UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING THEIR THESIS LITERATURE REVIEW

SKRIPSI

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Academic writing, difficulties, undergraduate thesis.

Scientific writing is an essential skill to be mastered by students at a higher education level. Most universities always provide students with scientific writing as a mandatory subject to be delivered in class especially in late semester students such as thesis writing seminars and undergraduate theses. This subject is obligatory for students to write scientific texts such as articles, reports and theses as final assignments as the requirement to finish education at universities. Scientific writing is about writing the writer's ideas, arguments or research in a systematic order to reach the conclusion. According to Leite (2019) , academic writing is a social interaction between writers and readers in functional deliberative goals, resolutions, and socialization developments on the fundamental genre analysis.

The research was conducted on 5 students undergoing English thesis writing as participants from the English education department, faculty of teacher training and education at the University of Islam Malang. The research conducted using semi-structured interviews based on their experience regarding difficulties, factors of difficulties and solutions encountered in the writing literature review.

The result concluded that the students write literature review by selecting suitable material from various sources, writing in complete and sequential way following the template of another research despite of having undergraduate thesis guidelines and supervision with the lecturers. There are eight sites where students find their sources, like Google, Google Scholar, Academia, Eric.gov, Tandfonline,

Sinta, ResearchGate and Repository from any university. In terms of preference, students tend to choose undergraduate thesis as a reference, finding random material containing one of the topics and choosing main theory and newer sources. However, there were only three students who considered finding a similar research method to the previous research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research background, problems of the research, purposes of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms as the introduction of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Scientific writing is an essential skill to be mastered by students at a higher education level. Most universities always provide students with scientific writing as a mandatory subject to be delivered in class especially in late semester students such as thesis writing seminars and undergraduate theses. This subject is obligatory for students to write scientific texts such as articles, reports and theses as final assignments as the requirement to finish education at universities. Scientific writing is about writing the writer's ideas, arguments or research in a systematic order to reach the conclusion. According to Leite (2019) , academic writing is a social interaction between writers and readers in functional deliberative goals, resolutions, and socialization developments on the fundamental genre analysis.

Academic research and studies are the great contributor of knowledge in the world's scientific development. According to Burke in Khazaal (2019) one distinguishing character of academic writing is not only logical for certain groups of people but also logical from the view of general society. Student enrolled in universities or other higher institutes have to contribute their knowledge and dedication in the form of scientific work. Academic writing contributes to the growth of information and academic resources since a large portion of theoretical and methodological support is obtained from academic writing (Sanches, et al, 2019) . The validation of their learning is carried out in large part by the written presentation of these academic works.

The book reflects on the importance of academic writing and presents methods and techniques for writing in a grounded manner.

According to Noori (2020) scientific writing is a form of formal text constructed to present the research conducted by the researcher in a methodical manner characterized by comprehensive, focused, brief, and structured concepts that are backed up by evidence. Moreover, You and Li (2021) stated that academic writing is considered as an important skill in academic contexts as it is used to communicate ideas, information and between the researchers and wider academic communities. Furthermore, Sanches, et al, (2019) explains that academic writing has characteristics which together distinguish it from the forms of writing including formal, structured, supported by evidence, critical, precise; and objective.

There are many processes of writing academic texts from introduction, literature review, research method, result and conclusion. However, one that distinguishes scientific writing from another type of writing is literature review where the researcher must include references from related literature to support their study. In writing scientific texts, it is necessary to include a review of related literature to support and make the written argument valid. In stating the scientific argument is necessary for the researcher to relate and support their findings with references from other authors related to the study to gain a valid conclusion of the study (Shahsavar & Kourepaz, 2020) . Scientific writers always interact with each other through their written arguments, therefore, scientific texts always involve frequent references to the argument (Khazaal, 2019) . In using reference in academic writing, the researcher should be able to attain the originality of their works by giving acknowledgment and citing the author of the reference properly (Oshima & Hogue, 1999) . According to Fitriyah (2021) researchers' statements in academic writing should be supported with related literature and grounded on parent theories. In

addition, Bacha (2019) added that writers gain authority by referring to proper citations, presenting assurance in their evaluations and taking responsibility for their ideas.

Writing literature review and discussion sections is not an easy task, it requires good skills in both reading and writing. According to Khazaal (2019) , one major challenge in writing academic texts is finding related literature suitable to the writer's own idea. According to Shahsavar & Kourepaz (2020) it is essential for the writer to access many sources related to the study in the writing of literature review. There are many possible difficulties in writing literature reviews such as finding the right reference, connecting the reference with the statement, and writing coherently.

Nowadays, with the help of the internet, students have better opportunity to access abundant resources of literature for their literature review, however, it also requires the students to have decent language proficiency as most of the literature found in the internet are written in English (Bari, 2020) . This makes writing literature review even more difficult for EFL learners as it requires knowledge in L2 such as vocabulary and grammar to understand the sources written in English. According to (Puspita, 2019) , problems in writing thesis are mainly divided into linguistic problems and non-linguistic problems, linguistic problems encompasses any difficulties caused by language related factors such as vocabulary and grammar, while non-language problems related to any difficulties that are not related to language such as laziness, relationship with lecturers, anxiety, lack of support and materials. Also, Fitriyah (2021) stated that the students might encounter several challenges in writing their research in a foreign language, let alone organizing their writing to their university's formatting standard.

Many studies reported a variety of difficulties related to academic writing in a foreign language, a recent study conducted by Shahsavar & Kourepaz (2020) it is indicated that most

students, were unable to properly synthesize, criticize, and explain the literature that is used in their writing as they tend to summarize others' interpretations. Moreover, Bacha (2019) found that the majority of the students were lacking skills in creating a coherent connection between their statements and literatures. In terms of EFL students, Fitriyah (2021) found that students in English academic writing have difficulties regarding the structure, developing ideas, and choosing vocabulary related to their own topic. Moreover, in the study conducted by Khazaal (2019) , most students are having difficulties in expressing their ideas in English, let alone synthesizing their ideas.

Considering the importance of writing for undergraduate thesis for university students and the many possible difficulties in writing literature review, the researcher is interested to study students' difficulties in writing literature review of their undergraduate thesis.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study about issues in writing literature review, the researcher writes the research questions as follows:

1. How do the students write literature reviews?

2. What are the factors causing difficulties in the writing of literature review?

3. What are the students' solutions to the difficulties in writing literature review ?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

According to the problems of the study, the researcher formulates the purpose of the research as follows:

1. To explore how the students write literature reviews.

2. To identify factors causing the difficulties of writing literature review.

3. To identify students' solutions to the difficulties in writing literature review

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The research was conducted on 5 students undergoing English thesis writing as participants from the English education department, faculty of teacher training and education at the University of Islam Malang. The research conducted using semi-structured interviews based on their experience regarding difficulties, factors of difficulties and solutions encountered in the writing literature review.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study gives beneficial scientific contributions to the study of academic writing.

1.5.1 Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, the results of this research can provide beneficial information about factors, difficulties and solutions in writing literature reviews in academic writing.

1.5.2. Practical Benefits

The results of the study can provide the reader with practical information on the writing process of literature review, including how the students' find and understand the source as well as the potential difficulties in the writing process.

A. For general readers:

This study contributes to the readers with beneficial information about the process of writing literature review and the potential difficulties that might be encountered during the writing and understanding of the source.

B. For researchers:

This research provides beneficial information and suggestions for conducting research on thesis writing, especially in writing literature reviews and opens up more opportunities to study more deeply about difficulties in academic writing.

C. For lecturers

This study informs the lecturer about possible difficulties encountered by students based on their experience in writing thesis literature review to help them find solutions about solving students' difficulties in writing literature review and develop better methods in teaching writing.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

This section explains the definition of the key terms used in this research to avoid misunderstanding.

1. Academic Writing

Academic writing refers to organized text containing legit and scientific information supported with evidence and literature.

2. Undergraduate Thesis

The term undergraduate thesis in this study refers to a professionally written project to present university students' research or study as the qualification of their enhancement of educational degree.

3. Literature Review

The terms literature review refers to sections in academic writing especially in a thesis or dissertation that explains and presents related theory or literature to support the study.

4. Writing Difficulties

The term writing difficulties refers to certain blockade limits or the whole process of writing which in the current study focuses on the difficulties of writing in literature review.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion above, the researcher formulates the conclusion of the study as follow.

5.1 Conclusion

The result concluded that the students write literature review by selecting suitable material from various sources, writing in complete and sequential way following the template of another research despites of having undergraduate thesis guidelines and supervision with the lecturers. There are eight sites where students find their sources, like Google , Google Scholar, Academia, Eric.gov , Tandfonline , Sinta , ResearchGate and Repository from any university. In terms of preference, students tend to choose undergraduate thesis as a reference, finding random material containing one of the topics and choosing main theory and newer sources. However, there were only three students who considered finding a similar research method to the previous research.

In terms of difficulties, there are seven difficulties in writing literature review such as deciding the content, coping with lecturer's expectations, making coherence of the idea, grammar, finding good quality sources as some of them are paid access or difficult to find. Moreover, the students also have difficulties in finding suitable material that fits into their writing. However, in terms of paraphrasing, none of the students encountered difficulties because they had not yet paraphrased or taken a plagiarism check.

Regarding the solution for difficulties in writing literature reviews , it can be indicated that the solution includes taking examples from already published documents as they have been revised and well-arranged. In terms of finding sources, the solution includes the use of certain cites like sci-hub to open protected access, keep searching on the internet, and using existing sources and citations from other documents. As for paraphrasing, it is shown that the first solution used the combination of paraphrasing tool and Grammarly, the second solution is checking the meaning consistency to make sure the meaning is still the same and the third solution is rearranging all the text and see whether it is still detected by Turnitin then rearrange afterwards.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher provided suggestions to the students, lecturers and the next researcher as follows.
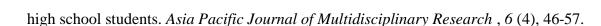
For the students, it is suggested to consult more on how to write literature review on undergraduate thesis writing guidelines from the respective university as it contains suitable format based on university standard.

For the lecturer, it is important to guide the students in terms of making coherence and how to find good sources for their writing as it is the most common difficulty encountered by them.

For the next researcher, it is suggested to use a questionnaire prior to the interview to select suitable participants instead of choosing the participants randomly.

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