
AN ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS FACED BY FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF STKIP MUHAMMADIYAH MUARO BUNGO IN WRITING CAUSE AND EFFECT ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present the result of a study conducted to describe analysis of problem faced by first year students of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muaro Bungo in writing cause and effect essay. This study was a descriptive research design. This research conducted by involving all students of first year students of English Program Study of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muaro Bungo academic year 2017/2018. Instrument of research were writing test and interview. The findings showed that the students got low score in writing cause and effect essay. It was shown that 16 students (88,89%) had difficulties in writing cause and effect essay. There were 12 students (66,67%) had difficulties in organizing ideas, 16 students (88,89%) had difficulties in using correct grammar, 10 students (55,56%) had difficulties in using appropriate words, 14 students (77,77%) had difficulties in using transition goal, 9 students (50 %) had difficulties in using mechanics. The causes of this problem were Interlingua transfer, intralingua transfer and vocabulary. Thus, the researchers expect that the writing lecturers are able to give good writing technique, and the students can do more exercises to increase their skill in writing.

Key words: *Writing, cause and effect essay*

ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk menunjukkan hasil dari penelitian dari analisis masalah yang dihadapi mahasiswa tingkat pertama STKIP MUhammadiyah MUara Bungo dalam menulis esai *cause and effect*. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan melibatkan semua mahasiswa tahun pertama dari program studi bahasa inggris STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara BUngo tahun akademin 2017/2018. Instrumen penelitian adalah tes menulis dan wawancara. Temuan penunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mendapatkan nilai yang rendah dalam menulis esai *cause and effect*. Temuan ini menunjukkan 16 orang mahasiswa (88,89%) memiliki kesulitan dalam menulis esai cause and effect. Ada 12 orang mahasiswa (66,67%) yang memiliki kesulitan dalam menyusun ide, 16 orang mahasiswa (88,89%) memiliki kesulitan dalam menggunakan tatabahasa yang benar, 10 orang mahasiswa (55,56%) mengalami kesulitan dalam menggunakan kosakata yang tepat, 14 orang mahasiswa (77,77%) memiliki kesulitan dalam menggunakan transisi, 9 orang mahasiswa (50%) memiliki kesulitan dalam menggunakan mekanis. Penyebab dari masalah tersebut adalah transfer interlingua, transfer intralingua, kosakata. Jadi, peneliti berharap dosen yang mengajar matakuliah *writing* bisa memberikan

teknik yang baik dan mahasiswa dapat melakukan banyak latihan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulisnya.

Kata Kunci: *Menulis, esai cause dan effect*

INTRODUCTION

Writing plays an important role for students who are in the process of learning a language. It is one of the productive skills, besides speaking, which involves process of transferring ideas into understandable written form. According to Sapkota (2012:70), writing is an activity of putting down the graphic symbols which has a function to present a language in order to convey some meaning, thus, the reader can grasp the information. Nunan (2003: 88) also states that writing is a process of thinking to invent ideas, thinking about how to express ideas into good writing, and arranging the ideas clearly.

In addition, writing is an essential thing to gain success in high school, college and job. It is usually needed by students to pass their educational institution. Writing has become one of the tests in "Ujian Akhir Sekolah (UAS) beside other skills like reading and listening at senior high school. Whereas at university, they are required to write essays, tests, reports, paper and thesis during their studies. Writing skill is also necessary in writing formal application letters in applying for job or graduate training. In other words, writing has been identified as threshold skill for getting success in

academic field as well as job section.

Considering about the important of writing, English Department of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muaro Bungo has made it as one of compulsory subjects that should be mastered by the students. The departments provided several series of writing courses such as English Paragraph Writing, English Essay Writing, and Paper Writing that are offered in different semester.

According to Oshima and Hogue (2006: 56), essay is a piece of writing which consists of several paragraphs that cover of introductory, body and concluding paragraph. Crews (2000) also states that an essay is as a fairly brief piece of nonfiction that tries to make a point in an interesting way. Thus, Essay is a collection of several paragraphs that convey ideas or point in an interesting way.

One of the common patterns of essay organization is called cause and effect essay. Oshima and Hogue (2006: 94) states that cause and effect is a form of writing that discuss the causes (reasons) for something, the effects (results), or both.

Writing cause and effect essay is the simplest essay pattern or organization, however, there were only few students who are proficient at writing it.

According to the data takes English Essay Writing assignment score of 18 students of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muaro Bungo, 2 students (11,11%) got excellent score with minimum correction, 5 students (27,77%) got good score with some correction, and 8 students (44,44%) got average score with changing several sentences in paragraphs and contents, and 3 students (16,66%) got low score with changing whole paragraphs and contents.

Writing cause and effect essay is the simplest pattern / organization essay, however, There are several problems that can be found in process of writing cause and effect essay. According to Brown (2004:244), students had difficulty in organizing of idea, using correct grammar, choosing correct vocabulary, using transition signal and using appropriate punctuation and spelling.

The difficulties faced by students above can occur because of some causes. According to Brown (2000:224), the students' error in writing are influenced by two major causes; interlingual and intralingual transfer. He states that interlingual transfer is a significant source of error for all learners. He explains that interlanguage is learner language, which emphasizes the separateness of a second language learners' system. He also defines interlingual as a system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native and target language.

Interlingual is when the students of foreign language make structure deviation by the effect of their mother tongue. In other words, it is called language transfer. The difficulties occur because the features of source language and target language are different.

The second cause that can cause students' difficulties and errors in writing is intralingual transfer (Brown, 2000:224). Intralingual derives when the students make ungrammatical structure since they do not have enough knowledge of their target language. Intralingual errors result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer. Namely, learners make mistakes because they do not know the target language very well, and have difficulties in using the target language. It can be said that students have lack knowledge of the target language. One of them is lack of grammar knowledge of the target language. As Richard and Renandya (2002:145) state "grammar is too important to be ignored, and without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained". It means that the use of correct grammar will influence the sense of students' writing in order to catch readers interesting with the story that the students tell.

Besides two causes above, another cause that made students got difficulty in writing is lack of vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary makes what learners write

become uninteresting, and boring (Farooq, et al., 2012:186). Lack of vocabulary makes students cannot express their ideas. They do not know what words they have to use to put their thought in their writing. Also, because of lack of vocabulary, the students use the same words in different context. This condition will affect the students' writing quality, because the choice of words in writing will influence the content of their writing. Readers will get difficulties to understand and comprehend students' writing because the words that are used will influence the meaning of the writing.

Based on the phenomenon above, the researcher was interested to do research on the analysis of problem faced by the first year students of STKIP MB in writing cause and effect essay. The researcher focused on the problem faced in writing cause and effect essay by the first year students of English Department of STKIP MB academic year 2017/2018.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research was descriptive research that used quantitative approach. Gay (2000:11) states that quantitative approaches are used to describe current conditions, investigates relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena.

The subject of the research was the first year students of English Department of STKIP MB academic year 2017/2018. There were 18 students which involve in this research.

The instruments were writing test and interviews. The writing test was used to find out the students' ability and their difficulties in writing cause and effect essay. In addition, the interviews used to support the result of the findings. Before doing the test, the validity of the test was seen. Content validity was used to find out the validity of the test. Gay (2000:163) says that Content validity is the degree of which a test measures an intended content area. So, the test that was used must be relevant with students' knowledge. The researcher asked the students to choose one of the topics from some topics given. Then, the topics that were chosen by students were used as topics for cause and effect essay test.

To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique. There were two assessors. The first assessor was Assessor 1 and the second assessor was Assessor 2. To calculate the correlation coefficient of the scores given by two assessors the researcher used Pearson Product Moment Formula (Gay, 1987:364) as Follow

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sum XY - \frac{(\sum X)(\sum Y)}{N}}{\sqrt{\left(\sum X^2 - \frac{\sum X^2}{N}\right)\left(\sum Y^2 - \frac{\sum Y^2}{N}\right)}}$$

Finally, the researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation based on Arikunto (2010:75):

0.81 – 1.00 : Very high
0.61 – 0.80 : High
0.41 – 0.60 : Enough
0.21 – 0.40 : Low
0.00 – 0.20 : Very low

In this research the researcher used writing test to get the data. The procedures of gathering data were as follows:

- a. The researcher asked students to do the writing test on a piece of paper and chose one of the topics
- b. The researcher collected students' writing
- c. The researcher copied the student's writing and gave one copy to assessor 1 and another for assessor 2
- d. The assessors read the students' writing one by one
- e. The assessors gave check to the kinds of difficulties faced by students using the table in Appendix 1
- f. The researcher identified whether the students had a difficulties or not based on these criteria in Appendix 1

In analyzing data, the researcher did the following steps:

- a. The researcher checked the table that indicates the students' difficulties on each aspect of writing cause and effect essay
- b. The researcher listed the students difficulties on each components of writing cause and effect essay by using the formula below

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where: P = percentage
F = frequency
N = Total sample

The students are said that they have problem if the percentage above 50% and they have no difficulties if the percentage less than 50%.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the data analysis and findings of this research, the researcher concludes the result of the research, as follows

a. Students' Ability in Writing Cause and Effect Essay

Based on the result of the data analysis, the researcher found that 16 students (88,89%) out of 18 Students had difficulties in writing cause and effect essay, and 2 students (11,11%) had no difficulties. In short, almost all of the students got difficulties in writing this kind of essay.

b. Students' Problems in Writing Cause and Effect Essay

Based on the data analysis, it was found that the students got difficulties in writing cause and effect essay such as organizing idea, grammar, vocabulary, transition signal and mechanics. (See appendix 2). The data also shown on the diagram above.

Diagram 1. Percentation of students difficulties in writing cause and effect essay

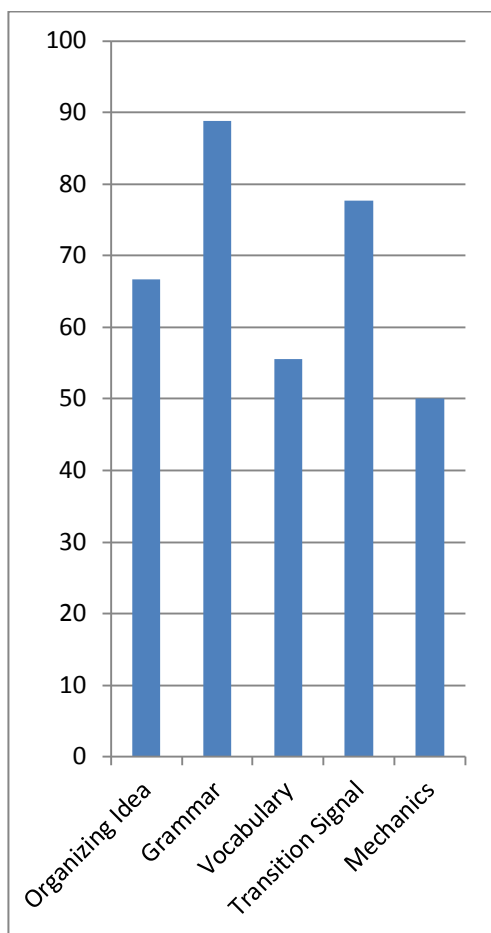


Diagram 1. Percentation of students difficulties in writing cause and effect essay

First, students got difficulties in organizing ideas. Based on the data of students' test, it was found that students have poor ability in organizing ideas. It was proven by the data that the students did mistakes 66,67% in organizing ideas. It means that 12 students have problem in organizing ideas. They did not understand how to organize the idea. It started from the thesis statement. Their statement didn't meet the proper ones because they didn't understand how to create the good thesis statement. Finally,

they could not organize and guide their ideas into a good cause and effect essay.

The second finding was 16 students (88,89%) had difficulties in using appropriate grammar. It mean that some students still had problems in using grammar. They had difficulties in using active or passive sentences, tenses, the Subject-verb arrangement, comma or colon, lack of parallel sentences, prepositions, incorrect noun number, incorrect phrasing, modal verbs, quantifier, conjunctions, determiner, modifier, etc. Most to their essay just translated the Indonesia version into English version. So, the readers can't understand what the writer is trying to say.

Next, there were 10 students (55,56%) had problems in choosing appropriate words. There were some informal words, inappropriate transision, misused word, redundancy that mention on the essay. It means that some students were not able to use the appropriate words as it is. Readers are not able to focus to the meaning of the essay.

Another problem that should be considered in writing cause and effect essay is the use of transition signal. Based on the result of the data analysis it was found that 14 students out of 18 students (77,77%) had difficulties in using appropriate transition signal. It means that more than half students did not understand in using transition signal. Some of students' writing can't guide their explanation from the cause to the effect of the topic given.

Last, the researcher found that 9 students (50 %) had difficulties in using mechanics. It means that some students still had problem how to use mechanics. They were not able to using appropriate punctuation, gerund, pronoun, and spelling. They usually confused to put gerund because they didn't understand how to use that in the sentences. Most of the students' writing contained of misspelling. It was seem that there were no revising stage on the writing process that the students done.

The data shown that there were many problems made by the students in writing cause and effect essay. Almost 88,89 % of the students got difficulties in writing cause and effect essay. There were many mistake made by the students. It made the researches continue the research to find the reason of the mistake.

c. Causes of Students' Problem in Writing Cause and Effect Essay

There were some causes that made students got difficulties in writing cause and effect essay. The first cause is interlingual transfer. Interlingual transfer is one of important factor that make students difficult to write their ideas because the features of Indonesia language is really different from English. From the data analysis, it was found that there were 91% students did interlingual transfer in their writing. They translated word by word into English. The different structure between Indonesia and English

make students got confused when they wanted to transfer their ideas into written form. The way of students use Indonesia influence their way in using English. Because of this different language structures, students got difficulties when they tried to use English in the real form.

The next cause of students' difficulties in writing cause and effect essay was intralingual transfer. Based on the data, all of students did grammar errors in their writing. Students did many errors in choosing correct action verb, linking verb, pronoun and using correct simple past tense. Their lack understanding about grammar made their writing became mess and their writing was difficult to be understood by readers.

There are several causes of students' difficulties in writing cause and effect. Those are intralingual dan interlingual transfer. The different structure made the ideas transferred several times.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research question and findings in the previous chapter, this study revealed that the first students of STKIP MB had problems in writing cause and effect essay. It was proven that 16 students out of 18 students had problems in writing it. There were 12 students (66,67%) had difficulties in organizing ideas, 16 students (88,89%) had difficulties in using correct grammar, 10 students (

55,56%) had difficulties in using appropriate words, 14 students (77,77%) had difficulties in using transition goal, 9 students (50 %) had difficulties in using mechanics. Then, the causes of this problem were Interlingua transfer, intralingua transfer and vocabulary. Thus, the researchers expect that the writing lecturers are able to give good writing technique, and the students can do more exercises to increase their skill in writing.

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APPENDIX 1**Table of Students' Problems Criteria in Writing Cause and Effect Essay**

No	Aspect	Criteria
1	Organizing Idea	Students had difficulty in organizing of idea, if they lost of introduction or conclusion; no apparent organization of body; severe lack of supporting evidence (could not be outlined by reader). (Brown 2004:244)
2	Grammar	Students had difficulties in grammar if they could not understand what the writer was trying to say; unintelligible sentence structure (Brown, 2004:244).
3	Vocabulary	Students had difficulties in vocabulary if there were inappropriate uses of vocabulary (Brown, 2004:244).
4	Transition Signal	Students had difficulties in using transition signal if they did not use appropriate transition signal (Oshima and Hogue, 2007:156)
5	Mechanics	Students had difficulty in mechanics, if they made mistakes in using appropriate punctuation and spelling (Brown, 2004:244)

APPENDIX 2**Table of Students' Percentage of Problems Faced by the Students in Writing Cause and Effect Essay**

No	Aspects	Students			
		Had Problems		Had no Problems	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Organizing Idea	12	66,67	6	33,33
2	Grammar	16	88,89	2	11,11
3	Vocabulary	10	55,56	8	44,44
4	Transition Signal	14	77,77	4	22,22
5	Mechanics	9	50	9	50