

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter displays and discusses data gathered. Those data are displayed and discussed in order based on the research questions of the present study. Then, based on those data, conclusion is drawn and some recommendations related to the results of this study are presented.

5. 1. Conclusions

Referring to the results of this study, three points are concluded in accordance with the research questions. First, the sixth semester students in the institution, where this study takes place, need to learn how to write a research paper since they have to prepare themselves to deal with their last requirement, namely writing a thesis, in order to complete their studies. Then, in terms of competencies required in writing a research paper, it is found that the students need to learn not only discourse competence, but also critical thinking and linguistic competencies required in academic writing.

Second, in terms of the syllabus, it is found that it does not exist. However, even though the lecturers do not have the syllabus, at the beginning of the course, both the students and the lecturers negotiated what topics would be discussed during the course. Therefore, as the result of the negotiation, the students are satisfied with the course since they feel that the course has accommodated their needs in terms of academic writing, particularly how to write a research paper.

Third, regarding the model of syllabus design, backward approach is implemented. The process begins from determining the expected learning outcomes followed by the content and the learning techniques. Furthermore, in terms of types of syllabus, the combination between skill-based and task-based syllabi is chosen since it is expected to be able to improve the students' academic writing skill through a series of tasks which are provided to give opportunity to the students to perform their skill.

Related to the elements of the syllabus, the learning goal stated in the syllabus model is preparing the students to write a research paper since the results of this study show that research paper is the most important academic writing type. Some aspects of discourse, critical thinking, and linguistic competencies required in writing a research paper are emphasized in some sessions. Those emphasized aspects are the points which are important to be learnt by the students since they need to improve their skills on those points.

Forth, dealing with learning concept implemented in the syllabus designed, blended learning which combines online and face-to-face sessions is chosen to be implemented due to the limited time for each face-to-face sessions. In this case, online sessions are expected to give opportunity to the students to keep learning outside the classroom. The combination between the face-to-face sessions and online session is expected to maximize the students' learning inside and outside the classroom.

5. 2. Recommendations

Looking at the results of the present study, several recommendations are proposed. First, it is recommended to provide a syllabus before the course is begun regardless of whether a discussion takes place at the start of the semester to negotiate learning materials, learning objectives, assignments, and assessment. Thus, it is clear for both the students and the lecturers what the goal of the course is, what topics discussed, what activities involved, what assignments the students are being to do, and how the students' competences are assessed.

Second, it is also recommended to offer an academic writing course as a compulsory course. Thus, all students can get into the course since it is an important course regarding their preparation to deal with their thesis writing. Third, regarding the number of students in each class for the academic writing courses, it is recommended to have small number of the students (no more than 20 students) in order to maximize the learning process. This might enable the lecturers to effectively monitor the academic writing progress of each students in the classroom. However, it is inevitable that it needs more lecturers.

Fourth, it is recommended for the lecturers of academic writing courses at the institution where this study takes place to consider using the syllabus model produced in this study since it is designed based on their students' needs. Other institutions which have similar condition may also utilize the syllabus model. Fifth, related to the implementation of the syllabus model, other researchers may examine the effectiveness of it in accommodating the students' needs. Finally, in terms of the procedure of conducting needs analysis, it is suggested to investigate not only what aspects the students need to learn, but also what aspects are important for the students to learn because all aspects can be needed by the students, but not all of them are important for the students at the moment. As a consequence, it will be easier for the syllabus designer to determine what aspects have to be involved in the syllabus.