

## **SENTENCE FEATURE IN STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING (Case Study in Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator Pontianak)**

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**Abstract:** Academic writing is one type of writing that should be mastered by students in Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator Pontianak. Academic writing is very important because it functions as a way to express idea or other way of communication in doing research. Academic writing is an essential to process in writing academic article. Moreover, writing skills are an important part of communication. Academic writing is specific abilities of communication to put writers' ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge, and then how to make sentence become paragraph. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The writer collected the data by giving instruction to the students to write academic article. The respondents are 60 students which are the representative of the students from class A to F in semester 5. This semester is chosen because they have academic writing subject. The result of research shows that the most crucial problem in writing sentence in academic context by students of Polytechnic Tonggak Equator Pontianak is in the sentence category. In this problem students are not able to vary their sentence in their paragraph that might cause the quality of their sentence is not proficient.

**Keyword:** Sentence Feature, Academic Writing, Politeknik Tonggak Equator Students

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Academic writing is one type of writing that should be mastered by students in Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator Pontianak. In writing, there is always problem faced by students especially in making the qualify sentence. The problem might be caused by the difference in language pattern and diction. On the other hand, Academic writing is very important because it functions as a way to express idea or other way of communication in doing research. Academic writing is an essential to process in writing academic article. Moreover, writing skills are an important part of communication. Writing skills may help much if one wants to communicate to and share information with others. Academic writing is specific abilities of communication to put writers' ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge, and then how to make sentence become paragraph.

In English, there are some types of genres of writing, such as narrative, descriptive, exposition and procedure text. Each genre has their own characteristics and linguistics feature. Meanwhile, procedure text is a text that is designed to describe and do something is achieved through the steps. Procedure text is part of important step because in every text and activity we will find it, such as how to make brownies cake and how to make flower pot using used bottles. Therefore procedure text is part of many texts and activities. Procedure texts should be acquired by the seventh grade students of Junior High School and the students are expected to be able to write a simple short procedure text. Procedure is a text that tells the reader or listener how to do

something. Therefore the students have to write about their procedure text base on their experience in daily activities.

Basically, students sometimes do not put attention about the right grammar including punctuation and diction in their writings especially in writing procedure text. They are just completing the task when writing the text, even the task considered easy such as Procedure Text. As the result, some problem appeared in their sentence feature. Therefore, this study is expected to find out the sentence feature in academic writing of Politeknik Tonggak Equator Pontianak. The writer interest's to investigate what is the sentence feature may occur in students' academic article.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested to investigate the feature of students' sentence in academic writing. The writer has always found that the sentence written by students do not meet the academic standard. By knowing the features of sentence written by students in academic writing, the writer hopes to provide a solution in the future that might be useful to improve the students' academic writing. Therefore, it is important to know the common feature of students' sentence in writing academic article.

### **Problem**

The problems stated in this writing are as follow:

1. What is students' sentence feature used in writing academic article in academic writing class?
2. What is the students' problem in writing the sentence in academic writing class?

### **Purpose**

In order to reach the goal in this writing, the writer needs to state the purpose of the writing. The purposes in this writing are as follow:

1. To find out the students' sentence feature in writing academic article in academic writing class
2. To find out the students' problem in writing the sentence in academic writing class

### **Definition of writing**

Writing is one of skill in English and one of the most essential skill in learning English. According to Nation (2009) with writing, as with the other skills of listening, speaking and reading, it is useful to make sure that learners are involved in meaning-focused use, language-focused learning, and fluency development. It is also important to make sure that the uses of writing cover the range of uses that learners will perform in their daily lives. These can include filling forms, making lists, writing friendly letters and business letters, note-taking and academic writing. Each of these types of writing involves special ways of organizing and presenting the writing and this presentation also deserves attention.

Writing is a process that is made in order to reach a goal through written expression. Nation (2009) claims one way of focusing attention on different aspects of writing is to look at writing as a process. One possible division of the writing process contains the following seven sub processes. Considering the goals of the writer, having a model of the reader, gathering ideas, organizing ideas, turning ideas into written text, reviewing. Those steps may become a guideline for the writer to improve their writing capability.

The sentences in writing text are also considered in order to give a maximum understanding. In dealing with a sensitive topic, the writer of this text has been careful not to issue imperatives, with the exception of remember in the first sentence of the last paragraph. However, as the aim of the text is to ensure that jurors work in an effective and collaborative way, modalities which indicate a high degree of obligation are used: must, essential, should, important, dominate, necessary, largely. Modalities, in fact, saturate the text and are found in a full range of grammatical categories. The following is the part of speech used in delivering message based on (Watkins, 2005).

<b>Should, must, may</b>	<b>Verb (modal auxiliaries)</b>
<b>Dominate approach</b>	<b>Verbs</b>
<b>Largely, enthusiastically</b>	<b>Adverbs</b>
<b>Essential, important, necessary</b>	<b>Adjective</b>
<b>suggestion</b>	<b>noun</b>
<b>Feature of Academic writing</b>	
<b>Sentence pattern</b>	

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. In writing academic text, students need to consider whether their sentence tells something clearly. Therefore, students need to put a subject and a verb and such of composition is called simple sentence. A sentence is a group of words that contains at least one main clause. To understand this definition easily, someone need to know what a main clause is, but it will be incomprehensible if their do not. Thus, it is critical that one might be able to identify this word group, for, if someone cannot identify a main clause, they cannot be certain that they are using complete sentences in your writing, (McDonald, 2011).

#### **Main clause and Subordinate clause**

A main clause is a group of words that contains at least one subject and one verb and that expresses a complete idea. Main clause can give meaning even though there is no other sentence support or explain that sentence. In the other hand, a subordinate clause is a group of words that contains at least one subject and one verb but that does not express a complete idea. All subordinate clauses begin with subordinators. It is important to use variation of sentence in the paragraph in order to improve the quality of the sentence. Moreover, the use of variation in sentence may prevent the reader from the monotonous in reading the article, (McDonald, 2011).

### **Simple, compound, complex and compound complex sentence**

Sentences are categorized according to the number and types of clauses they contain. The names of the four types of sentences are simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. You need to be familiar with these sentence patterns for a number of reasons. If the students wants to improve his sentence, it can be done by adding coordinate conjunction like “and” or “but”, therefore such of sentence is called compound sentence. Moreover, students also may improve their sentence with subordinate conjunction such as “although”, “because”, “while”, “when” in order to make their sentence complex. The combination of coordinate and subordinate conjunction in sentence form compound complex sentence. Compound complex sentence is one feature that makes the sentence in academic writing is acceptable by reader, (McDonald, 2011). This way may help reader understand how the various word sentence or clause groups operate in a paragraph. Therefore, it is important to be familiar of this sentence pattern because Variety, Varying sentence patterns creates interest and avoids monotony. Repeating a sentence pattern endlessly will bore even most interested reader. Emphasis, students can use these sentence patterns to emphasize the ideas that you think are more important than others. Grammar, knowledge of the basic sentence patterns of English will help you avoid the major sentence structure errors discussed in Section Three. Being able to recognize and use these sentence patterns will help students control their writing and thus express their ideas more effectively, (McDonald, 2011).

### **Structure of Academic writing**

Most academic courses in English-medium colleges and universities use essays to assess students’ work, both as coursework, for which a deadline one or two months ahead may be given, and in exams, when an essay often has to be completed in an hour, (Bailey, 2003). Bailey (2003) adds that there are some processes in writing academic such as Planning, Organizing paragraph, revising and editing, and Introduction. In planning, the writer is helped to help to ensure that they answer the question set. Organizing paragraph is the next step that is one by the writer. It emphasizes how the paragraphs are developed. Paragraphs are the basic building blocks of texts. Well-organized paragraphs not only help readers understand the argument; they also help writers to structure their ideas effectively. The next step in academic writing is to revise and edit. This process is done in order to check the error and mistake that is made by the writer in the previous process and the last is writing the introduction. An introduction is crucial, not just for what it says about the topic, but for what it tells the reader about the writer’s style and approach. Unless you can introduce the subject clearly the reader may not wish to continue.

### **METHOD**

This research is descriptive qualitative research. A descriptive qualitative research is conducted by describing the situation and problem found by the writer from the data obtained from the students and the subject of research. In this study, the writer describes the finding of his observation and he employs descriptive to deliver the result of research. Descriptive is a basic form of qualitative research, (Walter R Borg, 2007). The respondents are 60 students which are the representative of the students from class A to F in semester 5. This semester is chosen because they have academic writing subject.

### **Research Participants**

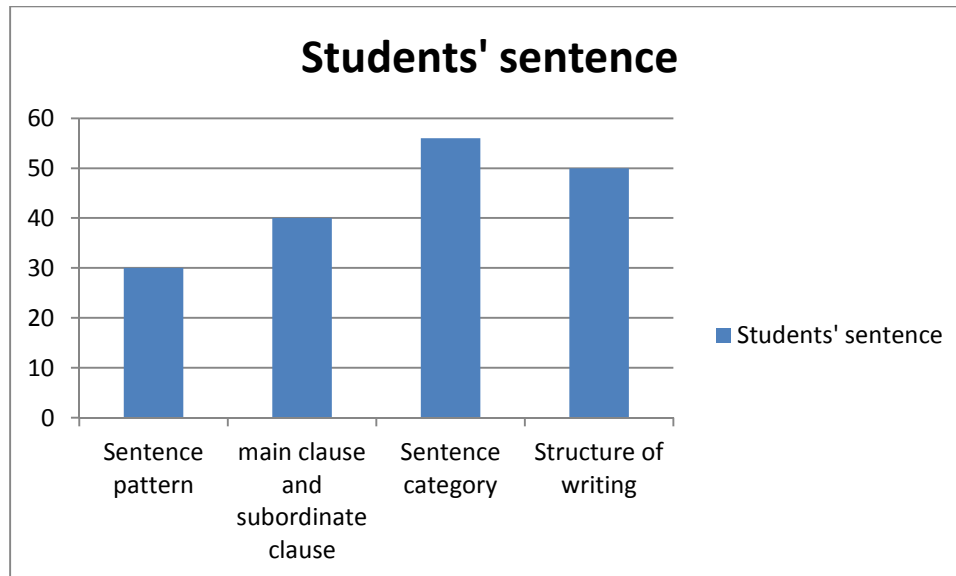
The subjects of research in this writing are students of Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator Pontianak. The writer identified the students' sentence in academic writing class as it is stated in the problem. There are 6 classes take academic writing and from each class the writer took 10 students to represent the others based on their ability in writing (Marguerite G Lodico, 2010). The writer chose the students who have medium ability in writing that is obtained from their academic writing score. The total numbers of participants in this research are 60 students.

### **Data collecting and Data analysis**

The tool of data collecting in this research is document. The writer collects the data by giving instruction to the students to write academic article, (Marguerite G Lodico, 2010). The test instrument is to write procedure text. The writer gives a writing test for a writing academic text based on their own topic. Then the writer distributes the test papers to all students. When the students finish their writing, the papers were collected and then the writer circle in the aspect that is not fulfilling the criteria. Then, the writer analyzes the sentence feature that students apply in their sentence. After all the data analyzed, the writer interpret the data and make conclusion.

### **FINDING**

In this part, the writer would like to explain the result of data analysis related to students' sentence feature in writing academic article. The result of the analysis can be seen in the following chart:



The chart shows that there are four aspects that are analyzed and the result show that students have problem in writing academic article. The feature of sentence that is used by students in their paragraph causes the quality of sentence in their academic writing. The first aspect dealing with sentence pattern show that there are 30 students from 60 students do not makes clear sentence. The application of subject- verb in their sentence is not clear that make the reader may be confused with their writing.

The second is the main clause and subordinate clause shows that there are 40 students from 60 students do not make clear link sentence when they apply this in their sentence. The use of main and subordinate clause is to vary the sentence of the students in order to improve the quality of the sentence. Students tend to start their sentence with main clause, however, some students have started to apply subordinate clause in starting their sentence but there is a problem with punctuation that is put after the clause. These sentence causes the readers do not have sign in reading their text.

The third is sentence category. The sentence category includes simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound complex sentence. It is shown from the chart that from 60 students more than 50 students are not able to vary their sentence in their paragraph. They tend to use one type of sentence and tend to repeat the sentence. Students are not able to vary the simple sentence to compound sentence or to compound complex sentence. This condition might make reader get bored and they are not interested to read the article because the quality of the sentence is not proficient.

The last is dealing with structure of writing. There are 50 students still have problem with the structure of academic writing. It seems that students are not familiar with the procedure

in writing academic article. Those 50 students who have the problem tend to make simple structure that is not in line with article structure. This condition may make the students writing will not become academic.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the analysis, the writer would like to conclude that the sentence feature in students' academic writing. The most crucial problem in writing sentence in academic context by students of Polytechnic Tonggak Equator Pontianak is in the sentence category. From 60 students, more than 50 students are not able to vary their sentence in their paragraph. They tend to use one type of sentence and tend to repeat the sentence. Students are not able to vary the simple sentence to compound sentence or to compound complex sentence. This condition might make reader get bored and they are not interested to read the article because the quality of the sentence is not proficient. Students are not able to use main clause and subordinate clause interchangeably. This condition make students tend to start their sentence only from main clause. Moreover, the use of one type of writing clause in the sentence will not improve the quality of the sentence as well. Furthermore, the problem in using sentence pattern and apply the writing structure, worsen the quality of students' academic article.

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