

Chapter One

Introduction

There are several points in this chapter. The first point is background of the study. Identification and delimitation of the problem are included in this chapter. Besides, the researcher also mentions the research questions, the objectives of the study and the significance. In the last part of this chapter, the researcher describes the organization of the chapters.

Background of the Study

Writing is one of the communication ways that people used to interpret message to the other people around them. Webster (2021) defined writing is the process of one who writes letters or characters that serve as visible signs of ideas, or symbols. Writing is an activity that a person undertakes to represent thoughts and ideas into written form that many people can read. From the statement mentioned, writing needs to take much time to be mastered because it is not like speaking and listening skills that can be obtained from natural processes. The process of writing is complex. Ibnian (2011) stated that writing is a complex and interconnected system of interactive and repetitive processes. In higher education, writing is much needed for students to complete their studies for academic purposes. In line with Abdullah, Kassim, Ghani, Rahman, and Zamin (2019) said students at all higher education levels must be highly skilled in writing for an academic audience. The product of writing can be in the form of an article, thesis, essay, etc.

Good knowledge of sentence structure is also important to make successful in writing. It had been conducted by Bulqiyah, Mahbub, and Nugraheni (2021) conveyed constructing the correct sentence influences the quality of writing. Additionally, Kurniawan, Sofian, and Wardah (2017) stated that the students who make good writing, they also have good mastery in arranging the structure of sentences that produce clear meaning. It means if students want to get a good writing, they should master the sentence structure as well.

As one of the writing products, an essay is kind of paper commonly assessed for college students. Ariyanti and Fitriana (2017) defined an essay as one of the academic writings in which a writer may incorporate factual information with existing expert theories. However, in teaching and learning process, writing essay is still challenging for students. Students still face difficulties in writing essays. Ashrafiany, Hasanuddin, and Basalama (2020) stated that in writing essays, the students need to have good writing skills and knowledge to develop ideas. Sometimes, in processing the essay, the students become stuck when they want to continue the sentences after writing the first idea. It is because they lack exploring the topic they will write about. Besides that, one of the significant challenges is the basics of students' writing skills which means they should consider the grammatical rules and their accuracy in writing.

Essay writing is a course studied at English Language Education Department in a private university in Yogyakarta. In teaching and learning process, the researcher found many students got low achievement in writing essay. Besides, the researcher also did a mini-interview for the students and the

lecturers about students' mastery of grammar. They said that students' ability to master sentence structure is still low. This is why the researcher was interested to find out the possible correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement.

Identification of the Problem

In an English Language Education Department of a university in Yogyakarta, writing essay is an activity that both teachers and students commonly do in the teaching-learning process. It is different from any writings like daily journals or the other creative writing that simply expresses the idea or thoughts in written form. Writing essay is a scientific paper that should be written clearly, structured, and provable. This is in line with Eunson (2012), defined as essay is a written piece on a particular subject that contains a combination of facts and opinions, is organized scientifically, and uses appropriate writing strategies.

Based on the researcher's interview with English students in writing class at a private university in Yogyakarta, the researcher got some phenomena. Firstly, many students got a low score in writing an argumentative essay. They said that they found difficulties in writing essay. One of them is that they have difficulty in developing the ideas because they had lack mastery about the issues.

Another phenomenon in writing class is that students lack of sentence structure knowledge. They said that they got difficulty in writing by using a foreign language. There are some problems faced by the students in sentence structure. For instance, they make two sentences that are connected inappropriate

ways. In other words, those sentences are connected without a conjunction or connecting word. Also, the students often make sentences incomplete. It means, the word does not appear in the sentence, so what is being stated is not clear.

Based on two phenomena found above which, some students who got low score in writing argumentative essay, and some of them also have lack of knowledge about sentence structure; these allow a correlation because writing essay needs to have mastery of organizing the sentence structure to make writing understandable and stick into the readers' mind. Therefore, the researcher is interested to find out whether there is any significant correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement. These questions need to be investigated.

Delimitation of the Problem

This study focuses on finding out the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement at a private university in Yogyakarta. There are two variables, namely students' sentence structure mastery and essay writing achievement. Among some types of English writing essays, including expository essays, descriptive essays, narrative essays, and argumentative essays, the researcher focuses only on argumentative essays as one of the variables. Therefore, the researcher will explore the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and argumentative essay writing achievement.

Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, there are three questions addressed in this study.

1. How is the students' sentence structure mastery?
2. How is the students' essay writing achievement?
3. Is the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement?

Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the research are:

1. to measure the students' mastery on sentence structure
2. to investigate the students' essay writing achievement
3. to find out the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement

Significances of Research

This research gives some advantages for the teachers, students, and other researchers.

For teachers. This study will help teachers to know the correlation between students' mastery in sentence structure and students' essay writing achievement. This research can be helpful for the teachers to evaluate how they should teach the material to improve students in writing essays.

For the students. From this research, the students will get mastery about the correlation between students' mastery in sentence structure and students' essay writing achievement. This research provides the measurement of students' mastery in sentence structure so that the students will be able to see how far they have progressed in learning English.

For other researchers. The result of this study gives some information about the correlation between students' mastery in sentence structure and students' essay writing achievement. The other researchers can use this result as the theoretical overview for further research on the same topic. Therefore, by conducting this research, it can inspire the other researchers to conduct the further research in the same area.

Organization of the Chapters

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction. In this chapter, the researcher presents the background of the study that elaborates the reason why the researcher wants to conduct the research on the correlation between students' mastery in sentence structure and students' essay writing achievement. In Introduction also presents identification of the problem and delimitation of the problem. The problems are identified into three research questions, first "How is the students' sentence structure mastery?", second "How is the students' essay writing achievement?", and the third "How is the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement?". Those three research questions will address the objectives of the research. The significances of the study describe the advantages of this research

for the teachers, for the students, and for the other researchers. For the last sub chapter is organization of the research contains the organization of every chapter in this research.

The second chapter is literature review. This chapter provides some theories and concepts from prior researchers or experts as the foundation related to the correlation between students' sentence structure mastery and their essay writing achievement. This research gives several points such as the definition of sentence structure and argumentative essay. It also provides the information of the important aspect in argumentative essay.

The third chapter is methodology. There are several points of this chapter. The first one is research design which describes the quantitative approach to conduct this study. The second is the research setting which describes this study was conducted at a private university in Yogyakarta. The research population and sampling which describe the respondents and the sampling of this study. The data collection method explains how the researcher collected data using test. The last is data analysis which presents how the researcher analyzes the data.

The fourth chapter is finding and discussion. In this chapter, it presents the results of the research that answer the three research questions and discuss the information related to them.

The last chapter contains conclusion and recommendation. This chapter presents the summary of this study and gives the suggestion to students, teachers, and further researchers.