

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introduction of the research that covers the background of the study, statement of problems, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of related terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing in academic setting like university is often regarded as a challenging task. This is because academic writing has different purposes and different characteristics from any writing like journalistic and creative writing. Bruce (2008, p. 1) states that general purpose of academic writing is “to develop the ability to integrate a wide range of different types of knowledge”. Specifically, academic writing aims to persuade readers to believe in what they write (Richards, 2008). Those purposes are related to writing for others. Murray (2005) emphasizes on the importance of writing for others through journal articles. Journal article, as a form of academic writing, is often viewed as a rapid medium of integrating information since it is commonly accessed freely via university library (Thyer, 2008). This view often motivates academicians, especially lecturers, to publish their journal articles. Lecturers mostly publish journal articles for disseminating the results of research to other scholars (Thyer, 2008). In addition, lecturers also have other purposes in publishing journal articles such as developing career progression and building university’s status (Murray, 2005). By publishing journal articles, lecturers may get acknowledgement or having promotion to develop their careers. Meanwhile, lecturers can help to build university’s status by producing and publishing journal articles in national or international journals in order to increase the university ranking.

Academic writing, in this case journal articles, is viewed as a difficult challenge for academicians since it has several characteristics in order to create good academic works. The characteristics are formality, detachment, tentativeness, objectivity, rigor, and clarity (Monippally & Pawar, 2010). Those characteristics are

sometimes ignored by some academicians. The ignorance is caused by the lack of education on the characteristics of academic writing that is sustained by some academicians (Murray, 2005).

In academic writing, there are also several problems. Dunleavy (2003) describes some problems in academic writing such as the problem in constructing the sentence structure and the use of citation and reference style. Oshima and Hogue (2007) illustrate that the common sentence problems are sentence fragments, parallelism, and run-on sentences. The problems of citation and reference style occur when making citations and references (e.g. spelling inconsistencies, citing multiple authors, incorrect formatting, capitalization, etc.) (Onwuegbuzie, Combs, Slate, & Frels, 2010). Moreover, sentence structure problems can be assumed as unsuccessful attempts to present ideas or contents through sentences. Meanwhile, the problems in citation and reference style can be assumed as writers' problem in acknowledging other works.

Several researchers have conducted some studies related to problems in academic writing. Demirezen (2012) conducted a study regarding sentence structure to identify problem of simple sentences made by students of Turkish University. The results of the research showed that the students had difficulty in using simple sentences with extended element (6th type of simple sentences). This problem was caused by the position of phrasal modifiers (at the beginning of sentence, mid-sentence, and at the end of simple sentence) that was often neglected by the students. Similarly, Jalal (2012) did an analysis of academic writing problems in students' research papers related to sentence problems. The results of his study showed that the problems were such as coherence, sentence structure and sentence logic. Regarding the problem of citation and reference style, Suwarjo et al. (2012) analyzed the use of citations and references on students' research papers of Education Faculty. The results of their analysis showed that some mistakes were found such as quoting sources without citations in the body of research and without references in the reference lists.

All of those previous studies above took students as the subject of the study. However, this present study is different from those previous studies since it attempts to take lecturers' works as the object of the research while the previous studies took students' works as the object of research. The journal articles are from the same university, a university in Bandung, West Java, which focuses on the Faculty of Mathematics and the Faculty of Engineering. This study aims to evaluate the quality of sentence structures and the quality of citations and references in journal articles made by lecturers from science and engineering discipline. Furthermore, this present study aims to reveal the tendency of the way lecturers make sentence structures, citations, and references their journal articles. To conduct this study regarding sentence structure, it is framed within theories proposed by Alwi Dardjowidjojo, Lapoliwa and Moeliono (2003) and Oshima and Hogue (2007). In addition, rules from APA style are also used to evaluate the quality of citations and references.

1.2 Statement of Problems

The problems of the present study are arranged into three questions as follows:

1. What types of sentences are used in the journal articles written by the lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties?
2. How is the quality of sentence logic in the journal articles written by lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties?
3. How is the quality of citations and references in the journal articles written by lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the research questions, this study aims to:

1. To identify the sentence types in the journal articles written by lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties.
2. To evaluate the quality of the sentence logic in the journal articles written by lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties.
3. To evaluate the quality of citations and references in the journal articles written by lecturers of Mathematics and Science and Engineering Faculties.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This present study is limited only to evaluate sentence structures, citations and references of journal articles made by lecturers of one university in Bandung, West Java. The journal articles have to be written in *Bahasa Indonesia* or Indonesian Language. It focuses on journal articles of the Faculty of Mathematics and Science and the Faculty of Engineering.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Findings of this study are expected not only to provide theoretical benefits but also practical benefits. Regarding theoretical benefits, the findings of this study are expected to give a contribution related to the new mistake patterns of journal articles that have not been found yet. For practical benefits, the findings of this study are expected to increase the awareness of using proper sentence structures, citations, and references and enforce the academic honesty.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid any misconception and misunderstanding, there are some terms that have to be clarified as follows:

1. Academic writing

Academic writing is a set of conventions that appears in a thesis or a published paper in certain disciplines (Murray, 2005).

2. Journal articles

A journal article is a form of scientific writing that has target readers with relatively similar discipline background (Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2005).

3. Sentence Structures

Sentence structure refers to the physical nature of a sentence and how the elements of that sentence are presented. It is similar to word choice, authors should attempt to vary their sentence structures such as variation of subjects, lengths, or types to create rhythmic prose and to keep their audiences interested (Walden University Writing Center, 2011). The basic pattern of Indonesia Language sentence is S + P + (O) + (Pel) + (Ket) or the same as S +

V + (O) + (C) + (A) but the last three elements are optional (Alwi et al., 2003).

4. References

A reference is an acknowledgement of the work of previous scholars and a reliable way to locate it. References are used to state opinions in some literatures, as data in the manuscript to support interpretations and conclusions (American Psychological Association, 2010).

5. Citations

A citation is defined as the partial reference in the main body of the assignment (Neville, 2010).

6. Case Studies

A case study is one of specific qualitative inquiry approaches in which a researcher explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. A case is bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake in Creswell, 2009).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This study is organized into five chapters with the following structure:

1. CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter is introduction of the research that covers the background of the study, statement of problems, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

2. CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents some relevant theories and reviews some issues related to several main concepts of the study, namely academic writing, sentence types, sentences, citations, and references.

3. CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research method that is employed in this study. It includes explanation of the research design, the data collection and the data analysis.

4. CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents findings and discussion of this research in describing and analyzing the results to answer research questions.

5. CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter shows conclusions drawn from the research findings. In addition, suggestions for future studies also are included in this chapter