

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of the background of study, the formulation of research problem, research objective, significance of the research, scope and limitation of the research, and definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Writing is considered as one of basic skills in English to express ideas into the words. It is the process of moving some senses to get the ideas. As what stated by Raimes (1983: 76) states that “writing is a skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts arranged in words, sentences and paragraphs using eyes, brain, and hand”. Writing is also basic language skill for every students but they must have extra interest on how to make good writing. Jeremy Harmer (1998: 79) support that writing is a basic language skill, it means that the students need to know how to write certain writing type. In addition, writing skill is very important for students to improve their knowledge to produce good writing. According to Taselin (2010:104), “writing is an important part of language teaching as it also functions as an essential tool for learning in which students improve their knowledge of the language elements in real use. Moreover, writing is divided into many types based on its function and style.

As a basic and important skill, for English as Foreign Language (EFL) students still face some difficulties in how to write good writing. Firstly,

writing becomes the most difficult skill to be learned by the students. Rozimela (2013: 3) state that writing becomes the most difficult skill when it is learned by the foreign language learners. In writing, the students are difficult in case of content, vocabulary, organization and other aspects. Secondly, writing is also considered as complicated skill which EFL students must learn complex cognitive activity. According to Utami (2014: 2) writing is also considered as a very complicated skill to learn. It involves a complex cognitive activity in which the writer should be able to organize some specialized skills at the same time, such as content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, formal informal word, and letter formation. Therefore, there is no doubt that EFL students find writing as a difficult skill to master because the process demands them to use many cognitive and linguistic strategies. By those difficulties above, it can be said that writing is not an easy skill to be learned by especially Indonesian students as EFL students.

Thirdly, it is widely known that writing is more difficult than others skill, writing requires a special training and a lot of practices which cannot be mastered in just a short time. Sachers (2016) since high school student are falling to master writing proficiency, developmental writing programs at the college level have become increasingly necessary. That is why the students who learn English as a foreign language should have more effort to master it because writing is the most difficult skill for English learners to master. Though writing is the most difficult skill for English learners, if the students

have a strategy and appropriate approach, it will not as hard as they think. Therefore, learning strategies have a significant role in acquiring a foreign language.

As the result based on issues above, writing is not only an option for young learner, but also a necessity especially for university level and in university level writing very complex. To support that Agamon (2003) agrees that writing is one of the most complex and difficult skills to be mastered by most student and even teachers since it needs a process of critically and systematically. Almost every day in academic life, demanded to write for many purposes. Along with reading comprehension, writing skill is a predictor of academic success and a basic requirement for participation in civic life and in the global economy. Then it is understood that any important information always use written documents. When people will apply for a job, they must be asked to give their personal information in a written form. Moreover, when they want to apply a scholarship or a job abroad they will definitely be given a test to determine their competencies in writing.

Another term, in higher education, undergraduate students of English Education Department are obligated to produce academic writing for their project essay. In this regard, writing is one of the tasks that cannot be avoided for university students since they are required to write essays, articles, reports and research papers (Hanata & Sukyadi, 2015:37). Furthermore, academic writing requires conscious effort and practice in composing, developing, and shaping ideas and tasks, which are particularly difficult for the students

because they are faced with cognitive challenges to share their ideas and critical thinking through the academic writing.

While this definition is limited to these two works, virtually all texts on writing style include various definitions that mirror those of these authors. These two instances were chosen because of the careful delineation the authors used in creating writing style analysis procedures. Perhaps a more simple way of stating this would be in the words of Klausmeier (2001:15), "Writing style refers to the manner in which authors convey their ideas to readers". For this study, writing style will consist of the measurable areas of writing academic to appropriate used formal in formal word. This brief definition of style, which is expanded upon later, has been refined so as to make a quantitative analysis possible.

Academic writing is at the centre of teaching and learning in higher education, fulfilling a range of purposes according to the various contexts in which it occurs. A student, while doing a university course, is expected to read and think reflectively and critically, synthesise a big amount of research material, and defend a position he or she has taken on the basis of analysed information. The teaching of academic writing skills aims at developing students' skills for continued use of academic English to successfully operate in different domains of language use: personal, public, occupational and educational.

In fact, academic writing tasks pose real difficulties to English Language Learners (ELL) at all levels of education and scholl subjects,

especially to those student with limited academic literacy skills in their native languages (schleppegrell, 2004: Gomes, 2011: Zhu, 2001). Indeed, once student enter universities and become part of learning communities, writing becomes more a daunting task. As cognitive, content, and academic demans increase, the development of English Language Learners (ELL) writing skill becomes a multi-dimensional challenge for students and for professors and institution. Students struggle with the process of learning to write writing to learn (Marinetti, 1985). A broad definition of academic writing is any writing done to fulfill a requirement of a college or university. Academic writing is also used for publications that are read by teacher and researchers or presented at conferences.

Futhermore, good academic writing is very important because one of the major skills required for the students' academic success although may often fail to meet the standards of lexical appropriateness and grammatical accuracy demanded by their English writing teacher in academic writing. Academic writing in appropriate language used in thesis can help student to make good academic writing. The good writing using formal word. The academic writing in appropriate language used informal word only focus on using informal word in wrting thesis. According to Smith, (2002) and Theobald, (1997) as cited in Katherine Ann Linnemanstons and Catherine M Jordan (2017: 2) "In academic writing expected to produce logically structured ideas with well argued, substantiated points, taking different opinions into consideration. There are various genres of academic writing,

such as essays, reports, lab reports case studies and dissertations. Regardless of the genre in writing, style of writing should be the same clear, concise, with appropriately referenced ideas. In higher education one of the main things will be judged on is the quality of writing. This considers the various elements required in an academic text from word through to paragraph level. It offers advice on text cohesion and emphasises the need for planning and drafting work. In academic writing journal must use formal word”.

Informal word as one requirement in academic writing, more commonly used in situations that are more relaxed and involve people we know well. Formal word is common by used in writing and informal word is commonly used in speaking. However, there are times where writing can be very informal, for example, when writing postcards or letters to friends, emails or text messages. There are also examples where spoken English can be very formal, for example, in a speech or a lecture. Most uses of English are neutral that is, they are neither formal nor informal. Formal word and informal word are associated with particular choices of grammar and vocabulary. Contractions, relative clauses without a relative pronoun and ellipsis are more common in informal word.

Formal and informal word serve different purposes. The tone, the choice of words and the way the words are put together vary between the two styles. Formal word is less personal than informal word. It is used when writing for professional or academic purposes like university assignments. Formal word does not use colloquialisms, contractions or first person

pronouns such as 'I' or 'We'. Informal language is more casual and spontaneous. It is used when communicating with friends or family either in writing or in conversation. Formal word is used when writing personal emails, text messages and in some business correspondence. The tone of informal language is more personal than formal language.

There some previous study have be conducted in academic writing. The first is about grammatical cohesion on students' academic essay writing. It was conducted by Taufiq Rahman in 2017. This research was concerned with the use of grammatical cohesive features between sentences. In addition to the findings of the study, it showed that based on the interview result embraced two causes of the students' committed incohesive writing. The causes were mother tongue interference (interlingual transfer) and overgeneralization (intralingual transfer).

The second study was conducted by Fadi Abu Sheikha and Diana Inkpen (2012). They conduct a study focused on classifying texts as formal or informal styles. In this study, they explained how to build a model that will help to classify any text or sentence as formal or informal style automatically. Fadi and Diana presented the main characteristics of formal ad informal language styles then they derived the features of their model. They made two datasets, general-domain documents of formal and informal style and the second represents medical texts, by collecting documents for both formal or informal styles from different sources. As the result, they found that it is possible to classify any text or sentence according to formal or informal

styles. Building classification text into formal and informal is very useful in different applications such as evaluating texts of research papers to determine formality degree of different types of texts.

Third study was conducted by Zulkifli Akhmad and Islan Nur Rizal Amiri (2018). They focused on analyzing students' understanding in using formal and informal expression. This study was intended to know the ability of fourth and sixth semester students at English Department of IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. Zulkifli and Islan conducted observation to the students' worksheet and interview them to collect the data. From this research result, they found that the majority students had understood the use of formal and informal expressions. In addition, students' difficulties in understanding formal and informal expression is that they are accustomed in using informal phrases and it make them tricky to recognize whether the expression they used is formal or informal. Besides, this study also found that the students thought that learning formal expression is harder than informal expression, and actually this difficulties were influenced by their basic skill of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery.

The fourth previous study was conducted by Zaidatus Sholihah (2018). She studied the academic writing that written by the fifth semester students of English Teacher Education Department at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The research was intended to know the use of informal language in students' thesis proposal. The researcher also wanted to know the teachers'



response toward informal language used by the students. From her study, she found that students of English Teacher Education Department at UINSA Surabaya used nine kinds of informality element in their thesis proposal. The nine elements are unattended anaphoric pronouns, first person pronoun, construction, sentence initial conjunctions, sentence fragment, listing expression, direct question, adverb in initial or final position and second person pronouns. Meanwhile, the element which is not used in their thesis proposal is split infinitive. Besides, she also found that teachers respond to all elements of informality which are used by the students except for adverb in initial or final position. Mostly teachers like to tell the students that error is found but they do not give the correct form to the students. It is directed to make the students find the error by themselves

However, according to several previous studies that explained above, there is some differences between them and this present study. The difference is this research focuses on identifying the use of formal and informal words in academic writing especially in thesis and this research use quantitative method. Meanwhile, the study that had been conducted by Taufiq Rahman (2017) before was focused on other characteristic of academic writing, for example grammatical cohesion. While the study belongs to Fadi A. S. and Diana I. (2012) focused on classifying texts as formal or informal styles, and Zulkifli and Islan (2018) only focused on students' understanding in using formal and informal expression. The last study, Zaidatus (2018) has investigation resemblance to this present study. However, Zaidatus's study

investigated the use of informal language in students' thesis proposal and the responses from the teacher.

Based on the previous studies above, in this study tries to invitigated use of formal and informal words in academic writing especially in research report. As formal word is used when writing for professional or academic purposes like university assignments, therefore the researcher is interested to conduct a research concerning to academic writing in thesis entitled **“Informal Words Made by the Students’ of IAIN Tulungagung in Writing Thesis”**.

## **B. Formulation of Research Problem**

Based on the background of the research, the research problems of this study are:

1. What types of informal word are made by the students’ of English Department at IAIN Tulungagung in writing their thesis ?
2. How is the frequency for each type of academic writing used in thesis by the students’ of English Departement at IAIN Tulungagung ?

## **C. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the background of the research, the research problems of this study are:

1. To know types of informal language word are made by the students’ of English Department at IAIN Tulungagung in writing their thesis.

2. To know the frequency for each type of academic writing used in theses by the students' of English Department at IAIN Tulungagung.

#### **D. Significance of the Study**

It is expected that the finding of this current study will give contribution to the institution, English teachers, readers and next researchers.

First contribution is dedicated to the institution. The finding of this research can give valued information or knowledge for the institution to review and reorganize the syllabus of English writing course to include the explicit teaching of academic writing in the teaching and learning of writing course engaging the lecturers to deliver the academic writing theory in their writing class.

Second, For English lectures, the result of this study can be used a feedback to improve their teaching academic writing. They will be able to use the appropriate strategies to motivate the students in learning a particular subject, especially writing academic writing.

Third, this can be a new input for the readers which will improve their knowledge and new perspective in academic writing. The last, this research is dedicated to the next researcher. It is expected whether this research can be used as the source in their findings and give useful information or comparison by further researchers who are interested in conducting the research regarding with the cohesion especially the good academic writing.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

Academic writing has several characteristics such as; formal vocabulary, using correct grammar and punctuation, using cautious language, avoiding subjective language and objective language, emotive language, using linking word, multi word phrases, contracted form. This study investigates only on informal word used by the students.

In addition this study only focus on thesis especially on background of section because background of the research is one the most important parts in thesis where the writer present the reasons for conducting the study. This decision was made to ensure that a representative sample of the academic writing style was assessed. Other sections of background of study (background of the research, statement of the research problem, the objectivity of the research, significance of the research scope and limitation of the research and definition of key term) rely on multi verb, emotive language, use of questions, and contracted forms because many student used it in their thesis. The limitation of subject is appropriate using informal word in thesis. The researcher using table of informal word to know formality level in writing.

#### **F. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding of the concept used in this study, it is necessary for the researcher to provide some definition of the terms used in this research. Those are:

1. Writing

Writing is an activity in which the writers take their ideas or information that they get into acceptable written form.

2. Academic Writing

Academic writing is The style of writing found in academic and scholarly journals in education, dissertations and Master's theses in education and other professional publications in education.

3. Formal word

Formal word is word style made by the students in their academic writing which characterized by expressions that are often taken from spoken English.

4. Informal word

Informal word is more casual and spontaneous. The use of the informal word in academic writing causes the ambiguity and confusion.

5. Thesis

Thesis can be called research report or dissertation is a document submitted in support of candidature for an academic degree or professional qualification presenting the author's research and finding