# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction to the study. It covers background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the research.

## 1.1 Background

In this era of digital revolution, internet technology has given an immense contribution to communication and information sharing. We can use the internet to communicate with people around the world because it is now possible to send a message to any part of the world through a simple e-mail address and the message will be delivered in a short amount of time. Chat rooms, video conferencing and other messenger services are some of the latest additions of technology that allow people to converse in real time. With the help of such services, it has become very easy to communicate, establish relationship and share information. Indeed, there is no doubt that the internet has made communication become easier and more convenient.

Information is another big advantage that the Internet offers. Internet treasures a huge amount of information on any topic. There is a wide range of information available on the internet from general knowledge to celebrity's latest news; everything is available at our fingertips. There are numerous search engine services that lead to many articles, websites and other sources of different subjects in a matter of seconds. People can even share any information that we have on forums or sites that allow people to discuss and share thoughts and information. With the internet, people can easily increase their knowledge and save their time to search information.

The internet has also given a great increase in website development. Initially, many considered websites a luxury. But today, websites have become essential. Millions of websites in various domains such as education, business, government, and entertainment come up every day. Websites have become a choice for any industry to define their digital presence and to target their audience, specifically the major population on the internet. That is why websites have become dear to the hearts of people; they can just click the site they are interested in to get what they want.

In academic industry, specifically in higher education, college and university websites are a major source of information and the largest communication tool between the university and internal or external audiences. University website can be a main digital gate of information

that people can easily engage with. People can get various information from the website, such as the campus history, campus' programs, achievements, admission information, etc. Abrahamson (2000) reports that the web is the second most important source after campus visits as a source for researching colleges. Therefore, college and university websites play a significant role in promoting an institution's identity and providing information for prospective students as well as current students.

The content of the website must be valuable and usable due to its function as a promoting instrument. Websites remain a powerful interactive medium and the content must be informative, clear, and compelling. In addition, the content of the website also has to be linked together accurately to ease the readers to navigate in whichever way they choose (Shaw, 2012). As an interactive medium, a website has to clearly inform, guide, and sell something to the audience. Hence, the use of a right copy elements must be considered.

In order to clearly communicate the messages, a website should be constructed properly. The appropriate construction of the layout is required. The appropriate placement and the way of placing information can be very impactful in communicating the information that the websites offer.

Many researchers have conducted analyses in university website to investigate the content strategy and the web usability. Elsayed (2016), for instance, has conducted research to investigate the current state of the web content of the website of Abdulaziz University (KAU) and propose a web content strategy to be applied. The findings show that KAU website content has been sorely neglected by the web coordinators. In addition, to improve this, she suggests the university to focus on the way it creates, delivers and governs its web content. Another research has been conducted by Rahman and Ahmed (2013) reviewing the definitions of website usability from the 1990s to the present day and several approaches that have been used for the evaluation of university websites. Their research shows that five factors are considered important for achieving usability: interactivity and functionality; navigation, searching and Interface attractiveness; accuracy, currency and authority of information; accessibility, understandability, learnability and operability; efficiency and reliability.

This recent study aims to see and examine the composition of the website of the top 10 universities in Indonesia taken from the data of Hundred Best Universities in Indonesia 2017 released by Kementrian Riset Teknologi dan Pendidikan Tinggi Indonesia (Kemenristekdikti) or Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education. The absence of any research related to home pages composition is considered empty space that the researcher can

fill. The research is expected to contribute to the development of university website's usages and also to gain a new perspective of composition.

## 1.2 Purpose of Research

The objectives of analysing website homepages can be elaborated as follows:

1. To investigate the composition of the university home pages
2. To identify the copy elements in the ten best Indonesian universities' websites

## 1.3 Research Questions

In conducting this study, these following questions are used as a guideline:

1. How is the meaning of composition realized in the ten best public and private university website homepages in Indonesia?
2. How are the copy elements identified in the homepages?

## 1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the website homepages of the top ten public and private universities in Indonesia. This study is carried out to analyse the homepages structure and evaluate them according to the composition theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and the copy elements by Maslen (2009). Thus, this study will only attempt to reveal how the university websites translate the meaning of composition and the copy elements components. To reach the aims of the study, Multimodal Analysis will be used as a framework.

## 1.5. Significance of the Study

The study constitutes useful foundation to investigate how the components of copywriting and the composition of the homepage work to the main function of a university website.

This study is significant for the development of website usage, particularly in higher education. Students rely on information from college websites in evaluating the institution (Tucciarone, 2007) and the highly competitive nature of college websites suggests a need to study and address the needs and preferences of both current and prospective web users (Kiang Ng, 2003).

This study is relevant because of the limited academic research done in this area. Even though there are many research that have been conducted regarding university websites, there

has been rarely of those connecting to multimodality particularly to composition. This topic is relevant to be discussed to give an important effect of the university website.

## 1.6. Research Methodology

### 1.6.1 Research Design

In this study, a descriptive qualitative method will be used to reach the objectives of the research. The main characteristic of qualitative research is that it is mostly appropriate for small samples, while its outcomes are not measurable and quantifiable. Qualitative research offers a complete description and analysis of a research subject, without limiting the scope of the research and the nature of participant's responses (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Sandelowski (2000) stated that descriptive qualitative method is a chosen way while straight explanations of phenomena are needed. While Bryman (2004) stated that descriptive qualitative analysis is an approach used by researcher to assert meanings in and of texts. From the two statements, it can be defined that this method is mostly about descriptions and interpretations. Thus, this research design is suitable for the purpose of this study because this study focuses on the compositional meaning in the data.

### 1.6.2 Data Collection

The data are in a form of screenshot taken from top ten universities homepages that derives from Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education. Furthermore, the analysis is only conducted to the top ten public universities and private universities. Finally, the data lie on screenshot of each homepage of the domain of university website at the same date (March 1, 2018). They were:

| Rank | Public University | Domain |
|:---:|:---|:---:|
| 1 | Universitas Gadjah Mada | ugm.ac.id |
| 2 | Institut Teknologi Bandung | itb.ac.id |
| 3 | Institut Pertanian Bogor | ipb.ac.id |
| 4 | Universitas Indonesia | ui.ac.id |
| 5 | Institut Teknologi Sepuluh November | its.ac.id |
| 6 | Universitas Diponegoro | undip.ac.id |
| 7 | Universitas Airlangga | unair.ac.id |
| 8 | Universitas Brawijaya | ub.ac.id |
| 9 | Universitas Hasanuddin | unhas.ac.id |
| 10 | Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta | uny.ac.id |

| Rank | Private University | Domain |
|:---:|:---|:---|
| 1 | Universitas Kristen Petra | petra.ac.id |
| 2 | Universitas Surabaya | ubaya.ac.id |
| 3 | Universitasa Sanata Dharma | usd.ac.id |
| 4 | Universitas Katolik Parahyangan | unpar.ac.id |
| 5 | Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana | uksw.edu |
| 6 | Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang | umm.ac.id |
| 7 | Universitas Islam Indonesia | uii.ac.id |
| 8 | Universitas Merdeka Malang | unmer.ac.id |
| 9 | Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta | uajy.ac.id |
| 10 | BINUS University | binus.ac.id |

The data above derived from the list of best hundred universities in Indonesia 2017 released by Kemenristekdikti (Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education) in August 22th 2017. The list is an official data that can be used as the valid information.

### 1.6.3 Data Analysis

After the data are collected, they further analysed in two main steps: (1) Analysing the composition, (2) Analysing the copy elements. Kress and van Leeuwen's compositional meaning is used for analysing the composition in the website home pages. Meanwhile, copywriting elements of the data are analysed using copywriting theory proposes by Maslen and Shaw. Furthermore, the detailed process of collecting and elaborating the data are given in chapter 3. Beside the dominant compositions of a homepage and the copy elements pattern, the findings of this study will display some simple descriptive statistics in a form of percentage and graphic.

### 1.7. Clarification of Terms

- Multimodal

    Multimodal texts are any texts whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic modes such as verbal, visual, aural, etc. to make meaning and to communicate messages (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 177)

- Composition

    Composition refers to the representational and interactive meanings of the image to each other through three interrelated systems (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The first is Information Value that deals with the placement of elements that supplies them

with specific informational values attached to the areas of images. Then salience that refers to some different degrees that is created by some factors like size, placement, color contrasts, etc. The last system is framing that has to do with the elements like dividing lines or framing lines that connect or disconnect elements of the image that further signify them to the same or different sense. Those three principles apply to a combination of text and image on a page or even a digital screen including websites. It is not only applied to pictures but also apply to layouts.

- Copywriting

  Copywriting is the creative process of writing text for advertisements or publicity material (Bowdery, 2008). The product of copywriting is called copy. It is a written content aims to increase brand awareness and persuade people to take a particular action.

- Home page

  Home page is the main page of a website a visitor will see that a web search engine navigated. It may also serve a landing page to attract visitors. A homepage is used to facilitate navigation to other pages on the site by providing links to prioritized and recent articles and pages, and possibly a search box.

## 1.8. Organization of the Study

This paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter (Introduction) focuses on presenting general introduction of presented study. It consists of the background, research questions, purposes of the study, scope of the study and significance of the study. Furthermore, it also provides how the study is conducted, the list of key terms and organization of the paper.

The second chapter elaborates the theoretical foundation that provides a basis for conducting the research questions. This chapter covers the theories that are applied in answering research questions. Moreover, some previous studies that are related to the study are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter III presents Research Methodology. It explains how the study is conducted. It describes the focus of the study realized by the formulation of problem. In addition, it

presents the explanation of research design in detail, data collection and analysis employed in this study.

Findings and Discussion is provided in chapter IV. It presents the data obtained from the study as well as the analysis of the data.

The last chapter covers the conclusions from the study and offers suggestions for University Websites and further study.