

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. The research background, the identification of the problem, the delimitation of the problem, the research questions, the objectives of the research, the significance of the research, and the outline of the research will be explained in this chapter.

Research Background

One of the important skills in academic performance is writing skill. Writing skill is needed to communicate the ideas in a written form. According to Meyers (2015), writing skill is the ability to discover and organize the ideas in a unit of discourse. Hence, a good writing skill is needed to present the idea systematically in order to make the writings become easy to understand.

Writing is a tool used to convey the idea in a written form. According, Bjork and Raisanen (as cited in Umer & Javid, 2014) writing is a thinking tool which means that it is a tool to communicate the ideas in a written form for language learning. Meyers (2005) stated that writing is a process of determining and managing opinions, putting them on paper, and then revising them. Thus, it could be inferred that writing is a tool that is used to communicate the ideas in a written form by including some process such as generating the ideas, putting the ideas on paper and revising.

Writing is important for the students, because of several reasons. According to Pincas (as cited in Martiwi, 2016), writing is a way to communicate a message to a reader for a purpose such as to state individual identity, to provide information for the reader, to persuade the reader, and to construct a literary work.

Hence, in writing, the students need to present their idea clearly and in sequence so that they readers will understand about what they write. By presenting the ideas clearly, it means that the students' communication skill is getting improved. Thus, it indicates that writing is important to improve the students' communication skill. Moreover, in higher education, some assessments and tasks require writing to evaluate the students' understanding (Fadda, 2012). Hence, by presenting the students' understanding about the material clearly and systematically in their writings, it proves that the students understand about the material.

One of the types of writing is academic writing. Abu-Ghararah and Hamzah (as cited in Al Badi, 2015) pointed that, academic writing is the written sentences that are organized well within a paragraph and paragraphs, and the expression of the ideas in the units of a text. It means that academic writing is a written form of our idea that is presented logically and systematically in a unit of a discourse. In addition, academic writing is a kind of writing that requires the students to write academically. Academically means that the students need to follow the rule of academic writing such as the use of correct grammar, the appropriate punctuation, the correct vocabulary, and so on. Moreover, according to Aholjailan (2015), academic writing is the kind of writing that the purpose is not for pleasing the readers instead it used to satisfy the students' instructor. From those statements, it can be inferred that academic writing is the kind of writing that is meant for academics such as teacher, students, and many more in which the writer needs to write properly and present the ideas logically and systematically.

Academic writing is important because of some reasons. The first one is it can encourage the students to write properly. It is because in academic writing the

students are required to follow the rule of academic writing such as the use of correct grammar, the appropriate punctuation, the correct vocabulary, and so on (Abdulkareem, 2013). In addition, academic writing can encourage the students to have a critical thinking because in academic writing they need to present their ideas clearly and the conclusion of their writing need to be stated logically.

Logically means that there is a relation between the topic being discussed and the conclusion (Al Badi, 2015). Hence, by doing an academic writing the students need to put their critical thinking into their writing and they need to analyze their idea in order to make the reader understand about what they write. Thus, academic writing is important for the students to habituate them to write properly, and think critically.

Academic writing is somewhat challenging because to make a good one, the writer need to fulfil some requirements of good academic text. The requirements of academic writing to be considered as a good academic text such as the use of correct grammar, well-organized paragraph, the use of proper vocabulary and many more, but to fulfill the requirements of good academic text some students still face some difficulties (Abdulkareem, 2013; Wanja, 2016). It indicates that the standard of a good academic text becomes a challenge for some students because they need to fulfill some requirements such as well-organized paragraph, the proper vocabulary, and so on. In addition, Fadda (2012) supported that academic writing is the biggest challenge for the students in higher education so they still need support to write a good academic text. Support here means that the students still need some helps from their instructor to guide them in producing a good academic text. In conclusion, writing a good academic text becomes a

challenge for some students because there are some requirements to be fulfilled, but some students feel difficult to fill it. Hence, it caused them to be guided in order to produce a good academic text.

Identification of the Problem

Academic writing is important to be studied especially for the students in higher education. Academic writing is important to make the students to be more academic in writing. It is because, in academic writing the students are required to write based on the rules of academic writing such as the correct grammar, appropriate punctuation, appropriate vocabulary, support the ideas, and so on. By those requirements, the students are habituated to write academically which means they would be able to write by using the correct grammar, appropriate punctuation, appropriate vocabulary, support the ideas, and so on. In academic writing the students also need to put their critical thinking and analyze their idea, so that academic writing also habituates the students to think critically. Since academic writing is important to be studied because it can habituate the students to write properly and foster the students' critical thinking, it becomes a course studied in higher education.

Academic writing is also studied in some courses at English Language Education Department. Hence, ELED in one of private university in Yogyakarta also includes academic writing as courses. The example of courses that study about academic writing in ELED is Academic Reading and Writing course, and Interpretive Reading and Argumentative Writing course. Those courses are provided in the first year in which Academic Reading and Writing course is in the first semester and Interpretive Reading and Argumentative Writing course is in

the second semester. However, this research only focuses on Academic Reading and Writing course.

Based on the researcher's experience, in Academic Reading and Writing course, the students were asked to make an academic essay based on the given topic from the lecturer. In order to make a good academic essay, the students were required to write academically by following the academic writing rules such as the correct grammar, the use of formal language, the appropriate use of punctuations, the appropriate vocabulary, cohesive and coherent, and many more. Besides, the students also need to put their critical thinking and stated their ideas clearly in their writings.

As stated earlier, Academic Reading and Writing course is provided in the first year that is in the first semester and the students are asked to make academic texts. However, not all of the students in Academic Reading and Writing at ELED in one of private university in Yogyakarta are able to make a good academic text. Based on the result of the researcher's informal interview with three ELED in one of private university in Yogyakarta students batch 2014 to find out their problem in writing academic text when they were in the first semester, some of them response that they confuse to write an academic text, because when they were in high school, they only taught about the basic knowledge of academic writing such as the tense used in academic text, the structure of the text, and many more. In addition, they also stated that they are rarely asked to make an academic text at high school. However, when they entered higher education they have to learn more complex knowledge and did more complex task. It caused the students to struggle when they are asked to make an academic text because they are only

having the basic knowledge about academic writing, whereas in university level they are asked to do more complex academic writing such as they need to support their writing by giving evidence, reasons, and stated their ideas clearly and in sequence. Meanwhile, the first year students still lack of experience on writing an academic text that caused them face some difficulties to make a good academic text.

In addition, based on the researcher's experience, some of the first year students still need support from their lecturer to make a good academic text and they got some feedback related to the use of punctuation, vocabulary, correct grammar. It could be indicate that that they are still less able to make a good academic text based on the rule of academic writing like using the proper punctuation, vocabulary, correct grammar, and so on. Hence, writing an academic text is somewhat challenging for the first year students. From those statements, the researcher needs to conduct a study to find out the first year students' difficulties in writing an academic text at an ELED in one of the private university in Yogyakarta.

Academic writing is important to be studied, yet some students still have the problem to make a good academic text. So, the researcher was interested in investigating the difficulties of writing English academic text of the first year students of ELED in private university in Yogyakarta. Besides, some factors causing the difficulties in writing academic text will also be investigated in this research. In addition, this research is important to be conducted. It is because by conducting this research the difficulties and the factors causing the difficulties in writing academic text will be recognized, so that in the future, the result of this

research is beneficial to avoid the difficulties and the factors causing the difficulties found in this research.

Delimitation of the Problem

This research is limited to discuss the difficulties of writing English academic text experienced by the first year student batch 2017 in Academic Reading and Writing course at ELED in one of private university in Yogyakarta. Besides, this research also included the contributing factors that cause the difficulties of the first year students of ELED in one of private university in Yogyakarta in writing academic text.

Research Questions

The research questions of this research are:

1. What are the difficulties in writing English academic text faced by the first year students of English Language Education Department in one of private university in Yogyakarta?
2. What are the factors causing the difficulties in writing English academic text of the first year students at English Language Education Department in one of private university in Yogyakarta?

The Objectives of the Research

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

1. To find out the first year students' difficulties in writing English academic text at an English Language Education Department in one of private university in Yogyakarta
2. To investigate the factors causing the difficulties in writing English academic text of the first year students at English Language Education

Department at an English Language Education Department in one of private university in Yogyakarta.

Significance of the Research

This research is beneficial for the students, the teachers and even for other researchers. The benefits of the research due as follows:

The students. The findings of this research will encourage the students, especially for the first year students to make use the result of this research to their language learning especially in academic writing, so they can anticipate their difficulties in writing academic text.

The teachers. The findings of this research will help the teachers to understand the first year students' difficulties on academic writing. Hence, the teacher can find the solution to overcome the first year students' problem in academic writing.

Another researcher. The findings of this research can be used by other researchers as a reference to conduct future research related to the difficulties of academic writing.

Outline

In this research, there are several things that are discussed in each chapter. Chapter one discusses the introduction of the study which consists of background of the study, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, research questions, the objectives of the research, and the outline of the research. Chapter two discusses about literature review, related study, and the conceptual framework. Chapter three discusses the research methodology which consists of research design, research setting, research participants, data collection method,

data collecting procedure, and data analysis. Chapter four presents the findings and discussions of the research and chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendation of the research.