesion, the researcher focused on investigating the logical statements by breaking up the paragraphs of the final project abstract into sentences and looking at the cohesive and coherence devices used to connect one sentence to the others.

With respect to cohesive and coherence concept analysis, the researcher elaborated on two different theories with contrasting analysis compositions. The analysis of cohesion, adopted by Halliday and Hasan (1976), was based on the concept of the text as a semantic unity which was dependent on the cohesion between its elements. Meanwhile, to address coherence aspects, Oshima and Hogue's theory (2007) was carried out to determine the use of coherence tools in the logical statements of undergraduates' abstract theses. Cohesion can be classified into two main categories: grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion encompasses reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction, while lexical cohesion includes reiteration and collocation. This grammatical cohesion was adopted to address the meaning of logical statements regarding discourse analysis issues. Further, transcribing was utilized to classify the data and identify them on the basis of grammatical cohesion (reference, ellipsis substitution, and conjunction). Following this, all the annotated data were systematically compiled into a table to streamline the analytical process and facilitate a more lucid grasp of the underlying trends and patterns evident within the data set. Moreover, the constituents of coherence include five elements: repetition of key nouns, consistent pronouns, transition markers, and logical order. This study examined the elements of coherence utilized in logical statements, highlighting the significant influence of transition markers. Hence, it is essential to analyze the coherence elements to demonstrate how the logical statements are effectively shaped through the utilization of transition markers in composing the undergraduate thesis abstracts.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

This study examined cohesive and coherent devices in ten undergraduate thesis abstracts. The analysis drew upon Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesion framework and Oshima and Hogue's (2007) coherence framework. Overall, the findings reveal that EFL students relied heavily on lexical cohesion and on coherence strategies such as repetition of key nouns and transition markers. These patterns suggest that students prioritized clarity and emphasis, though sometimes at the expense of variety and sophistication.

a) *The proportion and features of transitional indicators exhibited via cohesive mechanisms*

Cohesion analysis showed clear differences in students' use of lexical and grammatical resources. Table 1 summarizes the combined frequencies and proportions of cohesive ties realized in the students' theses abstract.

Table 1. Cohesive Ties in Thesis Abstracts

Cohesive Ties	Sub-Cohesive Ties	Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Lexical Cohesion	Reiteration		
	– Repetition	164	29.5%
	– Synonym	61	11%
	– Superordinate	42	7.6%
	– General Word	17	3.1%
	Collocation	44	7.9%
Sub Total		328	59.1%
Grammatical Cohesion	Conjunction	127	22.8%
	Reference	98	17.6%
	Ellipsis	0	0%
	Substitution	2	0.4%
Sub Total		227	40.9%
Total		555	100%

In line with Table 1, the data reveals a total of 555 cohesive devices employed in the students' thesis abstracts. These are distributed across two main categories: lexical cohesion (59.1%) and grammatical cohesion (40.9%). Among lexical cohesive devices, repetition dominates as the most frequently used subcategory, accounting for 29.5% of the total occurrences. This is followed by synonyms, which appear in 11% of the data. In addition, collocations (7.9%) and superordinates (7.6%) are used with almost equal frequency. By contrast, general words represent the smallest proportion, with only 3.1% of the total occurrences. These figures indicate that while students employ a range of lexical cohesive devices, their reliance is heavily skewed toward repetition. Within grammatical cohesive devices, conjunctions constitute the largest share, at 22.8%, making them the most common feature within this category. References follow, accounting for 17.6% of the data. Meanwhile, substitution appears only rarely, with 0.4% of the total occurrences. Finally, ellipsis is entirely absent from the dataset (0%). Taken together, these results show that conjunctions and references are the primary grammatical resources used by students, while other grammatical devices are either marginal or not used at all. Overall, lexical cohesion outweighs grammatical cohesion in frequency, with repetition and conjunctions emerging as the most dominant devices across the abstracts.

On the other hand, it is possible that the higher prevalence of reference devices observed in the abstracts of this study's thesis can be attributed to the inclusion and calculation of the definite article "the" inside these reference devices. Furthermore, it emerged that the predominant pronouns employed in the works were "they", followed by "it", "them", "these", "this", and "he". The abstracts of undergraduate theses may have inspired this pattern of pronoun usage. Students were advised to employ third-person pronouns in their abstracts to enhance objectivity and authority in their writing, as exemplified below.

Nadiem Makarim applied directive speech because he hoped that teachers could apply what he suggested so that they were able to instill a sense of nationalism in educating the nation generation

In this extract, there are two personal references in one sentence, they are 'he' and 'they'. Here 'he' refers to 'Nadiem Makarim' in the preceding sentence. The singular item 'he' is used to reduce the repetition of the same word previously mentioned, in this case, person. Subsequently, the plural item 'they' refers to 'teachers' and is used to explain precisely the 'teacher' word mentioned previously. The subsequent category pertains to demonstrative references, which serve to identify a referent based on its closeness, as exemplified by the terms "this," "these," "that," and "those." In the present scenario, it was observed that the demonstratives "This" and "These" were used with a much higher frequency compared to "That" and "Those". This might manifest in students seeking to demonstrate how explicitly the objects and subjects of their research are depicted by replacing nouns and functions with pronouns. Judging from these results, the low percentage of substitution and the absence of ellipsis connections may indicate that the students lack an advanced understanding of these two grammatical tying relationships. They continue

to engage with multiple repetitions without attempting to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of communication by reducing redundancy and preserving the flow of ideas.

b) The delineation of transitional indicators for logical assertions elucidated through coherence strategies

Moving on to coherence, it has been previously mentioned that four elements contribute to the attainment of a coherent text. These elements include the repetition of essential nouns, the utilization of consistent pronouns, the incorporation of transition signals to establish connections between ideas, and the organization of ideas in a logical manner. Therefore, the frequency and proportion of these factors are displayed in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. The Occurrences of Coherence Aspects

Coherence Aspects of Logical Statements				
Text	Repetition of key noun	Consistent pronoun	Transition marker	Logical order
1	16	4	11	1
2	5	4	12	1
3	15	2	15	2
4	22	2	12	2
5	33	2	17	2
6	38	12	11	1
7	20	1	9	1
8	20	1	12	2
9	10	3	18	1
10	8	2	10	1
Total	187	33	127	14
Percentage	51.8%	9.1%	35.1%	3.8%

As presented in the Table 2 above, all aspects of coherence are present in the writing of student thesis abstracts, with a total of 361 occurrences, which includes repetition of key nouns, consistent use of pronouns, use of transition signals, and arrangement of logical orders. The findings revealed that the repetition of key nouns is remarkably common in coherent compositions, with 187 appearances. This was followed by 127 occurrences of Transition Markers. This exemplifies that both are indispensable when striving for sentence coherence. A more detailed composition can be seen in the breakdown of the findings below ([Table 3](#)).

Table 3. The Findings of Coherence's Aspects

Coherence's aspects							
Text	Repetition of key nouns		Consistent Pronoun		Transition Markers		Logical order
	Item	No	Item	No	Item	No	Item
	Vladimir Putin	6	His (President of Russia)	2	Which, and after that,		
1	Politeness Strategy	5	He (President of Russia)	1	that, from, Moreover, because,	9	Logical division of ideas, comparison/contrast
	Positive and Negative face	3	Them (audiences)	1	with, in order to between		
	Speech	2					
2	Nadiem Makarim	2	It (the study)	1			
	Directive Speech	3	He (minister of Education)	2	About, by, with, which, because, that, what, so that	8	Logical division of ideas
			They (the Teachers)	1			
3	The Transitivity System	8	It (transitivity system)	1	That, before, between, and,	7	Logical division of ideas
	Jakarta Post	3	They (the readers)	1	as well as through, by		
	Research	4					

Coherence's aspects							
Text	Repetition of key nouns		Consistent Pronoun		Transition Markers		Logical order
	Item	No	Item	No	Item	No	Item
4	Subtitle Strategies	11			With. And, from, that, meanwhile,	9	Logical division of ideas
	Maleficent 2 Mistress of Evil	7	It (the data)	2	Following, because so, which		
5	Translation	4				10	Logical division of ideas, comparison/contrast
	Traffic Signals of Railways	3	They (element Interpretant)	1			
	Data	2	It (person's interpretation)	1	And, that, who, then, from, another,		
6	Study	3			But, whose, with,	11	Logical division of ideas
	Railway	6			for, and also		
	Sign	19					
	Grammatical cohesion	15	His (mr. president)	10	Between, and, therefore, first,		
7	Joko Widodo	12	They (types of grammatical cohesion)	1	Second, by, then, Finally, That, to, Through	11	Logical division of ideas
	MPR 2021	4	He (Mr. President)	1			
	Annual speech	7					
8	Karonese Batak	11	It (semiotics)	1	That, or, as, such as, which, by, what,	11	Logical division of ideas
	Semiotics	4			Towards, and,		
9	Colour Symbols	5			especially, for	10	Logical division of ideas
	Research	3			With, to, and, from,		
10	English Textbook	10	It (the data)	1	that, by, meanwhile, in	17	Logical division of ideas, comparison/contrast
	Moral Value	7			addition, for		
	EFL Textbooks	5			Into, in order to, with, that, among,		
9	Ecolinguistics	2	It (the research)	3	And, whether or while, subsequently, to	17	Logical division of ideas, comparison/contrast
	Ecology	3			Ultimately, in particular, also, in contrast, for		
10	Indonesian EFL Textbook	4	It (the data)	2	To, which, and, as, because	5	Logical division of ideas, comparison/contrast
	Linguistic Landscape	4					

It should be noted that the reiteration of keywords or phrases is the most frequently used, aiming to reinforce the reader's understanding of fundamental terms within the passages. Nevertheless, based on the proportion of occurrences of the consistent pronoun, it remained fairly adept at avoiding excessive repetition. The author integrated the noun through the consistent pronoun, which continues to denote the same individual throughout the paragraph, as evidenced in one of the ensuing excerpts.

Finally, the reason why President Joko Widodo used grammatical cohesion is that he would like to express relationships between things...

The pronoun "he" in the subsequent clause refers to Jokowi Dodo, as indicated in the preceding clause. This recurrence of the term Jokowi Dodo is not confined to one sentence but is also present in earlier sentences. Notwithstanding, this repetition does not alter the fundamental meaning of the sentence concerning Jokowi Dodo. What's more, it is noteworthy to mention that the abstracts likewise employed logical orders as strategies to effectively construct and articulate coherent arrangements of ideas. This

logical sequence can be attained through three fundamental elements: chronological order, logical division of ideas, and comparison or contrast paragraphs.

There are three problems in this study. First is the type of grammatical cohesion that President Joko Widodo used in his annual speech. Second, the way President Joko Widodo used grammatical cohesion in his annual speech. Third, the reasons why President Joko Widodo used grammatical cohesion in his annual speech.

The propositions delineated in the abstract conform to a chronological order to articulate the structure of the study. The paragraph opens with an overview of the three problems under inquiry and then goes on to introduce each issue separately. The second statement sheds light on the initial matter, which concerns the grammatical cohesion employed by the president in his annual address, whereas the subsequent section details the way in which the president integrates grammatical cohesion in his discourse. Additionally, the final sentence expounds upon the underlying rationale for the use of grammatical cohesion. Outlining the research in such a manner helps maintain clarity and coherence throughout the thesis, as each issue is systematically based on the previous one in a carefully ordered chronological framework, hence facilitating understanding and allowing the readers to anticipate how each part of the study will unfold.

In contrast to the previously mentioned samples, it was further acknowledged that the student's thesis abstracts applied logical orders marked by logical division of ideas, as demonstrated in the subsequent instance.

This study discusses the politeness strategy used by Vladimir Putin in his speech on the reason why Russia attacked Ukraine. (2) The purpose of the study is to comprehend what kind of politeness strategy theory Vladimir Putin used, how positive and negative face responses are, and what the message conveyed in his speech is. (3) Qualitative research was applied. (4) The data analysis was shaped into the table by grouping the politeness strategy theory after that the data was analyzed to answer the research problem. (4) From this study the researcher found out that there are 27 utterances that are included in the politeness strategy. (5) The result shows that the positive politeness strategy was frequently used in this study because he wanted to make a good relationship with all the audiences in order to minimize the social distance between them.

The logical division of ideas in the passage is distinctly rendered, complying with a coherent transition from the introduction to the conclusion. The text begins by articulating the focus of the research, which is the use of politeness strategies by Putin in his speech about Russia's incursion into Ukraine. In turn, the objective of the inquiry is explicitly stated, emphasizing the purposes of the research, delving into the array of politeness strategies, appraising face responses, and explicating the message in the address. Following the aims, the text transitions to specify the methodology, signifying that a qualitative research approach was employed to analyze the speech. The logical division of ideas is discernible up to the concluding phase of the abstract, that is, the findings, which implies that the recurrent application of positive politeness strategies is intended to foster favorable relationships with the audience while diminishing social distance. This structure secures a logical development of ideas, flowing seamlessly from the introductory section to the conclusions, which in turn enriches the reader's insight into the study's trajectory. Yet another representation of logical orders evident in the abstract of the student's thesis can similarly be reflected in the framework of comparison and contrast. This particular organizational structure can be illustrated through the subsequent example, which seeks to clarify the methods and reasoning associated with the comparison and contrast strategy in academic writing, such as thesis abstract.

Ultimately, environmental issues should be incorporated into every nation's curriculum in order to equip future generations with the necessary foundations to protect and enhance the ecology. This occurrence inevitably demands that numerous countries integrate the instructional approach to build environmentally-based concepts in textbooks. In the Indonesian context, whether the textbooks facilitate environmental education (EE) to promote ecological principles or foster students' competence in recurrent environmental concerns is ambivalent.

As elucidated in the preceding abstract, the systematic organization of ideas through comparison and contrast is clearly observable. We shall assess the configuration of concepts. At the outset, it highlights the critical need for integrating environmental education (EE) into the educational curricula of all nations to empower future generations to preserve the ecology. Thereafter, this global deal with the specific context of Indonesia investigates whether Indonesian educational resources authentically promote

ecological values or simply instruct students to manage environmental issues without nurturing a strong awareness of ecological concepts. Thus, the abstract constructs a logical framework by initially providing a broad perspective and later honing in on a more specific national context, accentuating the challenges inherent in the Indonesian approach.

c) *Leveraging transition markers on logical statements*

The leverage of transitional markers within students' thesis abstracts is particularly noteworthy in alignment with the various coherence dimensions. It is fundamental in establishing coherently structured ideas, sentences, and paragraphs. The adept adoption of transitional markers within student abstracts facilitates the construction of coherent, logical arguments throughout the paragraphs, thus enhancing their readability and flow. To rephrase, crafting sentences through the strategic use of transition markers empowers writers to effectively communicate their ideas and meanings throughout the paragraph, as illustrated in one of the student's thesis abstracts.

The results of this study show that Vladimir Putin threats more positive faces than negative faces. Moreover, this result shows that there are main strategies used by Vladimir Putin in his speech..

The earlier referenced excerpt addresses the placement of the discourse marker as supplementary information that emanates from the initial sentence to elucidate further regarding the data that stands in contrast to the antecedent assertion. It accentuates that the result derived from the research (of Putin's tendency to display more favorable expressions) reveals this particular trend and suggests further implications. The further implication can be inferred from the phrase, "this result shows", implying that it offers the tangible or specific implications that Putin employed particular strategies. It delineates a direct relationship between the displayed behavior (threatening more positive face than negative face and the thorough analysis of Putin's speech strategies. Together, they create a logical sequence that connects the research findings with a broader conclusion regarding the rhetorical strategies utilized by Putin in his speeches. The emergence of transitional markers in the thesis abstract is evidence that EFL students are thinking more about textual organization, which helps them compose logical statements.

3.2. Discussion

This study examined the use of cohesive and coherence devices in EFL students' thesis abstracts, providing critical insights into their writing competence and the strategies employed to establish textual cohesion. The results showed that lexical cohesion, especially repetition, dominated students' writing, while conjunctions and references largely represented grammatical cohesion. The overall distribution shows that lexical cohesion (59.1%) outweighs grammatical cohesion (40.9%), indicating that students rely more heavily on word-based repetition and associations than on grammatical mechanisms to achieve connectedness. These findings align with Uru et al. (2021), who argue that cohesion, particularly lexical cohesion realized through reiteration, constitutes a crucial component of academic writing by promoting semantic connections within and across phrases and sentences, thereby enabling readers to interpret authors' intended meanings. This pattern reflects Halliday and Hasan's (1976) claim that cohesion varies across categories depending on the writer's linguistic repertoire and communicative needs. Moreover, such findings also align with the view that cohesive ties enhance text comprehensibility (Khalil, 2023; Briesmaster, 2017), which in turn reflects the writing quality (Maamujav, 2021; Enayat, 2025). The strong presence of repetition and transition markers confirms earlier work (Crossley et al., 2016; Walková, 2020), which shows that these features act as scaffolds for logical progression in academic texts. However, the heavy reliance on repetition suggests that while students recognize its role in clarity, they may lack strategies to balance repetition with variety (Chandran & Shah, 2019).

In terms of grammatical cohesion, the absence of ellipsis and minimal use of substitution were unexpected since both devices, though less common, are typical features of academic discourse that reduce redundancy and promote conciseness (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), as well as to signal the authentic and appropriate use of language (Tajeddin & Rahimi, 2017). These omissions may reflect a lack of knowledge and of proficiency in employing more advanced, implicit cohesion strategies (Zahara et al., 2023), suggesting that such devices require higher linguistic competence and a deeper awareness of academic discourse conventions (Gurkosh & Badie, 2016; Yasuda, 2019; Kim et al., 2021). It may also reflect a tendency among EFL learners to prioritize explicitness over conciseness, aiming for clarity in high-stakes writing tasks (Hyland, 2005). Their absence suggests that students are more comfortable with explicit connectors than with condensed forms, which can make their writing less sophisticated. However, the use of rhetorical strategies and linguistic choices in academic writing inevitably varies

according to the specific communicative purposes of each section (Golparvar et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2023).

Taken together, these findings highlight a combination of strengths and shortcomings in students' command of cohesion. The frequent use of repetition, conjunctions, and references demonstrates some control over textual cohesion and the ability to guide readers through the text, whereas the limited deployment of synonyms, collocations, substitution, and ellipsis points to underdeveloped skills in achieving variety, conciseness, and stylistic sophistication. These findings align with Bui (2022), who argues that learners' preference for explicit cohesive devices reflects surface-level familiarity, whereas the underuse of more complex lexical and grammatical cohesion stems from misconceptions or insufficient understanding of these resources, thereby affecting overall writing accuracy. This tendency suggests that students need to develop the ability to internalize an ideal grammatical model that accommodates both the flexibility and conventionality of language use as well as the user's knowledge, which remains a challenge for students (Matsumoto, 2021). Thus, writing involves a wide range of skills, strategies, and higher-order cognitive processes (Sahlane, 2019).

Pedagogically, the findings highlight the need for explicit instruction in the full range of cohesive strategies. Teaching students to use transition markers more flexibly can improve coherence, particularly in signaling argument flow (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Besides, guided practice in reducing redundancy through varied lexical choices and controlled use of pronouns could enhance precision and style. Then, targeted exercises on substitution and ellipsis could expand students' repertoire of cohesive tools, helping them achieve greater textual economy and fluency (Siekmann et al., 2022). In addition, integrating cohesion and coherence more explicitly into writing rubrics would also ensure that students are assessed not only on accuracy and structure but also on their ability to vary cohesive strategies.

Finally, these findings underscore avenues for future research. Mixed-methods approaches that combine textual analysis with interviews or classroom observations could uncover why students avoid certain devices. Such extensions would provide deeper insights into the development of cohesion and coherence in academic writing and inform targeted pedagogical interventions.

4. Conclusion

This study offers a systematic analysis of logical statements in Indonesian EFL undergraduate thesis abstracts using a dual framework, Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesion model and Oshima and Hogue's (2007) coherence model. The originality lies in examining an underexplored academic genre through an integrated lens, showing that while students rely heavily on repetition and transition markers, they rarely employ devices such as substitution and ellipsis. This pattern reveals both strengths in making ideas explicit and weaknesses in achieving variety and sophistication in academic writing.

Pedagogically, the findings highlight the need for explicit instruction on cohesive and coherence strategies. Teachers should train students to use transition markers more strategically, minimize redundancy, and diversify their repertoire of cohesive tools. At the curriculum level, coherence-focused activities and assessment criteria should be embedded into academic writing courses (AlMarwani, 2020), while teacher training should include approaches for diagnosing and addressing discourse-level issues.

Future research should expand across institutions and disciplines and employ mixed-methods designs, combining textual analysis with learner perspectives. Such work can deepen insights into how cohesion and coherence function in novice academic writing and guide more effective pedagogical interventions. Ultimately, strengthening students' discourse competence will better prepare them to meet international standards of academic communication (Wang & Xie, 2022).

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Declarations

- Author contribution** : Pirman Ginting was charged with the comprehensive oversight of the research initiative. He additionally directed the composition of the manuscript and facilitated the cooperation among the authors. Sulistya Ningsih Pratiwi engaged in both the gathering and the analytical examination of the data. Ika Agustina, Yenni Hasnah and Rosmen formulated the manuscript and supervised the subsequent revisions of the manuscript. The authors granted their endorsement for the finalized manuscript.
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