

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the research study. It includes the background, research questions, research objectives, significance of the research, limitations, rationale, and previous studies.

A. Background

As human beings, communication is a fundamental need, and while much of it occurs verbally, writing remains a crucial aspect of communication. English, as a global language, facilitates connections worldwide both orally and in writing. Hidayati (2018) emphasizes that writing is an essential tool for written communication. Graham (2019) adds that writing is a fundamental skill. In Indonesia, students learning English focus on mastering four core skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Writing is particularly important for students, as it helps them organize their ideas and convey meaning effectively.

Fajri, Hambali, and Jaya (2015) note that written communication spans various formats, including books, novels, magazines, and academic papers. Effective writing skills are essential for students to organize their ideas and articulate them clearly. Writing also plays a significant role in preserving language and knowledge (Sirbu, 2015).

Despite its importance, many students find writing to be challenging compared to other language skills. Wibowo (2013) points out that writing is often the most difficult skill for foreign language learners to master. This is supported by Richard (1990, as cited in Hidayati, 2018), who identifies writing difficulties as a major issue for both native English speakers and learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) worldwide. Hensel (2008, as cited in Agesta, 2016) also highlights that writing poses significant challenges for students, requiring extensive mental processing to organize and present ideas coherently. Indonesian students, in particular, struggle with the multi-stage process of writing, which includes planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Rosiana & Yasmin, 2007). Additionally, Salima (2012) emphasizes that writing in English presents serious difficulties, particularly in terms of sentence structure, vocabulary use, and grammatical accuracy (Davies & Pearse, 2000).

A crucial aspect of writing that students often struggle with is lexicogrammatical features. Lexicogrammar, a concept explored by Sardinha (2019), refers to the intersection of lexis (vocabulary) and grammar within language use. This concept underscores that vocabulary and grammar are not separate entities but are deeply intertwined, influencing each other to form coherent and accurate written texts. Lexicogrammatical features encompass how words are combined into sentences and how grammatical structures are employed to convey precise meanings. For instance, the choice of specific lexical items (such as technical terms or colloquial expressions) must align with appropriate grammatical rules (such as tense, aspect, and agreement) to ensure clarity and correctness in writing.

The complexity of lexicogrammatical features extends beyond simple word choice and grammatical rules. It involves understanding and applying various language patterns and structures, such as collocations, idiomatic expressions, and complex sentence formations. Effective writing requires an intricate balance between lexical richness and grammatical accuracy. Mastery of lexis involves understanding not only the meanings of individual words but also their usage in different contexts, including their connotations and collocations. For example, certain verbs are commonly paired with specific prepositions (e.g., "interested in," "good at"), and understanding these combinations is crucial for producing natural-sounding text.

Grammatical accuracy involves applying rules related to sentence structure, punctuation, and syntax. This includes proper use of tense, subject-verb agreement, article usage, and sentence cohesion. Harmer (2006) notes that writing allows more time for reflection compared to oral activities, but it also demands precise vocabulary and grammatical accuracy to achieve comprehensibility. Students often struggle with these aspects due to insufficient vocabulary knowledge and a lack of grammatical precision. Maolida and Purnamasari (2018) argue that grammatical accuracy is a significant challenge in EFL writing, while Carpenter (1987) emphasizes its importance for ensuring clear communication. Atmaca (2016) and Salima (2012) further highlight that grammatical errors are common among EFL learners, affecting the overall quality of their writing.

Integrating lexical and grammatical knowledge, known as lexicogrammar, is essential for effective writing. Research by Ruegg, Fritz, and Holland (2011) and Alderson and Kremmel (2013) shows that combining lexis and grammar enhances writing proficiency by addressing both content and form. Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) emphasize the importance of understanding the interaction between words and their grammatical environments.

In the context of this research, the narrative genre will be the primary focus. Narrative writing, as described by White (2020), is primarily concerned with telling a story whether real or fictional and involves a clear structure that includes characters, a setting, a plot, and often a conflict and resolution. Unlike other genres, which may focus on explaining or persuading, narrative writing invites readers to immerse themselves in a story. The genre's hallmark is its ability to engage readers emotionally and intellectually, drawing them into the lives of the characters and the events that unfold.

Narrative writing follows a traditional structure consisting of the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. This structure, as White (2020) points out, allows the writer to build tension, develop characters, and ultimately resolve conflicts in a way that is satisfying for the reader. The narrative genre is not limited to fiction; it can also be found in non-fiction works such as memoirs, autobiographies, and personal essays, where the author recounts their personal experiences or reflections. Through the use of detailed descriptions, dialogue, and character development, the narrative genre offers a unique opportunity to convey complex human experiences and emotions.

Given the versatility of the narrative genre in both fictional and non-fictional contexts, this thesis will explore how narrative writing can shape a reader's perceptions and communicate values effectively through storytelling. By examining the narrative structure and techniques used in storytelling, the research will provide insights into how stories can influence the way we understand the world and interact with others.

Recent studies, such as Hasibuan and Simatupang (2018), reveal that writing challenges students to focus on both the writing system and lexicogrammatical

features. These challenges often result in frequent errors, highlighting the need for targeted instructional strategies. This study aims to explore students' perspectives on lexicogrammatical issues and understand how these challenges impact their writing. The study is titled "EXPLORING TWELVE GRADE EFL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE OF LEXICOGRAMMATICAL FEATURES PROBLEMS IN NARRATIVE WRITING PROCESS".

B. Research Questions

Based on the background research, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. What are the students' perspectives on lexicogrammatical features in writing?
2. What problems do students encounter in using lexicogrammatical features while completing narrative assignments?

C. Research Objectives

Related to the research question above, the aims of this research are as follows:

1. To explore students' perspectives on lexicogrammatical features in writing
2. To identify the problems students face in using lexicogrammatical features in their narrative assignments.

D. Research Significances

This study is expected to give new insight and information for the writer about how students using lexicogrammatical features in writing and also identify the difficulties and the problems that students faced when they write an assignment. And hope it would be able to give institution more informations to identify the obstacles that students deal in writing. This study also expected that help other researcher to use this research as a comparative study.

Hopefully, this study expected to give something about what the problems that students faced in writing based on their perceptions. Then, it hoped that this research can be used as a reference for those who want to conduct research in English teaching and learning process.

E. Research Limitation

Considering the problems that have been identified above, this study is focused on students' lexicogrammatical problems that they usually faced when students write an assignment and also find out that problems based on their perspective and also to know how they express the ideas and decode through simple free writing such as a diary or complex structured writing like an essay. The data is taken by distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, and observing in the classroom. In conducting this research is limited to 12th grade students in lexicogrammatical problems at MA Ar-Raudloh Cileunyi Bandung.

F. Rationale

For students one of important skills that should be they learned in English subject is writing. Because at the whole of the first and the second semester, every students are asked to do work several assignments that teacher ordered to write also when middle and final exams there are some essay questions that must be answers by students in order to graduate from school. According to Brown and Lee (2005) stated that mastering writing skill can transmit information, express thoughts, feelings, and reactions. But, at the same time writing is also difficult to be mastered by English learners, especially by foreign language students. The difficulty is not only generating and organizing ideas but also how to pour the ideas into readable text (Richards and Renandya, 2013). Harmer (2011) assumed that writing is a complex task that requires a variety of skills. Such as mastering vocabulary, grammar, and organization of the text.

Before students study about writing, they should learn vocabulary as the first step. Vocabulary mastery is one of important components in writing. Mastery vocabulary is not only to support writing ability, but also the existence of the words mastery is very crucial in learning English as a foreign language (Puspitasari 2018). Zihong Bai (2018) stated that vocabulary is the basic component of language and fundamentally important aspect of language development. Limited knowledge of vocabulary is the main problem when learning language. It means that if the students have low vocabulary they will find the difficulties to mastering writing skills. Vocabulary includes lexical chunks, phrases two or more words, such as good morning and nice to meet you.

Phrases like these involve more than one word but have an explicit, formulaic usage, and make up a significant portion of written English language usage (Barcroft, Sunderman, and Schmitt, 2011). Lexical aspect is important for students to mastering writing skill. Because it relates to vocabulary or words in the dictionary. In English, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs make up the largest part of the vocabulary (Fromkin, 1997). By lexis or vocabulary students will also be able to express their ideas. In order to do that lexical aspect cannot be ignored in producing sentences. Because according to Mackey (1984) stated that every word is the center of a constellation which all parts support each other.

The other problem that students faced in writing beside vocabulary is grammatical accuracy. English as foreign language students cannot write correctly without knowing grammar (Atmaca, 2016). The process of meaning-making can be hampered because of grammatical inaccuracy when the readers read the writing. In contrast, many students especially EFL learners get many errors on that accuracy. Lim (2018) stated that there had been a firmly held belief that correcting student's error of writing in through process will prevent learners from incorporating incorrect grammar and punctuation into their inter-language. The components of grammatical accuracy consist of subject and verb agreement, preposition, modals, article, verb form, and tense sequencing (Brown and Lee, 2015).

Based on previous studies above two aspects that should be noticed by students to build sentences there are lexical aspect and grammatical aspect. In addition some studies merge the dimensions lexis and grammar into one lexicogrammatical dimension (Ruegg, Fritz, and Holland, 2011; Alderson and Kremmel, 2013). Also according to Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) stated that the lexicogrammatical dimension of language deals with co-occurrences between words and grammatical environments, or between grammatical structure and their lexical environments.

From the explanations, lexical and grammatical or called lexicogrammatical is important for students to enhanced their writing ability, but at the same time some of students faced the difficulty when mastering it.

G. Previous Studies

The study on lexicogrammatical students in writing has been conducted by several researcher. First study was conducted by Goussakova (2018) the purpose of this study was to investigate both phrasal and clausal lexicogrammatical features as evidence of writing development for L2 students exiting the EAP program at Seminole State College of Florida. This study added to established there was a change in frequency counts of the lexicogrammatical features between placement and exit writing in local English for Academic Purposes corpus, and as a result, obtain empirical evidence of English language development at various stages. This study showed that provide empirical evidence of linguistic complexity of phrasal and clausal features in local learner corpus of placement and exit writing essay at the EAP program.

Second, the study was carried out by Karlina (2021) the purpose of this study was to analyze lexicogrammatical featured in recount text at the X grade of SMAN 14 Semarang and explain the students'perspection toward lexicogrammatical featured in recount text. The result showed that the most occurrence of lexicogrammar was simple past form, then the feature of grammatical reference, conjunction, adverb of time, and the last occurrence was the particular name of person and the students mostly perceived that the use lexicogrammar which functioned to realize the density of lexis was substantial but also at the same time they saw that those application were quite hard.

Third by Wiratno (2018) the study focuses on the teaching genre; it highlights lexicogrammar. This paper presents the findings of a classroom action research study on teaching English news writing to two classes of English Department students. Twelve Diploma Program students and 12 Undergraduate Program students participating in the English for Journalism course were purposefully chosen to participate in this study. Because students are faced with the challenge of news information on the one hand and how to express the content on the other, this type of teaching necessitates a particular technique. Simply, both studies are investigating the function of lexicogrammar for certain texts; this current study, yet, discusses the elements of lexicogrammar and how those parts are applied in recount text.

The fourth by Asibuan, Irmayana, and Riski (2020) examined students' errors and their reasons for these errors in using lexico-grammatical features in writing explanatory texts at the English Department of Institut Pendidikan Tapanuli Selatan. The study found that the most common errors were in using the simple tense (63%), conjunctions (23%), and passive voice (13.8%). The main causes of these errors were a lack of understanding of simple present tense, conjunctions, and passive voice.

The fifth by Fajri, Hambali, and Jaya (2015) conducted a study on writing problems and the use of lexico-grammatical features in academic texts among English students. They identified major challenges related to vocabulary and correct grammatical structures and provided recommendations for improving writing instruction.

And then by Li and Wang (2017) explored strategies for teaching lexico-grammar in English language learning at the higher education level in China. The study assessed the effectiveness of various teaching methods, including contextual and language exploration techniques, in enhancing students' writing skills.

The last, the study was carried out by (Hasibuan, Irmayana, and Riski, 2020), the focus of this study which are students' error and their reasons for that in using lexicogrammatical features in writing explanation text ability at the fourth semester of English Department of Institut Pendidikan Tapanuli Selatan. Based on the result of this study, the writer found that errors in using lexicogrammatical features in writing explanation text are simple tense (63.0%), conjunction (23.0%), and passive voice (13.8%). And the causes of students errors are lack of understanding about simple present tense, conjunction and passive voice