Article

Discourse Ability in Speech Texts of Students of the Faculty of Letters, Nahdlatul Wathan University.

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to analyze students' ability to construct a complete speech based on structural elements such as a title, greeting, introduction, body, and closing. The method used is descriptive qualitative, analyzing speech texts from a number of students. The results indicate that although students understand these elements, their application is still limited and does not support speech cohesiveness. The use of greetings and other pragmatic expressions is often inconsistent, resulting in less effective messages. In addition, students experience difficulty in organizing data and facts comprehensively, and introductions and closings are often inadequate. These findings highlight the need for training and a deeper understanding of speech structure and discourse analysis to improve students' ability to construct cohesive, contextual, and meaningful speeches.

Keywords: *Discourse Analysis, Student Speeches, Text Structure, Cohesion And Coherence.*

INTRODUCTION

Speech is one of the forms of direct communication that plays a crucial role in both students' academic and social lives. Through speech, students are able to effectively convey ideas, opinions, or aspirations to their audience, thereby influencing, informing, or persuading others. Good speaking ability not only reflects mastery of the material but also demonstrates the capacity to organize words logically, construct systematic arguments, and deliver messages persuasively. According to Suhandang (2009), success in public speaking is greatly influenced by the ability to compose a systematic and cohesive text, as a well-organized structure facilitates the audience's understanding of the message and enhances the speaker's professional image and confidence.

In the context of discourse awareness development, the ability to construct a systematic speech becomes a primary indicator for ensuring that messages are not only delivered but also capable of building deep and cohesive meanings (Rakhmat, 2010). Effective communication is not solely determined by the content of the message but also by how the message is organized and delivered in a structured manner. Developing discourse awareness in speech writing is an integral part of ensuring that students do not merely follow formal patterns but are also able to organize ideas logically and systematically. Consequently, the messages conveyed can be received well and leave a strong impact.

Based on observations and data collection at the Faculty of Literature, UNW Mataram, it has been found that many students face difficulties in composing complete

and systematic speeches. Some students tend to prepare their speeches fragmentarily, without following a clear structure, and struggle to establish connections between different parts of the speech. As a result, the messages conveyed are often incomplete, meaningless, and less effective in achieving communication goals. This phenomenon indicates that although they possess adequate language skills, they have not yet mastered the ability to compose systematic and cohesive speech texts optimally.

The urgency and relevance of this research are highly significant, considering that systematic and cohesive speech skills are essential competencies that students must develop—especially in today's era, which demands effective communication both orally and in writing. These skills serve as indicators of academic success and professionalism, as the ability to present ideas systematically and persuasively is highly valued in the workplace. Furthermore, speech ability contributes to building self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and social competence among students. If students fail to organize their speeches systematically, the messages they deliver may become unclear and less engaging, preventing the communication objectives from being achieved optimally.

This research is also relevant to the educational needs of improving the quality of language and literature instruction, particularly in developing students' oral communication skills. Through this study, it is hoped that effective solutions and strategies can be identified to enhance students' abilities in constructing systematic and cohesive speeches. This is important to ensure that the learning process does not stop at theoretical aspects but also equips students with practical skills that can be immediately applied in real life, both within academic settings and in the community.

Additionally, the results of this research can serve as input for lecturers and educational institutions in designing more relevant and effective learning programs. Such programs can focus on developing discourse awareness and text structure, thereby improving students' speaking skills. Thus, this research holds high urgency in enhancing the quality of graduates and addressing communication challenges in the modern era, which requires students to deliver ideas systematically and persuasively.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis techniques. Data were collected through observations of speech texts composed by third-semester students of the Indonesian Literature Study Program at the Faculty of Literature, Nahdlatul Wathan University, Mataram. According to Nazir (2003), the descriptive research method aims to systematically and accurately depict existing facts to enable comprehensive understanding.

The data collection process involved carefully reading the texts, identifying and classifying the speech structures, including the title, opening greetings, introduction, content, conclusion, and closing greetings, and then organizing the data systematically into tables. Sugiyono (2010) adds that in qualitative research, the data obtained can be presented in the form of brief descriptions, diagrams, or relationships between categories to provide a comprehensive overview. Data analysis was conducted by reducing the data, presenting it in detail, and drawing conclusions related to the development of discourse awareness in students' speech writing. This approach is considered relevant because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the structural and discourse aspects formed within students' speech texts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of students' speech texts, it was revealed that although students generally understand the main structural elements of speech composition—such as the title, opening greeting, introduction, content, conclusion, and closing greeting—the application of these elements remains partial and has not yet resulted in the construction of a cohesive and systematic discourse structure overall.

From a discourse analysis perspective, this condition indicates that the process of meaning formation in the speech texts tends to be fragmentary and pays insufficient attention to textual relationships and social contexts. For example, out of a total of 28 texts analyzed, 10 did not explicitly display a title, while some others concealed the title within the introduction. This phenomenon suggests that students have not fully realized the strategic function of the title as a guide to meaning and as an element that binds ideas within discourse (Somad & Indriani, 2010).

The use of opening greetings has been employed by the majority of students; however, variations and accuracy in their usage reveal inaccuracies in integrating symbolic and social aspects that are part of social discourse. Some students jump directly into the content without delivering a complete greeting, indicating that they have not yet internalized the pragmatic function of greetings as initial elements that can build social relations and textual cohesion (Rakhmat, 2010).

The introduction section in many texts remains weak or even absent, which indicates a lack of understanding of the textual function as an opening and a means to prepare the context for constructing discourse meaning. An ineffective introduction reduces the opportunity to build a comprehensive meaning framework for the audience, thereby making the message less structured and incapable of establishing a logical flow (Somad & Indriani, 2010).

In the content section, many students fail to organize data and facts comprehensively and cohesively. Of the 28 texts, 12 show incomplete supporting data and facts, which jeopardizes the continuity of meaning and discourse coherence. This suggests that they have not yet mastered the principles of textual coherence and cohesion, which are essential aspects in the construction of meaning within discourse analysis (Chafe, 1991). They tend to organize ideas separately without paying attention to relationships between parts, resulting in fragmented overall meaning and an inability to develop a complete and meaningful message for the audience.

The conclusion section shows deficiencies, with 10 out of 28 speeches lacking a clear summary, and 8 failing to convey specific hopes or expectations. These shortcomings reflect students' inability to compose a conclusion that integrates all parts of the text and reinforces the main message, in accordance with discourse analysis principles that emphasize the importance of the closing as an end marker that strengthens meaning (Sugiyono, 2010).

Regarding social and symbolic aspects, most texts contain greetings from various religions, but three texts did not include a closing greeting. This phenomenon indicates that students have not fully understood that textual elements like greetings serve a social function as markers of cohesion and continuity of meaning within social discourse contexts (Rakhmat, 2010).

Overall, the data suggest that although students understand the formal elements of speech structure, they still lack the application of principles for constructing coherent and systematic meaning based on discourse analysis. These deficiencies are closely related to limited practice in organizing ideas logically, mastering relevant data and facts, and understanding the social and symbolic functions of each part of the text. Therefore, developing discourse awareness should become an integral part of the learning process, so that students not only follow formalistic patterns but are also capable of composing complete, coherent texts that build deep meaning, grounded in the principles of critical discourse analysis that emphasize textual relationships and social contexts as the foundation of meaning.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings highlight the need for increased understanding and practical exercises in preparing complete, cohesive, and contextual speeches. Students should be provided with more intensive training on the structure of speech texts, including the appropriate and consistent use of pragmatic and symbolic elements. Furthermore, integrating discourse analysis principles and meaning construction techniques into the curriculum is essential to enable students to produce speeches that are not only structurally complete but also meaningful and relevant to the communication context. This study is limited to analyzing speech texts of students within a single educational institution and does not consider psychological, social, or pedagogical factors that may influence their abilities. Additionally, the research is descriptive and analytical in nature, and has not tested the effectiveness of specific interventions or teaching methods aimed at improving students' systematic speech-writing skills. Future studies are recommended to examine the impact of various teaching methods, such as discourse analysis-based training, role-play, or peer review, on enhancing students' ability to produce cohesive and meaningful speeches. Furthermore, exploring psychological factors such as motivation and self-confidence that influence the learning process could provide deeper insights. Longitudinal approaches may also be employed to track the development of students' skills from the beginning to the end of the learning process.

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