

PARALLEL SESSION 2 (ACADEMIC WRITING)**Puri Asri 2 Room****12 March 2015****14.05 – 15.25**

D. Academic Writing

Description of the session: writing in English at all levels can be a huge frustration to both those producing academic texts and those who have to read them. Three experts have some practical advice on dealing with academic writing.

Moderator : Winda Wastu Koutronas (English Development Manager – British Council Indonesia Foundation)

Panel :

1. Prof. Emi Emilia (Universitas Pendidikan Bandung)
2. Dr. Ingrid S. Surono, M.Sc (Head of Food Technology Department)
3. Colm Downes (English for Peacekeeping Manager – British Council Indonesia)

The session is opened by the moderator, introducing three panels of the session.

***A Critical SFL Genre Pedagogy in Teaching Academic Writing in a Tertiary EFL Context in Indonesia
(Prof. Emi Emilia)***

- I am going to present the result of my study conducted within three years (2012-2014). The structure of this presentation: background-aims of the study - theories that inform the study – study - findings- conclusion.
- Background:
In 2004, the English Curriculum was released by the government-inspired by the genre-based approach. The competence standard: Year 8, Semester 1. Listening:
 - Understanding meanings in simple conversations to interact with others in the closest environment
 - Understanding meanings in simple oral descriptive and recount texts to interact with others in the environmentCritical thinking has also been emphasized in Indonesian education, especially in the reform era (Depdiknas, 2001)

In 2004 and 2005, English Department of my university and I have conducted several trainings for teachers in several districts in West Java, in cooperation with lecturers from universities in Australia and Japan. We used SFL genre-based approach. Some teachers who have applied SFL, GP appropriately in secondary schools have also been empowered

psychologically, cognitively and politically and economically. Some of them managed to become the winner in a competition involving their capacity in writing.

But at the university level research in genre-based pedagogy is still limited. Student teachers find a lot of problems in teaching practicum because they are not familiar with genres high school the students learn. The problems are:

- 1) Incomplete research proposals
- 2) Students' powerlessness in proposal examination

There are confusions when students are assigned to compose research proposal. They cannot answer the question and the logic of the research. There is an assumption that students should learn to write a research proposal after learning research methodology. It is not surprising that they are confused because the research methodology has just been taught mostly in the sixth semester.

I choose Systemic Function Linguistics Genre Pedagogy (SFL GP) because it is focused on literacy (reading and writing) also listening and speaking, believing that literacy is a tool for empowerment.

- Aims of the study:
 - 1) to investigate whether SFL GP can help develop students' academic writing skill and critical thinking;
 - 2) to investigate students' opinions about the course
- Theories that inform the study:
 - 1) SFL GP (Derewianka & Jones, 2012; Hertzberg, 2012). It is first developed in Australia. I used model of SFL GP adapted from Derewianka, 2007, in Hertzberg, 2012, p.115). The circle model consists of: Building topic knowledge, building text knowledge, creating a text independently. I modified the consisting circle from five into only three steps because the students are already familiar with some types of text when they were still in senior high school. We can change the model based on the condition.
 - 2) Academic Writing: Exposition text, Discussion, Research Proposal.
The concept of research proposal is conventional. It consists of three main elements (Gkathorn & Joyner, 2005; Paltridge & Stairfield, 2007, Swales & Feak, 1994, 2004):
 - a. Introduction, (consisting of background, research questions, purpose of the study and significance of the study),
 - b. the literature review,
 - c. research methodology.
 - 3) Standard concept of Critical Thinking (especially The Critical Thinking Movement) (Paul, 2000; Chaffe, 2000):
 - a. The critical Thinking Standards

- b. Elements of Critical Thinking
 - c. Fallacies in critical thinking
 - d. Critical thinking dispositions
- The Study:
It was a qualitative case study with multiple case study design conducted in 6 semesters. We involved 17 participants who were learning about writing, both writing argumentative texts and writing a research proposal. There were 16 meetings in each case study.

The teaching learning cycle (followed the model):

- 1) Building topic knowledge: students read different references about the topic.
- 2) Building text knowledge: the student learnt each element of the proposal including their rhetorical moves. The student should see first how to write each element. It is important because many students can read but they cannot write. Show them what should be written first and what is next.
- 3) Guided reading and writing: The students were guided to write each part of the proposal
- 4) Independent writing: The students wrote independently
- 5) Reflection: The students got feedback on what the student had written

The student wrote each element of the texts in focus (exposition, discussion, research proposal) in several drafts, getting feedback and guidance from the teacher.

Over the process, the students were also taught about referencing, quoting and "making the voice of the writer clear through making statements which are not literature dominant, but the researcher or the writer dominant" (Clare, 2003, p.26)

For example:

Literature Dominant: Emilia (2005) in a study examining...demonstrated that SFL GP...

Research Dominant: Empirical evidence from recent research (Emilia, 2013) demonstrated that...The study examined...

Show the difference use of literature and research dominant.

- Results:
Observations: improvement in students' ability in writing, grammar and their eagerness to read.
The students learned to know genres of writing. A lot of students read but find difficulties in expressing what they have read in writing. By knowing the genres and experiencing processes of "submitting draft-getting feedback-rewriting", the students will realize the needs to read. They will know that without enough reading, what they write will be fake.

Example:

First Draft (problems in citation)

"...As written by researcher, Mild (2008) have found out that cell phones damage key brain cells...(low achiever)

Final draft

"...As written by Mild (2008) that cell phones damage key brain cells...(low achiever)

First drafts (grammar mistakes)

"Those who are support plastic surgery say..." (Rina)

"We can easily found that..." (Andy)

"An electronic devices..." (Reni)

- For research proposal, it is important to encourage the students to be concise and direct in composing introduction. Regarding this, teaching macro theme-hyper theme-macro new matters. This material is need for students in composing introduction of a text. The example given is for exposition text genre. There must be cohesion of the clause level as well as the text level. The macro new should be relevant with macro theme. The content of the text should also have relevance and clarity. The detail of the example text can be observed on the slide.

Introduction is the main important part of writing. This part helps the readers to predict what will be written by the writer. By reading the introduction, the readers will decide whether they want to continue reading the text or not. The lecturers should show the student the way to write this part and let the students follow.

- Analysis of transitivity revolves on the verb, the participants of the text, and adverbial aspect of the text. In the context of (L)ow, (M)id and (H)igh achiever students, there are different types of processes, such as material, relational, mental, verbal, behavioural, and existential. These processes show that the text is dialogic. The existence of participants (abstract nouns), such as mortality rate, infertility, moral value, national development can be pushing factor for students to read. The understanding upon those words can only be gained from reading.
- Analysis of modality which consists of 'modalisation' and modulation is important in academic writing to show care and modesty. It may cause the reader accept or reject the point delivered.
- Analysis of Research Proposals: all the research proposals contain all elements requires in a research proposal, including introduction, literature review and research methodology: students' control of the structure of a research proposal.
Example: what should be in the background of research proposal?

The literature review section shows students' ability:

- To categorise relevant works based in their similarities in topic
- To put relevant works in order
- To categorise works into descriptive and explanatory theory

By mastering those, students can write descriptive and explanative theory.
In each part of research proposal, citation should be used. Citation is as tools of persuasion.

- **Conclusions**

SFL GP can help develop students' writing and critical thinking ability. The assumption that the students should be taught to write a research proposal after they learn research methodology cannot be justified. The most important thing is appropriate guidance and feedback provided by the teacher in each stage of the teaching cycle.

The second panel is Dr. Ingrid S. Surono, M.Sc., Ph.D. She graduated from Food Technology Bogor Agricultural University in 1980. She earned her MSc in Dairy Microbiology and Food Processing from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok-Thailand, in 1984. Her PhD was obtained from the United Graduate School, Gifu University- Japan, in 1996. She has dedicated herself to probiotic research since 1992, and her research interests are in child nutrition, functional foods and foods safety. She has 30 international published papers in peer-reviewed journals, mainly on probiotics, child nutrition, and immunology, and she is also a reviewer of the British Journal of Nutrition, Beneficial Microbes, and some national journals. She is co-promoter of 11 PhD students from Post Graduate Programs at Faculty of Medicine, Airlangga University, Faculty of Medicine, University of Indonesia, Faculty of Human Ecology Bogor Agricultural University, and Faculty of Public Health, Andalas University. At present time she is Head of Food Technology Department, Faculty of Engineering, BINUS University, Alam Sutera Campus, Tangerang, Indonesia.

Importance of Academic Writing Skill at the University
(Dr. Ingrid S. Surono, M.Sc)

- What is academic writing?
 - Academic writing is formal and follows some standard conventions
 - Each academic discipline has its own specialist vocabulary which will be expected to be learnt and used in writing
- What is the point of academic writing?

The substance of academic writing must be based on solid evidence and logical analysis, and presented as a concise, accurate argument.

As the slide has stated, academic writing must be based on solid evidence. That is a difficult task. To write this kind of writing in Indonesian language has been difficult. Writing in foreign language is more difficult. We will never be able to write if we do not read and listen.

- Differences between academic and personal writing:

First, personal writing tells a story while academic writing comments, evaluates and analyses. Second, personal writing does not need technical vocabulary while academic writing requires subject-specific vocabulary.

Third, in personal writing, "I" or the author is as the main centre. However, in academic writing, "I" is placed as observer and commentator as well.

Fourth, about the source of information, personal writing extracts that from the writer's experience, while academic writing comes from sources and refers or what others say.

Fifth, based on the previous point, personal writing is more likely dominated by personal views and feeling, different with academic writing which is more focused on evidence, arguments, and conventions for citation.

- Main problems of writing:
Most of the students have no acquaintance components of any kind of academic writing. Academic writing also requires accurate grammar.
- Writing is at the very heart of academic life, why?
 - First, interrelated skills of academic life: writing and reasoning is the two most important skills for success in higher education.
 - Second, appropriate academic writing presents polished and professional image.
 - Third, it consists of logic and beauty of language, a good command to help thinking more clearly and deeply
 - Fourth, it has a positive impact on every aspect of academic work
- Based on Journal and Country Rank (1996 – 2013) released by Scopus, Indonesia's position is the 61th. In percentage, compared with the other Asian Countries, Indonesia has only produced 0.1% journals, less than China (14.8%) and India (3.5%). It should be improved.

Looking at the new policy of government for those who are pursuing Ph.D, it is compulsory for them to publish at least one national and international journal/paper.

- Importance of English Language:
Manuscripts with extensive English language deficiencies will be returned to the author without being reviewed. It is a problem because I find out a lot of students' manuscripts with terrible English. What to do then to respond on this situation:
 - finding a partner to support the writing process,
 - mentoring roles in each University, by finding people that will engage in dialogue to make academic writing better.
- Support for academic by British Council:
 - The most crucial requirement for Indonesian academia to grow as a scholar, is support from native English speakers. Before submitting an English academic paper, it is probably better for us to get it checked by native speaker.
 - Compulsory English for academic writing curriculum is urgently needed
 - Appropriate academic writing modules are really important to help universities conducting English academic writing course.

- Training/workshop for researchers as place for transferring knowledge
- Coaching in Academic writing
- Coaching, a crucial role:
 - *Academic editing*
 - *Coaching helps to develop both writing skills and confidence.*
 - *Some of the best academic science articles rely on words not only to tell, but also to show meanings*
 - *One-on-one to teach what that meant and how to achieve it, instead of just editing the draft of manuscripts*
 - *Fee-paying proof-reading services to improve the standard of English in manuscripts for non-native speakers at reasonable price supported by funding scheme from the Directorate General of Higher Education*
- How is the way to make this country go global? By producing academic writings. Academic writing is like tools for recognition.
- Recommendation:
a unit on academic writing service at the Directorate General of Higher Education, with the support of The British Council to assist manuscripts or articles that are prepared for publication in academic English

The third speaker is Colm Downes. He is the Peacekeeping English Project Manager at the British Council. He is the author of 'Cambridge English for Job Hunting'. Before moving to Jakarta Colm taught English for academic purposes at University College London for many years. He currently teaches regular EAP classes to students completing a MSc in Defence Management at the Indonesian Defence University (UNHAN).

Teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – Perspective on EAP materials, resources and curriculum design (2)
(Colm Downes)

- Comment on previous point of Dr. Ingrid, "...the most crucial requirement for Indonesian academia to grow as a scholar, is support from native English speakers". Now, people all around the world speak English, most of them speak English better than native English speakers. In my conclusion, it is not really necessary to look upon native or non-native speaker as long as they can speak English well.
- **EAP ACADEMIC writing**
As I have presented in the previous parallel session, UCL has different four courses. I am teaching at Pre-sessional English Course. We have 20 weeks, including 5 weeks most

intensive learning in almost the end of the course. Within these 5 weeks, as we can look at the timetable, most of time is allocated for academic writing.

Writing an academic article in English enables students to demonstrate that they have 'mastered' their subject and add their own critical analysis. Academic writing has its own style and convention that should be learnt. All students struggle with this. Both native and non-native students (also lecturers) are asked to produce academic essays in English, it comes to be massive shock and daunting task as well. Fortunately, academic writing is a skill that can be taught.

Recommendations:

1. Students need to be taught how to critically evaluate sources; either students agree or disagree with the texts.
 2. The best way to learn how to academic writing skills is to read academic articles.
 3. Students need to be taught to analyse academic articles, in their subject area, for the academic conventions followed in their specific field of study. Or good student essays: give too high English writing examples or models will only make the students consider the command to write as a daunting task. Give them more achievable model.
 4. General EAP coursebooks can teach students the process of academic writing, moving from understanding academic writing to using reading sources through to revising and drafting the final text of their essay or report; teach them to summarize.
- In pre-sessional course, I always ask my students to write 3000 words of research essay and give them feedback after they submit it. Feedback is given on the strengths and weaknesses of this essay at the draft stage and suggestions are made for improvement. Completing this essay requires the integration of all the core skills mentioned above, particularly reading, research skills and writing skills, as well as the application of existing grammatical and vocabulary knowledge. It is a good exercise for them.
 - Looking at Stephen Bailey, *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. This book comprises of writing skills that will help the students to equip themselves, such as critical analysis, avoiding plagiarism (important to know about this because there are several countries where plagiarism is still acceptable; now, there has been a system to detect plagiarism where there are four words or more in line found the same with another text) and hedging. We are going to talk about hedging later.
 - Academic Style (appropriate formal vocabulary, neutral and objective)
(an exercise taken from Stephen Bailey, *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*)

Study this paragraph and underline any examples of poor style.

"How to make people work harder is a topic that lots of people have written about in the last few years. There are lots of different theories etc and I think some of them are ok. When we think about this we should remember the old Chinese proverb, that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. So how do we increase production? It's quite a complex subject but I'll just talk about a couple of ideas"

The underlined words are suggested to avoid in English academic writing. Avoid vague words like 'lots of people' 'the last few years', it is better to give specific name and dates. Avoid using 'lots of', 'etc'. Avoid using too personal and informal words like 'I think', '...are ok...', 'I'll just talk about a couple'. Avoid also using rhetorical questions, like 'so how do we increase production'. Avoid using contractions 'It's quite a...'. Do not quote proverbs or similar expressions like '...the old Chinese proverb..."

The paragraph could be written in academic way. This is the result:

"Motivation has been the subject of numerous studies during recent decades, but this essay will focus on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (1966). Their contemporary relevance to the need to motivate employees effectively will be examined critically, given that this can be considered crucial to a firm's survival in the current economic climate."

- Typically we show students model research articles in their discipline. The relevant published article can be explicitly analysed for academic conventions, and the function and linguistic features made visible. We usually ask them to do the writing like the super high standard we have shown them. It is going to be very daunting. Instead of using that model, it would be better if we use authentic academic text of our students in previous term. We can take two apprentice texts, both the high scoring and the low one, and then we discuss on those more relevant and achievable models with the students. We should remember that not all of our students want to be famous international academics.
- Hedging (cautious / tentative / vague language)
In order to distinguish between facts and claims, writers often use tentative language such as *it seems likely that...* or *arguably...*. This technique is called *hedging* or *vague language*. Hedging is crucial in academic discourse, and hedge words account for approximately 1 word in every 100 in scientific articles.

For example: All Indonesian women like chocolate. Is it true? No. This sentence needs hedging. Hedging makes your claims less strong and therefore more difficult to dispute.

- I used to send my electronic feedback for my students so they can rewrite it. I use indicators to assess the research essay. These indicators should be informed to the students.

- Online sources to learn academic writing:
 - University of Reading is going to open free online course on May.
 - www.futurelearn.com/courses/english-for-study
 - Academic English Online (Queen Mary)
 - Purdue-Online writing lab
 - www.uefap.com
 - www.futurelearn.com/course/understanding-ielts
 - British Council Learning from the learners – a free online course.