

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Research on reference as one of cohesive devices has led to a discovery that reference is the most frequently cohesive device used among others (Abdurahman, 2013; Rahmawati, 2012; Maulani, 2011; Suwandi, 2003). The research carried by Abdurahman on the use of grammatical cohesive devices in the written context of the students' thesis writings showed that students utilized reference as the most frequently used cohesive devices with 82.25%. The study also revealed that most of the students are failed to use reference properly indicated by the inappropriate reference to refer in the plural form and vice versa. The study conducted by Rahmawati which worked to find out the cohesion used in newspaper also found that reference 236 or 55% as the most commonly used cohesive device in newspaper. The same result is also applied in the study done by Maulani as the study found that in the abstract of English department students' skripsi, there were 719 references equals to 68.67% of all cohesive devices. Besides finding the personal reference as the most commonly used, the relation in reference also studied by Suwandi as the study revealed that anaphoric reference in text is the most frequently used reference relation in reference. These four previous related studies show that how reference becomes the most frequently cohesive device used in the written context.

Reference has function to link meaningfully every word in discourse to show a text its whole unity and texture. Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined

reference as the relation between an element of the text and something else by reference to which it is interpreted in the given instance. Closely similar with the idea of Halliday, Eggins (2005) stated that referencing indicates how the writer introduces participants and keeps track of them throughout the text and has function to show who major participants in the text are.

Acknowledging the importance of reference in the written discourse, this study is intended to analyze how the references work in spoken discourse, particularly in academic context. Hence the spoken activity chosen for this study is presentation held in the academic area, which is presentation delivered by English department students in the State University of Jakarta. The presentations in academic area are various. The one then will be analyzed is semi-scripted speech. Semi-scripted speech is different from spontaneous speaking activity such as impromptu speech. Based on The Research Report (n.d), in semi-scripted speech taken place in academic context, the speech of speaker must be relevant to the written materials in the sense all information must be based on what the speaker has already written in the thesis. The semi-scripted speech selected is final thesis presentation and presentation from Academic Presentation class which the students are required to act like the researcher from the journal they found online or offline, and present to their friends in class.

As a compulsory requirement for those seeking undergraduate degree, thesis writing and thesis seminar are two important things for college students. After student write his thesis, he is required to have thesis seminar where he has to present the thesis in spoken context to examiner. On the one hand, the

presentation in Academic Presentation class – then will be known as academic presentation – is similar with thesis presentation, where students have to find a journal and present it like they are the researcher. This type of presentation also requires the participant to read, understand conceptually the journal, and present what is the result. These thesis presentation and academic presentation are indeed another form of academic spoken discourse, and thus, it needs appropriate cohesive devices in order the message well conveyed.

The importance of reference in academic spoken discourse has great deal. Reference has significant impact in assuring the clarity of idea and establishing the meaning. The use of reference should be considered carefully because if it is used inappropriately, it will distract the clarity of speech and distort the information, or as Halliday and Hasan (1976) said, the ambiguity will occur if the cohesive devices are used inappropriately. For instance, a male speaker misplaces the use of ‘them’ while he purposed to refer a third-singular person in a narrative. This kind of mistake will give impact to the audience who perceived the information. It may create unclear message or confusion on what the speaker wants to refer. Moreover, in academic context, all presentation is required to have chronological sequence of idea and clear message, hence, cohesive devices will be inevitably needed. Therefore, the use of reference as one of cohesive devices is surely important to be considered. In addition, from the writer’s initial observation in one of Academic Presentation classes, there are some students committed many referring mistakes, such as using “they” to refer singular

“student”. The kind of mistake is sure able to create ambiguity in the information given.

Besides the importance of reference in academic presentation, the use of reference can also be relevant aspect in the teaching process. It is because in teaching process, teacher has to explain and elaborate the material logically sequential to make one information with another connected. As a result of that, reference helps to link the sentences in order to avoid misunderstanding. For literature students who want to work in media or literature, reference does help in similar function to connect ideas and create connected meaning. Having these reasons, this study is intended to analyze the use of reference in the students' delivery performance in the academic presentation.

Considering the previous related researches, there are spaces uncovered yet. The three previous related studies only give the type of reference most occurred but no to the types of reference relation. That is the gap wants to be filled by this study on what the kinds of reference relation made by the participants and whether or not the reference already creates appropriate textures, in regard, this study also wants to examine whether or not the spoken discourse is similar with written context in using the types of reference. Hence, this study aims to make the reference to be the research area and this study will cover types of reference, types of reference relation, and the way of participants making the texture by using reference.

1.2 Research Questions

How is the reference used in academic spoken discourse?

- a) What the types of reference are used in academic spoken discourse?
- b) What the types of reference relation are used in academic spoken discourse?
- c) How do the participants use reference in academic spoken discourse related to the creation of texture?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

This study has purpose to find out the reference used in academic spoken discourse including types of reference, types of reference relation, and how participants use reference related to the creation of texture.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study covers reference as a part of cohesive devices in academic spoken discourse. Since it is an important aspect on how a speaker link word to word in the topic presented, reference is indeed a big area to be analyzed. Therefore, the limitation happened due to the other cohesive devices are too broad to be covered.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study may contribute theoretically to the research area of reference as cohesive device in spoken discourse and also give insight and awareness about the reference used in academic spoken discourse to the writer.