



## Transition Signal Analysis in Undergraduate Theses: An Overview

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### Abstract

Transition signals is one of the main important things in composing a coherent paragraph; in fact, many students still feel struggle to apply them in their academic writing. Therefore, this research is conducted in order to provide a comprehensive overview of how current students use transition signals in their undergraduate thesis. This research is conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. The data are obtained from nine findings and discussion chapters on undergraduate thesis of English department students. The data are classified based on the types of transition signals by Oshima and Hogue (2006). The result revealed that all types of transition signals are existed in undergraduate thesis, those are transition signals for chronological order, order of importance, additional idea, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, giving example, and conclusion. The type of transition signals that most frequently used is transition signals for addition whereas the type of transition as the least used is transition signals for order of importance. Also, the type of transition signals that most incorrectly used is transition signals for chronological order

### Keywords

Transition signals, finding and discussion, undergraduate thesis

### Abstrak

*Kata hubung merupakan salah satu hal penting utama dalam menyusun paragraf yang koheren; Faktanya, banyak mahasiswa yang masih merasa kesulitan untuk menerapkannya dalam karya tulis ilmiah mereka. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini dilakukan guna memberikan gambaran komprehensif tentang bagaimana mahasiswa saat ini menggunakan kata hubung dalam skripsi mereka. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data diperoleh dari sembilan bab temuan dan pembahasan skripsi mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Data yang ditemukan kemudian diklasifikasikan berdasarkan jenis kata hubung menurut Oshima dan Hogue (2006). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua jenis kata hubung dapat ditemukan pada skripsi mahasiswa, seperti urutan kronologis, urutan kepentingan, gagasan tambahan, sebab akibat, membandingkan dan mengontraskan, memberikan contoh, dan memberikan kesimpulan. Jenis kata hubung yang paling sering digunakan adalah kata hubung untuk memberikan tambahan, sedangkan jenis kata hubung yang paling sedikit digunakan adalah kata hubung untuk urutan kepentingan. Selain itu, jenis kata hubung urutan kronologis adalah yang seringkali keliru digunakan.*

### Kata Kunci

*Kata hubung, hasil dan bahasan, tesis sarjana*



## Introduction

Over the last decade, the acquisition of writing skills has proven to be the most challenging activity among for those studying English as a foreign language (Richard&Renandya,2002). This difficulty arises because there are various interconnected actions involved in producing written text, where the writing process consists of processes involving the creation, organization, and elaboration of ideas and arguments academically in sentences. For this reason, students construct their arguments, reasons and pieces of evidence toward certain issues into one type of academic writing, which is recognized as an undergraduate thesis.

Hence, the mastery of writing abilities holds significant importance since students, particularly in universities, are expected to proficiently and accurately compose a thesis as a prerequisite for graduation upon completion of their studies. Therefore, writing skills are very important to master because, at the end of the study, students are required to be able to write a thesis well and correctly as a condition for graduating. The important thing for students to pay attention to is to focus their attention not only on organizing their ideas but also on improving sentence construction and recognizing the main points of focus. Like the statement made by Jones (2007), who said that one aspect of writing that should be paid attention to is the integration of one paragraph with other paragraphs. In order to enhance the quality of writing and facilitate comprehension, it is important to provide concept of coherence by establishing natural relationships between phrases, ideas, and facts.

Furthermore, to ensure coherence in writing, it is important to use transition signals accurately while composing written expressions. According to Oshima and Hogue (2006), transition signals serve the purpose of establishing connections between sentences or paragraphs, hence ensuring a smooth flow of ideas without any sudden shifts or disruptions. Transition signals connect words or phrases and strengthen the internal cohesion and coherence in a writing. They show the relationships between the parts of a sentence, between the sentences in a paragraph, or between the paragraphs in a longer piece of writing

Even though transition signals have a big role in producing good writing, there exists a certain percentage of students who face difficulties in using transition signal. A study regarding transition signals was also reported by Sari (2018) in her research *The Use of Transitional Signals in Writing Essay at The Fifth Semester Students of English Department*, found that certain transition signals were still used incorrectly by some students, where the use of transition signals did not follow their function and classification. This phenomenon poses a challenge for readers in understanding and comprehensively grasping the intended meaning of the written ideas, sentences or paragraphs.

Mahendra and Dewi (2017) also found that the majority of students used typical transition signals in academic writing. This could happen because of their unfamiliarity with all types of transition signals. Consequently, English learners should enrich their knowledge regarding the types of transition signals and their functions in sentences, since by doing so, they can construct coherent paragraphs.

For those explanation above, students become unaware of the relevance of transition signals in undergraduate theses. Students' lack of transition signal knowledge drives it. Although transition signals are crucial to proper writing, they are useless if the writerr cannot



choose an appropriate one to help readers identify the writer's thoughts and guide them to the writer's target. Based on this consideration, this research intends to provide an overview about how students use transition signals on their finding and discussion part in the undergraduate thesis entitled “An Analysis of Transition Signals on Students’ Undergraduate Thesis”.

### Method

This research employs the qualitative descriptive method in this study, as it provides a suitable approach to address the research topic about transition signals in undergraduate theses by students. This method places emphasis on the collection of data and afterwards describes it through the process of interpretive analysis. The purpose of this research is the researcher wants to see the transition signals in the students’ undergraduate theses because of the importance of using transition signal in academic writing. Transition signals can not only be seen word for word but must also be seen in paragraphs.

The data was taken from undergraduate theses authored by students from the English Department, which are kept in the Library of the Faculty of Letters and Culture. The undergraduate theses become a primary data source is because of the prerequisite completion of many writing subjects and seminar proposals by students before composing the undergraduate theses. Students had acquired knowledge regarding the principles of composing effective research papers through studying academic writing. Moreover, the data is analyzed and categorized according to the ideas outlined by Oshima and Hogue.

Table 1  
 The List of Transition Signal by Oshima and Hogue (2006)

Meaning/ Function	Transition Signals	Coordinating Conjunctions	Subordinating Conjunctions	Others
To introduce chronological order	First		Before	The first
	First of all		After	(reason, cause, step, etc.)
	Second		Until	The second
	Third		When	The third
	Next		While	Another
	Then		As soon as	The last
	After that		Since	The final
	Meanwhile			
	In the meantime			
	Finally			
	Last			
To introduce the order of importance	Last of all			
	Subsequently			
	First			The first
	First of all			An additional
	First and foremost			The second
	Second			Another
	More important			A more important
Most important			The most important	
More				

	significantly		The most significant
	Most		
To introduce	First	Before	The first
chronological	First of all	After	(reason, cause,
order	Second	Until	step, etc.)
	Third	When	The second
	Next	While	The third
	Then	As soon as	Another
	After that	Since	The last
	Meanwhile		The final
	In the meantime		
	Finally		
	Last		
	Last of all		
	Subsequently		
To introduce the	First		The first
order of	First of all		An additional
importance	First and		The second
	foremost		Another
	Second		A more
	More important		important
	Most important		The most
	More		important
	significantly		The most
	Most		significant
To	All in		
introduce the	all		
conclusion	In		
	brief		
	In		
	short		
	To conclude		
	To summarize		
	In conclusion		
	In summary		
	For these		
	reasons		

In addition, English department students have the option of linguistics, literature, or English language teaching for their undergraduate theses. For undergraduate theses analysis, the researcher chose three from each subfield, totalling nine. Data balance was achieved by allocating data from each field equally. The researcher exclusively focuses on the findings and discussion section of each of the 9 undergraduate theses because it contains all the researcher's arguments and describes their findings in detail. The analysis revealed 469 paragraphs in 9 chapters, 611 of which had transition signals. When the researcher repeatedly used transition signals, 163 signals were created within the paragraph. After analyzing 163 paragraphs, the researcher selected 59 for the investigation as representative data. This study analyzed 59 paragraphs containing transition signals using interpretative analysis. Beside that, the author



use Sugiyono (2008) to analyze the data by using three-step approach guided, they are data reduction, data display, and conclusion

## Result and Discussion

An analysis of English Department students' theses at the Faculty of Letters and Culture Library is presented here. Data was obtained from nine theses, focused on chapter four (findings and discussion). The data was classified using Oshima and Hogue (2006) transition signal's classification. focused on chronological order, order of important, additional idea, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, giving example, and conclusion. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English determines the function of each transitional signal, helping identify correct and incorrect usage.

## Result

The results revealed that there were 163 transition signals, which produced all types of transition signals, based on Oshiman and Hogue (2006). However, only 59 data findings were able to explain more deeply the representation of each type of transition signal.

Table 2  
Research Result

Types of Transition Signals	Correct	Incorrect	Total
Chronological Order	20	12	32
Order of Importance	1	-	1
Additional Idea	26	5	31
Cause and Effect	37	-	37
Comparison and Contrast	41	4	45
Giving Example	13	-	13
Conclusion	4	-	4

In this table, comparison and contrast are the most correctly employed transition signals in student theses. Where transition signal kinds are: *likewise, similarly, also, as well as, to be similar, and, both ... and, not only ... but also, and neither ... nor*. While, the transition signals that are classified in contrast are; *however, in contrast, instead of, on the contrary, on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, although, even though, and while*. Otherwise, some of students still incorrectly using this transition signal such as *likewise, on the other hand, and though*. he order of importance of transition signals is interesting. They are consist of *more important, most significantly, above all, most of all, the most important, the second most significant, and the primary*, and only one, namely the more important data contained in student thesis data, and the type of transition signal. Other important sequences were not found. In addition, the data found that the error in using transition signals was in the chronological order transition signal type.

In the findings, it is stated that the transition signal in chronological order is the most prominent data in the student theses. This type of signal transition appears in many student theses. In both the correct and erroneous of transition signals. The right transition signal used is *before, after, last, last of all, first, second, next, finally*. While the transition signals *then, while, first, second, and meanwhile* are incorrect for students to use. In the transition signal for the order of importance, it was found that the data that uses the order of importance is only one



data produced in the student's undergraduate theses, namely "More Important". Thus, this data is found at least in the student undergraduate thesis. The transition signal more important was applied appropriately in this paragraph. Furthermore, in the transition signal for additional ideas, students have a lot of different answers for the change signal for more ideas when they use this type. Some students do use transition signs correctly in their scholar thesis, while others do not do so in the right way. The correct transitions are *furthermore*, *and*, *besides*, *also*, *moreover*, *in addition*, and *another*. While the incorrect transitions are *moreover*, *in addition*, and *and*. In the other words, in using these additional idea transition signals, it was observed that certain transition signals indicated a lack of coherence with their intended function. First, this paragraph explains the analyzing steps. Thus, each step should begin with a chronologically ordered transition signal like first, second, third, etc., but the addition transition signal is utilized continuously, which is incorrect. Second, a sentence shouldn't use many transition signals because it's inappropriate. Thus, one transition connected to the previous and next sentences is best. Based on all data findings, transition signals for additional ideas were used by students in their undergraduate theses 32. Additionally, there are several unused transition signals, *both too...and*, *additionally*, and *final*. The third type of transition signal is cause and effect. In this part, the researcher collected eleven data from nine theses in the finding and discussion section that contained transition signal, and found that not a single student used transitions incorrectly. *Because*, *thus*, *consequently*, *as the consequence*, *as the result*, *hence*, *for this reason*, *accordingly*, *therefore*, *so*, and *due to* are the data that were analyzed. Next transition signal is comparison and contrast. The correct transition signal for comparison and contrast that students used in their theses are *in contrast*, *similarly*, *not only...but also*, *nonetheless*, *even though*, *likewise*, *alike*, *despite*, *in spite of*, *on the other hand*, *instead of*, *however*, *nevertheless*, *although*, and *but*. Otherwise, some of students still incorrectly using this transition signal such as *likewise*, *on the other hand*, and *and though*.

The analyzed data of transition signal for giving example found no one of students use this transition signal *for example*, *such as*, and *for instance* incorrectly. The last is transition signal for conclusion. There are four of the data findings that contained correct transition because there is no one students used transition incorrectly. The analyzed data were in conclusion, in summary, to sum up, and all in all.

## Discussion

In this research, it was found that students use all transition signal types in writing their undergraduate theses. However, there are some transitions that students hardly ever use, even though they are the most frequently used and repeated ones. Transition signals in undergraduate theses will be discussed in this step. Based on Oshima and Hogue (2006), the researcher found all types of transition signals: chronological order, order of importance, additional idea, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, examples, and conclusion. First, Transition signals for chronological order is the most used, Even though this kind of transition signal has the most mistakes.

The second is about transition signals was found as the less used. That is order of importance. this type was rarely used by students because they are not familiar with its use. From the whole undergraduate thesis that had been collected, only one transition signals for



order of important that used by students, that is more important. Another types that categorized in less used is transition signals for conclusion. This thing looks really weird because transition signals for conclusion are the common transition in academic writing. The cause lies in the students who prefer use finally and last of all as a conclusion marker for their writing whereas these type are function more price to explain the last step of a process of something or a procedure in doing something.

The third is using transition signs in incorrectly. The findings showed that transition signals were used incorrectly to figure out the chronological order. The most common transitions used wrongly in this type are *then, while, and meanwhile*. These phenomena happened due to a lack of comprehension among students regarding the purpose and usage of certain transition signals categorized within this particular kind. These phenomena happened because students do not understand the function of some transition signals classified in this type. They focus only to collect information and put them as the content of their writing, while, that information cannot be organized well if they use the inappropriate transition signals to link the ideas with another one.

### Conclusion

In the context of academic writing is important for students to utilize transition signals in order to enhance the coherence of paragraphs and facilitate comprehension for readers. In academic writing, students need to use transition signals to make paragraphs more fluid and help readers understand them more easily. Incorrect use of transition signals makes readers confused about understanding the reading. So it is very important to understand the types of transition signals and the ability to use them appropriately.

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