

ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL COHESION ON STEVE HARVEY MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify the grammatical cohesion devices in Steve Harvey's speech, using a discourse analysis approach. The theory for this study was based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory. Data collection was conducted through observation, involving watching, listening, and transcribing the speeches. The data was then analyzed using an identification method, where the context of each phenomenon was described, and the data was categorized according to the theory. The analysis revealed 10 references, 1 substitution, 1 ellipsis, and 3 conjunctions in the speech. The results indicate that the use of references dominates the speech delivered by the speaker, reflecting a strong reliance on this cohesive device to maintain clarity and continuity. Conjunctions are the second most frequently used grammatical elements, playing a crucial role in connecting various pieces of information and ideas throughout the speech. This frequent use of conjunctions helps to ensure that the speech flows smoothly and logically from one point to the next. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of cohesive devices in effective communication, particularly in public speaking. Understanding the role of these components can provide valuable insights into how successful speeches are constructed.

Keywords: Linguistics; Discourse Analysis; Grammatical Cohesion

INTRODUCTION

In linguistics, the study of the interrelationship of meaning between words is called Discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is an approach that examines how people use language in texts or conversations (Yule, 2010). It explores how language functions within larger contexts, focusing on how ideas and information are linked and effectively conveyed through multiple sentences or interactions. Within the realm of discourse analysis, a primary focus is on grammatical cohesion, which investigates how grammar elements contribute to the coherence and structure of discourse. In communication, grammatical elements help create a sense of cohesion, linking one sentence to another. The cohesion formed by grammar can represent a sequence of events that would be unclear if grammatical rules were ignored. Thus, the meaning conveyed by the speaker is organized through the use of grammatical elements (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Due to its pervasive nature, understanding and applying grammatical cohesion is manageable for most people. Below, clauses that use grammatical element to construct cohesive meaning in communication.

“I put it on **then** it breaks”

The word 'then' in the sentence above is a conjunction that serves as connection of those two clauses. In this case, the clauses 'I put it on' and 'it breaks' are connected by the word 'then,' indicating that the two actions occur sequentially. Halliday and Hasan (1976) mention that cohesive text or sentence consists of reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Therefore, the sentence above demonstrates a phenomenon of grammatical cohesion. In addition to everyday communication, the phenomenon of grammatical cohesion is often evident

in speech, whether formal or informal. Speeches are monologues delivered with carefully chosen and arranged words, aiming to influence the listener. One particular type of speech known for its ability to motivate listeners is motivational speeches. In the realm of talk shows, Steve Harvey stands out as a host who frequently delivers motivational speeches to his audience. Known for his interactive approach, Harvey often offers advice to audience facing challenges or seeking guidance. The following excerpt showcases how grammatical cohesion is utilized in his words.

“..**Somebody** was talkin' on the phone one day and **he** wanted to just go...”

The sentence above is a fragment of the story being told. The story is about imagination leading to world-changing discoveries. The story really makes the listener want to change and no longer fixate on the current situation. Of course, the meaning of this story can be conveyed well because the sentences are well related to each other. As in the quote above, the speaker uses the word “somebody” in starting the story, and in the next clause the speaker replaces it with the word “he”. This change certainly does not change the storyline. This replacement is done to avoid repetition. The change from “somebody” to “he” is a suitable change so that the first clause and the second clause become one unit. This is a cohesive sentence where the first clause still carries the message to the second clause. The important point that makes the two clauses related is the use of the personal pronoun “he”. The personal pronoun refers to the subject in the first clause and in grammatical cohesion it is called reference (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Several researchers have examined this linguistic phenomenon and these studies helped in understanding the theories and terms in grammatical cohesion research. First, Made and Dewi (2023) have done a research entitled *Lexical and grammatical cohesion analysis of "nothing like us" song lyrics: written discourse analysis*. The aim of the study is to illustrate and analyze the types of lexical and grammatical cohesion and also identify the most common lexical and grammatical cohesion in a song. The data in this study were analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's theory (1976). The results showed that conjunction appears most in the Justin Bieber song. Second, Rizki et al. (2022) have done a research entitled *Discourse Analysis of Grammatical Cohesion Devices in Student Explanation Texts*. The aim of the research is to examine the use of cohesion devices in the textbook of students. The data in this study were analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's theory (1976). The results of this research showed that the devices that appeared the most were references with 61%.

The two studies mentioned above share similarity and difference with this research. The primary difference lies not in the purpose but in the data source. This study uses a speech delivered by the famous host Steve Harvey as a data source. In his speech, Steve Harvey employs cohesion devices to construct a well-structured narrative. The similarity across the studies is the use of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory to examine grammatical cohesion phenomena in the data source.

Discourse analysis is a field of linguistics that examines how words relate to their socio-cultural context (Paltridge, 2021). This approach examines language patterns influenced by the context of the discourse. Gee and Handford (2012) add that discourse analysis studies language above the level of individual sentences, analyzing how sentences are arranged to produce cohesive and coherent texts. But a single sentence or utterance can be examined with a discourse analysis approach because this approach does not only focus on the literal sentence structure determined by grammar, but also on how the sentence functions as a “communication” or “action”.

Cohesion occurs when the understanding of an element in a discourse depends on other elements (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). It means that an element in a text or discourse cannot be understood correctly without referring to other related elements. The first element presupposes

the existence of the second element, so in order to understand the first element effectively, one must understand the second element to which it refers. In other words, cohesion involves the interdependent relationship between elements in a text or discourse so that the overall meaning can be clearly understood.

Halliday & Hasan (1976) mentioned that grammatical cohesion consists of reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction.

Reference, the act of alluding to a person, thing, place, or abstract concept in speech or writing, serves as a fundamental element of cohesive devices in language. It encompasses various forms such as pronouns, nominative demonstratives, circumstantial demonstratives, and the definite article. These forms aid in maintaining coherence within discourse. Broadly, reference can be categorized into three types: personal, demonstrative, and comparative. By understanding these categories, speakers and writers can effectively utilize reference to create cohesive and comprehensible communication

Example:

“Don't tell **me** anything” (Muhyidin et al., 2020)

Substitution is a process where words used by the speaker to replace a previous phrase or clause. The difference between substitution and reference lies in how the word or phrase is used in the context of the sentence. Substitution emphasizes more on replacing a word or phrase with another word or phrase that has the same meaning or is at least grammatically equivalent, while reference emphasizes more on referring to something that has been mentioned earlier in the text or speech.

Example:

“The genies worked very fast. Roro Jonggrang was panic and she asked how to stop them. Then, the main told her to make chicken think it is morning by cleaning, farming, and grinding. When they **did**, the chicken woke up and the genies were scared. (Kristiana, 2020) Ellipsis is very similar to substitution that it is often called “substitution by zero”. They basically have the same basic relationship between words. It is just that ellipsis uses a different pattern to replace the same phrase or clause in the previous one. In ellipsis, the previous phrase or clause is no longer mentioned or replaced by any word in the words that follow. The understanding of what is conveyed is based on the listener's ability to catch the meaning between the first words and the second words.

Example:

For many Americans, **they** had come face to face or had allowed themselves to come face to face. (Dang, 2020)

Conjunctions in language are elements that help maintain unity and cohesion in a text. Conjunctive elements such as linking words (and, or, but), linking phrases (therefore, as a result), or subordinating clauses (because, although) act as meaningfully binding the text. They convey a logical connection between the ideas presented in the sentences, ensure a smooth flow of thought, and help the reader or listener to understand the relationship between parts of the text.

Example:

Bandung Bondowoso accepted her challenge **and** called genies”. (Kristiana, 2020).

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method and focuses on language-based data analysis. Qualitative methods, as described by Creswell (2013), emphasize observations of the

environment presented in a narrative format. Data collection is done through direct observation of everyday phenomena, with information being well documented (Américo et al., 2023). The observation method involves attentive observation and listening, with note-taking as the main data collection technique. Analysis of the collected data used the identification method, utilizing the identity technique. The analysis process included contextual understanding and categorization of the data based on the theory proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). Subsequently, conclusions were drawn from the analyzed data. The research findings were then presented using descriptive statistics, in line with the approach advocated by Marczyk et al. (2005), which emphasizes the use of descriptive statistics to present the results of qualitative research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section discusses the results of observations from the data sources studied. The observations are recorded and grouped according to type, using Halliday and Hasan's theory as the primary framework for classification. This theory is essential for researching and categorizing data based on specific criteria. The study examined a total of 15 data points, which represent the entire dataset under analysis. By applying Halliday and Hasan's theory, the author identified all the cohesion devices used by the speaker in the data sources. To provide a clearer understanding of these findings, the data will be presented in the table below.

No	Devices	frequency
1	reference	10
2	substitution	1
3	ellipsis	1
4	conjunction	3
Total		15

Discussion

a) Reference

Data 1

“**God** picks certain people he'll make rich and certain people **he** don't...”

The quote consists of two clauses. Steve Harvey begins his speech with this quote, using "God" as the subject in the first clause. In the second clause, he refers to God with the pronoun "he." Thus, "he" in the second clause serves as a reference that maintains the coherence and flow between the two clauses.

Data 2

“...so if **you**'re at a place in your life...”

Steve Harvey mentions these words when explaining people's habits. He initially states that people will get something from their habits or daily activities. This statement is general because he uses the word "people." To make it more specific, he switches to "you," emphasizing his point to the audience he is addressing. The "you" refers to the audience in his talk show.

Data 3

“no matter what **your children** think it don't matter, **they** have nothing to do with it...”

The quote above from Steve Harvey addresses the influence of other people. He explains that influence from others can be both positive and negative, and if it is negative, one should ignore it, even if it comes from family members. The two clauses in the quote discuss this idea. The first clause states that if the influence is bad, it should be ignored, even if it comes from one's children. The second clause explains why this should be done. The two clauses are connected through the use of the pronoun "they," which refers to the subject mentioned in the first clause.

Data 4

“I’m no better than none of y’all”

The audiences that attend the talk show know who Steve Harvey is. He is known as a comedian and host, and he has a lot of money. In his quote, Steve Harvey explains that God gives everyone the same opportunity to become successful. He emphasizes this point by giving an example from his own life. The word "I" refers to Steve himself. He uses this reference to illustrate that, even though he is rich, he is not better than the audience.

Data 5

“let **me** tell you something.”

This data is similar to the previous data that Steve referred to himself in his speech. However, it is slightly different because the speaker uses the reference as an object. The speaker uses “me” to refer to himself before saying something. The type of reference he uses is an object personal pronoun. This difference highlights how the use of pronouns can subtly change the focus of a statement. Understanding this context helps in analyzing the speaker's intent and the impact of their words.

Data 6

“when I told you 2019 will be **the best year of your life** but you have to claim **it**”

Steve Harvey hopes to change people's lives in the future. He gives the audience a specific statement to motivate them, it is “the best year of your life.” However, in the second clause, Steve mentions what people should do without repeating the statement. Instead, he uses “it” to refer to that statement. He uses the reference to avoid the repetition.

Data 7

“So **he** made you just like **him**”

In this speech, Steve Harvey shares his perspective on God's creation of life. He explains that God created life with a plan, and from that plan, life continues to unfold. Harvey parallels this with human existence, suggesting that, like God, humans must also have a plan to make things happen. By using "Him" to refer to God, Harvey emphasizes the importance of intentionality and planning. This reference helps the audience understand and connect with the essence of his message.

Data 8

“I’m not a **better** person than you”

The sentence “I’m not a better person than you” belongs to comparative reference. Comparative reference is the use of words or phrases that compare two or more entities in terms of a certain trait, amount, or level. In the sentence above, “better” is the comparative form of “good” and serves to compare two entities, namely “I” and “you”. This sentence structure shows that the speaker is comparing himself to another person in terms of being a “better person

Data 9

“do not let **Satan** come here.... **his** job is only to destroy you”.

Steve Harvey in this context explains that one of the main keys to success is to control one's thoughts. Steve Harvey says “here” while pointing to his head which means mind. In this sentence, the word “his” refers back to “Satan” mentioned earlier. This is an example of anaphoric reference because the word “his” refers backwards, to the already mentioned word “Satan”.

Data 10

“don't give control of **this** to nobody especially the devil”

The context of this data is linked to the previous data, which emphasizes that controlling thoughts is a key to success. Slightly different from before, in this instance, Steve uses the word "this" while pointing to his head. He uses the reference "this" to refer to his mind. Understanding this reference is challenging without context. In other words, the reference "this" is a type that requires context to understand what the speaker is referring to.

b) Substitution

Data `11

“God picks certain people **he'll make rich** and certain people **he don't.**”

The quote above is the first part of Steve Harvey's longer statement. If viewed in isolation, it might imply that God is unfair. However, when considered in the context of the entire statement, it becomes clear that Steve Harvey is actually trying to convince the audience that everyone gets the same opportunity. Substitution occurs in the second clause, where a word or phrase is replaced to avoid repetition. In this sentence, "he don't" is a substitution for "he'll make rich." Besides avoiding repetition, it also makes the sentence more concise and easier to understand.

c) Ellipsis

Data 12

“do not let Satan come **in here** and function and operate”

This data is the same as data 9. However, the focus here is on the ellipsis phenomena in the quote above. As previously mentioned, "here" refers to a thought, indicated by the speaker pointing to his head when saying "here." In the subsequent phrases, "here" is intentionally omitted. The phrases should be "function here" and "operate here." Despite the omission, listeners still understand what is being conveyed by referring back to the previous clause.

d) Conjunction

Data 13

“but you first have to think it the difference between successful people **and** non successful people is here”

In this context, the speaker tries to distinguish between two categories of individuals namely successful and unsuccessful. By employing the word "and" to link these two categories, the speaker utilizes it as a conjunction to connect two equivalent phrases. Both "successful people" and "non successful people" possess comparable attributes, indicating they are not part of a continuous event or similar construct.

Data 14

“...it will run to it **even though** it's very long”

The quote above comprises two unequal clauses, indicating a continuous contrast between them. These clauses appear interconnected, facilitated by the conjunction "even though." This conjunction serves to unify the clauses, such that removing either would result in an incomplete understanding of the described event. In

addition, the conjunction "even though" not only links the clauses but also underscores their complementary relationship, emphasizing the necessity of considering both for a comprehensive understanding.

Data 15

“the roblem is people stopped waiting on the package **then** when it get to you”

The word "then" in the sentence above serves as a conjunction linking two clauses. It connects the meaning of the first clause to the second, establishing a sequential event where the first clause precedes the second. Essentially, "then" connects sentences to form a cohesive narrative by indicating the chronological order of events. Thus, the conjunction "then" serves as a valuable tool in structuring and organizing narratives.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that the speaker employs a variety of cohesion devices throughout the speech. Notably, reference devices are the most frequently used, with personal references being particularly prominent. Interestingly, the speaker avoids using collective pronouns such as “we,” “our,” and “us,” opting instead to frequently repeat the pronoun “you.” Additionally, substitution and ellipsis are the least utilized cohesion devices, with only one instance of each. The study identified a verbal substitution and a nominal ellipsis. Overall, these findings indicate that Steve Harvey effectively employs various grammatical elements to create a cohesive speech.

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