



AN ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC WRITING ACQUISITION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INDONESIAN CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Academic writing is arguably the most important skill in academic contexts and also the most difficult skill for most students to master. Consequently, extra learning efforts are necessary to be carried out by the students to ensure that their acquisition up to the present academic requirement. This study was conducted to find out the acquisition of students' academic writing skills. Study was conducted in Indonesian classes consisting of 30 students as the sample of the study which were selected by random sampling technique. Valid and reliable research instruments in the form of essay test was administered to the sample to collect the required data. This study found that university students of Indonesian classes have sufficient acquisition in academic writing. Therefore, this study implies that academic writing of the students should continually be improved to ensure that the students have higher acquisition in academic writing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are important for every human being as the basic capital to achieve success in life. The writing skills of someone need to be improved continually. This is due to the fact that writing skills belong to a process of growth required a lot of practice and writing itself is an activity of a process. Writing is not only related to the use of grammar and punctuation but is a process that can develop the ability to think dynamically (Mantra et al., 2020). Writing is not just handwriting or writing techniques, but writing can mean telling what is already known and more than that writing can help understand what is already known (Abedianpour & Omidvari, 2018).

Writing skill is recognized as the most difficult skill among the four language skills that every student must have. The four skills include listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills (Karim, 2018). Writing is a productive skill by using writing. Writing can be said to be the most complicated language skill among other types of language skills. This is because writing is not just copying words and sentences, but also developing and expressing thoughts in an orderly writing structure.

Writing skills can increase self-confidence and help foster creativity. However, in reality students' language skills are not as expected. It is known that there are still many students' mistakes in language, especially in terms of writing essays. These errors can be seen in the use of spelling, diction, effective sentences, and paragraph development (Mantra et al., 2021). On the other hand, the low value of composing is influenced by various factors, such as students, educators, learning media, teaching methods and learning approaches, which are chosen by the language educators.

Writing is expressing something by using written language. Saying something is meant to convey, proclaim, tell, describe, explain, convince, explain, and so on to the reader in order to understand what happened in an event or activity (Widiastuti, 2018). Furthermore, it is said that in communication there are four elements, namely writing is (1) a form of self-expression; (2) something that is generally conveyed to the reader; (3) rules and behaviour; and (4)

writing is a way of learning. As a form of self-expression, writing aims to communicate, convey an idea across time and space. That is, writing can be done anytime, and anywhere according to the circumstances contained in the author (Widiastuti et al., 2021).

Writing is a complex discovery process and allows one to learn to manage time. Writing is a reflection in a person who grows through a process. Someone who can write well, of course, has gone through various continuous exercises. With continuous practice coupled with a person's passion for writing will have implications for the results of his writing (Mantra et al., 2020). Writing is writing graphic symbols that describe a language that is understood by someone so that other people can read the graphic symbols if they understand the language and graphics. Writing is a complex ability that requires a number of knowledge and skills (Saddler et al., 2018).

Writing activities require a careful and integrated ability in organizing writing (Sun & Feng, 2009). Furthermore, creative understanding means having inventiveness and creative ability. In order to create a creative generation in the sense of being able to produce something for the benefit of themselves and others, educators need to create diverse learning activities so that they meet various levels of student abilities. Moreover, students should really active in enhancing their writing skills (Cahyani et al., 2018).

The learning carried out has not optimized students to be active in writing and often do writing activities. This means how writing activities become a culture for students. However, learning still prioritizes mastery of theoretical writing rules. Learning to write which emphasizes more on this theory causes students to be bored and not interested in writing (Toba et al., 2019). In addition, writing activities do not emphasize the real thing, namely training students to express or express ideas creatively through writing.

Writing activities are more emphasized whether or not students' writing is neat. In addition, the topics that students will write about are not based on what students experience but are limited by the topics or themes given by the educators. This results in students having difficulty expressing their ideas or being less challenged with the given topic. Writing is communication (Widiastuti et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is said that in communication there are four elements, namely writing is (1) a form of self-expression; (2) something that is generally conveyed to the reader; (3) rules and behaviour; and (4) writing is a way of learning. As a form of self-expression, writing aims to communicate, convey an idea across time and space. That is, writing can be done anytime, and anywhere according to the circumstances contained in the author.

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Writing activities require a careful and integrated ability in organizing writing. Next is creative understanding. In order to create a creative generation in the sense of being able to produce something for the benefit of themselves and others, language educators need to create diverse learning activities so that they meet various levels of student abilities (Adas & Bakir, 2013). Improving creative writing skills is relatively growing within a person and is the most profound and unique experience for a person. To generate this creative power, a conducive atmosphere is needed that describes the possibility of the growth of this power.

Based on some of the opinions above, it can be described that writing is a means of self-disclosure through writing. Writing is not just a motor activity but also involves one's mentality. Writing is one of the media to communicate. Through writing, a person can convey meaning, ideas, thoughts and feelings through a series of written words. Writing is an ability that can be learned and needs to be practiced, because it is a skill that will become more skilled the more you practice it (Toba et al., 2019). Therefore, having writing a good writing ability is very important. Educators should know the existing students' writing ability in order to be able to develop students' writing skills. Both micro and micro writing skills should be improved to make students able to express themselves properly in the form of writing.

Several studies have been conducted previously related with writing acquisitions and writing skills (e.g.: Mehrdad et al., 2016; Widiastuti, 2018; Joanna Pawliczak, 2015). However, most of those studies investigated general writing skills. The previous studies were not focused on studying the academic writing acquisition which are highly important for both students and university lecturers. Therefore, this study is intended to analyse students' writing ability to figure out the current ability of the students.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The selection and use of an appropriate research design depend on the nature of the variables under investigation. The present study simply investigates the students' writing skills. This study made use of an ex post facto research design with descriptive analysis. There were 30 students from Indonesian classes were determined as



the samples of the study by means of quota random sampling technique with lottery system. The data required for this study were collected by using language lecturer made essay test to measure students' writing skills. The test items were constructed by acknowledging the specification of valid and reliable test to ensure that the data were appropriately collected through test administration to the selected sample. To ensure the reliability and validity of the research instruments, the research instruments were validated by test experts and then revisions were made accordingly. The valid and reliable research instruments were used to collect the required data for study. The data of this study were in the form of raw showed the achievement of samples in writing skills. Therefore, to figure out the extent on writing skills of the students, the process of data analysis was taken using mean score formula and norm reference measure with standard five. On the completion of data analysis, the results of findings were presented descriptively and argumentatively to establish valid and reliable findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected in this study were in the form of scored resulted by the essay test as the research instrument. The main aim of this present study was to measure the students' ability in writing skills. The data obtained were analyzed using appropriate formula to measure the extent of the students' writing ability. The mean was obtained from counting up all the scores and then they were divided by the number of individuals. This is better known as the mean or average figure. In statistics, it is more often called the arithmetic mean and it is symbolized by "M" The formula for getting the mean score. The standard deviation is another way of showing the spread of scored. It measures the degree to which the group of scores deviation from the mean. In other words, it shows how all the scores are spread out and this gives a fuller description of test scores and the range that simply describes the gap between the highest and lowest marks and ignores the information provided by all the remaining scores.

The computation of the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of the scores showed the students' writing ability resulted the mean (M) was 23.90 and the standard deviation (SD) was 4.69. Based on the computation above, the data which were analysed by using norm-reference of five standard values the converted scores of ≥ 30.93 (excellent acquisition of writing skills), ≥ 26.24 (good acquisition of writing skill), ≥ 21.56 (sufficient acquisition of writing skills), ≥ 16.87 (insufficient acquisition of writing skills), ≤ 16.87 (poor acquisition of writing skills). The raw scores obtained by the subjects under investigation of the students can be seen the following table.

No	Raw Score	Standard Score	Total Subjects	Percentages
1.	32 – 31	≥ 30.93 (A/Excellent)	5	16.67 %
2.	30 – 27	≥ 26.24 (B/Good)	3	10.00 %
3.	26 – 22	≥ 21.56 (C/Sufficient)	15	50.00 %
4.	21 – 17	≥ 16.87 (D/Insufficient)	5	16.67 %
5.	16 – 15	≤ 16.87 (E/Poor)	2	6.67 %
			30	100 %

Table 1. Acquisition of Students' Academic writing skills

Based on the table that the results of data analysis by using norm reference measurement of five standard values clearly show that:

1. There were 5 subjects or 16.67 % out of 30 students under investigation showed excellent acquisition of academic writing skills.
2. There were 3 subjects or 10.00 % out of 30 students under investigation showed good acquisition of writing skills
3. There were 15 subjects or 50.00 % out of 30 students under investigation showed sufficient acquisition of academic writing skills
4. There were 5 subjects or 16.67 % out of 30 students under investigation showed insufficient acquisition of academic writing skills
5. There were 2 subjects or 6.67 % out of 30 students under investigation showed poor acquisition of academic writing skills

In a broad sense, the research findings showed that the students' writing skills could be considered as sufficient. This is because the number of students who achieved sufficient acquisition in writing skills by using language lecture made essay test which is regarded as a valuably high valid and reliable test. The results of data analysis by using of norm-reference measure of five standard values showed that: (1) there were 5 subjects or 16.67

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% out of 30 students under investigation showed excellent acquisition of academic writing skills, (2) there were 3 subjects or 10.00 % out of 30 students under investigation showed good acquisition of academic writing skills, (3) there were 15 subjects or 50.00 % out of 30 students under investigation showed sufficient acquisition of academic writing skills, (4) there were 5 subjects or 16.67 % out of 30 students under investigation showed insufficient acquisition of writing skills, and (5) there were 2 subjects or 6.67 % out of 30 students under investigation showed poor acquisition of academic writing skills. This means that the degrees of the acquisition of academic writing skills by using language lecturer made essay test objective test were sufficient.

Based on the data above, it can be discussed that students' writing level was still in sufficient level. Ideally at university level students should have an excellent level of academic writing skills because writing skills are needed by the students to express ideas and write them down in academic writing. As an inseparable part of academic life, writing scientific papers has the aim of solving certain problems, achieving specific goals, adding knowledge, increasing knowledge and concepts of knowledge about certain problems, and fostering the ability to write and think scientifically for the authors. In addition to having the purpose of scientific work, it also has a function, namely as an educational, research, and functional function. Seeing the importance of scientific writing, the author of scientific papers must really understand the contents of scientific papers and arrange his work properly, and can be scientifically justified. Writing academic texts is an academic activity that aims to produce academic writing (Schillings et al., 2018). Academic writings studied at the tertiary level in Indonesian language courses are writing ideas in the form of research proposals, paper forms, book summaries, reviews, articles, and reports written logically and systematically in the form of reports.

For everyone who is in an academic environment writing skills are a demand. In writing activities, writers are required to be active and productive, because at the time of writing the writer must be active and creative in formulating ideas or ideas systematically so that the writing is understood by the reader. A writer can be said to be productive if the author is able to produce writings based on his own thoughts with a logical system so as to be able to create written works that can be accepted by readers (Syahrin et al., 2019). At the tertiary level, the ability to write demands that must be met by every student is the ability to write an academic paper. Substantial demands attached to a student make him have to understand writing techniques and procedures for a written work. The quality of an academic paper that is made is largely determined by the student's understanding of the two demands. Student-made essays many found wrong. This error show that college student not yet understand and have not applied the required standards that applies to a work academic writing, both technically and substantive.

At the university level, academic writing skills are very necessary because by writing students can express ideas and write them down in academic writing. With the academic writing ability possessed by students, one's imagination power can be sharper, language mastery increases, and increase self-confidence because they are able to work. In making scientific papers, students are required to comply with the rules that have been made. For example, from the systematics of writing a paper, it must be gradual from the introduction to the list of references. Not only the systematics, in writing the paper it is also necessary to pay attention to the language used to be precise and appropriate. Right means not wrong in arranging sentences so as to produce effective sentences. Appropriate means not using slang, so in writing it is only allowed to use standard language.

Writing academic texts is an academic activity that aims to produce academic writing. Scientific writing is an inseparable part. This is in line with the fact that at every academic step, scientific papers are always present as the main task for academics to show their scientific data. Through scientific writing, an academician will measure his knowledge, skills and abilities in applying his insights, as well as the ability to apply their knowledge (Syahrin et al., 2019). Scientific writing is a written work that contains the presentation of a scientific discussion. Scientific writing is done by a researcher or writer. The purpose of writing is to tell something systematically and logically to the readers (Widiastuti, 2018).

Scientific papers are usually written to find answers about something by proving the truth. work theme Scientific writing are things that are new (actual) and have never been written by others. Although a theme that has been written by someone else aims to develop from the previous theme, it is called follow-up research. Scientific essays include, among others: papers, reports, theses, theses, and dissertations. Semi-scientific essays, namely: articles and opinions. Scientific essays have standard rules and special requirements that must be complied with regarding the method and use of language, while non-scientific essays are not bound to standard essays, and semi-scientific essays are in between.

4. CONCLUSION

Academic writing taught in Indonesian language classes is writing ideas in the form of research proposals, paper forms, book summaries, reviews, articles and reports written logically and systematically in the form of reports. In the activity of writing academic texts, there are three stages of writing scientific papers in universities,



namely the first stage of pre-writing, the second stage of writing, and the third stage of revising. The activity of writing academic texts is clearly important and is an activity that is beneficial both for writers and for the development of science. Seeing the importance of writing academic texts or scientific writings, the writer of scientific papers must really understand the content of scientific papers and arrange their works well and can be scientifically justified. At the university level, writing skills are needed in order to be able to express ideas and write them down in academic writing. This study implies that university lecturers should continually improve students' academic writing skills. Moreover, various strategies should be employed by university lecturers to ensure that students were active in learning academic writing skills.

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